



# Foundation of Faith

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THE PURPOSE OF SANCTIFICATION



# SANCTIFICATION

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## Editorial

*Dear Reader,*

*Pentecost is the celebration of the Holy Spirit from on high Who was sent to the earth by Christ, now glorified and seated on the throne to the right of His Father. Yes, He had promised this to His disciples, “But when the Helper comes, Whom I shall send to you from My Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me” (John 15:26).*

*The disciples experienced the fulfillment of this promise on the day of Pentecost. They received the Comforter, this godly Agent, the Spirit of power and love and a sound mind, in order to faithfully witness and to live to the glory of God and to help build His kingdom.*

*How wonderfully God proclaimed the birth of His Son to the shepherds in Bethlehem! How powerful was the jubilation of the disciples and people on Palm Sunday! How shocking was the arrest of the Savior and then His crucifixion! But then how radiantly and victoriously the resurrection over all powers of death and hell followed!*

*Dear Reader, we have it all in Jesus, our Savior. In Him “are hidden all treasures of wisdom and knowledge. . . . For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:3,9). The promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost was already prophesied in the Old Testament:*

*On Him shall rest (Isaiah 11:2):*

*-the Spirit of the Lord*

*-the Spirit of wisdom*

*-the Spirit of understanding*

*-the Spirit of counsel*

*-the Spirit of might*

*-the Spirit of knowledge*

*-the Spirit of the fear (reverence) of the Lord*

*Because all blessing and fullness comes from Christ, Pentecost is not just a historical event, but is a valid promise for everyone, for all time, even today for you and me. Therefore, the apostle Paul could say to the Corinthians then and to us today, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen” (2 Corinthians 13:14).*

*H. D. Nimz*

# Overcome Evil with Good

**M**any years ago before emancipation, the American South was home to many slaves. One of these slaves was an ardent Christian and a loyal servant to his earthly master. However, his master encountered some financial difficulties and put him up for sale. His master sold him to a young plantation owner saying, “This slave is a good worker, and you can trust him. In fact, you’ll like him in every regard but one.” This made the new owner very curious, and he pressed for details until he learned, “He prays to God, and no one can stop him. That’s the only problem.”

He replied, “I’ll win him over with my whip.”

The former owner answered, “I’m afraid you won’t succeed. I would not recommend whipping him, because he would rather die than not be allowed to pray.”

Cuff, the slave in question, served his new master with equal loyalty. He also continued to pray, and it was not long before his new master found out. He summoned Cuff and forbade it, saying, “We have no use here for someone who prays. Make sure that I don’t hear any more of this nonsense.”

Cuff answered his master, “Oh, Master, I like praying to Jesus. Praying lets me love my master, his wife, and everyone around me even more, and it gives me the strength to work harder for you.” Nonetheless, he was again forbidden from praying, this time under threat of severe punishment.

Evening came, and when he had finished all his work, Cuff prayed to his God, much as Daniel once had. The next morning he was called to account. When his master asked why he had disobeyed, Cuff answered, “Oh, Master, I have to pray. I can’t live without prayer.”

These words made his master very angry. He ordered the other slaves to strip Cuff of his shirt and to tie him to the whipping post. Then, the master grabbed his leather whip and swung it at the slave’s naked flesh, over and over again, until his own wife came running out of the house, tearfully begging him to stop. However, he was in such a rage, he threatened to beat her too if she didn’t stop interfering. She stepped away, and he continued to strike Cuff. When he had finished, he ordered some of his other

slaves to wash Cuff’s bloody back with salt water, after which he had to put his shirt on and go back to work.

Cuff went back to work, his soft song interspersed with sighs of pain. “I pray no more sorrow and sadness or trouble will be; there’ll be peace in the valley for me.” He worked all day, despite the great pain and the blood running down his back.

In the meantime, God was working on Cuff’s earthly master. By that very night, he had come to recognize how inhumane his actions had been. He began to fear for his soul. Lying in bed, unable to sleep, he felt his anxiety grow and grow until he could stand it no more, waking his wife at midnight with the words, “Wake up! Wake up! I’m dying!”

“Should I call the doctor?”

“No, no! I don’t want a doctor. Is there someone on the plantation who can pray? I’m afraid I’m going to hell!”

“I don’t know of anyone except the slave you tortured yesterday because he prayed,” his wife replied.

“Do you think he would pray for me?”

She answered, “Yes, I believe he would.”

“Well, then call him at once!”

They found Cuff on his knees in prayer. When he heard them calling his name, he thought, “Here comes another beating.” But his master had called, so he went.

As soon as Cuff entered the room, he saw and heard his master’s great distress. In fear and desperation, the master cried, “Oh, Cuff, can you pray for me?”

“Yes, may God bless my lord and master. I have been praying for you all night!” And then Cuff fell to his knees and like Jacob at Peniel, fought for his master in prayer. It was not yet dawn when his master and mistress were born again.

Master and slave embraced. The love of God washed away all barriers of race and class, cleansing the past cruelties and bringing forth tears of joy.

Cuff was immediately freed from slavery. He did not work another day on the plantation. Instead, his master took him on the road to preach the Gospel. They travelled throughout the South, witnessing of God’s overwhelming might and power to save sinners. This is the best way to overcome evil.

# Surrendered

**T**he slave trembled as he stood at the marketplace waiting for the result of the highest bidder. This meant he would have to be separated from his wife, children, and everything valuable to him. The bid went higher and higher until the auctioneer finally hit the gavel. A man stepped out and stood in front of the shackled slave and said, “You now belong to me. I have purchased you.”—“Yes, sir,” mumbled the poor slave with a broken voice.—“I paid a high price for you,” the buyer emphasized. The slave nodded in agreement. “But what is even more important,” the buyer added, “I purchased you to set you free.” He allowed the shackles to be removed and said, “Go! You are a free man!” The slave fell to the feet of his savior and shouted with joy, “Oh Master, I will be your slave forever!”

Paul considered himself a free-willed slave of Jesus Christ. He said in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

God has a right to your life since the time of creation. All people are God’s creation. But not everyone is a child of God. Only those who have been purchased through

the blood of Jesus are God’s children. If you are a child of God, God has a double claim on your life. Peter writes in his letter that we are not redeemed with corruptible silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19). This fact has made us debtors, Christ’s slaves. Our lives no longer belong to us. It is God’s possession.

He has the right to say as He pleases. What a blessed surrender when a Christian realizes that God wants to use him in His kingdom. God can direct our lives much better than we ourselves can. A lot of people are afraid to dedicate their lives to the Lord. In their fear of surrendering, they consider Christ a thief Who is expecting more from them than He should, taking more than He gives. This is definitely a lie of Satan.

Do not be frightened to surrender your life to Christ. He is a good Master. He will bless you and make you a blessing for others. He will fill your life with joy, even in times of suffering. Even though a life of dedication and self-sacrifice may appear unpleasant, concentrate on the fact that you are God’s work in Christ. It is His desire to create something beautiful out of you to His glory. Why don’t you present your body as a living sacrifice now in this moment of your life?

L. J.



# An Important Question

Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, traveled through the upper lands of Asia Minor and came to Ephesus, where he found many disciples who had recently come to believe in the Lord Jesus. To them, he addressed the important question: “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” (*Acts 19:2*). Astonishingly, they gave him the answer, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.” But they considered it self-evident to immediately claim for themselves this precious offer Paul revealed to them. And when Paul laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them. What a glorious reception of the Holy Spirit without great awareness or much knowledge of Him!

Today, we live in a time when the gospel isn’t scarce, and is being preached everywhere, which includes receiving or being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Thousands of copies of books and tracts have been written and circulated by God’s people. Nevertheless, only relatively few have received the Holy Spirit.

“Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” This is still an important question for all of us who have been followers of Jesus for many years. There is nothing more important in our time than that every single child of God is assured of having received the Holy Spirit. Do you have the Holy Spirit, given to us by God and Whom the world cannot receive (*John 14:17*)?

Receiving the Holy Spirit does not depend on our great knowledge nor on our great faith; rather, it depends only on our obedience and willing surrender to God.

Let’s study the disciples at Ephesus. They didn’t know there was a Holy Spirit, and yet they received Him, as did the gathering there in the upper room in Jerusalem. They didn’t know much about the Holy Spirit, but one thing they knew: the Lord had told them to stay in Jerusalem until they had received “power from on high.” And when they obediently waited with prayer and supplication, not just some, but all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Is it really necessary for us to receive the Holy Spirit? Paul certainly saw the absolute need to receive the Holy Spirit, and therefore his important question to the Ephesians: “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

The Lord Jesus said, “I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!” (*Luke 12:49*).

Brothers and sisters, it cannot start burning in our hearts until we have the Holy Spirit. The fire of the Holy Spirit will banish all languor and half-heartedness and fill us with courage and zeal for the cause of God, so that He can build His work through us and add souls to His Church as once in Jerusalem. If we possess the Holy Spirit, we will be better able to overcome all difficulties and move from victory to victory. And the gifts of the Spirit will then be found among us.

In Jesus’ farewell speech (*John 14*), we see that the Lord had promised His disciples a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, Who would abide with them forever. In the same chapter, we also find the functions of this promised Comforter and what He should accomplish.

## He Will Teach You

Who among us does not need the instruction of the Holy Spirit? In all areas and for every task, but especially in the work of the Lord, it is so necessary. Be it pastors or helpers, all need the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Sunday School teachers, the question also applies to you: “Did you receive the Holy Spirit?”

## He Will Remind You

How important is this reminder—to pray, to testify, to read the Word of God! The Holy Spirit will remind us of everything the Lord has told us. Therefore, “did you receive the Holy Spirit?”

## He Will Guide You

*John 16:13*—Who among us does not need the guidance of the Holy Spirit, be it in the proclamation of God’s Word, in reading the Word of God, in every little job in the congregation, or in our everyday lives at home and at work? Therefore, “did you receive the Holy Spirit?”

## He Will Be Your Power

*Acts 1:8*—We need penetrating power that not only reaches the ears but the depths of the heart, a power that softens stony hearts. Observe the apostle Peter at Pentecost. He was filled with power from on high so when he preached, the great multitude asked, “What shall we do?” Therefore, “did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

## Announcements

*Pentecost in Herford, Germany*

June 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*Fest in Aylmer, Ontario*

*50th Anniversary of the Congregation*

June 29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*Bible Course in Neustädt, Mexico*

July 22<sup>nd</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019

*Youth Seminar in Tuningen, Germany*

July 28<sup>th</sup> - August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019

*Fest in Chilliwack, BC*

August 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*Camp Meeting in Blaubeuren, Germany*

August 17<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*Convention in Swartz Creek, Michigan*

August 31<sup>st</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup>

*Fest in Edmonton, Alberta*

October 12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>

## Peniel

The ford of the Jabbok in darkness and night  
Is where Jacob gathers his family.  
He thinks of his past and his dangerous plight,  
And who can help now, but God only?  
They have to cross over, his heart's in dismay;  
His ego and boasting have melted away.

As Jacob examines his heart, it is then  
That fear and regret do confound him.  
His brother is coming with four hundred men;  
He's helpless if they will surround him.  
He wrestles with God; will this be his last breath?  
His ego must die, must experience death.

But see, as he dies, the sun rises anew;  
The night dissipates without warning.  
His soul is refreshed as with fresh fallen dew;  
The darkness is gone, it is morning.  
His ego is conquered, the victory's won;  
He's blessed with new life, for the battle is done.

Have you had a Peniel, died to yourself?  
Are you free from all condemnation?  
Do you love God more, more than anything else?  
Christ died to bring this full salvation!  
At Peniel, Jacob discovered new life;  
And you, have you brought a complete sacrifice?

When you have presented your life and your soul  
To God without all reservation,  
You will praise the Savior, for He's in control,  
Yes, even in your situation.  
You're resting in God, and the sun's shining bright;  
He's fighting your cause and is leading you right.

A. Drews

# The Purpose of Sanctification

*Sanctification gives us strength to proclaim Christ in word and in deed.*

**T**he most prevalent trait in human society is self-centeredness. Even in religious circles, where we least expect to find it, it is evident. In most cases, selfishness and the pursuit of personal gratification, as well as satisfaction, prompts human action. Most people buy, sell, build, calculate, teach, write; in short, they work to further their own personal happiness and well-being. This characteristic is so ingrained in a human being that even when we become a Christian or experience sanctification . . . [if] we do not resist this self-centeredness, it will be much more difficult to remain victorious in temptations and trials. The overanxious person who desperately strives to feel the joy that the experience of sanctification offers may not even muster the necessary faith for this experience.

Is it possible though that God gave us sanctification for a higher and nobler purpose than just to increase our joy and satisfaction? It would seem then that the great sacrifice on Golgotha, which was required for our sanctification, was not justifiable. However, once we identify the reason why God sanctifies us, we no longer delight only in our blessed state, but we realize that God has given the Holy Spirit to serve us.

No one should be robbed of the joy that comes with the blessing of

full salvation. We just want to direct your attention to the higher calling and purpose of this wonderful experience and the true value and special blessing it provides. Even though receiving the Holy Spirit causes unspeakable joy, it is not the main purpose for which He was given. With sanctification, God blesses us and prepares us for His service. He cleanses us so we can serve Him better. He forms us so we can live a holy and blameless life that glorifies Him. That's why He commands us to sur-

## The power of the Holy Spirit is revealed when God's children unite in His service for a common cause.

render our bodies as living sacrifices on the altar of service to Him.

Sanctification, on our part, is nothing less than a complete consecration and devotion to His service. Once we have grappled with and made the decision to surrender our lives completely to His service, He sanctifies us, fills us with His Holy Spirit, and empowers us. Then that person will "will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work" (2 Timothy 2:21). "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear

more fruit" (John 15:2). Both of these Scripture passages conclude that the Lord sanctifies us, cleanses and purifies us, thus preparing us for deeper and more meaningful service.

### Sanctification Protects Us

"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Once again, we notice we are directed away from ourselves

and are shown that sanctification should not simply increase our personal happiness. Sanctification is meant to help us walk blamelessly with Jesus Christ so we can live a holy life and be a light. Some people believe sanctification is solely intended to give us joy to skip and sing through life. However, the outward appearance is not the deciding factor but rather the visible evidence of life at home, at work, or wherever we have the opportunity to show the fruit of our full consecration to His service.

### Sanctification Empowers Us

"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). The apostles were already converted. They had even preached, but they were not yet devoid of "self." And in order to surrender, they had





need of a particular work of grace. Jesus said to them in Acts 1:8, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” The power they were to wait for, relating to the Holy Spirit, would not throw them down and helplessly disable them, rendering them powerless. On the contrary, they were to witness for Christ and accomplish good deeds, making the Gospel effective. Yes, they were empowered to endure persecutions and abuse, even to the point of martyrdom.

Sanctification empowers us not only to declare the gospel of Christ in words but also in deeds. “For this is the will of God, your sanc-

tification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor”(1 Thessalonians 4:3-4). Our bodies represent a living sacrifice, consecrated to God, filled with the Holy Spirit and power from above. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we can discipline our bodies in order to submit to God’s will and be obedient to Him. Through sanctification, we are perfected in love and become more proficient in good deeds.

