

PENTECOSTAL PREACHINGS OF WILLIAM SEYMOUR, JR. & FLORENCE CRAWFORD



William Joseph Seymour (1870 - 1922) was an African American, holiness preacher who initiated the Azusa Street Revival, an influential event in the rise of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. Seymour was a student of Holiness-Pentecostal leaders: Martin Wells Knapp (God's Bible School & Missionary Training Home, from whom Seymour group might stole the God's Revivalist's worldwide mailing list and adopted Knapp's "God's" "Bible School" "Apostolic" "Mission" "Revival" "Campmeeting" "Rescue" "Full Gospel") and Charles Parham (Bethel Bible School & Healing Home). Seymour adopted Parham's belief that speaking in tongues was the sign of receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit and worked together Knapp's group Frank Bartleman, Florence Crawford, Frank Glenn and R. McAlister. In 1906, Seymour moved to Los Angeles, California, where he preached the Pentecostal message and sparked the Azusa Street Revival. He met Knapp's southern colleague Charles Price Jones and Charles Harrison Mason, founders of the Church of God in Christ. Between 1895 and 1905, Seymour also met other holiness leaders, including Knapp's Colleagues Abner Crumpler, G. B. Cashwell, John Graham Lake and Charles Parham. The Apostolic Faith Mission of Seymour stands for the restoration of the faith once delivered to the saints, the old-time religion of camp meetings, revivals, missions, street mission work and Christian unity everywhere. His doctrines are as follows:

(1) The first work of grace. Regeneration or the new birth by the water and the Holy Ghost (John 3:3,5). Justification is that act of God's free grace by which we receive remission of sins (Rom. 3:25; Acts 10:42,43; Rom. 5:1,10; John 3:3,14; 2 Cor. 5:17).

(2) The second work of grace. The Holy Ghost calls the second work the "second benefit." The margin reads "second grace." And the Syriac reads that you might receive the grace "doubly" (2 Cor. 1:15).

(2-1) Sanctification is the second work of grace and is that act of God's grace by which He makes us holy in doctrine and life (John 17:15, 17; Heb. 13:12; 2:11; Heb. 12:14). Jesus opened the Bible to his disciples before He went back to heaven (Luke 24:24-50). He taught His doctrine to them well before He went to Heaven so when we get sanctified Jesus will teach us the Bible also, bless the Lord.

Sanctification is cleansing to make holy. The disciples were sanctified before the day of Pentecost. By careful study of scripture, you will find it is so now. "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" and Jesus had breathed on them the Holy Ghost (John 15:3; John 13-10; John 20:21,22). You know that they could not

receive the Spirit if they were not all clean. Jesus cleansed and got all doubt out of His church before He went back to glory. The disciples had the grace of the Spirit before the day of Pentecost. The disciples had an infilling of the Spirit before the day of Pentecost. For Jesus had cleansed the sanctuary and they had the witness in their hearts that He was their risen Lord and Savior and they were continually in the temple praising and blessing God (Luke 24:51,53).

(2-2) The baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire means to be flooded with the love of God and power for service, and a love for the truth as it is in God's word. So when we receive it we have the same signs to follow as the disciples received on the day of Pentecost. For the Holy Spirit gives us a sound mind, faith, love and power (2 Tim. 1:7). This is the standard Jesus gave to the church. The greatest evidence of the Holy Spirit abiding in the believer is what Jesus Christ promised He would do. Jesus promised He would teach us all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said so He means what He says. (John 14:17-26; John 16:7-15). So when He comes He does that in the believer, for He does it for me.

Too many have confused the grace of sanctification with the enduement of power or the baptism with the Holy Ghost. Others have taken "the anointing" which we receive after we are sanctified for the baptism and failed to reach the glory and power of a true Pentecost (John 20:21-24; Acts 2:3,4). God, Spirit and Word go together. They are the two witnesses spoken of in Zech. 4:3-14 and Rev. 11:3. When these two witnesses are not recognized all kinds of confusion will be manifested in the church.

(3) Seeking divine healing. We must believe, with great joy, that God is able to heal "I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26; Jas. 5:14; Psalm 103:3; 2 Kings 20:5; Matt. 8:16,17; Mark 16:16-18). "Behold I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is there anything too hard for Me?" (Jer. 32:27; Luke 24:52,53).

(4) The maximized Apostolic Faith Mission but the Minimized Second Coming of Jesus: "The purpose for which this corporation is formed are to do evangelistic work, conduct, maintain, control, carry on, supervise and found missions and also revivals, camp-meetings, street and prison work." 1914 Apostolic Faith Mission Constitution Article I: "There may be such other subordinate missions as may from time to time be established. That upon the written request of not less than twenty-five persons who are converted, a mission may be founded and established."

(5) Three ordinances Christ Himself instituted in His Church. His ordinances are water baptism, the Lord's supper and **foot-washing (adopting the Church of God)** in His name.



Florence L. Crawford(Reed 1872 - 1936), Lucy and M. Knapp's alumni at

Albion College and colleague, founded the Apostolic Faith Mission of Portland in 1906 and took over the Apostolic Faith newspapers from William Seymour in 1908. Seymour had appointed Crawford as the state director of the Pacific Coast Apostolic Faith movement where she would help other missions and churches join the movement in 1906. Crawford's break with Seymour was complete by 1911. Crawford's doctrines are a full-gospel or the fourfold gospel: (1) The New Birth (Regeneration) or Salvation is the act of God's grace whereby we receive forgiveness for sins and stand before God as though we had never sinned. Romans 5:1; 2 Corinthians 5:17. (2) Sanctification or Holiness, the act of God's grace whereby we are made holy, is the second definite work and is subsequent to justification. John 17:15-21; Hebrews 13:12. (2-1) The Baptism of the Holy Ghost is the enduement of power from on high upon the clean, sanctified life, and is evidenced by speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5-8; 2:1-4. (3) Divine Healing of sickness is provided through the atonement. James 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:24. (4) The Second Coming of Jesus will be just as literal and visible as His going away. Acts 1:9-11. There will be two appearances under one coming: First, to catch away His waiting Bride. Matthew 24:40-44; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; second, to execute judgment upon the ungodly. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Jude 14-15.

Frank Bartleman (1871 - 1936), right-wing of William Seymour, was an American Holiness-Pentecostal writer, evangelist and missionary. He converted to Holiness-Pentecostalism and became a preacher in 1892. He had worked for Knapp's Holiness Pentecostal leaders in Chicago, Colorado Springs, and Los Angeles. He began his writing career in Los Angeles in 1905 and wrote six books (*Two Years Mission Work In Europe*, *My Story: The Latter Rain, From Plow to Pulpit*, *The Deity of Christ*, *Dew From Heaven*) and 150 articles about a full gospel.

"The River of Living Water[s]" John 7:37-38
by William Seymour Jr.

In the fourth chapter of John, the words come, "Jesus answered and said unto her, If

thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith to thee Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee living water[s].” Praise God for the living waters today that flow freely, for it comes from God to every hungry and thirsty heart. Jesus said, “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his inmost being shall **flow rivers of living waters.**” Then we are able to go in the mighty name of Jesus to the ends of the earth and water dry places, deserts and solitary places until these parched, sad, lonely hearts are made to rejoice in the God of their salvation. We want the rivers today. Hallelujah! Glory to God in the highest.

In Jesus Christ we get forgiveness of sin, and we get sanctification of our spirit, soul and body, and upon that we get the gift of the Holy Ghost that Jesus promised to His disciples, the promise of the Father. All this we get through the atonement. Hallelujah!

The prophet said that He had borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed. So we get healing, health, salvation, joy, life--everything in Jesus. Glory to God!

There are many wells today, but they are dry. There are many hungry souls today that are empty. But let us come to Jesus and take Him at His Word and we will find wells of salvation, and be able to draw waters out of the well of salvation, for Jesus is that well.

At this time Jesus was weary from a long journey, and He sat on the well in Samaria, and a woman came to draw water. He asked her for a drink. She answered, “How is it that thou being a Jew askest drink of me who am a woman of Samaria, for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans?” Jesus said, “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee living water.”

O, how sweet it was to see Jesus, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, that great sacrifice that God had given to a lost, dying and benighted world, sitting on the well and talking with the woman; so gentle, so meek and so kind that it gave her an appetite to talk further with Him, until He got into her secret and uncovered her life. Then she was pricked in her heart, confessed her sins and received pardon, cleansing from fornication and adultery, was washed from stain and guilt of sin and was made a child of God, and above all, received the well of salvation in her heart. It was so sweet and joyful and good. Her heart was so filled with love

that she felt she could take in a whole lost world. So she ran away with a well of salvation and left the old water pot on the well. How true it is in this day, when we get the baptism with the Holy Spirit, we have something to tell, and it is that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. The baptism with the Holy Ghost gives us power to testify to a risen, resurrected Saviour. Our affections are in Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. How I worship Him today! How I praise Him for the all-cleansing blood.

Jesus' promises are true and sure. The woman said to Him, after He had uncovered her secret, "Sir I perceive that Thou art a prophet." Yes, He was a prophet. He was that great prophet that Moses said the Lord would raise up. He is here today. Will we be taught of that prophet? Will we hear Him? Let us accept Him in all His fullness.

He said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto my Father." These disciples to whom He was speaking, had been saved, sanctified, anointed with the Holy Spirit, their hearts had been opened to understand the scriptures, and yet Jesus said, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." So the same commission comes to us. We find that they obeyed His commission and were all filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and Peter standing up, said, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." Dear loved ones, we preach the same sermon. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy . . . The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." That means until now and to last until Jesus comes.

There are so many people today like the woman. They are controlled by the fathers. Our salvation is not in some father or human instruments. It is sad to see people so blinded, worshiping the creature more than the Creator. Listen to what the woman said, "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and ye say Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." So many today are worshiping in the mountains, big churches, stone and frame buildings. But Jesus teaches that salvation is not in these stone structures—not in the mountains—not in the hills, but in God. For God is a

Spirit. Jesus said unto her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh and now is, when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father." So many people today are controlled by men. Their salvation reaches out no further than the boundary line of human creeds, but praise God for freedom in the Spirit. There are depths and heights and breadths that we can reach through the power of the blessed Spirit. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the hearts of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him."

The Jews were the religious leaders at this time, and people had no more light upon salvation than the Jews gave them. The Jews were God's chosen people to evangelize the world. He had entrusted them to give all nations the true knowledge of God, but they went into traditions and doctrines of men, and were blinded and in the dark. Jesus came as the light of the world, and He is that light. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Let us honor the Spirit, for Jesus has sent Him to teach and lead us into all truth.

Above all, let us honor the blood of Jesus Christ every moment of our lives, and we will be sweet in our souls. We will be able to talk of this common salvation to everyone that we meet. God will let His anointing rest upon us in telling them of this precious truth. This truth belongs to God. We have no right to tax anyone for the truth, because God has entrusted us with it to tell it. Freely we receive, freely we give. So the gospel is preached freely, and God will bless it and spread it Himself, and we have experienced that He does. We have found Him to be true to His promise all the way. We have tried Him and proved Him. His promises are sure.

"Receive ye the Holy Ghost/Spirit"

by William Seymour

1. The first step in seeking the baptism with the Holy Ghost, is to have a clear knowledge of the new birth in our souls, which is the first work of grace [Regeneration] and brings everlasting life to our souls. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Every one of us that repents of our sins and turns to the Lord Jesus with faith in Him, receives forgiveness of sins. Justification and regeneration are simultaneous. The pardoned sinner becomes a child of God in justification.

2. The next step for us, is to have a clear knowledge, by the Holy Spirit, of the second work of grace wrought in our hearts by the power of the blood and the Holy Ghost. "For by one offering, He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us" (Heb. 10: 14, 15). The Scripture also teaches, "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2:11). So we have Christ crowned and enthroned in our heart, "the tree of life." We have the brooks and streams of salvation flowing in our souls, but praise God, we can have the rivers. For the Lord Jesus says, "He that believeth on me as the Scripture hath said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. This spake He of the Spirit, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given." But, praise our God, He is now given and being poured out upon all flesh. All races, nations and tongues are receiving the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the prophecy of Joel.

3. When we have a clear knowledge of justification and sanctification, through the precious blood of Jesus Christ in our hearts, then we can be a recipient of the baptism with the Holy Ghost. Many people today are sanctified, cleansed from all sin and perfectly consecrated to God, but they have never obeyed the Lord according to Acts 1, 4, 5, 8 and Luke 24: 39, for their real personal Pentecost, the enduement of power for service and work and for sealing unto the day of redemption. The baptism with the Holy Ghost is a free gift without repentance upon the sanctified, cleansed vessel. "Now He which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. 1: 21-22). I praise our God for the sealing of the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption.

Dearly beloved, the only people that will meet our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and go with Him into the marriage supper of the Lamb, are the wise virgins—not only saved and sanctified, with pure and clean hearts, but having the baptism with the Holy Ghost. The others we find will not be prepared. They have some oil in their lamps but they have not the double portion of His Spirit.

Before Pentecost, the disciples were filled with the unction of the Holy Spirit that sustained them until they received the Holy Ghost baptism. Many People today are filled with joy and gladness, but they are far from the enduement of power. Sanctification brings rest and sweetness and quietness to our souls, for we are one with the Lord Jesus and are able to obey His precious Word, that "Man shall not live

by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," and we are feeding upon Christ. But let us wait for the promise of the Father upon our souls, according to Jesus' Word, "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall receive the Holy Ghost not many days hence . . . Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:5, 8). Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! O worship, get down on your knees and ask the Holy Ghost to come in, and you will find Him right at your heart's door, and He will come in. Prove Him now. Amen.

"Sanctified on the Cross"

by William Seymour

"I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth." Jesus is still praying this prayer today for every believer to come and be sanctified. Glory to God! Sanctification makes us one with the Lord Jesus (Heb. 2:11).

Sanctification makes us holy as Jesus is. Then the prayer of Jesus is answered, and we become one with Him, even as He is one with the Father. Bless His holy name.

He says again in 1 Thess. 4:3, "For this is the will of God even your sanctification." So it is His will for every soul to be saved from all sin, actual and original. We get our actual sins cleansed away through the blood of Jesus Christ at the cross; but our original sin we got cleansed on the cross. It must be a real death to the old man. Romans 6:6, 7, "Knowing this that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin: for he that is dead is freed from sin." So it takes the death of the old man in order that Christ might be sanctified in us. It is not sufficient to have the old man stunned or knocked down, for he will rise again.

God is calling His people to true holiness in these days. We thank God for the blessed light that He is giving us. He says in 2 Tim. 2:21, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use." He means for us to be purged from uncleanness and all kinds of sin. Then we shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared

unto every good work. Sanctification makes us holy and destroys the breed of sin, the love of sin and carnality. It makes us pure and whiter than snow. Bless His holy name!

The Lord Jesus says, "Blessed are the pure in heart." Sanctification makes us pure in heart. Any man that is saved and sanctified can feel the fire burning in his heart, when he calls on the name of Jesus. O may God help men and women everywhere to lead a holy life, free from sin, for the Holy Spirit seeks to lead you out of sin into the marvelous light of the Son of God.

The Word says, "Follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." So, beloved, when we get Jesus Christ our King of Peace in our hearts, we have the almighty Christ, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because He trusteth in Thee." We shall have wisdom, righteousness and power, for God is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His acts. This holiness means perfect love in our hearts, perfect love that casteth out fear.

Brother Paul says in order to become holy and live a holy life, we should abstain from all appearance of evil. Then the apostle adds, "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 Thess. 5:23). "To the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints" (1 Thess. 3:13). Bless His holy name. O beloved, after you have received the light, it is holiness or hell. God is calling for men and women in these days that will live a holy life free from sin. We should remain before God until His all cleansing blood makes us holy—body, soul and spirit.

SPIRIT-BAPTISM EXPERIENCE OF FLORENCE CRAWFORD, FOUNDER OF THE APOSTOLIC FAITH CHURCH & KNAPP'S Colleague

I was brought up in a home of unbelief. I never knew what it was to hear my mother pray and I never laid my hand on a Bible until I was a grown woman, but God looked down into my heart and saw that I wanted something real.

One night as I was dancing in a ballroom I heard a voice speak out of Heaven and say "Daughter, give Me thine heart." I did not know it was the voice of God so I went on dancing. Again the voice spoke. It seemed my feet became heavy and the place was no longer beautiful to me. Again the voice spoke much louder, " Daughter, give Me thine heart!" The music died away and I left the ballroom; and for three days and nights I prayed and wept, wrestling against the powers of atheism and darkness. The enemy would tell me there was no God, and that the Bible was a myth. I could hardly eat or sleep, and it seemed there was no hope for me, but I thought: Why did God speak out of Heaven if there were no hope?

At last I remembered a woman I knew was a Christian, and I went to her home. When she opened the door and looked at my face she said, "You want God." I said, "I want Him more than anything else in the world." Right there I fell on my knees, and as she prayed for me, God came into my heart.

Oh, the rest, the peace, the quietness that flooded my soul was wonderful! As I wept for joy, I said, "I must go and tell the others." I went to the home where some friends were waiting for me to join them in a card game. They had cards on the table and were ready to play; but I told them, "No cards for me; I have found Jesus!" They saw the light of another world on my face, and the cards were put away.

What a change God made in my heart! Everything I had loved that was of the world was taken out of my heart; but, oh! how I loved lost souls. Often I wept as I saw those who looked sad, and many times I would stop and tell them the story of Jesus.

When I heard that God could sanctify wholly, I sought that experience. For years I went from place to place where they taught sanctification, willing to kneel at any altar, no matter how humble, if only I could find satisfaction for my hungry soul. When evangelists came to the city, I found a way to get a private interview with them, if possible, and told of my hunger. When they heard how earnestly I had sought and consecrated my life, they would say, "You are sanctified," but I knew I was not.

There was a hunger, a craving, a thirst in my heart. While I was living a consecrated life, the fire had not yet fallen on the sacrifice.

How I thank God that when I heard of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, He led me to a little mission. It was not a fine hall, but just an old barn-like building with an old board laid on two chairs for an altar. The floor was carpeted with sawdust; the walls and beams blackened by smoke. I looked around to see if anybody saw me go in, but I would not have cared if the whole world saw me go out. I had found a people who had the experience I wanted. The first "Hallelujah" I heard echoed down in my soul. When I went out of there that day, the only thing I wondered was: Can I ever get it?