#### **Sanctification Unites the Children of God**

The power of the Holy Spirit is revealed when God’s children unite in His service for a common cause. In His High Priestly Prayer, Jesus em-

phasizes the true purpose of sanctification: “Sanctify them by Your truth. . . . that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me” (John 17:17, 21). And in verse 23, He says, “that they may be made perfect in one.”

The Holy Spirit promotes unity. The spirits of division will find no home in those whose hearts the Holy Spirit indwells. When the spirits of disunity are cast out and the spirit of unity presides, it is easy to “speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions” (1 Corinthians 1:10). This describes the essential and significant purpose of sanctification.

W. Seaton

# Elements of Sanctification

## Knowledge of Salvation

I know I am a child of God. I know I am born again. That is the necessary foundation for entire sanctification. First, a person must know he has been justified, and has received forgiveness of his sins.

The assurance of being God's child comes about through genuine repentance and childlike faith in Jesus Christ and His death on Golgotha. As a child of God, I love God above everything, and I hate sin and everything sinful. My desire is to live completely pure and free of all forms of sin.

Many years ago, William Booth described his experience of sanctification after he had received the assurance of being God's child through faith. He designated this experience as the first step to entire sanctification.

## Recognizing the Necessity

Although I know I am a child of God, I also recognize there are leanings or inclinations in my heart that do not please God, inclinations I want to be free of. I feel these inclinations are a hindrance to a truly successful Christian life. In my heart, I find a bent towards evil that comes from moral depravity. Sometimes referred to as inherited sin, this depravity is something I was born with. But Christ, Who died for us, Who justified us and made it possible for us to be God's children, is also able to cleanse us from this inherited bent towards sin. To recognize this is the second element necessary to experience entire sanctification.

## Desiring Sanctification

An earnest desire to have a totally cleansed heart is the third necessity to experiencing complete sanctification.

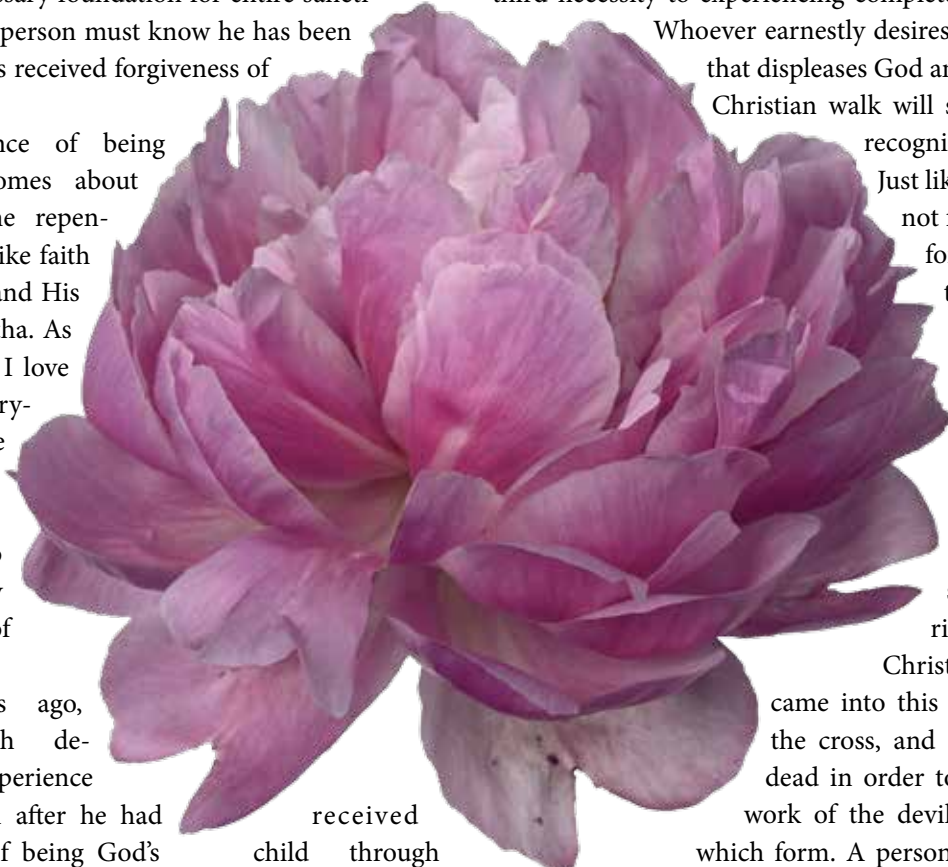
Whoever earnestly desires to be rid of all that displeases God and hinders their Christian walk will stay away from recognized hindrances.

Just like a person cannot find forgiveness for a committed sin if they are not willing to give it up, neither can their heart be fully cleansed if they want to hang on to something detrimental to the

Christian life. Christ came into this world, died on the cross, and arose from the dead in order to destroy every work of the devil, no matter in which form. A person who has truly understood this and has a longing for Christ to fully have His own way in their life has attained the threshold of this next step.

## Total Consecration

A full consecration, or giving oneself fully to the Lord, is a vital element of entire sanctification. A person wishing to be fully sanctified must willingly submit themselves completely to the will of God. That includes one's whole self, talents, gifts, time, and all that one has. It is to be dedicated to the Lord for time and eternity. This is what Paul brings out and emphasizes in Romans 12:1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."



As soon as this full surrender or consecration in full obedience and faith to God, His Word, and the Holy Spirit takes place in the heart, the Holy Spirit takes possession of the heart and will make it His abode. The heart is then cleansed from such inclinations that come from moral depravity. This full consecration and surrender is a necessary prerequisite in experiencing entire sanctification. This is the enduring fruit of a fully sanctified person. Those filled with the Holy Spirit are totally dedicated to God with all they are and have. The Holy Spirit living in them makes this possible.

#### **Faith**

This necessary element means we believe and trust God will do as He has promised when we totally submit to Him. When a person complies with God's prerequisites, he or she can be sure God will do as He has promised.

The work of entire sanctification is magnificent and wonderful. One of the biblical designations for entire sanctification is also called the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit." It is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit into our hearts. It can also be called baptism into the fire of the Spirit, for it consumes and burns away all hypocrisy.

The Holy Spirit's work is to cleanse or to make holy. We are "sanctified by the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:16). God gave the Holy Spirit and "purified their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8-9). In Matthew 3:11, we read, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." Fire is a cleansing as well as a devouring agent. Therefore, all who are sanctified by the Holy Spirit have pure hearts.

Another role of the Holy Spirit is to bestow power, as verified by Acts 1:8. The Holy Spirit leads, comforts, and instructs God's children, as Jesus promised (see John 16:7-14). Entire sanctification is of utmost importance for every believer and for the church of God as a whole.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

# The Abundant Life

*"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).*

In the Allegheny Mountains in North America, there is a small man-made lake with clear water reflecting the blue sky. This small lake, surrounded by mountains and receiving its water from a small, mountain creek, supplied a nearby industrial city with water years ago. During one summer, due to lack of rain, the small creek nearly dried up and the city declared a state of emergency: a water shortage. Inside the water tower, the water levels decreased more and more. The municipality issued a water restriction, allowing residents to use water only a few hours a day.

Not even a hundred miles away, there was a smaller city, also amid the mountains. In the city center flowed a natural spring with lots of water. In the same dry summer, this spring supplied the city with an abundance of water. In fact, the water overflowed its tower. The larger city did have water, but the smaller one had it abundantly.

This is exactly how God's children experience the Holy Spirit in their lives. In some, we see spiritual life resembling the small, humble creek. It is hardly sufficient to refresh the soul in times of difficulty and testing. Then there are others who experience the words of the Lord Jesus in their fullness: "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." That is life overflowing. This abundant life is not only for

them, but there are also rich blessings overflowing for hungry and thirsty souls around them desiring to experience the secret of this blessed fullness.

Afflictions arise, but they cannot take away their great peace. The days are dark and dreary, but their childlike faith only becomes stronger. Sickness hits hard, but just as an exploded oil well—due to an earthquake—flows stronger and richer, so flows from their lives a rich, wealthy blessing to the people around them. Steady prayer flows from their hearts. Genuine praise and thankfulness is heard from their lips. Trust is their second nature. Joy is just the natural succession. They never give up serving the Lord, not because they have to serve, but rather as a joyful expression of love. They resemble deep wells that are constantly overflowing. They have proven the words of the Master: “The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

This was the life the apostles had after their experience on the Day of Pentecost. Out of timid, selfish, hesitant followers of Christ became frank, self-sacrificing, and brave messengers for Him, who shared the Gospel with wonderful power, joy and sure results. Some of these men were Stephen, “a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit” (Acts 6:5), and Barnabas, “a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith” (Acts 11:24). The first deacons were “full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom” (Acts 6:3). Paul journeyed from place to place on his mission trips “filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 13:9). Charles G. Finney preached the Living Word with joyful devotion because he was filled with the Spirit. Hudson Taylor, Georg Mueller, and many others did the same. God offers every child of God the opportunity to be filled with the Holy Spirit as a birthright, a true inheritance.

## SANCTIFICATION

# The More Abundant Life

**T**he word “life” may have different meanings for different people under different circumstances. We may speak of a “new life” when a baby makes its debut into a family, or someone may see hardships as simply belonging to “life.” Yet when Jesus speaks of life in John 10:10, He is not referring to natural or social life.

So what did Jesus mean when He said, “I have come that they may have life”? He was not merely referring to the span of existence between birth and death, for the people listening to Jesus did possess this life. And for many this span of time is marred by sad and disturbing occurrences that bring pain and suffering. So when Jesus was speaking of life, He meant at least two things:

1. **Spiritual life**—a life that emanates from a personal relationship with God through our Savior Jesus Christ. Paul writing to the Ephesians says that although at one point they were dead in trespasses and sins, they had been made alive with Christ (Ephesians 2:5). Jesus says that He came into the world so that we may have life, spiritual life through Him. When Christ walked this earth He was surrounded by people who did not have this life, just as many who live around us do not possess it. And even if in the depth of the soul of men a longing for spiritual life exists, many are not even aware of what they lack.

2. **Eternal life**—When a successful young man came to Jesus and asked how he might have eternal life (Luke 18:18-23), Jesus instructed him about what needed to be done. It was obvious Jesus believed a person could possess eternal life here and now, or He would have corrected this young man’s belief. Because of the hunger in his soul for something he did not have, he concluded that what he was lacking was eternal life. Jesus agreed with him and showed him the way to receive it.

**How can a person receive this life Jesus came to give?** He told the young man to give up what he had believed to be life, and follow Jesus. To this young man, wealth and position were very dear; they had become his “life,” and until his ties to this life were severed, there was no



room for eternal life in his heart. Not every person deems this as his or her life, but there are many other things that ensnare our hearts and lead us to idolize either what we are or have. The cords that shackle us to anything other than Christ must be cut if we want to experience eternal life.

The other requirement Jesus places before this young man was to follow Him. This was asking a lot of him; as a ruler, he held a public position. To follow Jesus from village to village would require him to resign from this position. Sadly, it was more than he was willing to pay, so he returned to the environment where he had been before, with the same void in his soul. He did not receive spiritual and eternal life.

The Lord states that He had come so that we may have life, but He then added, “and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). We must concede that, that which is commonly referred to as Christianity, does not display this “more abundant life” very well. How many can relate to the testimony of a Christian sister who lamented, “I am slowly vegetating, I am not fully cut off from the Savior, but it’s not enough to joyfully bring fruit.” This indicates a need for a deeper spiritual life, which is what Jesus is talking about, a life that is vibrant, like a cup filled over its limit. David exclaims, “my cup runs over” (Psalm 23:5). There are depths in Christ to be experienced, there are riches to be attained beyond the surface of the Christian relationship with God. Paul writes about a life being hidden with God in Christ (Colossians 3:3). Spurgeon stated, “The nearer to Him, the fuller the heart is, not only of peace, but of life, and vigor, and joy.” Is this not what the Christian heart desires?

Such is a life in the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had come to give this life, and His prayer to the Father

was that He would impart it to the believers. Jesus spoke of power when the Holy Spirit would come and fill them (Acts 1:8). We see how diligent the apostles were in transmitting this teaching to the Christian church at the time. Peter told his audience at Pentecost that “the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39). How important today that the Holy Spirit resides in His fullness in the hearts of His people, that they may be witnesses to the world about the love, grace, and power of the gospel. To receive this life in the fullness of the Spirit, we need to consecrate our hearts to God, surrender all to Him, vacate the throne of our hearts, and yield to the Holy Spirit.

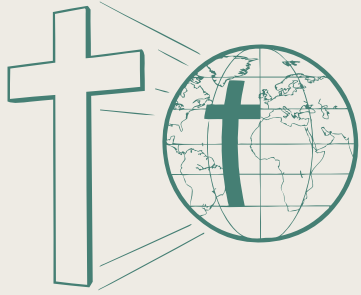
There are temporal and eternal benefits from the fullness of the Holy Spirit:

1. Abiding in Christ. There is security in Jesus and His care, for as a shepherd He watches out for the safety of His sheep. As a child of God we do not need to live in fear, for God will take care of His own.

2. Bearing more fruit. In John 15 Jesus explains the process of pruning the vine for more and better fruit bearing, which is the purpose of the deeper spiritual life. Bearing the fruit of the Spirit not only fulfills God’s purpose, it also satisfies the desire of our heart to be useful.

3. Conforming to the teachings of Jesus. If we want to be a blessing to others and a light in the world, we need to conform our lifestyle to the gospel of Jesus Christ. If we live according to our views and concepts, the fruit we bear will not resemble the fruit of the Spirit. I would encourage everyone to seek that “more abundant life” our Lord came to give. If He came to give it to us, then it is His desire that we possess a more abundant spiritual life.

Peter Ens  
Toronto, Ontario



# Radio Program Message of Salvation

Friedrich Krebs, Kitchener (ON)

## Be Filled With the Spirit

*“Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. . . .  
be filled with the Spirit.” (Ephesians 5:17-18)*

**L**ike a luminous pearl, this word stands amidst the many admonitions the apostle wrote in his letter to the Ephesian church.

Paul saw a foolproof solution to the problems that had arisen and stated emphatically, “Be filled with the Spirit”!

What the apostle told the church then, he could certainly say today. Since the letter was addressed to believers, his advice is for all children of God. In this context, our text highlights at least three essential facts:

### **1. There is a filling of the Spirit for all believers in the Church.**

This was confirmed by many witnesses in the Holy Scriptures. Jesus repeatedly spoke to His disciples of being filled with the Spirit. Shortly before ascending to His Father, Jesus clearly stated, “For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now” (Acts 1:4). He also stated, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

When the Day of Pentecost finally dawned, “there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.” Luke testified, “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:2, 4). Immediately, they began their Spir-

it-filled ministry. The Word worked mightily and went through the hearts of the listeners, and they asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Peter answered, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:37-38). Thousands followed his advice, and we read in Acts 4:31, “and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Peter also gave this testimony, since we read in Acts 4:8, “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them . . .” He spoke through this Spirit to the elders and leaders of the people. We read of Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, whose adversaries were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke. Before being so cruelly stoned, we read of Stephen, “But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:55).