From Monday till Friday I sought God and read my Bible at every possible moment between my duties. That Friday afternoon at the mission, the preacher stopped and said, "Somebody in this place wants something from God." I pushed the chairs away in front of me and fell at the altar, and there the fire fell and God sanctified me.

Three days later, a great hunger seized me for the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. God showed me that my heart was clean, and that the Holy Ghost could come only on clean vessels. I consecrated again, deeper and deeper, and sought for the power to tell the world what great things God had done for me. I sought till the following Friday.

As I sat in my chair in the mission, the Holy Ghost fell from Heaven and a rushing mighty wind filled the room. My tongue that had never spoken a word but English began to magnify and praise God in Chinese. The power of God shook my being, and rivers of joy and divine love flooded my soul. It was wonderful, but the greatest joy to my heart was that I had received the power to witness to lost souls so they could find Jesus.

I had many afflictions on my body, but I never once thought of praying for the healing of my body until God baptized me with the Holy Ghost and fire. I had worn glasses for years. Three attacks of spinal meningitis early in my life had left my head and eyes so affected that I could not leave the glasses off. I went to the mission that afternoon and told what wonderful things the Lord had done for me. As I had them pray; the healing power of the Son of God flowed through my eyes, and my eyes were perfect.

I had lung trouble for years and had to live in southern California for my health, but

God healed me of that. I was thin, diseased, broken down in every part of my body, but when I had paid the full price and in simple, childlike faith prayed that I might get my health back again and be a witness for Him in this world, the healing streams began to flow.

As I lay on my bed at night I would open my soul to God, and every avenue of my life to the heavenly streams that seemed to flow through every fiber of my being. And when I would awake, I would renew my consecration, and tell God He knew my heart and knew that my life was in His hands; that all I had or ever expected to have was at His disposal. Everything that I had given Him in all the deep consecrations that He required of me when I was seeking my sanctification and baptism, was all on the altar and was His, and what He gave me was not mine but only lent to me; it was His.

When a girl, I had been thrown from a carriage onto a jagged stump, and for some time had been at the point of death as a result of that accident. Later in life I had to wear a brace with straps and a metal plate because of that early injury, and I had not walked for eleven years without that brace. One night the prayer of faith was prayed for me, and God instantly healed me. I walked twenty-three blocks that night and had no pain. From that day to this, I have never had a tinge of pain from that problem.

The healing of my body was complete. An internal trouble the doctors said could not be cured without an operation was perfectly healed. Once diseased from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, I was made sound and well through the Blood of Jesus. The Christ of Calvary touched my body and made me whole. Oh, how I praise Him! How I worship Him for His great love to me!

Florence Crawford was the founder of the Apostolic Faith work with headquarters in Portland, Oregon. After being saved and then receiving her sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost in the Azusa Street revival at the turn of the century, she became an undaunted leader whose message and ministry reached hearts and lives the world over. She led the Apostolic Faith work from 1907 until her passing on June 20, 1936.

“Three Steps”

[by Florence Crawford], founder of the Apostolic Faith Church and Knapp’s **Colleague**

1. Salvation

The Bible clearly teaches that we are all born in sin. We read in Romans 3:23, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." We face the penalty of death because of our sins, for the Bible also says that the soul that sins shall die. We need to be saved—granted pardon from that death sentence and delivered from the power of Satan.

Salvation is not just joining a church, accepting Christ, or turning over a new leaf and deciding to do better. To be born again is to be saved from our sins, forgiven, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus. When this happens, we are changed in a moment. This definite transformation is likened in the Bible to a new birth.

In John 3 we read an account of Jesus' conversation with a man named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. Christ told him, "Ye must be born again." Nicodemus asked, "How can a man be born when he is old?" He didn't understand what Jesus was talking about, but Jesus explained that He was not referring to physical birth. He meant that man, because of the sin in his heart, needs to have a spiritual rebirth.

"Spiritual rebirth" and "born again" are other phrases that mean salvation. This salvation is possible for us because of the sacrifice Jesus Christ made on Calvary. He took the death penalty for our sins and died so that we might be free.

We receive the pardon He purchased for us when we repent and turn away from our sins. We come before a holy God and say, "Have mercy on me. Forgive me for the wrongs I have done. I turn my back on them." God forgives those who wholeheartedly desire to turn away from any actions that would displease Him and who are willing to submit to His direction and will for their lives.

God is not a respecter of persons. He says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). It doesn't matter what your background has been, what church you have been in, or what kind of life you have lived, salvation is available to everyone.

How will you know you are saved? The Bible tells us, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). God's Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, letting us know that we have been converted. We have a desire and purpose to live differently. "If any man be in

Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

If you are a child of God, you have been freed from the clutches of the devil. You have power to go and sin no more. Thank God for His forgiveness and for the salvation He has made available!

2. Sanctification

When we believe on Jesus Christ and become born-again Christians, the sins that we have committed are forgiven. That is the experience of salvation. However, the nature of sin is twofold. The second aspect of sin is the carnal nature inherited from Adam and Eve. Because they transgressed God’s commandment, they became sinners possessing a depraved nature, and that nature of sin was passed on to the whole human race. This can only be removed by sanctification.

Sanctification makes us pure—holy of heart—by removing the inherited inward tendency to sin. We are saved because Jesus Christ died on Calvary. Our sanctification, as well as our salvation, is available because Jesus, “that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate” (Hebrews 13:12). Holiness of heart comes about because God, through Christ’s sacrifice on a hill outside of Jerusalem, made a way that we can be freed from the depravity of human nature. We must not disregard or minimize this doctrine of sanctification, because it is essential in our Christian lives.

We are not claiming that sanctification makes us humanly perfect. We are not saying everything we do is exactly right from that point on. No, we are still human and thus subject to human error. We forget. We make mistakes in judgment. However, God gives us a holy purpose and purity of motive.

Sanctification is a dual process—our part and God’s part. The word sanctify means “to set apart or dedicate to a holy cause.” When our Portland church building was dedicated, we had a dedication service, praying that God might bless the building. That’s what might be called sanctifying the place, dedicating it for a holy purpose. In the same manner, we as individuals dedicate ourselves for a holy purpose. We humbly ask God to accept the offering of our lives and our service. We separate ourselves from the world, determining to shun every appearance of evil. We set ourselves to serve God and say, “O God, sanctify me.”

Then the second part of the sanctification process takes place as God does a spiritual cleansing of our inner man by purging us from the nature of sin. The glory of God fills our souls when we are sanctified, causing us to know that the work is done. Paul referred to this part of sanctification when he wrote to the Thessalonians, "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 Thessalonians 5:23).

The doctrine of holiness is vital. We want to be sure that we are saved and sure that we are sanctified.

3. The Baptism of the Holy Ghost

God's Word is definite about the importance of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This is a different work from salvation or sanctification, and it is given for a different reason. Salvation is to justify. Sanctification is to cleanse. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is to empower, and the outward witness of that experience is the speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.

Jesus' last words to His disciples were a command that they should wait in Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit. His followers obeyed. We read in Acts 2:1, "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Read that verse carefully in the King James Version of the Bible. Note especially the words, "one accord." Jesus had prayed that His disciples would be sanctified. And here we find that they were all in one accord. In other words, they had been sanctified.

The Spirit of God came down, because those who were praying had prepared their hearts to receive. "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:2-4).

Some people teach that the baptism of the Holy Ghost was given only for the establishment of the Early Church. However, on the Day of Pentecost, Peter told the thousands who heard him preach that the promise was to them, and to their children,

and to all who were afar off, “even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:39). That includes believers of our day.

God’s Word teaches us that the Holy Spirit is given to comfort and to counsel us. He will guide us into all truth and give us power and ability to be effective witnesses for Christ. He will bring to our memory the things that Jesus taught. He will direct our steps, give us hope and spiritual protection, help our infirmities, and bear us up in our weaknesses.

Are you saved? Are you sanctified? Have you received the baptism of the Holy Ghost? If not, seek God for these experiences.

“The New Birth”

[by Florence Crawford], founder of the Apostolic Faith Church and Knapp’s **Colleague**

Are you a Christian? It is vitally important to know. Church membership is honorable, and doing good deeds is worthy of praise. But the soul-searching question still remains: Are you really a born-again Christian? Jesus said, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

A born-again Christian is one who yields himself completely to Christ. This is necessary to inherit eternal life. When Jesus told Nicodemus that he needed to be born again, Nicodemus did not understand. Then Jesus used the illustration of the wind. Even though we don’t fully comprehend how it blows or why, we know it blows, and we can see its effect. So it is when a person is born again. We cannot understand how it happens, but we see and feel the results.

Many people who claim to be Christians are ignorant of this new birth, while others try to receive it in their own way. It cannot be obtained by good works, joining a religious organization, or merely turning over a new leaf. It takes a repentant heart, a godly sorrow for the sins one has committed, and a turning away from all sin. Then by faith one must reach out to God for mercy and forgiveness, and claim His promise of pardon. One can know personally what it means to be born again. A prayer such as the publican prayed, “God be merciful to me a sinner,” will bring the Lord’s forgiveness. The Bible says the publican was justified (Luke 18:13-14).

Some may feel they have committed only little sins and do not need to be justified.

Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden, the entire human family became sinners by birth and need to repent. However, God provided the plan so that all can be saved. Jesus, God's Son, died in our place that we might have forgiveness for our sins through His Blood (Colossians 1:14).

Because of Christ's death, every person has the opportunity to be pardoned. No one is held under the bondage of sin and condemnation without a chance of becoming a child of God. No one is serving Satan because he does not have the power of choice. Jesus shed His Blood that all might be redeemed.

The gap between the sinner and the Savior must be spanned by faith in God. Faith believes what God says. In Hebrews 11:6 we read, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Jesus said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Faith reaches out so a person can experience saving grace through the redeeming power of Christ.

The first step toward forgiveness is realizing the need for it. The Bible says that all have sinned. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9). Many feel they are too weak to overcome sin. In their own power they are, but when one is born again, his life is changed. God gives him the power to have victory over sin. Then he can say like Paul the Apostle, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1).

When you repent and ask God to forgive you, His Spirit will witness with your spirit that you are a child of God (Romans 8:16). You will know that you have been pardoned. The peace, joy, and love of God will fill your heart, and you will feel a sacred fellowship with Him. As you keep living in the will of God, your life will be a testimony that you are a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Many were defeated, the picture of despair, when they came to God. Some were hopelessly bound by crime, immorality, drugs, or alcohol. But God delivered them instantly. Even their countenance was changed when they repented with an honest heart. Others were so self-righteous, proud, moral, and kind that they didn't see their need for salvation. Yet when these self-righteous ones saw their need and repented,

God made just as great a change in their lives.

While most people are saved in church, you can be saved anywhere. People have been saved in their homes, alone in the woods, or walking among the crowd. Others have knelt in a prison cell. God requires only an honest heart. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21).

Do not think you have strayed too far in sin to receive this salvation. Whatever your condition, Jesus is able and eager to save you. He says, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17). In place of the word "whosoever" you can write your own name.

If you desire to be saved, God will never turn you away. Jesus said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). All you need to do is meet the conditions God has laid down in His Word. Pray with an honest heart, "Lord, I am a sinner and I need forgiveness. Have mercy upon me and I will serve You the rest of my life." A sincere prayer like that will receive an answer. When you receive that born-again experience your name will be written in Heaven, and you will have the hope of eternal life.

Will you call upon God now? "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart" (Psalm 95:7-8). Invite Him into your heart and find pardon.

"Salvation"

[by Florence Crawford], founder of the Apostolic Faith Church and Knapp's **Colleague**

Salvation (In Depth) - The New Birth

God extends the offer of salvation and eternal life in Heaven to every individual. Each person must choose whether or not he will accept God's offer.

What is salvation?

Salvation is the act of God's grace by which man receives forgiveness for his sins and stands before God as though he had never committed them. This experience is made possible by the death of Jesus Christ, God's Son, on the Cross. In fact, the word salvation comes from the Greek word meaning "redeemer" or "saviour." When Christ was born, the angels proclaimed, "For unto you is born this day in the city of

David a Saviour” (Luke 2:11). Christ’s sole purpose in coming to earth was to bring salvation to the human family through His sacrificial death.

In a letter to believers at Corinth, Paul the Apostle makes it clear that Christ’s death for the salvation of humanity is the very foundation of the Gospel message. “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Why is salvation necessary?

In the beginning of time, God created the first man and woman on earth, Adam and Eve. They enjoyed perfect fellowship with God, walking and talking with Him, and living pure and joyful lives in a beautiful garden that supplied all of their needs. God created Adam and Eve as free moral agents—they had the ability and liberty to choose whether or not to obey Him. His only rule for them was that they were not to eat the fruit of a certain tree: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In spite of knowing there was a penalty for disobedience (Genesis 2:17), they chose to ignore God’s warning and to eat from the forbidden tree. Through this act of deliberate rebellion against God, sin entered into their hearts. Since God can have nothing to do with sin, their sin separated them from Him. Theologians call this initial disobedience in the Garden, “The Fall of Man.”

The descendants of Adam and Eve—every person born into this world—inherited the sinful nature of their ancestors. Instead of coming into the world desiring to do right, each individual is born with a natural inclination toward evil. We read in Romans 3:23 that “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Sin is not simply a catalog of committed transgressions, but a condition out of which individual acts of wrongdoing are generated.

Sin may be obvious or subtle, but it always separates from God. The prophet Isaiah indicated this in Isaiah 59:2, “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” The ultimate result of sin is death and separation from God for eternity. Since all people in their natural state are sinners, all people are doomed to eternal death. However, God in His mercy and infinite goodness provided salvation through Jesus Christ as a way for humanity to escape sin’s awful consequences and to be united with God in loving communion.

God's plan for man's salvation

Sin and guilt are inseparable, so the sinner stands guilty and condemned before God. God's perfect righteousness and absolute justice demands a penalty be paid for sin. According to Romans 6:23, "the wages of sin is death"—physical death, spiritual death (separation from God), and eternal death (eternal separation from God with no hope of ever experiencing His saving grace).

God's plan from the "foundation of the world" (Hebrews 9:26) was to send His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the penalty of sin. Only a perfect and guiltless person could satisfy the justice of God in making payment for humanity's sins. Because Christ was sinless, He could "taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9), and pay the atoning price for their sins. In His amazing love and compassion for us, Christ willingly gave His life on the Cross of Calvary, suffering its cruel, agonizing death so that we could be saved from sin and its consequences. He died in our place that we might have forgiveness for sins through His shed Blood. When a repentant sinner comes to God and by faith confesses his belief that Jesus is the Son of God who died for all mankind, he will experience salvation.

Three days after Christ's sacrificial death, He arose from the grave and walked on earth once more! That amazing fact was documented by hundreds of people who saw Jesus after His Resurrection. Now, He lives in Heaven with God.

Terminology relating to salvation

There are many terms used in Scripture that refer to the same work of grace.

Justification — To be justified is to be judicially pardoned by God and thus absolved from the penalty of sin. Justification, the opposite of condemnation, occurs when God cancels the guilt and forgives the transgressions of a sinner. We read in Romans 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." God looks upon the sacrifice Jesus made on Calvary, and accepts that sacrifice as a substitute for the repentant sinner paying his own penalty. For Christ's sake, God forgives the sinner, blots out his transgressions, and in so doing, justifies him.

Saved/Salvation — In Acts 16:30, we read that the Philippian jailer fell before Paul

and Silas and inquired in desperation, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The word saved comes from a Greek word meaning "delivered" or "made whole." The angel of the Lord who appeared to Joseph told him that Mary would bring forth a Child conceived by the Holy Ghost, and declared, "Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Conversion – Jesus used the word converted when He instructed His disciples, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). To be converted means "to be changed from one purpose or use to another." As an example, a current trend in areas where housing is at a premium is to convert buildings that were once industrial buildings or warehouses into apartments. The inside is completely changed; only the outer dimensions of the structure remain the same. That building has been converted—changed completely—from one purpose to another. When a person is converted, he is changed completely by the power of God.

Atonement – In Romans 5:11, we read, "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." The word atonement means "exchange: restoration to divine favor." It refers to the reconciliation between God and humanity, accomplished through the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. The same word is translated reconciliation in most places in the New Testament. The only way a person can be saved is through faith in the atoning work of Christ on Calvary.

Reconciliation – Sin corrupted the moral nature of humanity, and thus the original state of every person born into this world is rebellion against his Creator. Reconciliation needs to take place—agreement and harmony must be restored—but a person cannot approach God in a sinful condition. Repairing the breach can only occur through a mediator, and that mediator is Jesus Christ. We read in Colossians 1:19-22, "For it pleased the Father that in him [Jesus] should all fulness dwell: and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself:…And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprieveable in his sight." Through the provision of Christ's shed Blood, harmony is secured between the repentant sinner and God, and they are brought together in fellowship and love.

Regeneration/Born again/New birth – The word regeneration literally means "to be born again," and refers to the spiritual change that takes place in a person when he

comes into possession of new life in Christ. Jesus told a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Nicodemus did not understand this statement, and he asked, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3:4-7). The phrase born again means "born from above." Jesus, using the universally familiar example of physical birth, was teaching the necessity of spiritual rebirth.

Redeemed/Redemption — The word redeem means "to ransom; to buy back." Peter wrote to believers in the Early Church, reminding them, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19). The price was paid for a sinner's redemption by Christ's death on Calvary.

Who may receive salvation?

The grace of God is freely and generously offered to all, for Jesus shed His Blood that all might be redeemed. No one is held under the bondage of sin and condemnation and forced to serve Satan without the opportunity of becoming a child of God. Everyone has been given the power of choice. Whatever the condition of an individual, Jesus is able and eager to save him. He said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Those who open their hearts to God have this promise: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). In Revelation 22:17, the universal invitation is repeated, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." God's appeal extends to all people in every generation, but the individual must make a personal choice to avail himself of salvation.

How to receive salvation

The steps for receiving salvation are laid out in God's Word—the Bible. The moment an individual takes these steps honestly and sincerely, God will pardon him and assure him that he has been born again to new life in Christ.