### **2. Not all believers are filled with the Holy Spirit, although all could be.**

If all in the church at Ephesus had been filled with the Holy Spirit, Paul would not have had to admonish them. He knew there were various issues that had arisen among those attending the congregation, but not by those who were filled with the Spirit. In Ephesians 5, he warns people against fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, foolish talking, and coarse jesting. These things could not



come from believers who were filled with the Holy Spirit. Unholy things cannot emanate from the Holy Spirit, nor from people filled with the Holy Spirit.

The fact that these things were occurring in the congregation showed a great spiritual deficiency. Paul addresses this deficiency with the call, “Be filled with the Spirit.” The difficulties arose from selfishness, self-love, indignation, and a big ego. This ego must be sacrificed so that the great “I Am” can fill the heart. He who is empty of himself and ready to devote himself fully to the Lord can be filled with the Holy Spirit.

### **3. God wants everyone to be filled with the Holy Spirit.**

This is confirmed in Ephesians 5:17: “Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” Paul could testify of this from his own life, for immediately after his conversion, Ananias, a disciple in Damascus, spoke to him at God’s command, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on

the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 9:17).

The apostles from Jerusalem sent Peter and John to Samaria. When they arrived, they prayed over those who had come to the faith that they might receive the Holy Spirit, and they did.

These examples clearly show us God’s will concerning being filled with the Holy Spirit. Just as people freely fill their bodies with wine for their own pleasure, which sometimes causes disorderly conduct, so does God, in contrast, want to fill our hearts and our spirits with His Spirit, so the Holy Spirit can govern, control, and fill us. And out of this comes a holy life!

Therefore, “be filled with the Spirit”! This is what God wants. And what God wants, we should also want. Place yourself under the will of God, consecrate yourself to Him in full obedience, and you will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

**“Be filled  
with the Spirit”!  
This is what God wants.  
And what God wants,  
we should also want.**



## Love One Another

**W**e don't like hearing about laws. Modern culture looks sideways at laws, and we are immersed in that culture. Many of the lawmakers we hear or read of are flawed, distant from us, and often hardly worthy of respect. So what about Jesus? Consider the following two laws spoken by Jesus:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

- Matthew 22:37-40

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

- John 13:34-35

Here we see several profound and radical truths. Profound, because they cover so much of Scripture in so few words; radical, because they turn the world as we know it on its head. At their heart, both sets of teaching have love at their core. Both deal with three different subjects: God, you, and me. You cannot remove any one of those three from the formula and have the same world-changing power that God has worked into the gospel.

Jesus places two commandments from the Old Testament side by side. Look carefully. By saying the second is “like” the first, He is saying that they are together. Throughout history, they have been fused as one “great

commandment.” We cannot be pleasing to God if we love our neighbor well, but don't love God; we cannot be pleasing to God if we love Him well, but don't love our neighbor (Luke's telling of the Great Commandment is followed by the parable of the Good Samaritan for a reason). We are bound by God to love immensely; all the teachings of the Old Testament extend from this concept.

As those who cling to Jesus, we see a further commandment: love one another as Jesus has loved us. That means I love you not because you've done something to make me love you, but because *Jesus* has done something to make me love you. This stands apart from you doing anything to make me love you. My behavior toward you is a serious matter between Jesus and me. By it, the world gets turned upside down. By it, the world will know we are Jesus' disciples.

Three of Jesus' disciples have an extra description besides their names and family in the list of disciples in Matthew 10:1-4. Matthew the Tax Collector, Simon the Zealot (Cananite), and Judas the Betrayer. Jesus hand-picked this group out of those who were following Him. Consider that Matthew was seen as a traitor and collaborator in the Roman domination of Israel. Then consider that Simon was part of the movement eager to spill Roman blood, and the blood of those who were allies of the Romans. These men had to eat meals together. By their love for one another, all those who saw them and knew them were astounded. Jesus asked them to love one another as He loved them both. May the Lord have mercy on us and help us to have this kind of love as well.

Anthony Zerbin  
Edmonton, Alberta



## Lessons From School (6)

When you begin a new course of study, you sometimes wrestle with a number of little problems: Did I register for all the required courses? How do I find the right building? Do I still need to get this paper signed? Will I find other students that are like-minded? Since a Christian's lifestyle is completely different, it's not always easy to find acquaintances who can understand why I have no desire to drink or hang out with those who are drunk, why I refrain from going to parties, and that I have responsibilities at church on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays. I had no great hopes of encountering people who would understand this. However, I was proven wrong. I didn't realize there are indeed others out there who agree with me even though they don't have the courage to proclaim it boldly. Some classmates invited me to yet another party, and as usual I declined. When other students were asked if they were coming along, one of them said, "Well, if Corinna isn't going, I'm not going either." Since we barely knew each other, I knew this was simply an excuse, but others started to use this as well since they were absolutely certain I would not be attending. Another situation where I expected to at least hear some discussion was when I prayed before a meal. But that was also not the case. They were respectfully quiet as long as my hands were folded and my head was bowed. They even excused themselves for continuing our conversation before noticing that I had bowed my head for prayer. And after a while, I noticed with great joy that another girl also began praying before her meal. As a child I tried hard to pray so that no one would see. But the older I get, the clearer it becomes: we don't need to be ashamed. Rather, not thanking God should be cause for shame.

Corinna Kowalski  
Hamm, Germany

### VERSE OF THE MONTH

***"For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."***  
***(Matthew 5:46-48)***

Spending time with friendly people is pleasant and worthwhile. We admire people with a kind character and a sunny disposition.

Friendliness is a desirable quality for anyone, especially a Christian, but alone it is not enough. In the Scripture above, Jesus wants to show us something much deeper: a sincere, unconditional love that permeates all aspects of our lives. This love allows us not only to love our neighbor but to carry his weaknesses as well. In fact, it reaches deeper yet, permitting us to reach out to our enemies with forgiveness—and even love.

Such an all-encompassing love is hard to comprehend. Nonetheless, this is a goal we can ask God to help us grow towards. He can and will give us step-by-step guidance in our daily lives to improve in this regard and to let our hearts be filled with His divine love.

# At The Last Moment

**O**n September 10, 2001, evangelist Bill Fay was on a return trip home on an American Airlines plane after a presentation in the state of Washington. From his seat, he watched a flight attendant trying to pound a block of ice into smaller pieces with a wine bottle. As he feared this rather dangerous undertaking could end in an injury, he got up from his seat to tell the flight attendant his concerns. The woman was touched that a stranger was thinking about her wellbeing. They started a conversation, and Fay was able to hand the flight attendant an evangelistic tract.

A short time later, she came to Fay's seat and said, "That's already the sixth time I've received such a tract.

What does God want from me?" "Your life," replied Bill Fay. A few minutes afterwards, she prayed to give her life to Jesus Christ and accepted Him in faith as her personal Lord and Savior.

The next day, this American Airlines plane was the first of two planes flown by terrorists into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center. The flight attendant's name was found on the list of the deceased. On Tuesday, September 11, only hours after her repentance to God, she stepped into the eternal glory of her Savior. No one knows what the next day may bring. Tomorrow is not in our hands. When God calls, there is no better time to accept Him than this very moment.

## Experiences With God

*"Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me" (Psalm 50:15).*

An author wrote, "Fear nothing; freely confess that the Lord is your Savior."

In February 2018, due to the result of an examination, I was unexpectedly admitted to the hospital. I had to fast for 6 days. Then I had surgery because they had found cancer.