Acknowledge the need. The first step toward receiving forgiveness is realizing the

need for it. The Bible says that all have sinned. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). When a person recognizes the fact that he is a sinner and doomed to Hell unless he is completely changed by God's mercy, his self-righteousness and self-sufficiency will disappear. He will rightly see himself as being in a perilous condition, in desperate need of God's intervention to save him from eternal damnation.

Repent and confess. When a sinner comes to God with genuine sorrow in his heart for committed sins and confesses them, asking God to forgive him, God will not turn him away. God's Word promises, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). It also says, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). Repentance does not earn God's forgiveness, but rather, it places the sinner in a position where it can be received. It is the condition of the human heart required by God before forgiveness can be granted. We read in 2 Corinthians 7:10, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

Forsake all known sin. A person who is truly repentant will be willing to turn away from the sins of his past and to purpose never to go back to them. Isaiah 55:7 reads, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him...for he will abundantly pardon." As one turns from sin and his own ways, God's pardon is offered in abundance!

Ask. The repentant sinner must invite Jesus Christ into his heart and life, yielding control of his life in complete honesty and surrender to Him. Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matthew 7:7-8).

Believe. When a sinner has reached out to God for mercy and forgiveness, the gap between him and the Savior must be spanned by faith. Receiving is conditional upon the individual's faith in Christ's atonement. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." When a repentant sinner looks to Christ's atoning work at Calvary, faith takes hold and he

receives salvation through the redeeming power of Christ.

The assurance of salvation

God will let a person know when he has been saved. The Bible tells us, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:16). Joy and peace will replace all feelings of guilt, emptiness, and heartache. The sense of condemnation will be gone in a moment of time. In its place will be a deep love for God and a desire to please Him.

What salvation accomplishes

When a person is converted, he stands before God as though he had never sinned. His sins are forgiven and removed from him as "far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12), and cast "into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19), never to be remembered against him again. We read in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The newborn believer's outlook and life style change. The wrong things that were once loved are now hated; the right things that were once hated are now loved. Not only do actions change, but even motives and desires are transformed. When salvation takes place, the sense of separation and inner emptiness vanishes. Salvation causes the individual to feel complete, loved, and at peace. He will have love for God and for other people.

How to keep salvation

Some simple actions will help new believers keep what God has given them.

Purpose to continue to live for God. A new Christian needs to make a commitment to cherish his connection with God and value it above all else. While it is possible to turn away and become separated from God again, that is not necessary. God will help the one who determines to retain his salvation at any cost. If a person walks within the framework of God's Word, he will be kept by the power of God.

Make restitution. After receiving salvation, the newborn believer must make right any wrongs that have been committed against others in order to have a clear conscience before God and other people. God expects His followers to straighten out the past wherever possible. Paul the Apostle said, "Herein do I exercise myself, to have always

a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men” (Acts 24:16).

Read the Bible. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:15, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” To rightly divide the Word of truth means “to properly proportion it; to attach the right weight to it.” Believers must value the Word of God, building their lives on His Word and building His Word into their lives, for it enlightens, encourages, and points out areas of danger.

Talk to God. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, we find the instruction, “Pray without ceasing.” We cannot spend every moment on our knees, but it is possible to have a prayerful attitude at all times. This attitude is built by acknowledging our dependence upon God, realizing His presence within, and determining to obey Him fully. The person who does this will find it natural to pray frequent, spontaneous prayers in addition to regular times of sustained communion with Him.

Seek for entire sanctification. If a person genuinely wishes to stay saved, the best course of action is to seek immediately for entire sanctification. Salvation deals with the acts and guilt of committed sins, but the sinful nature—the inward tendency inherited from Adam—still remains. Entire sanctification deals with the nature of sin. John addressed the two-fold sin problem and offered the two-fold remedy in 1 John 1:7-9, saying, “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin [singular, the sin nature]. If we say that we have no sin [if we say we were not born with an Adamic or sin nature], we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, [plural, committed sins] he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [salvation], and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness [sanctification].” Forgiveness is offered for actual committed sins, while cleansing is offered for the Adamic nature. “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. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).

Fellowship with other Christians. Friendships should be developed with other like-minded believers. Spending time with those who have committed their lives to God, both on an informal basis and in the more organized setting of collective worship, is a great source of spiritual strength and encouragement. Hebrews 10:24-25 warns against forsaking the assembling together with other Christians. When believers

gather together to worship, they receive help and encouragement from other believers.

Learn to recognize a trial. The Apostle Peter cautioned believers in the Early Church not to think it was strange when a fiery trial came along to try them, as though some strange thing happened to them (1 Peter 4:12). He let them know that trials were not abnormal, but are within the plan of God. God allows the faith of a Christian to be tested to strengthen and encourage growth.

Distinguish between temptation and sin. It is vital for new Christians to distinguish between a temptation to do wrong and an act of sin. Temptation is not sin. Rebelling against God's command and resuming evil is sin.

Tell others. It is important that newborn Christians tell their close associates about the change that God has made in their lives. In Revelation 12:11, we read that those who triumphed over Satan "overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony."

Be sensitive to the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is the Guide and Teacher of the believer. We read in Romans 8: 14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." It is vitally important to heed the warnings and counsel of the Holy Spirit to our hearts.

Living victoriously

One of the results of salvation is that a victorious life without sin is made possible. We read in 1 John 3:9-10, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." The nature of God and the nature of sin are never blended together; they are so radically different that it is impossible to make a composite of the two.

A follower of Christ must continue to walk in obedience to the light of God's Word in order to retain his salvation. If he does not, that light becomes darkness—and how great is that darkness! The only way for a newborn Christian to retain his freedom from spiritual death is by continuing to abhor and reject all known sin.

As long as the believer is in a mortal body, he will suffer from human frailties and limitations. Saved and sanctified individuals continue to face physical, mental, and even emotional limitations that were a result of the Fall. He may make mistakes and may face chastening from God; he may need to come before God and express sorrow for grieving the heart of God. However, if the motivating and underlying theme of his life is to love the Lord with all of his heart, soul, mind, and strength (Luke 10:27), the grace and power of God are sufficient to keep that one pure and free from sin. In Jude 24 we read that He “is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” Paul wrote to Timothy, “For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (2 Timothy 1:12). God will keep the person who wants to be kept. Just as the vital union with the Lord Jesus broke the power of sin in our hearts and nature, continuing in unity with Him prevents sin in our lives.

A clear message

New life in Christ is possible for every person. The reality of the new birth has been proved by countless numbers of people who have experienced God’s pardon and experienced a complete transformation in their lives.

The Bible is clear: all who have not been born again need to repent and look to God for salvation. The urgency of this message cannot be overstated, for the consequences are eternal! While eternal loss awaits those who refuse, eternal joy and happiness will be the reward to those who receive and retain this wonderful experience of salvation.

“Sanctification”

[by Florence Crawford], founder of the Apostolic Faith Church and Knapp’s **Colleague**

The Path of Holiness

As a newborn babe is born desiring food, so a newborn child of God desires spiritual food to sustain and strengthen him for the future.

Have you ever wished you could draw closer to God? Do you desire to be more like Him in your everyday actions? Seek the path of holiness. Seek God for sanctification.

The Bible teaches that the experience of justification and the experience of sanctification are two different works of grace. They are received by faith through the power of the shed Blood of Jesus Christ.

The word sanctify means “to make holy, purify, consecrate, dedicate, cleanse, and separate.” In order to be sanctified, the born-again Christian must consecrate, dedicate, and separate himself to God and His will. Then God will do His part by purifying the heart and making it holy.

The Problem

When Adam disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, sin entered into his heart. Every person born into this world has inherited that nature of sin. But sanctification removes that Adamic nature and cleanses the heart. The inherited inward tendency to sin is taken away by the Blood of Jesus, and the heart is made pure and holy.

Sanctification is provided through Jesus’ Blood. We are told in Hebrews 13:12, “Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.”

Sanctification brings holiness. God is a holy God. Heaven is a holy place, and God has always demanded holiness. His Word says, “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16).

Christ wants His Church to be made up of holy, purified people. He gave Himself for the Church, “That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:26,27).

Sanctification also brings unity, a oneness among God’s people. “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one” (Hebrews 2:11). Jesus prayed for His disciples “that they may be one, even as we are one” (John 17:22). This prayer was definitely answered, for before the Day of Pentecost they “all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication” (Acts 1:14).

Christ’s Prayer

The holiness and unity which are the results of sanctification should be the desire of

every Christian. And the experience of sanctification is for all those who have been saved from their sins. This is also shown by Jesus' prayer for His disciples,

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:16,17).

Jesus was not praying for sinners because He was praying for those who were in the world but not of it. However, He did include Christians of today:

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20,21).

If you want to be sanctified, fully surrender your life to the will of God. Consecrate and yield yourself completely to Him and let Him have His way in all your plans, hopes, and desires. Look to God in simple faith, praising and believing Him for sanctification. God will make your heart pure and holy by the cleansing Blood of Jesus. The sinful nature with which you were born will be destroyed.

You will know when you receive the experience of sanctification just as surely as you knew when you were saved. The divine love of God will flood your heart. A deeper peace and rest and joy will come into your soul. The Spirit of God will witness with your spirit that you are sanctified.

After a person is sanctified, it is easier to live a joyous, victorious Christian life because the inherited sin nature is no longer inside. Temptation and trials will continue to come, but the inward tendency toward sin will be gone.

Humanity versus Carnality

However, even though a sanctified person has a heart that is perfect toward God, he is not perfect in the same way that God is perfect. He still is human and makes mistakes. He can misjudge a situation and be very much in error. But his motives are right. In his heart he craves to do the will of God, and to do right toward all men.

After receiving the experience of sanctification, a person must continue applying God's Word to his heart. Study of the Bible, daily opportunities to learn God's will,

and His corrections teach a person how to follow His ways more perfectly.

Do you want to have this experience of sanctification? Do you want to live a holy life? You can. If you are saved, and not sanctified, pray to be sanctified. The moment you make a complete surrender to God and believe His Word of promise, the Lord will sanctify you. Then you will be ready to seek for and receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the endowment of power for service.

“Sanctification” (In Depth)

[by Florence Crawford], founder of the Apostolic Faith Church and Knapp’s **Colleague**

A Second Work of Grace

Sanctification is a second, instantaneous, and definite work of grace, subsequent to salvation, which is accomplished in the believer through the shed Blood of Jesus Christ.

The word sanctify, along with the words translated saint, holy, and hallowed, is derived from the Greek word hagios, which means “holy.” For this reason, the experience of sanctification is also sometimes referred to as “holiness.” The verb sanctify has three basic meanings: “to make holy or purify,” “to consecrate or to separate from ungodliness and dedicate to God,” and finally, “to hallow.” A study of these words reveals that sanctification is the purification of the heart of a person—a dedication to God and an eradication of the sin nature. A holy and sanctified person, then, is one who has been consecrated or set apart to serve God and is cleansed from his old sin nature.

Origin of the doctrine of sanctification

The teaching of sanctification did not begin in the Apostolic Faith Church. When Florence Crawford, this church’s founder, walked into meetings being held on Azusa Street in Los Angeles in 1906, the people there taught her about the experience of sanctification. They had learned it from those who taught them. John Wesley is credited with reviving the teaching of sanctification, but the experience did not begin with him either. It began with God! Sanctification is a Bible doctrine.

Sanctification in the Old Testament

In Old Testament times, God pointed His people to sanctification. We read in Leviticus 20:7, "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God."

The merit of the atonement provided by Jesus' death was foreshadowed by the Levitical offerings (Hebrews 13:11-12). The Old Testament Tabernacle is sometimes used as an illustration of the three foundational Christian experiences: salvation, sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. An Israelite's sins were forgiven when he brought his trespass offering to the priest who offered it upon the brazen altar, located in the Tabernacle courtyard (Leviticus 6:1-7). When the offering for sin was presented, no mention was made of actual trespasses (Leviticus 9:3,15). This offering typified heart cleansing.

When a trespass offering had been offered upon the altar, the priest would then perform a ceremonial washing, typifying the ordinance of water baptism, at a laver that was also located in the courtyard. Following the washing, the priest would enter the first of the two rooms that made up the Tabernacle, called the Holy Place. Representing the experience of sanctification, the Holy Place contained a table with shewbread on it, which typified the Word of God. The golden candlestick, also in the Holy Place, represented the light that God sheds into a Christian's life. The third item in the Holy Place was the golden altar. On it was a continual offering of special incense, and the fire that started its burning was sent by God himself. The burning incense represented the prayers that come out of a sanctified heart.

Next to the Holy Place, but separated from it by a veil, was the Holy of Holies, which represented the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Shekinah glory of God, a physical manifestation of His presence, dwelt in this room. Only the High Priest could enter this room once a year, on the Day of Atonement. When Jesus was crucified, the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies was torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51), and sanctified Christians now have direct access to the fullness of the Spirit of God in their lives. The steps symbolized by the Tabernacle illustration must still be followed today. The experience of salvation should be followed by water baptism as soon as possible, and a Christian can only receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit after being entirely sanctified.

Sanctification in the New Testament

In the New Testament era, we find that the experience of sanctification was taught to the Early Church. Paul was concerned that the believers in Thessalonica be sanctified.

Reading through the Book of 1 Thessalonians, it is clear that these believers had a good start, but they needed something more. Paul said that he sent Timothy, “our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith” (1 Thessalonians 3:2). In verse 10, he says, “Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.” The lack in their spiritual lives would be supplied by the experience of sanctification.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, we read, “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. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” Here, Paul the Apostle states very clearly, almost as a prayer, his desire for the believers at Thessalonica to receive this experience.

The characteristics of sanctification

When a person prays through to salvation, he receives the assurance that his sins have been forgiven, and the Lord will not hold them against him any longer. He has been pardoned—absolved from the wrongdoings in his past. Still, there remains in him that carnal nature from which those deeds sprang in the first place. That is why sanctification is needed. Salvation deals with the acts and guilt of committed sins, while sanctification deals with the nature of sin, the inward tendency inherited from Adam.

It is important to understand that when the Bible mentions “sins” plural, it is referring to committed sins. “Sin” singular usually references the Adamic nature. John addresses the two-fold sin problem and offers the two-fold remedy in 1 John 1:7-9 where he says, “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin [singular, the sin nature]. If we say that we have no sin [if we say we were not born with an Adamic or sin nature], we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, [plural, committed sins] he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [salvation], and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness [sanctification].” Forgiveness is offered for actual committed sins, while cleansing is offered for the Adamic nature.

In Paul’s instruction to the believers at Thessalonica, he spoke of his desire that the “God of peace sanctify you wholly” (1 Thessalonians 5:23). The meaning of the word wholly is “entirely,” and that is the reason the experience of sanctification is

sometimes referred to as “entire” sanctification. In fact, this verse could accurately be read, “the very God of peace sanctify you complete to the end,” “the very God of peace sanctify you through and through,” “all in all,” or “in every part.” There is no implication that God would sanctify them “by and by,” or “part way and more as you go along.” The experience of sanctification is complete.

Even though the word “wholly” is very expressive, Paul continues, “I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” If God sanctifies the whole spirit, soul, and body, is anything left? No, it is entire sanctification. It is complete. In verse 24, Paul added, “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” Will do what? He will sanctify a person wholly and preserve him blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Clearly, the thought here is that a Christian receives something definite, and receives it before the Lord Jesus Christ returns.

In many New Testament references to sanctification and holiness, the definite nature of sanctification is evidenced in the original Greek text by the aorist tense of the verb, which indicates a specific and completed act, rather than an ongoing one. Though spiritual growth continues throughout a Christian’s life, the cleansing work of sanctification is not a gradual process; it is accomplished in an instant. In every phase of his life, a sanctified Christian continues to learn to apply what he has received. Christian growth begins when a person prays through and is saved, and it should continue until that person steps into Heaven.

Holiness is more than morality. Morality is limited because people use differing standards to define what is moral and what is immoral. In contrast, holiness is defined by God’s Word and is imparted through sanctification. Holiness is a state of the heart that is commanded, and it is what every Christian needs (Hebrews 12:14). Sanctification provides it; there is no other way to be holy.

Why sanctification is necessary

Genesis 1:26 indicates that man was made in the image of God in the sense that he has an immortal soul. Human beings also bear the image of God in the sense that they are moral creatures. People can experience a sense of guilt or remorse. They can feel joy. They have the power of reasoning and choice—they have the moral capacity to choose to do right or to do wrong.

Though Adam and Eve were created with a pure bias or inclination, they chose to do wrong, and by that choice plunged all of humanity into a depraved condition. Genesis 5:3 says, "And Adam . . . begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." The first child born into this world was in Adam's image, not God's image. After the fall, mankind inherited Adam's depraved nature, and every person born into this world has an unholy inclination. Everyone begins with that as a moral basis.

One of the clear lessons in the first chapter of Genesis is that like produces like. Repeatedly the Bible states that each living plant and creature reproduced after its kind. That is true of fallen man too. All people inherited their moral nature from Adam—his sinful nature. That is why two sanctified people do not produce a sanctified child. Their offspring is a fallen child with a depraved nature who needs to be saved and later sanctified. John 3:6 says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." All people need to be born of the Spirit—to have their hearts regenerated and their past sins forgiven. Then they are ready to have their hearts cleansed and made holy through the sanctifying power of Jesus' Blood.

The Bible makes it very clear that, in addition to being born with a sinful nature, every individual also eventually chooses sin. Selfishness is part of a child's nature long before he develops an ability to reason. Then, when reason is developed, he continues in the same direction and makes the same choice Adam made.

It is possible to trace a "behavior trail." Mark 7:21-23 says, "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man." Following the behavior trail back to its source does not lead to the mind, although the mind may have determined how a wicked deed would be carried out. The behavior trail does not lead to the hand, though the hand may have committed the deed. The behavior trail will always lead to the heart where the plan was conceived. It is the heart of man that has the problem. God's remedy for sin goes to the heart of man and solves the heart problem. When the heart problem is solved, the behavior problem is solved.

God has provided a way to deal with the heart problem. The Bible repeatedly instructs about the need for cleansing, purging, and purifying. It says that the old nature, (also referred to as "the old man" and "the body of sin") must be put off. (See Colossians 3:9; Romans 6:6.) These are references to the necessity in the believer's life for the experience of sanctification.