Two days after my surgery, I was released, and was able to recover quite well. A few weeks later, I began chemotherapy. This was supposed to take six months. After less than four weeks, my body could not take it anymore. I begged God to help me with the chemo. After contemplating the thought of quitting chemotherapy, I finally did just that.

On September 10, I had another appointment at the hospital to find out the results from the latest examinations. I asked my Father in heaven to help me accept what He had intended for me. I said, "Thy will be done."

It was almost incomprehensible to me when the doctor told me I was cancer-free, since I had been diagnosed with Stage 3 cancer. I want to give all glory, thanks, and worship to my great God and Father in heaven through Jesus Christ. He's stayed with me throughout my long life, and He's never failed me when I've gone through deep valleys. "He has a way, He does not lack resources." His compassion, His power, His love, and His loyalty work together so we are wanting no thing.

What was I? Who am I? What did God see in me that He showed me so much grace? To this very moment, the Lord has helped me. I would sincerely like to thank all who prayed for me.

*Irma Lehmann,  
Toronto (CA)*

# If Sinners Entice You

“Tom, have you heard the latest?”

“No, David, what happened now?”

“The rich Mr. Ebert is whining and complaining because he lost his wallet yesterday.”

“Where did he lose it? Has nobody found it yet?”

“Tom, because you’re my best friend and know how to keep quiet, I’ll tell you. Yesterday, just before dark, I had to buy something for my mom. A couple of steps from our property, I saw a brown wallet lying on the street. When I opened it, I found a hundred dollars in it. If you want to, we can share the money. Mr. Ebert is supposed to be one of the richest men in our city. He won’t go bankrupt.”

“That’s not right, David. You talk as if the money belongs to us.”

“Of course it belongs to us. Nobody knows anything about it.”

“Not true, David. Last Sunday, my Sunday School teacher said, ‘God sees everything, and He punishes

every sin.’ The teacher also said that those who are not honest the first time usually became very bad people. No, David, if you want to become a thief, you can’t be my friend anymore. You probably don’t know the verse from the Bible, ‘My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent’” (Proverbs 1:10).

“What are you suggesting, Tom? What should I do with the money?”

“Come on, let’s go to Mr. Ebert right now and give the wallet back to him with everything in it. Everyone who lives in our village will soon know about it. They’ll appreciate you and also the parents of such a son. And me, I’ll be proud of my friend David in the future.”

“You’re right, Tom. I almost ended up on a bad path. I’ll ask my parents if I can go to Sunday School with you every Sunday from now on.”

L. Besler

## *Seniors' page*

# Uncertainty In Old Age?

A few days ago, I was at the airport waiting to pick up a Brother. While waiting, I looked up and noticed an elderly lady cautiously approaching an escalator. She focused on the step she would have to take to get onto the moving stairs. To one side of the escalator, there was a space that opened down to the waiting room below, and she stood as far away from this opening as possible, on the opposite side of the escalator. Finally, she grasped the moving railing and risked the step forward. During the ride downwards, she did not look around, as some other passengers did, to perhaps locate family members or her luggage. This ride down was too stressful for her to attempt that. I noticed that some time before arriving at the bottom, she already held one foot raised to step off. The awaited moment arrived, and she was finally able to dismount safely.

I stood there and thought about the uncertainty in life as one ages. The other passengers using the escalator appeared unconcerned. They talked, laughed, looked around, or looked in their backpacks and, without any further thought, walked off the escalator. Not so for this older

lady. She had given her carry-on luggage to a helpful fellow passenger to make things easier. Her uncertainty was clear in this situation.

This is how many older people feel. Things that were routine a number of years ago are now the cause of stress and fear. We hear, "I'm unable to do that." "I dare not drive into the city center anymore." "How will I cross the street?" "Will I have enough money to survive?" "To which doctor should I go?" and many, many more such questions. We become uncertain, and doubts frequently arise.

In addition, many changes occur in our times. Often, as we age, we cannot understand these changes that result in increased stress. Why can things not stay as they always were? Why do all facets of human existence undergo such massive changes that the only thing for certain is more change? Values, uses, traditions, and even spiritual standards are often tossed aside and ignored, or are changed by younger generations. Someone commented recently, "I just don't fit into this world anymore!" Maybe you are experiencing similar feelings.

Then the uncertainty arises: "Were our grandparents and we, in





our generation, wrong? Is everything we believed in and stood for incorrect? Is what we believed and how we did things not important?" The questions become acute, especially in spiritual situations. In this, the enemy of the soul attempts to make older children of God doubtful of their faith. "Are you truly a child of God? Is what you believe true? Why do you not feel God's nearness more clearly? Why do you have such negative thoughts?" and "God has probably forsaken you!"

Satan uses many doubts and accusations to make children of God uncertain. In our older years, it may be more difficult to withstand Satan's attacks.

How can we avoid all this?

We need prayer and God's Word as well as the whole armor of God as Paul describes in Ephesians 6. Read about this in verses 10-18. Have you considered that we are never too old to use these weapons masterfully? In contrast to a physical war, for which mostly young people are chosen, the spiritual weapons of older, experienced fighters of God become stronger. Just like Caleb, you can become a mightier fighter in your old age!

Then, look for your security in the character and promises of God. God is trustworthy. He loves all His children endlessly, both young and old. He loves them all, including you! He is the victor, and He fights

for you and is at your side. This God has promised to be at your side until the end of time. He has also promised to carry you into your old age. He has promised to be your helper, your rock, your hope, your Lord, your Redeemer, and your Savior, and He will be your reward. Paul could say, "being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). We are surely able to depend on this, because God is truth

**He has promised to be  
your helper, your rock,  
your hope, your Lord,  
your Redeemer, and your  
Savior, and He will be  
your reward.**

and His word is true! If we trust in Him, He will guide us through all the uncertainties that old age brings.

Will we be abandoned in the difficulties of our later

years? We find the answer in a well-known verse written by Fanny Crosby:

*Safe in the arms of Jesus,  
safe from corroding care,  
Safe from the world's temptations,  
sin cannot harm me there.*

*Free from the blight of sorrow,  
free from my doubts and fears;*

*Only a few more trials,  
only a few more tears!*

*Safe in the arms of Jesus,  
safe on His gentle breast,*

*There by His love oershaded,  
sweetly my soul shall rest.*

R. Taron



# On the Road of Salvation

Part 6

*At the Rear of the Ranks*

Ron Taron

## *God's Plan of Salvation in the History of Israel*

“Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God.” (Deuteronomy 25:17-18)

The Israelites were on the way to the Mount of God, where He would give them His law. They journeyed through the desert, passing hills and peaks, ignorant of the fact that behind the ridgeline an enemy army was observing their every move. Suddenly, clouds of dust, a loud clamor, and screams of agony resounded from the rear of Israel's ranks. The stragglers at the rear were under attack! It was the Amalekites, and their purpose was to destroy and plunder Israel.

All too easily we can experience something similar on our spiritual journey. The day begins with brilliant sunshine. We follow our morning routine, begin our day's work . . . and without warning a storm breaks over us. Suddenly and unexpectedly we're in the midst of a terrible battle. It could be any type of difficulty, or we're suddenly assailed by the powers of darkness so we're fighting for life or death. What if we hadn't strengthened ourselves in God that morning?

But the method of the Amalekite's attack also aims to teach us something. They attacked from the rear. According to God's Word, they killed the stragglers of the ranks. Can we see the danger of being among the stragglers at the rear?

### **Who are the stragglers at the rear?**

God's Word tells us that a “mixed multitude” followed along behind Israel. “Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on

foot, besides children. A mixed multitude went up with them also . . .” (Exodus 12:37-38). These were people who didn't really belong to Israel but attached themselves to them and traveled along. In a spiritual sense, those might be people who have attended services for many years and count themselves as part of a local congregation, but are not born into it by the blood of Jesus and the New Birth. They are often lovely people with many good qualities . . . but sadly, their name isn't in God's Book of Life. Dear friend, is this a description of your spiritual condition? Do you actively participate in all congregational activities, yet don't have the assurance of salvation?

Our text also tells us that the stragglers who couldn't keep up belonged to those at the rear of the ranks. In Israel's situation it could have been the elderly, or possibly little children or the sick, people who struggled to keep up. When a day's journey had been completed, they slowly stumbled into camp one by one. In a spiritual sense, these are Christians who haven't made progress in their walk with God. They're satisfied to have had some kind of a saving encounter with God and yet, have made few further efforts to grow in their faith. They're still following along but are constantly lagging behind.

Those whose hearts were still in Egypt also belong to the stragglers at the rear. Yes, they want to make it to the promised land, to heaven, but they long for what the world offers. These stragglers are also those who don't make the effort to gather enough manna. The long journey can be taxing, and they just don't have the strength to persevere. These are souls who don't enter the sanctuary of God in order to glean strength for the day.

The stragglers at the rear can also be those who don't keep pace with God. He wants to lead them deeper into



His service, to a complete consecration to Him. But they set limits and conditions to their service and are not willing to surrender themselves entirely on the altar of sacrifice. As a result, they drag along behind, somehow, unable to believe that if they consecrate their all to God, He will sanctify them and most certainly lead them in the best way possible. They hold fast to self, incapable of relinquishing control of their lives. And so, they fall behind, joining the stragglers at the rear.

At the rear of the ranks are also those who have grown tired and weary. They have lost their joy in serving God. They are still serving Him in a sense, in order not to be lost, but they have lost their first love. Slowly the many worship services, the prayer meetings, their duties in the congregation, and even their personal devotions become burdensome. Sadly, this is the condition of many Christians in our time.

The stragglers at the rear can also be those who are in danger of giving up due to the many trials and worries of life. They struggle along endlessly, not drawing strength from God's sanctuary, and are at the verge of giving up. Dear reader, do you belong to the stragglers at the rear of the ranks? If so, I urge you to recognize your condition, and the grave danger you are in.

### **Danger at the Rear of the Ranks**

In the account of Israel's story, those at the rear lost their lives. They died in the desert and did not reach the goal. They had started the journey as many others, with the same hopes and expectations, but they succumbed to the enemy and lost their lives. How tragic!

The stragglers at the rear are in danger of being blindsided by the enemy, just as a hunter stalks his prey. Yes,

just as the Amalekites destroyed them with a sudden attack before the back could defend themselves. The enemy of our souls does not fight fairly. He uses every trick and deceit available, and if you are stumbling along behind the ranks in your spiritual walk, sooner or later he will cause you to fall into sin and disobedience.

The danger of belonging to the ranks in the rear is being left behind, just as the five foolish virgins in the parable Jesus used. They didn't have enough of the oil of the Holy Spirit, and by the time they sought some and came running to catch up, it was too late. They were barred from entering the great marriage banquet of the Lamb. The danger is great! This condition is very serious! "Let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it" (Hebrews 4:1b-2).

The stragglers at the rear of the ranks are in great danger of not attaining admission into the heavenly Canaan, of failing to reach the goal, and of standing before a locked door. Dear reader, how about you? Have you slipped to the rear of the ranks? Are you going through the motions of belonging to the Body of Christ, but have lost your birthright? Are you among the stragglers who are not growing spiritually? Among the weary, to whom the service of God has become joyless and tiresome? If that's your condition, then awake to the great danger you are in. Repent, and let God renew and restore you. Give Him your all. Consecrate yourself unconditionally to Him on the altar of sacrifice, and He will fill you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. This is the only way to safely attain the prize of eternity.

# Praying Men

*"Who is a man who can pray and who trusts God, the Lord?"*



**W**ho is a man who can pray and who trusts God, the Lord?" Did Ernst Moritz Arndt, who made this remark, not even imagine a time could come in which men did not think it manly enough to pray and to trust God? I don't think so, for even during his time there were such men. Yet, he claimed and shouted to the world, "He is a man who can pray!"

We completely agree with him. Wherever we look in the world, we find great men and women throughout history who made important contributions to society, who believed that prayer was essential, and were not ashamed to admit this openly.

Louis Pasteur, who was known worldwide and became famous because of his research and discoveries for the treatment of infectious diseases, said, "Posterity will one day laugh at the foolishness of the modern materialistic philosophers. The more I study nature, the more I stand amazed at the works of the Creator. I pray while I am engaged in my work in the laboratory." One of his students, Professor Allier, shared this: "We knew that Pasteur, who had made great discoveries in the fields of physiology and chemistry, was a believing Christian who knelt praying before His Father with the simplicity of a child."

Who hasn't been gripped by the musical creations of Haydn? Whoever has heard his piece "The Creation" will never forget it. The composer was at a gathering with other musicians when the question was asked how to best regain strength when it begins to wane. Haydn humbly answered, he had in his home a place where he goes and prays, when he feels weary. And this means has never failed its strengthening effect.

We cannot assume that great men did not pray. The opposite is true. At all times and everywhere, there have been men who were brilliant in their field of work and were faithful prayer warriors. They were men whose knowledge and abilities in the various sciences paved the way for people today or who gave humanity something brand new and important.

A person is actually born as a prayer warrior because he not only has a body but also a spirit and soul from God. For this reason, he always feels drawn to his origin, to his Creator God. That is why he can never come to rest anywhere other than in the living God.

Geibel said so accurately, "Stretch your hand upwards in prayer. God will grasp it from above, and this touch will flow through you with holy power." Every true prayer warrior has experienced this.

I am aware there are many who don't want to pray because they believe everything happening in the world and in their lives happens because of unchangeable, established laws that cannot be influenced by our prayers. "Why pray?" they say. "My prayers don't change things in the slightest. What godly wisdom has ordained will happen. I will not change anything with my petitions."

Whoever speaks like that has not comprehended God. The key to understanding prayer lies in the word "Father!" God became our Father through Jesus Christ. A father gladly does what his child asks him to do if the granting of the request is beneficial. Therefore, whoever denies the possibility of answered prayer does not know God. He knows nothing about the fatherly love of God and therefore makes Him an uncaring lawgiver. But that is not the God Whom Christ has revealed to us. Yes, we can pour out our whole hearts to our God and Father. He always hears and answers us.



# A Father Who Failed

**W**hen David, the king of Israel, received news that his godless, rebellious son Absalom, who had led a seditious army against him, was dead, he covered his face and wept. Repeatedly he cried, “O my son Absalom—my son, my son Absalom—if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!” (2 Samuel 18:33).

These were bitter words for a father with a broken heart, who had failed in raising his son. David recognized that due to his own moral failure, he was greatly responsible for the tragic fall and death of his son. Without a doubt, the solemn and disapproving words of the prophet Nathan returned to David’s mind. “Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife” (2 Samuel 12:10).

Even though David regretted the sin, for which God had forgiven him when He repented, David had problems in his family for the rest of his life. Stealing, murder, disappointment and painful loss darkened the rest of his life. David certainly had a number of successes in life. In his youth, he was recognized as a great fighter (1 Samuel 17:34-36). He was also an accomplished musician. He was so successful that he was asked to play for the king (1 Samuel 16:34-36). He was also a successful poet, possessing a superior gift of poetry. A large number of psalms, masterpieces of spiritual literature, were written by him. No other prose written throughout the centuries has been utilized like David’s psalms.