What sanctification accomplishes

What does sanctification do in a life? When a person has been sanctified, the old man, the carnal nature, no longer dominates him because it has been eradicated. Sometimes the phrase “Christian perfection” is used, referring to the standard of life imparted to the sanctified believer. In Hebrews 13:20-21, we read, “Now the God of peace . . . make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.” Sanctification provides a perfect heart—a state of living where a person loves the Lord with all of his heart, soul, mind, and strength; where every deed is motivated by his devotion to God. It provides restoration of the pure nature that mankind enjoyed before the fall. The sanctified heart continually seeks after God and His will. Sanctified individuals cultivate purity in spirit, soul, and body, and they turn away from anything that would contaminate any part of their beings.

It is important to know what sanctification does, but it is also helpful to know what it does not do. Sanctification does not raise a person’s IQ. A diminished intellect was the result of the fall, but the provision for restoration does not deal with man’s head; it deals solely with the heart. So a person must not become discouraged and conclude he is not sanctified just because he does not perfectly understand something.

Sanctification does not deal with physical man, even though physical limitations were the result of the fall.

People are not mentally, physically, or emotionally perfect as a result of sanctification; they are morally perfect. Sanctification deals with man’s moral nature and his need for moral restoration. That is why sanctified individuals continue to face physical, mental, and even emotional limitations that were a result of the fall. It is important for a person not to search his head or his mind when going through a trial or a challenge, but rather to search his heart. If the motivating and underlying theme of his life is to love the Lord with all of his heart, soul, mind, and strength (Luke 10:27), God put that purpose there when He sanctified him.

Sanctification does not eliminate the possibility of being tempted. Look back again to Adam, who was created in a pure, moral state, but still was subject to temptation. Adam had the power to overrule what he knew was right in his heart; he did so and chose to do evil. The sanctified person, with that pure, moral condition, can still

choose to overrule what he knows is right, and fall back into sin, but it is certainly not necessary.

Heart purity, obtained at sanctification, establishes an intense desire to correct personal shortcomings. The proof of sanctification is that when a person sees some shortcoming in his life, rather than resisting the reminder or check of the Lord, the first and heartfelt response is to immediately go to his knees and say, "God, help me to do better next time, because I love You with all my heart, and I want to please You in every way." That deeply rooted desire to please the Lord describes sanctification.

This is not to excuse behavior that springs from a carnal nature. God knows the difference. Sin is an act of deliberate enmity and rebellion toward God, and it is dangerous to call any and every behavior just a "mistake." Rather than spending too much time trying to tag it, a person should quickly come before God, acknowledging his shortcomings and asking for His "grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). God will help. There is victory in the Gospel!

Sanctification gives the proper channel

In 1 Thessalonians 4:3, it says, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." God created the human family with certain natural appetites and desires—put there by God to serve a purpose. In Adam and Eve's case, there was nothing wrong with desiring pleasant food. There was nothing wrong with desiring to be wise. God gave them those desires. Paul's reference to fornication addresses the desire planted by God whereby the human family would be propagated. No matter what human behavior is considered, a person needs to be sanctified in order for that desire to be properly channeled.

With sanctification, God puts within a Christian's heart the "want to," the proper desire. When Paul says, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication," he is not just saying that a person needs sanctification, but he is telling why it is needed. Sanctification is needed so that this desire—and all others—are directed according to God's law of love.

Left to themselves, natural appetites and desires can run rampant through people's lives. Even a cursory look at society reveals the results of the fallen nature: God-given appetites and desires have been completely unrestrained in many cases.

Man needs to be forgiven for past sins and then he needs to be sanctified so his life can be lived according to the way God intended man to live. When a person is sanctified, it is not hard to live a holy life. It is spontaneous!

Paul wrote to the Thessalonian believers, expressing his desire that their “whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Preservation is a function that sanctification accomplishes. To preserve is “to keep in perfect or unaltered condition, to maintain intact, prevent from decaying or spoiling.” So the prayer is for the God of peace to sanctify wholly and to keep a person in that blameless condition unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. That experience is the preservation: God keeps the heart without moral fault. The core of the teaching of sanctification is that it gets to the heart and addresses the heart’s needs.

How to receive sanctification

The way in which a person approaches God for sanctification is different from how he approaches Him for salvation. When a person comes to God for salvation, he comes knowing that he is a sinner. There are sinful deeds in his life that separate him from God, and he feels remorseful about them, so he comes to God in repentance and asks for mercy and forgiveness. The Lord floods his heart with peace and gives him a completely new life.

When that individual comes to God to be sanctified, he does not come with repentance for committed sins. Instead, he comes with a recognition of needing something more—a deliverance from the inbred sin nature. He hungers for the ability to fully conform to the image and nature of Christ, so he comes consecrating, presenting his life in total submission as a living sacrifice to God. That is his part—to yield or separate himself to God. As he looks to God in simple faith, believing Him for this experience, God will do His part by purifying the Christian’s heart and making it holy.

A person knows when he has received the experience of sanctification, just as surely as he knew when he was saved, even if he does not know what to call it at the time. The divine love of God floods his heart. The bias or inclination to sin is gone, and a deeper peace, rest, and joy comes into his soul. The Spirit of God witnesses with his spirit that his heart has been cleansed.

The results of sanctification

There is joy in the sanctified heart. Acts 16:25 says, "At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them." Paul and Silas had been arrested, beaten, and put in stocks. At first glance, one might wonder, How could they sing in that condition? Yet, a little closer look at the sanctified heart might prompt the question, How could they not sing? That is what a sanctified heart does! It just happens. What do birds do? They chirp. What do stars do? They shine. The sanctified heart sings; that is its natural behavior. If a person is sanctified, the song is there, even though it may be deep inside when trials are great.

When a person with a sanctified heart gets down to pray, there is a praise to the Lord that wells up in his heart. What will happen when a heart comes before God in that manner? The Holy Ghost can be expected to descend upon that pure vessel and fill it with His Spirit. That is what happened in the Early Church when they were all "with one accord in one place" (Acts 2:1). God's Spirit came down and filled those believers with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, because that is what the Holy Ghost does. People can expect the same today. The Holy Ghost comes down on a pure sanctified life and endues that one with power from on high and sends him on his way to win souls for Jesus.

Sanctification provides unity, a oneness among God's people. In John 17, Jesus prayed that his followers might be sanctified, that they might be one as He was one with His Heavenly Father. That prayer was definitely answered, for before the Day of Pentecost they "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14). When people are sanctified, they are one in their desires for the furtherance of the Gospel. They will be in it together, pulling with the same goal in view. That is what a group of sanctified people does! While there still will be individual preferences and perspectives, it will not be a tug-of-war. Between sanctified individuals, unity and harmony will prevail.

Ephesians 5:25-27 uses an illustration to describe the purpose of sanctification. It says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." The purpose of sanctification is to make the Church what it ought to be in the sight of God. Sanctification is not for unbelievers. Sanctification is for those who have been saved; those who know their sins have been forgiven. They will be part of the

“glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing,” but “holy and without blemish.”

After sanctification, the sanctified state is maintained through the same consecration by which it was obtained. A person abides in Christ, and allows Him to abide within. He lives according to the way God would have him live. He is more sensitive to the checks of the Holy Spirit. He is more careful than he was before. He is more open to the prompting of the Spirit of the Lord.

For Believers Today

If you have been born again, sanctification is an experience that is for you today. It is required for all Christians, for God has commanded, “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). Consecrate your all to Him, and pray until the experience is yours. What a wonderful difference it will make in your life!

“The Baptism of the Holy Ghost”

[by Florence Crawford], founder of the Apostolic Faith Church and Knapp’s **Colleague**

The Apostolic Faith Church is conservative in nature, following a tradition of Wesleyan holiness taught and practiced by those whom the Holy Spirit descended on at the Azusa Street Revival.

Have you ever wished your efforts for God could be more effective? Have you longed to be a powerful witness of the Gospel, always ready to enlighten others with the Word of God? The Lord has promised the baptism of the Holy Ghost so that the Holy Spirit can be a part of you and assist in these needs.

Power for service

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the experience of the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, coming into a person’s life to give power for God’s service.

A measure of the Holy Spirit is given at every step a person makes toward God. It is the Holy Spirit who convinces men of sin, drawing them to repentance. The Holy Spirit witnesses to a person’s salvation, letting him know he is a child of God. The Holy Spirit shows the need for more of God and draws the converted person to

sanctification, the experience that purifies the heart. But it is in receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost that the Holy Spirit comes to live in the sanctified heart.

The primary purpose of this experience is to give Christians power. Jesus told His disciples, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:8). Jesus commanded them to wait in Jerusalem until they received this promised gift. One hundred twenty of the disciples obeyed and were baptized on the Day of Pentecost. The results of this experience were manifested in the lives of the disciples. They were bold to preach the Gospel, and thousands were converted.

The Holy Ghost as a comforter

Jesus also promised that the Holy Ghost would be a comforter (John 14:16), that He would guide into truth (John 16:13), and that He would bring to remembrance Jesus' words (John 14:26).

The baptism of the Holy Ghost was spoken of by Joel the Prophet: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28,29).

John the Baptist prophesied that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost. He said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Matthew 3:11).

The witness of the infilling

When the Holy Ghost is given, the witness is that the person speaks in a language unknown to him. On the Day of Pentecost, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). Those from other nations who heard them said, "We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:11).

In the years after Pentecost, the gift of the Holy Ghost continued. This gift was given about eight years later in Caesarea (Acts 10), and after twenty-three years in Ephesus

(Acts 19:6). All received the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in other tongues.

Since then, many people have received the experience of the baptism of the Holy Ghost with this same witness of speaking in a language unknown to them. The gift, however, is not the speaking in tongues, but the infilling of the Holy Ghost, of which speaking in tongues is the God-given evidence.

God baptizes today with the Holy Ghost just as He did on the Day of Pentecost. Peter said, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

Essential steps in receiving

In order to be filled with the Holy Ghost, essential steps must be taken. A person must first be born again, justified by faith. A second step, sanctification, occurs when the saved person goes deeper in consecration and God purges the heart. Then the heart is ready for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Although the disciples had been definitely promised the gift of the Holy Ghost, they had to wait and pray ten days before the power was given to them. Prayer and consecration are still necessary to receive this gift. God requires a complete submission of soul, mind, body, and spirit. He wants to control every thought and plan. Sometimes it takes fervent prayer to let Him completely direct every area of life. However, God has the experience of the baptism of the Holy Ghost for every person who will meet His requirements. He is no respecter of persons.

A necessity, not an option

It was not optional with the disciples whether or not to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus commanded them to wait for the promised power. And the baptism of the Holy Ghost is not an option today either. This experience is a necessity for every person who wants his life to be used and blessed by God.

If you have been saved and sanctified, seek for the baptism of the Holy Ghost. God will give it to you, and then out of you will "flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38). The thrill of the Third Person of the Trinity living in your heart cannot be explained. But He is worth seeking for until He is received.

“The Baptism of the Holy Ghost” (In Depth)
by [by Florence Crawford], founder of the Apostolic Faith Church

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the experience of the Holy Spirit coming into a person's life to give power for God's service. Thus, a study of this experience must begin with an exploration of the Person and nature of the Holy Spirit.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The terms Holy Ghost and Holy Spirit are interchangeable in Scripture: they are both translated from the same Greek word in the original texts. The Holy Ghost is not an abstract identity or a remote influence, but a distinct personality of the Godhead. He is God Himself, part of the Trinity that is comprised of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. He has personality and all the attributes of Deity.

The Holy Spirit was present at Creation. In Genesis 1:2 we read, “The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” From Creation and on through the Bible, we see evidence of Him, but in the New Testament, we find a fuller revelation of the workings of the Holy Spirit.

Every believer is influenced by the Spirit of God. It is the Holy Spirit who regenerates the heart of man (John 3:3-5; Titus 3:5). The Holy Spirit sanctifies the believer (Romans 15:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11). However, the filling of the Spirit, or the baptism of the Holy Ghost, is an experience beyond regeneration (salvation) and sanctification.

Although the baptism of the Holy Spirit was typified in the Old Testament, and alluded to by Old Testament prophets, it was not until after the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus that the Holy Ghost was poured out upon believers. When Jesus completed His work on earth and returned to the Father, the Holy Spirit came as the promised Comforter.

What is the baptism of the Holy Ghost?

There is much to be heard and read today about the baptism of the Holy Ghost. There are various theological understandings and opinions. Some say that this experience was only for the Early Church and not for believers today. Others teach that a person receives all God has for him at the point of conversion. Some think that the baptism is about speaking in tongues. However, we must base our beliefs on

Scripture. What does the Bible have to say about the baptism of the Holy Ghost?

John the Baptist prophesied that Jesus, the One of whom he spoke, would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. In Matthew 3:11, we read: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." The word that is translated baptism means "to be immersed; to be totally covered" and can be understood by looking at the physical demonstration of water baptism. When we come to be baptized in water after we have been saved, we go down into the water and the water completely covers us. We are immersed, totally under the water. When we receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, we are totally immersed and covered and filled with the Holy Ghost.

Jesus also used the word baptism in connection with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. He explained to His disciples that just as John had baptized with water, they would be baptized with the Holy Ghost. The word baptize gave His followers an idea of what they were to expect—that they would be immersed in the Holy Ghost.

Prophecy of the outpouring

Some 800 years before Christ came to earth, the prophet Joel wrote of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. His account prophesies events we have seen fulfilled within the past century. In Joel 2:23,28-29, we read, "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. . . .And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."

Joel may not have fully understood the prophecy that he gave, but God moved upon him and those words were spoken by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to let us know that there would be an outpouring of the Spirit of God. The Former Rain pertained to the outpouring on the Day of Pentecost; the Latter Rain pertains to the outpouring of the Holy Ghost that began in the early 20th century.

The outpouring on the Day of Pentecost

Just before Jesus ascended to Heaven, He told the disciples that the Holy Ghost would come. He instructed them to tarry in Jerusalem until they received the “promise of the Father,” which was the infilling of the Holy Spirit. We read that a group of 120 people gathered in an upper room in the city of Jerusalem, and they prayed. They had gathered in the upper room with one purpose in mind: the Lord had promised He would send power upon them and they were determined to receive it.

Scripture tells us that something happened in that upper room that they had never seen or experienced before—the power of God descended upon them and they were filled with the Holy Ghost. We read, “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:1-4).

God made His presence known to this group of believers in an outstanding way in this initial outpouring of the Holy Ghost. The coming of the Spirit was accompanied by two manifestations: the sound of “a rushing mighty wind,” and the appearance of “cloven tongues like as of fire.” John the Baptist had foretold One who would baptize “with the Holy Ghost, and with fire” (Matthew 3:11, Luke 3:16), and the two physical manifestations made a graphic picture of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The evidence of this amazing event was that those who had been filled began to speak in “other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Those from faraway countries who were in the city for the Day of Pentecost recognized the languages that were spoken and were amazed to hear the believers speaking in languages they had never learned. Peter stood and declared that this was what had been prophesied by the prophet Joel—the Holy Ghost had descended. Peter’s sermon that day resulted in the salvation of three thousand souls. The Holy Ghost, or Pentecostal, dispensation began then and continues until now. In fact, this event marked the birth of the Church.

Other recipients recorded in Scripture

In the years following the Day of Pentecost, the gift of the Holy Ghost continued to be poured out upon believers. Scripture records some of those instances. The Holy Ghost was given about eight years later to Gentiles in the household of Cornelius. Those

with Peter immediately recognized that the believers gathered at the house of this Roman centurion had received the gift of the Holy Ghost, for they “heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God” (Acts 10:46). In Acts 19:6, we read of the Holy Ghost falling on a group of believers at Ephesus, and when that occurred, “they spake with tongues, and prophesied.” All received the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in other tongues—a previously unlearned, distinguishable language.

Pentecostal outpouring on Azusa Street

In periods prior to the 20th century, God poured out His Spirit on individuals here and there. However, those were only “sprinklings” of the “latter rain” prophesied by Joel. In April of 1906, a small group of people from several Christian organizations arranged for prayer meetings in a home located on Bonnie Brae Street in Los Angeles, California. Their purpose was to seek for the infilling of the Holy Ghost, having heard of this experience being received by believers in the Midwest. These people were born-again Christians, subsequently sanctified, and all in one accord, as were those in the upper room on the Day of Pentecost.

Upon this group on Bonnie Brae Street, God poured out His Spirit and baptized them with the Holy Ghost. They experienced the same outward evidence of having received the baptism as did the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, and spoke in other languages “as the Spirit gave them utterance.” When a number received this experience, the word spread, and shortly the meetings were transferred to larger quarters on Azusa Street.

As time went on, the power of the Holy Spirit continued to fall, and thousands received the baptism. People flocked from the four corners of the earth to kindle their torches, and went forth to spread the flame, which began to set fire to the world. Those attending the services compiled the accounts of the meetings into a paper called *The Apostolic Faith*, and the headlines of the first edition blazed out the news, “Pentecost Has Come.” It proclaimed that “many [are] being converted and sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues as they did on the day of Pentecost.”

What are the qualifications?

In order to be filled with the Holy Ghost, essential steps must be taken. A person must first be born again, justified by faith. Scripture is clear that the Holy Ghost is

not given to the unconverted. We read in 1 Corinthians 2:14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

A second step, entire sanctification, occurs when the saved person goes deeper in consecration and God purges the heart. Believers are not only forgiven for committed acts of sin, but they also need to be delivered from the inherited nature of sin through entire sanctification. The old sinful nature must be crucified so that the new nature of Christ can be fully expressed (Romans 8:2). Then the heart is ready for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The 120 who gathered in the upper room at the time of the initial outpouring were saved individuals; they were the close followers of Christ, and were obviously committed to following His instructions. They had gathered in the upper room and had continued in prayer and supplication. When the Day of Pentecost came, ten days after Jesus' ascension, they were all "with one accord, in one place." Jesus had prayed for them to experience the unity described by that phrase. In John 17:9, we read His words, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." This prayer was not for the lost but for those who were already His followers, and He prayed for God to sanctify them (John 17:17). When the Holy Ghost fell upon them, they were in one accord—evidence that they had been sanctified.

Salvation and sanctification accomplish the forgiveness of sins and the removal of the sin nature. Then the condemnation for committed sins and the nature of sin are gone, and the heart is a suitable dwelling place for the Holy Ghost. The God who wants to live within us is a Holy God. The place where He dwells must be a holy place. So we must get the sin taken care of and the heart cleansed. When the habitation is made holy, we are ready to receive the infilling of the Spirit of God.

Pentecostal leaders at the turn of the 20th century were firm advocates of salvation and of sanctification as a second work of grace. These included William Seymour, the leader at the Azusa Street revival; Charles Parham, Seymour's teacher; and Florence Crawford, one of the key early Azusa Street workers. They understood and taught that the baptism of the Holy Ghost, with the evidence of speaking in tongues, was an experience for those who had been saved and subsequently sanctified. The controversy over whether it was necessary to be sanctified prior to receiving the Holy Ghost began when W. H. Durham, who had visited Azusa and had initially embraced the teachings, preached at a Chicago Pentecostal convention in 1910 and sought to

nullify the experience of sanctification as a second definite work of grace, calling his new doctrine "the Finished Work." This was a departure from what Parham, Seymour, and Florence Crawford taught when the movement began. The Azusa leaders denounced Durham's doctrine, saying that it made an opening for "spiritualistic counterfeits" of the genuine Pentecostal experience. They held that the Bible clearly teaches that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is for those who have been truly converted, sanctified wholly, and are living a victorious life without sin.

Receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit

How do we receive this experience? The answer is not complicated: it comes through prayer and consecration. When the heart and life is pure before God, the believer should then ask God for the baptism of the Holy Ghost. It is God's desire and intention to bestow this gift on hearts that are prepared to receive it. In Luke 11:9-10 we read, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." The writer goes on to describe how earthly fathers give to their children, and then asks, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13).

Although many consecrations were made when we sought for sanctification, there may yet be something that God is drawing out of our lives when we seek for the Spirit's infilling. God requires a further submission of soul, mind, body, and spirit. He wants to control every thought and plan, and sometimes it takes fervent prayer to let Him completely direct every area of life. Obedience goes hand in hand with submission: Peter proclaimed that the Holy Ghost is given to those who are obedient (Acts 5:32).

We cannot improve on the way the 120 received the baptism on the Day of Pentecost. They prayed and prayed with one purpose in mind, and that was to do what Jesus had said for them to do. You, too, must set yourself to one purpose and pray until you receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Faith is vital in obtaining this experience, just as it is in receiving salvation and sanctification. When a sanctified believer comes to God and asks for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, he must then believe that God's promise is true and reach out in faith to accept the promised gift. Since it is clear that this gift is available (Acts 2:39), and indeed, that we are commanded to receive Him (Ephesians 5:18), faith must

simply rest on these promises and commands, and step forward to claim the blessing.

The Holy Ghost is a gift, but a gift must be received. As we seek God for the Holy Ghost, we do not have to beg God. He wants to give this experience to us! That fact is an assurance that should bring great praise and rejoicing, and praise opens up a channel directly into the very presence of God. Many have testified that it was when they forgot all about themselves and simply rejoiced and praised God that the witness came.

The evidence of the Holy Spirit

Speaking with other tongues is the external evidence that was chosen as a sign that the Holy Ghost has descended. That evidence is uniform and consistent among all Spirit-filled Christians in all cultures and languages. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is not about tongues, but the Scriptural evidence of receiving the baptism is that the recipient speaks in another unlearned language.

The expression, "speaking in tongues," comes from a compound Greek word from glossa (tongue) and lalia (speaking). It refers to a language uttered by the human tongue, but through the power of the Holy Spirit. The language spoken through the anointing of the Holy Spirit will not be gibberish, but a definite language. When the power fell on the Early Church at Pentecost, their hearers "were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language" (Acts 2:6).

We do not need to be overly concerned with how we will speak in tongues. Any true manifestation of the Spirit of God will be accomplished in a manner that will glorify God. The gift of the Holy Ghost is what is being received, and when He comes, He will speak through our voices. As we yield ourselves to Him and allow Him complete freedom to do or say what He wills, He will take control. Our spirit will be enraptured by His presence, and we will glorify Him. The evidence of infilling may be just a few words or many hours of words. God knows and He will send the evidence in a manner that we will know. The presence of His Holy Spirit is unmistakable!

The purpose of the baptism

Scripture clearly indicates the purpose for the Holy Ghost being given. Acts 1:8 tells us, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and

unto the uttermost part of the earth.” That power was not provided for the disciples’ personal glorification, but for the benefit of others. It would enable them to be witnesses for Christ throughout all the world—to testify of Jesus’ resurrection.

These 120 had been with the Lord since His crucifixion, and thus they were eyewitnesses to the fact that He had risen from the dead. The Great Commission instructed them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. The known world at that point in history was not as big as it is now, but the disciples did not have the means of transportation we have today. When they heard the instruction to go into the entire world, they no doubt felt much the same as we would today: How are we going to do that? How are we going to let the whole world know that Jesus is alive?

The infilling of the Holy Ghost was what met that need. Power from the Spirit of God provided courage, boldness, confidence, insight, ability, and authority. The disciples needed all these to fulfill their commission from God.

We have the same need today, and the same provision is available. People are still receiving power in their lives through the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and it is still power for service. The one who receives the Holy Ghost will have anointing and ability to witness or testify of Christ.

The commission He gave to the disciples is the same commission given to us today. We have a responsibility to tell the world that we know Jesus has risen from the dead, that He has changed our lives, and that we have had an encounter with Him. The experience we have with Him is not to be kept to ourselves. The command is to be witnesses of what we have experienced and seen. We will need help from Heaven, so the Lord has promised to send the power we need—the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The Divine influence of the Holy Spirit

The word that is translated Comforter is Parakleetos, which means “Helper” or “Companion.” When the Spirit of God fills a person with His fullness, He is present within to accomplish His ministry of enlightening, guiding, empowering, anointing, and teaching.

When we have been baptized with the Holy Ghost, He guides us into all truth. There will be times when we need to know what the truth of God’s Word is, or what God’s

will is in our lives. The Holy Ghost will lead us into an understanding. There will be times when we need divine help to accomplish a task for the Lord. We know our own ability is insufficient. In looking at the original meaning of the word power, we find it could have been translated "ability." We will receive ability, abundance, might, and strength when we are filled with the Holy Ghost.

Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would abide in us. As soon as we begin our Christian walk, He is with us all along the way, but after we are baptized with the Holy Ghost, He will be within us.

The Holy Spirit will bring all things to our remembrance, "whatsoever I have said unto you." Perhaps we find ourselves conversing with someone and feel that we should speak a word for God. We may think, I really do not know what is going on inside this person. How can I say the right thing? In such a time, the Spirit of God will direct us and will provide the words for us to speak. He will do a better job of this than we could ever do, even if we gave it much consideration ahead of time. He alone knows the thoughts and intents of the heart! As we simply live for the Lord, the Spirit of God will provide opportunities and help us to be clear and effective witnesses of what we know is the truth.

The Holy Spirit gives life, energy, help, and hope. He will also give us boldness. The religious leaders in the time of the Apostles marveled at the speaking of Peter, John, and the others, because they had not been formally trained in the manner that the religious leaders had been trained. They called Peter and John "unlearned and ignorant men," but Peter and John had been taught by the Spirit of God and spoke with evident authority. They were told to not preach in the name of Jesus anymore, but they were true to the commission Jesus had left them and went right on proclaiming the truth. They obeyed God rather than man.

For believers today

God baptizes today with the Holy Ghost just as He did in the time of the Early Church. In Acts 2:39, we find Peter's words after he has received this experience: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." If you are saved and sanctified today, the baptism of the Holy Ghost is for you. There are no exceptions! God is not selective in His promise. He did not say that some could have it but that others could not. God has this experience for everyone who meets His requirements.

Notice that it was not optional with the disciples whether or not to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Jesus commanded them to wait for the promised power. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is not an option today either. This experience is a necessity for every person who wants his life to be used and blessed by God.

We thank God for those who continue to pray through and receive this experience in our day. If you have not received it, you can. Are you saved? Are you sanctified? If so, the Lord wants to fill you with the Holy Ghost. He wants to put something within you that will charge you. He wants to enable you to live a life revolving around being a witness of the resurrection of Jesus. He wants to give you boldness and authority. He wants to empower you to promote the Gospel that tells men and women they can be saved, that they can know it, and that it can change their lives.

Seek and receive this experience in your life!

“Divine Healing”

[by Florence Crawford]

We serve a miracle-working God, and we can thank God that His healing power still works today!

Does God still heal the sick? If you have ever walked through the valley of affliction, or have watched a loved one suffer in the grip of some painful or debilitating disease, you know the vital importance of the answer to this question.

In the Old Testament, we read of many instances when God performed miracles of healing. King Hezekiah was on his deathbed, but when he cried out to the Lord, God added fifteen years to his life. Naaman was healed of leprosy when he obeyed the instructions of God’s prophet, Elisha. God healed Job of terrible boils when he prayed for his friends.

When Jesus lived on earth, multitudes came to Him and were healed of all kinds of diseases and afflictions. He healed Peter’s mother-in-law of a fever. He healed the man, sick with palsy, who was let down through the roof. He cleansed the lepers, restored sight to the blind, and cast out devils. We read in Matthew 12:15 that “great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all.” Does God’s healing power still work

today, or are these just Bible stories which happened thousands of years ago?

Thank God, we can be assured that the day of miracles is not past! In Hebrews 13:8, we read that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. His healing power is never exhausted. He made our bodies, and He is well able to mend and restore them. No form of illness or disease exists that He cannot heal. The most progressive methods of man may fail: the most notable achievements in the medical field still leave countless unanswered questions. Yet, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God" (Luke 18:27).

Purchased with His stripes

Disease, pain, and death entered the world when Adam and Eve sinned. However, with the curse that followed sin, God gave a promise of deliverance to mankind. Isaiah said, "With his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5), looking hundreds of years ahead to the day when this promise was fulfilled in Jesus' death on the Cross. With His blood Jesus paid the price, not only for our salvation and spiritual healing, but also for our physical healing. We read in Matthew 8:16,17, "When the even was come, they brought unto him [Jesus] many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

Jesus purchased our healing at an infinite cost. When we think of the terrible agony He suffered, we recognize how unworthy we are to receive healing from Him. However, the multitudes Jesus touched when He walked on this earth were not healed because they deserved it. They were healed because Jesus looked on them with love and compassion, and that is how He regards His children today. We read in 2 Chronicles 16:9, "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." The poorest and weakest among us may trust in the love of God and look to Him for healing.

Prayer for the sick

God's Word gives clear instructions regarding what to do when we are afflicted. In the Book of James we read, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray." We have the blessed privilege of taking our physical needs to God in prayer, knowing that He

hears and answers any heartcry that reaches out to Him in faith. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" (James 5:13-15). Prayer over the sick should be accompanied by faith, both in the person praying and in the person being prayed for. When it is, God answers!

God wants each of us to walk in close communion with Him so He can pour His blessings upon our lives—including the blessing of healing. As we approach Him, we need to make sure that our spiritual lives are in a condition where our faith in God can take hold. We must be assured that no sin or lack of surrender to God exists in our lives. We cannot come to God demanding or hoping to earn self-shaped answers to our request by our great faith. Rather, we come basing our request upon the words Jesus expressed in His prayer, "Thy will be done."

There may be times when God answers our prayers for healing with a supernatural act, but there may also be times when the illness or disease is not taken away immediately. God may want us to endure for a time, and this trial of our faith does not have to defeat us. In 1 Peter 1:7 we read, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." If we truly trust in God, then we will offer our praise for whichever answer He sends, because we have confidence that He will choose what is best for us.

Are you afflicted today? Choose to trust in God, and He will not fail you.

"Divine Healing" (In Depth)

[by Florence Crawford]

A blessing for our day.

God is the Great Physician. He is the omnipotent God, the Creator, and His knowledge of the human soul, mind, and body is absolute. He has made provision for every need in the lives of human beings, and this provision includes healing of the physical body.

Sickness not in God's original plan

There was no place for sickness or disease in the original plan of God. After completion of His work during each day of creation, God looked upon what He had done with approval and saw that “it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). The decision of our foreparents to rebel against their Creator brought terrible consequences for everyone: disease, pain, and death entered the world when Adam and Eve sinned. However, with the curse that followed sin, God gave a promise of deliverance.

Healing provided through the atonement

Jesus came to destroy the works of Satan. We read in 1 John 3:8, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” Along with paying the penalty for our sins, Jesus provided for our healing at an infinite cost. The prophet Isaiah describes the sufferings of Christ in great detail, saying, “Surely he hath borne [lifted or taken away] our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted” (Isaiah 53:4). The word translated griefs is the same word used in reference to physical sickness and disease in 2 Chronicles 16:12; 21:15,18-19, and Isaiah 38:9. Sorrows is the same word used in Job 33:19 to denote physical pain. So this verse could be translated, “Surely he hath borne our sicknesses and carried our pain.”

Isaiah continues, “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). The verb healed, meaning “to mend or cure,” has a connotation of being made whole. While the prophet seemingly saw the picture of Christ’s future suffering in such clarity that he spoke of it in the past tense, he indicated that with His stripes we “are healed,” the verb tense reflecting an ongoing or continuing action. Thus, the prophet foretold that with His blood, Jesus would pay the price not only for our salvation and spiritual healing, but also for our physical healing.

In the New Testament, the Apostle Peter quoted from Isaiah’s prophecy. “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Peter 2:24). In stating that Jesus’ stripes brought healing, Peter used the Greek word *iaomai*. In the vast majority of cases throughout the New Testament where this word is used, it indicates physical healing. (The only two exceptions, where the word could possibly be referencing spiritual healing, are Matthew 13:15 and John 12:40, both of which are quoting from Isaiah 6:9-10.)

The Apostle Matthew also quoted from Isaiah's prophecy. We read in Matthew 8:16-17, "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Isaiah had prophesied that the Messiah's stripes would avail for humanity's healing. Matthew simply recorded that Jesus fulfilled this prophecy by physically healing the sick, giving definite proof that both Isaiah and Peter were talking about physical healing. Matthew used two specific words to make clear this truth: infirmities (from the Greek word *astheneias*, meaning the "consequences of sickness") and diseases (from the Greek word *nosous*, meaning "sicknesses").

The fact that Jesus healed people of physical ailments before giving His life on the cross does not negate the fact that healing was provided through the Atonement, as Scripture records that Jesus also forgave sins before His death on the cross. (See Matthew 9:2,6-7; Luke 7:48-50.) Healings that took place prior to Christ's crucifixion foreshadowed the price that would be paid at Calvary, just as healings that take place in our day look back in faith to that event.

Healing in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, we find many references to God's power and willingness to heal. God gave the first recorded promise of divine healing soon after He brought the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt, telling them, "I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26), and this promise was subsequently repeated (see Deuteronomy 7:15; Proverbs 4:20-22).

A number of the types or foreshadowing of Christ in the Old Testament relate to healing and atonement in conjunction with one another. For example, at the time of the Passover, the Israelites were commanded to slay the Passover lamb—the lamb symbolizing the Perfect Sacrifice who would one day come. They were to put its blood on the doorposts, and were promised that the blood of the lamb would save them from death. They were also instructed to eat the body of the lamb, and this would give them strength and health for their flight from Egypt. Psalm 105:37 says that when they came out, "there was not one feeble person among their tribes." The blood of the lamb availed! In 1 Corinthians 5:7, Christ is referred to as the Passover Lamb—pointing to the fact that Jesus' blood purchased our salvation and the stripes He bore on His body purchased our healing.

When the Children of Israel sinned and God sent poisonous snakes among them to punish the people for their unbelief and complaining, a remedy was offered. Moses was commanded to make a bronze serpent and lift it up on a pole so that any Israelite who had been bitten could look upon it and be healed (see Numbers 21:5-9). In John 3:14, Jesus specifically referred to the bronze serpent in the wilderness as a foreshadowing of His crucifixion. Just as the Israelites were healed of their physical sickness when they looked to the serpent suspended above them, humanity can be delivered from the spiritual sickness of sin by looking to Jesus' death on Calvary.

The Old Testament records many miracles of healing and even raising of the dead. For example, a dead child was restored back to life through the prayer of the prophet Elijah (1 Kings 17:22). Naaman the leper received healing when he obeyed the command of Elisha to wash seven times in the Jordan River (2 Kings 5:1-14). God healed King Hezekiah in response to his prayer, and added fifteen years to his life (2 Kings 20:6).

In Psalm 103, the Psalmist David gives praise for the fact that God "healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:3). In other psalms, too, both physical and spiritual healing are referenced as coming from God.

A picture of spiritual healing

Throughout Scripture, physical healing is often used as a picture of spiritual healing. The Psalmist proclaimed, "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds" (Psalm 147:3). The prophet Jeremiah, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, spoke of a day of hope for Israel, promising, "I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds" (Jeremiah 30:17).

As Hosea decried the terrible moral and spiritual decay of God's chosen people, he pled with them to return to God, saying, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up" (Hosea 6:1). In the closing verses of the Old Testament, the prophet Malachi spoke of a day of destruction for the proud and the wicked, but promised that to those who fear God's name, "The Sun of righteousness [shall] arise with healing in his wings" (Malachi 4:2).

Jesus' ministry of healing

When Jesus walked on this earth, He did not minister only to the spiritual needs of the people; a great portion of His ministry involved healing those who were physically afflicted. Miracles of healing were an important part of the works God sent Jesus to do (John 9:3-4). Eye-witness accounts in the New Testament show that Jesus' ministry included both divine healing and the forgiveness of sins.

Jesus' power to heal was, in fact, a proof of His authority to forgive sins—His miracles of healing authenticated His teaching and preaching, showing that He truly was from God. In Mark 2:1-12, we read how four friends brought a palsied man to the Lord. They were so consumed with their mission that they tore apart the roof of the place where Jesus was teaching in order to lower the sick man down in front of the Lord. No doubt the paralyzed man was anticipating that he would be healed. The four friends who brought him would have had that same anticipation. Perhaps they were surprised when the first words out of Jesus' mouth were, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." In fact, this man was paralyzed more than in his body—he was paralyzed in his soul! Jesus spoke to the greater need first.