David also had success as an army general. He was a gifted military leader who led armies to great victories. As a king, he was very successful. In general, he is considered to be Israel’s greatest king. As a leader, he displayed unusual wisdom. But as a father, he failed entirely after he sinned against Uriah the Hittite and took Bathsheba into his home. From that day forward, after Nathan spoke his charge against David, he neglected his role as a father. He lost the respect and trust of his children. He failed to administer the necessary discipline.

Even today, there are many men like David who are successful in certain areas but fail completely in their role as fathers. They fail to be a good example to their children. They fail to show the true value of life through their teaching and example. Every boy and every girl deserves to have a godly father. The greatest inheritance a father can give his children is the inheritance of a Christian influence.

I once heard in a sermon in worship service, “One day, I took my little boy onto my lap and told him, ‘You can go where your dad goes and be a Christian. You can say what Daddy says and be a Christian.’” Happy are the children who have this kind of father. Give us more fathers like this and we will have less youth crime.

Today, much suffering and trouble exists in many families because the fathers have failed. Perhaps they don’t miss out on providing for their family financially. They provide for their every need, and in some cases, they live in luxury. However, like Lot who set up his tent by the city of Sodom, they are too busy with their various responsibilities and have no time for God.

A father can provide for his children’s education, give them a beautiful home, provide them with food and clothing, entertain them, and love them. But if a father fails to raise his children according to God’s standards and does not provide a godly example for them to follow, he misses the mark. Just as children deserve to receive support and help, they also have a right to receive moral direction from their father. Sadly many fathers fail in this area.

Many boys and girls have never heard their father pray. They have never heard him say a personal testimony for Jesus or thank Him for all He has done. They have never seen their father read his Bible. These children are not provided with spiritual blessings they could and should receive by God’s grace from their father.

Are you a father whom your children can follow or are you failing? If you determine something is lacking, then I beg you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled with God.

# Let Us Not Grow Weary

I am sure we've all heard the statement, "I'm tired." In my 47 years of service, I have met so many people who have echoed this sentiment. These are people who started off very well and were enthusiastic in their service for the Lord. They got involved in their local church and were a blessing for many people, but over the years they got bogged down for some reason and simply got tired. They tried to hide in some large church where they would not have to be involved and finally some of them gave up.

Paul saw this happening during his ministry, and for this reason he is encouraging the church at Galatia not to become weary nor to give up. In Galatians 4:15-16, he makes them aware of a change in their spiritual condition. He asks them, "What then was the blessing you enjoyed?" We know Jesus said He came that we might have joy and that this joy should be overflowing in our lives. These people obviously had this experience and were serving the Lord with much joy, but then something changed. Perhaps there was an outside influence contrary to the Gospel, or some discouraging experience, where they were devastated by some other believer's behavior. Whatever it was, it altered the course of their lives so that Paul now asks, "Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" He encourages them in chapter six not to grow weary, nor to give up, for at the proper time they will all reap a harvest lasting for all eternity. Giv-


” *Therefore*  
*strengthen the hands*  
*which hang down, and the*  
*feeble knees.* “  
(*Hebrews 12:12*)

ing up has become a very real concern.

We find a classic real example in the life of Elijah. Elijah was a man of God who experienced things we can only read about. He told King Ahab it wouldn't rain until he would say so, and the rain stopped. He was supported with food by ravens (humanly impossible). He prayed for the widow's son, who was brought back to life. Yet the greatest event in Elijah's life took place on Mount Carmel. He had King Ahab summon his 450 Baal prophets and his 400 Asherah prophets and placed them before a very important decision (1 Kings 18:22-24). The God that would answer with fire would be the God they should acknowledge and serve. All the children of Israel agreed this would be fair. After the 850 prophets called on their god all morning to no avail, Elijah prepared a sacrifice according to Mosaic law. He then called on the name of Almighty God, Who answered with fire (1 Kings 18:30-39). Should Elijah not have rejoiced and perhaps called a feast for seven days? This was mi-

raculous! God had revealed Himself as the true God, but Elijah fled to the desert and finally lay down under a broom tree, ready to die. He simply did not want to go on living anymore. He experienced his greatest disappointment amid the greatest manifestation of God. What caused this disappointment? The people did not turn back to God. Oh, they did cry out, "The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!" but their lives didn't change. These were the Old Testament people, who like the ones in the New Testament would call out, "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" and then five days later they would cry, "Crucify Him!"—"We will not have this man to reign over us." You see, life went on as usual, and that broke Elijah's heart. After such a magnificent manifestation of the Lord's presence, people went on as indifferently as before and wavered between two opinions. This caused Elijah to retreat and to simply give up. He wanted to go home to be with his Lord, for he no longer saw any purpose in living.

Elijah was physically, emotionally and spiritually spent. He tried his best and it didn't yield the desired results. He was too tired to praise and worship God. Shouldn't they have worshiped and praised God for such a great miracle? But Elijah was tired. Too tired to seek out the 7000 who did not bow their knees to Baal. Too tired to have fellowship with them and encourage them to stay the course and remain committed



to God. Too tired to pray for others. If his assessment that no one was serving God anymore was correct, shouldn't he have prayed for these people to turn back to God? Too tired to seek out the lost and show them the error of their ways. Too tired to do anything for the Lord, even though the Lord still had a list of assignments for him to do. He was simply tired. He experienced a great disappointment which led to discouragement, and that led to him wanting to die.

My friend, where do you stand spiritually today? Have you also become too tired? Do you still have joy in your walk with the Lord? Is your enthusiasm for life visible to others? Or are you perhaps too tired to worship the Lord and thank Him for the greatest miracle of all times? We have been saved, not in our sins but from our sins. Forgiven and set free, because "if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Have we become complacent in our praise toward our Lord? Who takes time to thank God in prayer meetings during corporate prayer? People would rather stay home and view a favorite video or surf the web. The Hebrew writer's admonition would be appropriate: "Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees" (Hebrews 12:12). Are we too tired to seek the fellowship of believers? Do we say with Elijah, "I alone am left" and then withdraw like a turtle in its shell and isolate ourselves from everyone and everything? Are we too tired to

pray for others? Those who are lost? We can see those not serving God, but do we pray for them? Or do we criticize them and join forces with their accuser? (Revelation 12:10). Are we too tired to seek out the lost and invite them to come with us to hear the Word of the Lord? We have a lost world all around us, but who is enthusiastically seeking them and inviting them? We hear the excuse, "The time for winning souls is past," but Jesus said in the parable of the minas, "Do business till I come" (Luke 19:13). He has not returned yet, so we must do all we can to lead some lost soul to Jesus. Are we too tired to get involved in our local church? Perhaps you were actively involved and you were disappointed. Perhaps you got hurt. Don't give up. Leave the problem with the Lord and move forward. Paul says in Galatians 6:9, "Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart."

To give up is one of the easiest things to do. We simply don't have to do anything. We just quit. But we are so much closer to the other shore than we have ever been, so let us not give up now but let us encourage one another to keep moving forward until we see Him and hear those wonderful words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord" (Matthew 25:21).

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## ***Power from Heaven***

*Power from heaven, we need it today,  
Fire from God as we walk in His ways.  
Lord, give us oil so our lamps will burn bright,  
Following faithfully even at night.*

*Power from heaven for me, Lord, I pray,  
So I will trust you each hour of the day.  
Fill me with power so that I may do  
Only and always that which pleases You.*

*Power from heaven engenders new life,  
Grants us the oil so our lamps will burn bright;  
So we may suffer and work for the Lord  
With joy and rapture, while trusting His Word.*

*Come, Holy Spirit, do grant us today  
Power from heaven, so that we can say  
With lamps that are burning, hearts all aflame:  
We're following Jesus, praising His name.*