To the Jewish leaders present, Jesus' words were blasphemy; they knew that only God could forgive sins. However, Jesus' claim to divine authority was true, and He subsequently proved His claim. He said to them, "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house" (Mark 2:8-11). Immediately the paralyzed man stood to his feet, took up his bed, and "went forth before them all."

At other times also, healings helped to identify Jesus as the promised Messiah and Savior. When John the Baptist was imprisoned, he began to experience doubt as to whether Jesus really was the Promised One, and wondered if they should look for another. Jesus responded by calling attention to the "things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised. . . ." (Luke 7:22). He knew that these miracles—observable deeds, not theories—were the very acts that the prophets had said the Messiah would do (see Isaiah 35:5-6; 61:1).

Again and again, references to Jesus' miracles of healing are paralleled by references

to His preaching of the Kingdom of God. For example, we read in Matthew 4:23, “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.” The teaching and preaching aspect of Jesus’ ministry reflected His concern for wholeness of the spiritual man; the healing aspect of His ministry reflected His concern for wholeness of the physical man.

As word spread of Jesus’ ministry, multitudes came from all directions both to hear Him and to be healed. He never turned any away, but undertook for all who came to Him (Matthew 12:15; 14:14). He cleansed the lepers, restored sight to the blind, gave hearing to the deaf, and speech to the mute. He cast out devils, cured fevers, and even raised the dead. No sickness or disease was beyond His ability to cure.

Divine healing available today

The healing ministry of Christ did not end with His earthly life; it is part of His work in the Church today. Jesus himself promised, “And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:17-18). And this has been the case, for many were healed during the days of the Early Church and also since that time, as recorded in the history of the true Church to the present day.

Jesus’ promise at the time of His ascension is closely connected with prayer and asking in Christ’s name (see John 14:12-14; 16:23-24). The disciples, working in the power of the Holy Spirit, were to take the message of the Gospel of God’s Kingdom into the whole world, but it had to be in His name—that is, according to God’s character and His will. Requests made in His name, including those for healing, must be in line with His desires and eternal purpose on earth.

From Genesis to Revelation, God has shown His supernatural power, and His Word states repeatedly that He does not and will not change. We read in Hebrews 13:8 that Jesus Christ is the same “yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” He made our bodies, and He is well able to mend and restore them. No form of illness or disease exists that He cannot heal, for “the things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (Luke 18:27). He is still a God of miracles. His power to heal is still the same today as it was when He walked this earth—it spans all of time, from the dawn of

creation until this very day. Thank God, we can be assured that divine healing is still available today!

Causes of sickness

The Fall of Man resulted in terrible consequences for all humanity—we live in a world where evil impacts the health and welfare of every individual. Adam and Eve's decision not to follow God brought upon mankind the realities of sickness, aging, accidents, and other physical calamities. Intemperate living and sinful lifestyles have also led to human illness in many forms: addictions, diseases, some types of mental and emotional disturbances, stress-related conditions, etc. Because of the Fall, even those who obey and serve God are not immune to sickness, disease, and affliction.

Some theologians suggest that God imposes, or at least permits, sickness and disease as punishment for wrong actions. At times, this may be the case (see Genesis 19:11; Exodus 9:8-11; 2 Kings 5:26-27; Acts 13:10-11). However, there are numerous other reasons given in Scripture for why affliction occurs. There is the normal decline of physical health that occurs in conjunction with old age (see Genesis 48:10 and 2 Samuel 19:35). Job was declared "perfect and upright" in the sight of God, yet God allowed Satan to afflict him tremendously. Job's friends wrongly assumed that suffering always came as a result of sin, and tried to persuade Job to repent. God had a purpose behind Job's suffering that was not related to failure in his personal life.

Sickness may be the result of rigorous duties. Paul's companion in the Gospel, Epaphroditus, was "sick nigh unto death...for the work of Christ." In other words, his illness was not due to any sin in his life, but because the work of the ministry was so demanding (see Philippians 2:25-30).

At times, affliction may be permitted as a means of displaying God's power to observers. When Jesus' disciples saw a man who had been blind from his birth, they asked Him who had sinned, the man or his parents, to cause him to be born blind. Jesus answered, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:3). When word came to Jesus that Lazarus, a beloved friend, was ill, Jesus said that his sickness was not unto death, "but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby" (John 11:4). Another time, through the healing of Aeneas' paralysis, the entire cities of Lydda and Saron turned to the Lord (see Acts 9:34-35).

Affliction allowed for personal spiritual gain

Sometimes God permits affliction to come into the life of a child of God for the purpose of that person's personal spiritual growth or refinement, rather than for the benefit of others. David said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted" (Psalm 119:71). He recognized that he could be strengthened and perfected by going through trials.

Although the Apostle Paul was a man of faith and spiritual power, he had to endure affliction. Some have suggested that Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was intense bodily pain, or a chronic physical problem. Whatever its nature, this thorn was a distress in Paul's life and he prayed three times for its removal. God refused, but He let Paul know that the trial would be accompanied by the enduring grace of God. (See 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.)

Scripture offers many other reasons why suffering may come to a Christian. Some of these include:

To prove God's power to deliver - Psalm 34:19

To bring us back from wandering - Psalm 119:67

To allow us to experience God's comfort - Psalm 119:75-76

To teach us how to comfort others who are afflicted - 2 Corinthians 1:4

For our spiritual refinement - Isaiah 48:10

For our eternal gain - 2 Corinthians 4:17

Requirements for receiving healing

Serving God does not bring an assurance of a trial-free life. Rather, the Gospel promises adversity, challenges, sickness, and affliction, so believers need to know what to do when these events occur. Clearly, when our faith is anchored in the Great Physician, we will turn to Him in prayer.

A study of Jesus' healing ministry reveals some spiritual requirements necessary for receiving physical healing. In most cases, a desire to be healed is expressed, either by the individual himself or by the one bringing that individual to the Lord. In Matthew 20:30-33, we read of two blind men sitting by the wayside who heard that Jesus was passing by. They cried out to Him for mercy. We read, "And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?" When they responded

that they wanted their eyes to be opened, He “had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.” Jesus asked a similar question of blind Bartimaeus (see Mark 10:51). When the Lord approached the lame man by the pool of Bethesda, He asked him, “Wilt thou be made whole?” (John 5:6). When the answer was affirmative, Jesus healed him.

A desire for God’s divine intervention must be accompanied by a belief that God is able to heal. When Jesus was approached by a Roman centurion on behalf of his servant who was “grievously tormented,” He agreed to come and heal the servant. However, the centurion said he was unworthy to have Christ come under his roof, and indicated that if Jesus would just say the word, he knew his servant would be healed. Jesus commended the centurion’s faith, and responded, “Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.” The servant was healed “in the selfsame hour.” (See Matthew 8:5-13.)

We find many other examples of times when faith was a key component of a miraculous healing. The woman with an issue of blood exemplified faith when she pressed through the crowd to touch the hem of Jesus’ garment. His response to her was, “Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole” (Matthew 9:22). He asked two blind men who approached Him for healing, “Believe ye that I am able to do this?” When they responded that they did believe, He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith be it unto you” (Matthew 9:28-29).

Peter and John testified to the efficacy of faith after healing the lame man at the gate of the temple, saying, “And his [Jesus’] name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all” (Acts 3:16).

The Bible makes it clear that from the beginning, faith in God must also be accompanied by a willingness to obey Him. In Exodus 15:26, Moses told the Children of Israel, “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.” The same principle was repeated to God’s people in Deuteronomy 7:12,15.

We find numerous examples in the accounts of Jesus’ ministry when He required people to take an action that would demonstrate their submission to and faith in Him.

For example, a lame man was commanded, “Rise, take up thy bed, and walk” (John 5:8), a blind man was told to wash in the pool of Siloam (John 9:7), and Lazarus was told to “come forth” (John 11:43).

Instructions for the sick

In James 5:13-15, God’s Word gives clear instructions regarding what to do when we are sick. We read, “Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”

James discusses the proper response to affliction (any type of assault from the devil) and to times when the heart is merry. Then he asks the question, “Is any sick among you?” At this point, he is being specific with regard to health issues. Our duty in those times is noted here: we are to “call for the elders of the church.” The Bible puts the burden on the sick person to approach the ministry and request prayer. He takes the first step by indicating his desire to follow God’s Word in this matter.

The question may arise, “How sick should one be before calling the ministry?” We should call sooner rather than later, because doing so is a Bible commandment. We need support when we face illness, and we need not carry this burden alone. We can benefit by obeying this commandment. It is a blessing!

The healing process outlined in these verses specifically involves the “elders”—the ministry, or mature spiritual leaders of the church. The ministers are told to anoint the sick individual with oil. The oil itself carries no supernatural or curative powers, but is used in anointing to symbolize the out-pouring of God’s Spirit. The oil has been consecrated by prayer—ministers prayed over it and asked God to use it for His glory—and that is what is used to anoint the sick.

The anointing is done in the name of the Lord, by the authority of the instructions given in God’s Holy Word. The ministers do not pray for the sick in their own name, spiritual strength, or ability. They want the attention and the glory to go to God, for only God can heal—they simply act in obedience to His Word. They take a bit of that oil on a finger, put it across the sick individual’s forehead, and acknowledge that they pray in the name of the Lord. They place their hands on the head of the sick

individual, and pray a simple prayer asking God to undertake and to heal.

It is a prayer of faith—a prayer of expectation and reliance on God. It is also a prayer of yielding to God. It is implied that when we come for prayer we are asking for God’s will, for faith is based on submission to Him. In our hearts we say, “God, if You will get more glory out of me remaining sick than being healed, I submit to your sovereignty. That is not what I prefer, but Thy will be done.” As the ministers and the sick individual pray together, they look Heaven’s way and submit to God’s will. Thus, the “prayer of faith” is a peaceful assurance that He will do that which is most for His glory and the sick one’s ultimate good.

There may be times when healing does not come because of some spiritual hindrance. Scripture indicates that a lack of faith (James 1:6-7), the need for prayer and fasting (Mark 9:28-29), sin or disobedience in the life (Jeremiah 5:25), or seeking with a wrong motive (James 4:3) can all stand in the way of an answer to prayer. Yet, a lack of instant healing is not necessarily an indication that any of these conditions exist. It may be that instantaneous healing is not the will of God in a particular case.

While we do not know how God will answer in each case, Scripture indicates that extraordinary cures will occur. In James 5:17, we read that Elijah was a “man subject to like passions as we are” and God answered Elijah’s prayer. Thus, while “thy will be done” is implied, it is also implied that God will give uncommon results to common people who pray. God will be glorified by the healing of bodies. James concludes his instructions by saying, “And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” If that person’s heart is reaching God’s way and he confesses his sins, God promises to forgive.

Medical care a personal choice

In today’s society, the general public gives no thought to God’s power to heal, immediately seeking professional care when becoming ill or afflicted. In opposition to that mindset, some Christians may be inclined to equate trusting God with a refusal of professional medical care. We do not need to discredit the medical profession in order to believe and teach the Bible doctrine of divine healing—a doctrine which stands on its own merit. The acceptance or refusal of medical care is a personal choice, not a Bible doctrine. The Bible doctrine is divine healing.

We believe and teach that the Lord is the Great Physician. It is also true that the Bible indicts King Asa because, when he was afflicted, “he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians” (2 Chronicles 16:12). However, we also note that King Asa had previously sought help from Syria in an act of unbelief and disobedience (see 2 Chronicles 16:7). Thus, he was condemned because he refused to seek the Lord, not because he solicited the assistance of physicians. (Some commentators indicate that the physicians in this case may have been heathen physicians who resorted to magic.)

The woman who had the issue of blood “had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse” (Mark 5:26). If it had been wrong for her to seek the assistance of the medical experts of her day, Jesus would no doubt have pointed that out. Instead, He accepted the faith in Him that she expressed and commended her for it. Even today, God has performed many well-documented miracles for those who have been pronounced “incurable” by doctors. Many times, medical professionals themselves have expressed amazement at what their own tests have clearly substantiated was an act of divine intervention.

As Christians, we should support and pray for one who chooses to seek medical care in the same way we support and pray for one who chooses not to obtain medical care. It does not pay to make the refusal of professional care a cornerstone of our faith; it pays to make the doctrine of divine healing a cornerstone of our faith. We may find ourselves in a situation where we have no choice but to obtain care, or where it seems to be the best decision to solicit that care. We must build our faith upon the Word of God, not upon personal choices.

Ministers of the Gospel are often called upon to pray for saints of God facing health issues, including surgery. It is a privilege to go into a hospital before such procedures and pray with them. Those people have faith! Their trust is in God, so we must not equate the solicitation of medical help with an abandoning of Him. The Bible says, “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is” (Jeremiah 17:7). Choosing professional medical care does not automatically mean one is abandoning God; looking to medical science instead of God would be. Ministers pray for the sick with anticipation that God will heal, and if they remain sick, that God will encourage their faith as they continue to rely upon Him.

Medical science has made amazing advances in recent years, both in the understanding and treatment of disease. However, man’s ability to restore health is

still limited. At best, doctors and medical treatment may assist the human body in renewing the natural healing power invested in it by the Creator. God can heal in conjunction with medical help, but He also can and often does heal miraculously, without any human intervention. No matter what means God uses to perform the miracle of healing, Jesus is always the Healer (Exodus 15:26). He alone is to receive the glory for any manifestation of the power of God (Acts 3:12; 14:11-15).

How to endure in time of affliction

There may be times when God answers prayers for healing, but there may also be times when illness or disease is not taken away immediately. God may want us to endure for a while, but this trial of our faith does not have to defeat us. In 1 Peter 1:7 we read, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." The miracle of continuing faith and grace amid the fires of testing is no less a mighty act of God than the miracle of instantaneous healing which causes the world to marvel. God may want to provide solutions that will strengthen and make whole the spiritual man, rather than the physical man. It is the miraculous work of God which makes triumphant, overcoming Christians—and at times, the endurance of affliction is part of that process.

As we grasp by faith the fact that God's ways are best, there are some steps we can take to cooperate with Him in the process He is working out in our lives and to overcome any attempt of Satan to defeat us.

Remember that the enemy of our souls has no power where the Blood of Jesus is present. When we feel the powers of darkness attacking with doubts, fear, or discouragement, we can plead the Blood of Jesus. It offers protection! Remember those words in Exodus 12:13, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." Ask for it to cover you—your mind, soul, and body—and shelter you from the onslaught of Satan. The devil cannot stand against the Blood!

Reflect on times when God's way obviously worked out for the best. "Ebenezer" was the name of a stone memorializing God's past help (1 Samuel 7:12). Store up memories of past healings and deliverances, and bring them to mind whenever the reassurance of God's present help is needed.

Rejoice in spite of affliction. The Biblical injunction to give thanks in everything (1 Thessalonians 5:18) is not just a suggestion; it is a command. When we obey that command, the result is a transformed perspective. Life's realities may include physical

challenges, but when we rejoice in spite of affliction, we find that we have a hold on something that will take us through.

Recognize that our willingness to trust God for the ultimate answer is a witness to unbelievers. God wants to use our trials as a living commentary on His ability to carry His children through any circumstance. While instantaneous healing may speak to hearts, faith in action is also a testimony that cannot be refuted. And if that is God's plan, He will maximize the impact of our testimony for His glory.

Look for an opportunity to comfort others. Who can understand what it is like to suffer in the grip of unrelenting pain, day after day? Who can empathize with the emotions that come with a life-threatening diagnosis? Who can understand the ways that Satan comes to attack those who are on the sickbed? Only the one who has been there. Through your time of suffering, God has given you an open door to people who are vulnerable and in need of help—those who are hurting. Walk through that door!

Determine to learn the secret of contentment. Paul learned that God's grace was sufficient to make him satisfied with the circumstances in which he found himself, and we can learn the same secret. If our goal as Christians is to know Christ and become like Him, then it is vital that we learn to accept anything which will enable that process to take place.

Delve into Scripture. When we seek help from God's Word, we find it. In the pages of the Bible, we discover how others coped with sickness and pain, and triumphed. We see the compassion Jesus had for the sick, the diseased, and the disabled. We glean promises that encourage us to wait, to hold fast, to endure.

Focus on eternity. Paul said, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:17). Our ultimate hope in terrible illness, suffering, or pain is in realizing that this life is not all there is. Get a fresh focus on the eternal conclusion of the whole matter!

Perfect healing will come

It is true that following these suggestions may not be easy, but we can be sure of this: the God who loves us understands what a struggle it can be for us to lift our eyes away from the circumstances of our personal battle and fix them on Him. And He is there to supply help and strength for whatever we face. When the enemy comes in like a flood, we are assured that "the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah 59:19). God may bring relief through an instantaneous healing, but if that is not His plan, He will be there to encourage, to comfort, and to sustain us in the way that He has ordained for us. He has offered to "walk with us," yoked together with us in our sickness, grief, and pain (see Matthew 11:29).

If you are still coping with pain and waiting for healing, there is hope. Your healing is coming; perhaps sooner, perhaps later. We know that God has a time and a season for everything (see Ecclesiastes 3). The Psalmist tells us, "The steps of a good man are ordered [prepared; appointed] by the Lord" (Psalm 37:23), and you can be certain that God is going to do something on this healing journey of yours. If His plan is to touch you and remove the affliction that you are experiencing, rejoice in that deliverance. If a period of suffering is to be endured, recognize that He will use it for ultimate good.

Whatever the case, remember that when Christ reigns supreme, there will be no more sickness, no more suffering, no more sorrow, and no more death. Someday, no matter what you are facing in this life, perfect healing will come!

The Second Coming of Jesus (Eschatological Vision)

“The Antichrist”- Archdeceiver of the end times.

[by Florence Crawford]

One of the most foreboding characters in the Word of God, Antichrist embodies the very essence of Godlessness.

Christians have the enlivening and purifying hope in their hearts of the Rapture of the church. The Apostle Paul wrote of this event. “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). This Rapture of the Church could happen any moment.

Events to take place

The Apostle did not want the brethren to confuse the Rapture of the Church with the Revelation of Jesus Christ when He comes to set up His kingdom. God’s Word tells us that certain events will transpire before Christ establishes His kingdom on earth. “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [the day of Christ] shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” (2 Thessalonians 2:3). Here the Bible tells of the sign of the coming of the Antichrist—apostasy. As we look at Christendom today, we see in many circles a departure from the faith, people turning away from God and holiness, often “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof” (2 Timothy 3:5).

The falling away includes many who deny the virgin birth of Jesus Christ and deny that He is the divine Son of God. Some professing Christians have grown lukewarm, linking hands with the world. However, the Word says, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15). This “mystery of iniquity” (2 Thessalonians 2:7) was already working in the days of the Apostles, but there was, and is, a hindering power—the Holy Spirit in His present office as the reprover of the world and gatherer of the Church. When this restraining One is taken from the world at the Rapture of the Church, then the Antichrist will be revealed.

Characteristics of the Antichrist

The name Antichrist identifies one of the most foreboding personages in the Word of God. The Antichrist is opposed to God and to Jesus Christ. A single individual, he is called "that man of sin," "the son of perdition," "that Wicked . . . whose coming is after the working of Satan" (2 Thessalonians 2:3,8,9). This person, the Antichrist, is also called the "beast," because, from God's point of view, that is exactly what he is. In Revelation 13:2, it is said that he will have similarities of the leopard, bear, and lion—animals which are strong, fearless, and quick to seize their prey. The Antichrist will be very strong and powerful, there will be an air about him which is self-assured and proud, and his conquest will be rapid.

The Bible tells us that the dragon will give the beast his power, his seat, and great authority. The dragon is that serpent, called "the Devil and Satan" (Revelation 12:9). The devil offered the kingdom of this world to Jesus in temptation, but Jesus refused (Matthew 4:8-10). The Antichrist, however, willingly takes this offered kingdom. The beast will be wounded to death, as it were, but the deadly wound will be healed, causing the world to wonder and to worship the dragon and the beast (Revelation 13:3,4).

The Antichrist will come into power through flatteries, the promise of peace, and a certain measure of prosperity. He will change his tactics during the Tribulation, however, and become the most cruel and despotic ruler this world has ever seen. He will be a monster of iniquity, and will deceive the nations of the world. See Revelation 13:1-18.

This "man of sin" draws to himself the admiration and worship of the world, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb" (Revelation 13:8). Humanity is represented as being captivated by the Antichrist's qualities and powers. Their wonderment is, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" (Revelation 13:4).

He will deceive the Jewish people. The Antichrist will make a treaty with them during the first part of his reign, probably assuring them that he will solve their problems and guarantee their peace. It is possible that during this time the Temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem, and the sacrificial worship to God by the Jewish people will once again be reinstated.

Covenant broken

However, in the midst of the Antichrist's seven-year rule, his covenant with the Jews will be broken. This action by the Antichrist, will reveal to the Jews his demonic nature. There will follow a terrible time for the Jewish people, and for the whole earth—a time of great tribulation. "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it" (Jeremiah 30:7).

The false prophet will be the promoter of the Antichrist. He will set up an image of the beast and cause all who will not worship the image to be killed. He will force everyone to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead, establishing that no person will be able to buy or sell without the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name. There will be no salvation for the man or woman who worships the beast or takes his mark (Revelation 14:9-11). The safe course is to believe in the Lord Jesus today, follow His instructions, and be ready for the Rapture of the Church.

After the Tribulation period, Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, will come with His armies from Heaven to end the reign of the Antichrist and the false prophet. They will be "cast alive into a lake of fire." The dragon, which is the devil, will be cast into the bottomless pit. At that time, Jesus will set up His literal kingdom upon earth and reign for a thousand years, which the Bible refers to as the Millennial Reign. What a glorious time this will be! Those who believe in the Lord Jesus, do His will, and follow His instructions given in the Word of God, will be included among the overcomers who enjoy the glories and privileges of the Millennium.

"Hell" - Man's Opinion | God's Word
[by Florence Crawford]

For centuries, mankind has struggled with the Biblical doctrine of Hell. Many diverse opinions have been put forward in an attempt to establish the true nature of this abode of the wicked dead. Yet too often these views have served only to muddy the waters, obscuring the truths taught in the Bible. Let's examine some commonly held opinions on this issue.

"There is no such place as a literal, burning Hell."

Despite man's determined efforts to douse the fires of Hell with the waters of unbelief

and denial, he will never succeed in quenching its flames. To assert that there is no Hell is to destroy the credibility of the Bible. How can we believe that anything it teaches is true if the many vivid references to Hell are actually unreliable? We can't, but if we accept the Word of God as just that, we will believe there is, indeed, a very real place called Hell.

In the account of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus pulled back the veil to let us hear the rich man's pitiful cry from Hell, "I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:24). What kind of monstrous misrepresentation would this be if there were no such place of torment and suffering? Again, how could we place any faith in any of Jesus' words if we knew He was deceiving us in this area?

To profess faith in God and to place our lives in His hands is to trust Him completely. Along with this trust must come the conviction that His knowledge and understanding far exceed our own. So if we find ourselves wrestling with the thought of a literal, burning Hell, we need to lay it down and say, "Lord, I may not understand how or why such a horrible place could exist, but it is in Your Word. You know best, so I am just going to believe it as it reads." Rest in the knowledge that He has provided a way of escape from this awful place, and let your belief in Hell move you to help others find that way.

If you are an unbeliever who is scoffing at Hell, you need to realize that your unbelief has no effect on the truth. You can stand in the darkness of midnight and say you don't believe in the sun, but in the morning, the light will expose your misconception and leave you amazed and ashamed. Don't risk finding out too late that God was right and that you were deceived.

"A loving God would never send anyone to Hell."

This is very likely the most common grievance expressed against the doctrine of Hell. Sadly enough, it is probably heard more from professing Christians than from unbelievers. Why? Because professing Christians know God as a God of mercy and forgiveness, so they begin to imagine that He couldn't possibly cast anyone, no matter how wicked, into the searing flames of a lost eternity.

The fact is that God doesn't send anyone to Hell. Now that doesn't mean everyone is going to Heaven—not by any means. But every person who enters Hell does so by his own choice, and against the will of God.

The Bible tells us that God is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”(2 Peter 3:9). It also tells us that Hell was “prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41). It was never God’s intention that man should follow Satan into Hell. So instead of picturing a vindictive God casting poor unfortunates into the Lake of Fire, we need to see a weeping Father suffering while man, the crowning glory of His creation, stubbornly steps over the shed Blood of Jesus Christ and falls headlong into the abyss.

Some may say, “No one in his right mind would chose Hell, no matter how wicked he might be. God must be forcing him to go.” When sinners stand at the Judgment, face to face with a holy God, they will be horribly aware of the darkness of their own hearts. It will be painfully clear that they could never dwell in the presence of the God they have spurned. At that point, be assured that they will be speechless, and will entertain no hope of receiving anything other than what their sins have purchased for them.

“Eventually the sinners who end up in Hell will be reclaimed and transferred to Heaven.”

Search the Bible from cover to cover and you will never find even a ray of hope for the dead who have chosen to miss Heaven. There is no intermediate place called purgatory where sinners can purge away their sins and finally ascend to Heaven. Nor will the fires of Hell ever cleanse the soul that refused to be cleansed by the Blood of Jesus.

Paul tells us in 2 Thessalonians 1:9 that those who do not obey the Gospel will be “punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” Something that is everlasting by definition cannot have an end.

There can be no preparation for eternity in eternity. God has ordained that while we are alive we make our choice for Heaven or Hell. He promises to enlighten all individuals at some point in their lives, but if they ‘love darkness more than light,’ then darkness they shall have.

“The sufferings of Hell are not eternal. The souls there will be annihilated.”

This one is a favorite of the devil. If he can convince us that there is no Hell, or that

a soul is instantly destroyed upon entering there, where does that leave us? If we make it to Heaven, great! If not, don't worry, we'll never know the difference. Oh, what a terrible shock awaits those who comfort themselves that they will never suffer for their unrepented iniquity!

In referring to the never-ending punishment of Hell, Jesus emphasized the phrase, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." By using it three times in the ninth chapter of Mark. It would be absurd to speak of the unquenched fires of Hell if the inhabitants had long since been annihilated. No, we are told that "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night" (Revelation 14:11).

Some people are very glad to believe in an eternal Heaven, but loathe to accept the thought of an everlasting Hell. The Bible was not given to us so we could choose what sounds good and throw out what strikes us as distasteful. When Jesus said, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46), He was letting us know that the eternal soul of man will dwell in one place or the other. To deny either is to deny Him who spoke the words. Dangerous ground indeed!

"Hell is everything the Bible says it is."

Amen. What it comes down to is that there is great danger in applying our emotions and limited understanding to issues that far surpass our limited scope of comprehension. Yes, it hurts to think of those we have known suffering forever in Hell. It stretches our imaginations to the breaking point trying to conceive of the stark horror of total and irreversible separation from God. We are aghast at the thought of everlasting torment in a lake of fire. We recoil at the realization that perhaps the worst torture of Hell will be that one's memory will be intact. The recollection of having trifled with God's offer of eternal life in Heaven will relentlessly haunt the sinner throughout the ages of eternity. "Why, why, why didn't I listen? Why didn't I respond when I felt His love and mercy drawing me? Why did I think I knew better? And now I am lost! Lost for ever!" Again and again it will replay.

Yes, it is unimaginably awful to contemplate. But read the entire account of the rich man and Lazarus. Notice that the rich man never says anything about the unjustness of his punishment. He didn't plead with Abraham to redress the wrong done to him. No, the Bible tells us that when we leave this life we will know as we are known. All

will be in proper perspective. The souls in Heaven and the souls in Hell will be fully convinced that justice was done.

Be sure you're prepared for the right destination today

"A Glimpse into the Future - What does the future hold?
by a leader of the Apostolic Faith Church

That question looms large in the minds and hearts of people around the world. Some ask it out loud and debate, predict, or philosophize about it. Others ponder it silently in the innermost recesses of their hearts. Still others resolutely push it aside and stifle all thoughts of what the future might bring. Whatever the case, the question refuses to be ignored.

Scripture Provides the Answer

Jesus Christ will take His earthly throne as King of kings and Lord of lords, and the kingdoms of this world will all become "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ" (Revelation 11:15). However, according to Biblical prophecy, He must first come to catch away those who have made spiritual preparation for that event—those known in Scripture as the "Bride of Christ" or the "Church." This occurrence, the Rapture of the Church, is the next great event to take place in God's plan for the ages.

The Holy Spirit is in the world today, dwelling in the hearts of believers, and He is holding back a terrible tide of destruction that will come upon the world when the Bride has been taken away. (See 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8.) God's wrath will then be poured out upon those who have rejected Him, in a period of time referred to in Scripture as the Great Tribulation—a literal time of terror and torment like has never been known.

How do we know that these cataclysmic events are just ahead?

Signposts

Scriptural prophecies clearly indicate that the culmination of God's dealings with the people of this earth will soon occur. When Jesus' disciples asked Him what signs would precede His coming and the end of the world, He responded with a comprehensive list. (See Matthew, chapter 24.) He said there would be:

- Wars and rumors of wars. Warfare has long been part of human existence, but the sheer annihilative potential of current weaponry and the possibility of conflict on a global scale, has made our day a unique and dangerous time unprecedented in history. Today, nine countries possess nuclear weapons,[1] and military engagements are constant. Since the end of World War II, there have been 280 armed conflicts involving one or more governments.[2]

- Famines. In 2016, an estimated 815 million people worldwide were suffering from hunger and malnourishment.[3] In addition to drought, other contributing factors of worldwide hunger include economic collapse, the displacement of people as a result of warfare, an increasing world population, and diminishing natural resources. In 2017, the chief economist for the United Nations World Food Programme said that twenty million people were in danger of dying from starvation in the next six months due to four different famines. [4]

- Pestilences. As of 2012, there were 219 virus species known to affect humans, and every year new strains of viruses are being discovered.[5] The past few decades have witnessed the emergence of “new” infectious diseases such as Ebola, HIV/AIDS, SARS, and the Zika virus. In addition, there is the growing problem of antimicrobial-resistant strains of “old” diseases such as influenza, malaria, and tuberculosis. According to the World Health Organization, about 490,000 people contracted a drug-resistant strain of tuberculosis in 2016.[6]

- Earthquakes. Approximately 500,000 earthquakes are detected in the world each year, though only around 100,000 are felt because many occur in remote areas or have small magnitudes.[7] In 2017 there were 13,095 earthquakes worldwide measuring 4.0 or greater.[8] In recent years, new technologies, such as processes related to oil and gas extraction, have increased the risk of earthquakes occurring in parts of the world where they were never before experienced.[9]

- Persecution and killing of followers of Jesus. Open Doors USA, which tracks persecuted Christians worldwide, stated that around the globe, oppression against Christians has increased with 215 million Christians experiencing high to extreme persecution in 2017.[10] A resolution passed by the United States House of Representatives condemning human rights abuses against Christians listed recent persecutions from around the globe, stating: “The Christian population in the Middle East has significantly decreased over the past few decades as a result of persecution, displacement, and genocide . . . such persecution ranges from social harassment and

discrimination to physical violence, imprisonment, torture, enslavement, rape, and death.”[11]

- False prophets deceiving many. Since the time of Christ, numerous individuals have amassed followers by falsely claiming to be God’s messenger, including Mohammad in the seventh century, Nostradamus in the sixteenth, and more recently, Joseph Smith, Sun Myung Moon, and David Koresh to name a few.

- Widespread iniquity. This past century has seen an increasing tolerance for sins relating to the devaluing of human life and sexual immorality. In 2013, 61 percent of the world’s population was living in a country where abortion was legal on demand or for social and economic reasons,[12] and from 2010 to 2014 an estimated 56 million abortions were performed annually, constituting 25 percent of pregnancies worldwide.[13] Euthanasia and doctor-assisted suicide are also gaining acceptance; one or the other is now legal in nine countries.[14] There is a growing movement to embrace “alternative lifestyles” as natural and healthy, and same-sex marriages are now recognized in twenty-six countries.[15]

- Declining love for truth. As of 2017, over 11 percent of the world’s population did not claim any allegiance to a religion, and 45 percent adhered to Buddhism, Hinduism, or Islam.[16] Even many churches which at one time preached the fundamentals of Christianity—the new birth and a life without sin—have changed their doctrine, “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof” (2 Timothy 3:5).

- The Gospel preached worldwide. Several interdenominational groups are currently working toward the goal of reaching every part of the world with the Gospel message. By 2001, the film entitled JESUS had been shown in every country of the world in over 1,000 languages.[17] Today, in addition to audio and video recordings and printed materials, the internet is taking the Gospel to places where it has never before been heard. One website, Bible.is, has posted the Bible online in 1,293 languages.[18] The Wycliffe Global Alliance reports that one or both of the Old and New Testaments are now available in 2,200 different languages, and organizations are currently working on 2,584 translations. They estimate translations are still needed in 1,636 languages.[19]

History in Advance

In addition to the end-time events detailed by Jesus, numerous other prophecies in the Word of God deal with the last days.

- Perilous times. Paul wrote that perilous times would come in the last days and evil men would become worse and worse (2 Timothy 3:1,13). We live in a day of inexplicable outbreaks of violence—riots, mass murder, and random shootings. In 2016, there were 469 suicide bombings in twenty-eight countries,[20] and in 2017 there were eight mass shootings in the United States alone, resulting in 117 deaths.[21]

- Automobile traffic. Nahum prophesied that in the end time, “chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall justle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings” (Nahum 2:4). Automobiles throng our six- and eight-lane freeways: it is estimated that more than 1.2 billion are traveling the world’s roads today.[22] Each year motor vehicle crashes result in nearly 1.3 million fatalities and up to 50 million injuries globally, and are the leading cause of death among young people ages 15 to 29.[23]

- Widespread travel. Daniel prophesied that “many shall run to and fro” in the time of the end (Daniel 12:4). Air travel continues to increase worldwide, with about 4.1 billion people traveling by air in 2017.[24]

- Knowledge increased. Daniel also foretold that knowledge would be increased in the last days (Daniel 12:4). Modern computers have capabilities that would have been unfathomable a few decades ago, and technology is continually advancing. The Internet allows instant access to vast quantities of information, and engineering feats are performed that stagger the imagination.

Signs in the Nation of Israel

Perhaps the greatest sign of the end of the Church Age is found in recent happenings concerning the nation of Israel. Jesus said, “Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it [the coming of Christ] is near, even at the doors” (Matthew 24:32-33). Scripture teaches that this fig tree represents the Jewish nation. (See Jeremiah 24:5-10; Hosea 9:10; Luke 13:6-9.)

God said that because of their disobedience, the Jewish people would be scattered among all nations. During the thirty or more centuries of their perilous existence, the Jews have been on the verge of annihilation many times, yet they have always regained their footing. They have been miraculously preserved for a special purpose in connection with the future fulfillment of God’s plan.

- The Promised Land inhabited by Jews. In 1948, a portion of the land promised by God to the Jewish people was restored to them in a United Nations vote, and they were declared a nation for the first time since 597 B.C. when they were conquered by the Babylonians. The new nation was named Israel. Today Jewish emigrants are moving to Israel from every country in the world just as the Bible foretold in Jeremiah 16:14-15.

- Jerusalem a burdensome stone. Zechariah prophesied, “In that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people” (Zechariah 12:3). Jerusalem has increasingly become a source of world contention as it is the location of holy sites significant to three major religions. Arab states captured a portion of the city in 1948 and barred Jews from entering. In the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel once again assumed full control of Jerusalem and renamed it their capital. On December 7, 2017, the United States became the first country to recognize it as such, and on May 14, 2018, moved its embassy there amidst violent Arab protests and international criticism.[25]

- Return of rainfall. When the Jews were scattered after the crucifixion of Jesus, the region became desolate, unproductive, and barren. For nearly 2000 years, rainfall was minimal. The Prophet Joel indicated that the rains would return when the Day of the Lord was at hand (Joel 2:1,23). At the turn of the twentieth century, rain began to fall in Palestine (modern-day Israel) and vegetation began to grow. From 1961 to 1990, the annual rainfall increased by roughly 30 percent.[26]

- Restoration of a pure language. The prophet Zephaniah foretold that the nation of Israel would have a pure language during the end times (Zephaniah 3:8-9). In 1982, Hebrew was declared the official and national language of Israel—a language which had been considered dead.

- Preparation to rebuild the Temple. Daniel 9:26-27 indicates that during the Tribulation period, the Temple sanctuary will be in use. Currently, in Jerusalem, several organizations are preparing to rebuild this sacred structure. The Temple Institute has recreated seventy artifacts needed to furnish the Temple and perform the sacred rites, including the golden menorah, the jeweled breastplate of the High Priest, and the musical instruments to be used by the Levitical choir. In addition, the Nezer HaKodesh Institute for Kohanic Studies was established in 2016 to train men from the tribe of Levi in performing the priestly duties of the Temple.[27]

- Availability of a red heifer. Numbers 19:1-10 indicates that a red heifer is necessary for the ceremonial purification of the Temple and the priests who serve in it. For over 2000 years, there has been no acceptable red heifer, though a handful have been located and then disqualified. Since 2015, rabbis of the Temple Institute have been coordinating an effort to breed a red heifer in Israel using the imported embryos of red Angus cattle.[28]
- Restoration of the shekel. According to Ezekiel 45:12-13,16, the shekel will be used as the offering to the Messiah at the Temple during the Millennium. In 1980, the shekel was restored as the official currency of Israel.
- Military victories. The overwhelming victories of Israel over the vastly superior armies of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan in 1948, 1967, and 1973 amazed the world. According to Zechariah 12:6, these victories are a prelude to the revelation of Christ at the end of the Great Tribulation.
- Jewish unbelief. In spite of the powerful evidence to Jews today that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah, according to Romans 11:25, their continued unbelief is a sign of the nearness of the Lord's Second Coming.

We are seeing a foreshadow of what is yet to take place in this nation which will be at the center of end-time events. The fig tree of Biblical prophecy is budding and putting forth leaves. The Jewish people, however, are not yet turning to God, nor crying for their Messiah as Zechariah prophesied they will do (Zechariah 12:10).

The Time of the Latter Rain

Another indication that we are living in the last days is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the Latter Rain foretold in Joel 2:23 and James 5:7. In the early 1900s, God gave a sign to an unbelieving world by pouring out the baptism of the Holy Ghost on a group of sanctified believers, just as it was given in the "early rain" on the Day of Pentecost. Since then, a widespread preaching of the Gospel by those endowed with power from on High has resulted in the salvation of many souls, the sanctification of believers, the empowering of witnesses, and the healing of many from incurable diseases. Clearly, the Holy Spirit is in the world and is preparing a Bride for Jesus.

Without a doubt, the stage has been set. We are seeing the fulfillment of the prophesied events which are to herald the Rapture of the Church. Jesus could come

back for His followers at any moment!

The Rapture of the Church

This event will occur when Jesus calls His followers (both Gentile and Jewish believers) with a trumpet blast, and they will be removed from the earth and transported to be with Him in the heavens. The Rapture will take place suddenly, unexpectedly, and lightning-fast—in the “twinkling of an eye,” according to Scripture. Jesus will descend from Heaven “with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). The word rapture means, “being carried away in body or spirit,” and this is literally what will happen. Those who have died as Christians will arise from their graves to meet Him in the clouds. Then those who are alive, and who have prepared themselves for His coming, will be changed in a moment and will join Christ and the resurrected dead in the air. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:20-38.)

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

The Christians who gather with Christ at the Rapture of the Church will take part in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, described in Revelation 19:7-9. Jesus Christ is the Bridegroom, and He will serve the saints. (See Luke 12:37.)

There, rewards will be given for faithful service. Those who have labored for God’s glory will hear the words, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matthew 25:21). Some will be given authority over ten cities, others over five. (See Luke 19:12-19.) Among the rewards to the overcomer will be “to eat of the tree of life,” to wear “white raiment,” and to be given the “morning star.” Jesus said, “I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels,” and, “to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” (See Revelation chapters 2 and 3.)

The Great Tribulation

While the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is taking place above, the terrible outpouring of God’s wrath will occur on earth because of mankind’s rejection of God’s love and mercy. This period of time, known as the Great Tribulation, is described in the Book

of Revelation. The Tribulation will last seven years. It will begin with a covenant made between Israel and a world leader, identified in Scripture as the Antichrist, and it will end with the physical return of Jesus Christ to set up His kingdom on earth. In between these events, those on earth will experience seven years of fear and terror, of darkness and torment. Daniel, prophesying of this, said, "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1). Jesus spoke of the same time, "Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21).

The Antichrist

The dominant figure of the Tribulation will be the Antichrist, the "man of sin," who will be revealed after the Bride has been taken out of the world. Initially, he will expand his empire through diplomatic ventures and subtle "peace" diplomacy. Only later will his true nature be revealed. His ascent to power will be rapid, and authority will be given to him from Satan. The Apostle John wrote of this man that "power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations" (Revelation 13:7). He will be a phenomenally persuasive and brilliant man, and also extremely wicked and diabolical. Scripture alludes to him as "the son of perdition" and also the "beast." All who dwell upon the earth, whose names are not written in the Book of Life, will worship him. (See Revelation 13:8.)

As the Antichrist gains control of the world during the Tribulation period, those who follow him will receive an identifying mark. The mark or seal of the beast will be placed in the right hand or forehead of all his followers, and those who do not have the mark will not be allowed to buy or sell. "The mark of the beast" will be literal, and those who receive it will seal their own eternal damnation, for the Word says, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb" (Revelation 14:9-10).

The Antichrist will come into power through flatteries, the promise of peace, and a certain measure of prosperity. He will change his tactics during the Tribulation, however, and will become the most cruel and despotic ruler this world has ever seen.

(See Revelation 13:1-18.)

The Jews during the Tribulation

For the past two thousand years, both Jews and Gentiles have had an opportunity to enter in and accept God's grace, but after the Bride is taken away in the Rapture, and the Tribulation sets in, God will turn back to the Jews alone. (See Romans 11:25-27.) Because God will again deal with the Jews as His chosen people, the Tribulation is also known as the time of Jacob's Trouble. During this time, the Jews will suffer in a greater measure than they ever have.

The Antichrist will deceive the Jewish people. He will make a treaty with them during the first part of his reign; among other things, this treaty will allow them to resume the ancient sacrificial system of temple worship. In the middle of his seven-year rule, however, he will ruthlessly break his covenant, ending the sacrifices and substituting the worldwide worship of himself and his image. (See Daniel 9:27.) This action will reveal to the Jews his demonic nature. When that covenant is broken, tribulation such as has never been known before will be poured out upon the Jews. A third of them will survive (Zechariah 13:9), and they will cry for their Messiah to come and deliver them.

Terrible Upheaval on Earth

During the Tribulation, God's judgment will be poured out upon the earth in the form of horrendous environmental catastrophes. The following are some of the cataclysmic events which will take place during that period.

- A storm of hail and fire mingled with blood will destroy one-third of all vegetation on the earth. (Revelation 8:7)
- A meteor will hit the earth, causing the sea to become like blood. This will kill one-third of all creatures in the sea, and destroy one-third of the world's shipping. (Revelation 8:8-9)
- A star named Wormwood will fall from the sky and poison one-third of all fresh water. This will kill many people. (Revelation 8:10-11)
- The sun, moon, and stars will be darkened by one-third, and both the day and

night will not be lit for one-third of their time. (Revelation 8:12)

- Locust-like beings will be released from underground. Their attacks will be very painful and will last five months. (Revelation 9:3-10)

- An army of 200 million horsemen on horse-like creatures will kill one-third of the earth's remaining population. (Revelation 9:15-19)

- Two beings, referred to in Scripture as "witnesses," will preach the truth of Jesus Christ for three and a half years and will be killed by the Antichrist at the midpoint of the seven-year tribulation. After three days, they will be resurrected and will ascend to Heaven in a cloud. (Revelation 11:3-12)

- People who have taken the mark of the Antichrist will develop a dreadful sore on their bodies within a short time. (Revelation 13:16-18; 16:2)

- The oceans will chemically change and become like congealed blood. Everything in the sea will die. (Revelation 16:3)

- The fresh waters will become like blood. (Revelation 16:4)

- The sun's rays will scorch the people on earth with tremendous heat. (Revelation 16:8-9)

- Great darkness will come upon the earth, and terrible pain will afflict its inhabitants. (Revelation 16:10-11)

- The kings of the world will gather their armies to battle against God at Armageddon. The River Euphrates will dry up, whereby the "kings of the East" will march toward Palestine in preparation for this battle. (Revelation 16:12)

- A tremendous earthquake will take place unlike any other—so devastating that all the mountains and islands will disappear. (Revelation 16:18-20)

- A hailstorm, with hailstones weighing close to 100 pounds, will cause men to blaspheme God. (Revelation 16:21)

The End of the Tribulation

At the close of the Tribulation, all the armies of the Antichrist and of his henchman, the false prophet, will gather in Israel to war against God, in an effort to usurp the Kingdom that Christ will set up on earth. (See Revelation 16:13-14,16.) In their rage, they will especially ravage Jerusalem and destroy a great part of Israel's population. (See Revelation 16:14-16; Zechariah 12:3.) At this point, the heavens will open and Christ will return to this earth in power and great glory with the heavenly host. He will execute judgment on the ungodly and set up His Millennial kingdom. (See Revelation 19:11-16.) The armies that follow Him upon white horses are the raptured saints.

Christ's feet will touch the Mount of Olives, and then, in a bloody encounter which will eclipse every other war known on earth, He will wreak vengeance and judgment upon His enemies. Concentrated in a place called Armageddon (possibly the Valley of Megiddo), the resulting carnage will cover a two-hundred-mile expanse. The birds will feast upon the dead bodies of the slain. During the battle, the Antichrist and the false prophet will be cast alive into the lake of fire. (See Revelation 19:20-21.) The armies of the Antichrist will be slain with the sword from Christ's mouth.

The surviving Jews will accept their Messiah, whom they have so long rejected. "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son" (Zechariah 12:10).

Christ's Millennial Reign

Following the Battle of Armageddon and the close of the seven-year Tribulation, the Millennium, or thousand-year literal reign of Christ and His saints, will begin. Jesus will be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords, and will judge the nations. (See Matthew 25:31-32.) This will be a time of peace and blessing, in which the people of earth will enjoy a "Garden of Eden" existence. The curse, which came upon the earth when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, will be lifted from creation, and the glorious and everlasting Kingdom of Christ and His saints will be established in peace. The Millennial Kingdom will have the following characteristics:

Jesus will rule from Jerusalem. The Lord is going to rule the world with the seat of His government in Jerusalem. Christ's kingdom will never be destroyed. (Zechariah 14:9; Isaiah 24:23; Daniel 2:44)

Saints will reign with Jesus. The armies that follow Jesus from Heaven, after the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, will rule and reign with Him. Among this group will be the prophets, Apostles, and martyrs of ages past, who will also return in glorified bodies to take part in Christ's government. (Jude 14-15)

Satan will be bound. An angel will come from Heaven and bind Satan for a thousand years, casting him into a bottomless pit. For the first time since the fall, people will dwell in the world without the power of Satan to tempt or torment them. (Revelation 20:1-3)

War will end. Nation will no longer fight against nation, and preparations and equipping for warfare will be over. (Isaiah 2:4)

Sickness and disease will be eliminated. After the curse has been lifted, all who remain and come under the rule and dominion of Christ will be set free from every disease and sickness. (Isaiah 35:5-6)

Mankind will enjoy longevity. Men will live long to enjoy the blessed reign of Jesus. (Isaiah 65:20)

Animal nature will be changed. The venom of the serpent, the sting of the scorpion, the instinct to kill in the wolf and the lion—everything that is savage and brought on by the curse in the animal kingdom will be done away with. (Isaiah 11:6-9)

Vegetation will be luxuriant. In our world today, even vegetation is dwarfed as a result of the curse. Nothing grows as lushly now as it will when Jesus reigns on earth. (Isaiah 55:12-13)

Nations will rebuild. The people who survive the Great Tribulation will rebuild. (Isaiah 65:21)

Annual visits will be made to Jerusalem. Everyone will be required to make a yearly visit to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts. (Zechariah 14:16-19)

Nations will worship God. All nations that remain will be brought into subjection to the Son of God. They will then obey the Word of God. (Micah 4:1-2; Zechariah 8:20-22)

The Jews during the Millennium

During the Millennial Reign, God will renew His covenant with Israel. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt: which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

Close of the Millennium

At the close of the Millennium, there will be a fresh outburst of evil, when Satan shall be "loosed [for] a little season" (Revelation 20:3). A final rebellion will take place, followed by swift judgment. Satan will go out to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth, and will gather them together to battle against God in a conflict known as the Battle of Gog and Magog. The armies will surround the camp of the saints—the city of Jerusalem. At that point, fire will come down from Heaven and destroy them. The devil will be cast into the lake of fire for eternity. (See Revelation 20:7-10.)

The Great White Throne Judgment

Then will come the Great White Throne Judgment. At this time, God will assemble the wicked living and wicked dead to stand before Him who sits on the Throne. The books will be opened, and all present will be judged according to their deeds done in the body. (See Revelation 20:11-12.) Because none of their names will be found written in the Book of Life, all will be cast into the lake of fire. (See Revelation 20:15.) There they will remain throughout eternity.

"Then Cometh the End"

Christ will reign until time has run its course. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Corinthians 15:24-25).

Scripture tells us that the present heavens and earth will be destroyed by fire at the close of the Millennium. (See 2 Peter 3:12-13; Micah 1:3-4.) After the earth has been destroyed by fire, God will establish the “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13). The heavenly headquarters for the universe—the New Jerusalem—will descend from Heaven. The redeemed will dwell with God forever, and the new heavens and earth will never pass away.

Be Ready!

We are living in tremendous days, the time of the end of the age and the end of the world. Have you made the proper spiritual preparation? Your answer could have awesome and irrevocable consequences. Realize that if you neglect those preparations, you are gambling with the eternal destiny of your never-dying soul!

There are those who say they believe that the end is near, but who speculate that perhaps the Lord will delay His coming a few years longer. We have no guarantee of that. The minutes on God’s clock are ticking by, and the evidence is conclusive: The culmination of the ages cannot be far in the future.

God wants us to have our eyes on the skies. We do not know the day or the hour of His return for His Bride, but we do know that those who are watching and waiting will be ready when He comes. Those who are looking for the coming of Jesus want to be like Him. There is ample instruction in the Bible about what the Lord expects His follower to be. He shed His Blood to wash away our sins and to make us pure in heart, so there will be no excuse for those who do not prepare themselves for His coming.

The Apostle John’s parting words were: “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).

Let’s be ready for that day!

Notes

[1] Hans Kristensen and Robert Norris, "Worldwide deployments of nuclear weapons, 2017," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 73:5 (August 31, 2017): 289-297, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00963402.2017.1363995>.

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SPIRIT-BAPTISM EXPERIENCE OF M. W. KNAPP'S COLLEAGUES



George Hughes, founder of Asbury University

I cannot begin to enumerate the blessings that God has poured out upon my life. One of the greatest is that I was brought up in a good Christian home. My storybooks were those of the Bible, and the Bible itself was read to me daily. We had family prayer morning and evening.

My grandfather, in whose home I was reared, was saved in the smoking car of a railroad train. He had watched the Christian life of my grandmother until deep conviction came upon him, and on his way back to the mine after a weekend at home, he gave God his life. He became a real Christian and used to teach me about the Bible and what is expected of a Christian.

But in spite of my Christian training I was not a real Christian. One cannot be educated into it; it doesn't come because one is born of Christian parents. I knew there was sin in my life, and I fought against it. I tried hard to live above sin; but every day, try as hard as I could, I still committed sin.

I was still a young boy when an Apostolic Faith paper came to our home in a little mining town in Central Washington. That paper had passed through several hands. I do not know how many had read it before we received it, but I know several that had. Finally the Lord directed it to us, and it changed the course of our lives.

We wrote these people immediately and they began to send the paper to us regularly. I used to go to the post office for the mail, and when the paper would come I knew the regular routine of our home life would be upset for several days. The folks only took care of the things that were necessary until the paper was read through and passed on to others. The paper eventually meant the salvation of several of us and also some that were our friends.

My mother and I came to Portland, Oregon to a camp meeting. It was here that I knelt and was saved. My Christian life began with that prayer, as the Bible says it should. It didn't begin with a public confession of faith, with a shaking of a preacher's hand, with a mere acceptance of Christ; but God became real to me, changed the whole course of my life, and gave me power over sin that has kept me living clean every day.

I found the Gospel real in grammar school, and in high school also. I found it worked in one place of employment for fifteen years, advancing from the lowest position to one of considerable responsibility. God helped me to live as a Christian should live before my business associates.

I thank God for a salvation that can do that for a young man. Never once have I wanted to go to a moving-picture show; never once have I wanted to attend a dance; never once have I wanted to frequent a questionable place of entertainment. Instead, I have enjoyed being in the places where a real Christian will be found—in the house of God or in other places where there is Christian fellowship or work to do for God.

During the war I was called into the service of my country. I thank God that He didn't desert me when I had to leave my church, when I had to go out and stand by myself for three years away from God's people. I found there, also, that Jesus was an ever-present friend. He stayed with me in times of loneliness, in times of dreariness, in times of extreme danger—when it was "hot" in more ways than one in the tropical islands "down under." I went into the army a Christian, and I came out a Christian, thanks to God and to the prayers of His people.

One of the officers told me when I first went into the service that the best thing I, or any other Christian, could do was to forget my Christianity while I was in the Army. But I thank God that I have a salvation and a religion that can go with me every day, to every place where I am called upon to go. The best thing a young man can

possibly do is to take the Lord with him. The best step I ever made was when I gave my life to God.

There were hard places to go through in the service. But the Lord carried me through them all and brought me home safely. There have been hard places in civilian life, also. But I have found God very near to me here, and all through my life.

A short while after I arrived home, I was caught in a gasoline explosion and my clothing saturated with flaming gasoline. It happened so quickly, I could hardly think what it was all about. My first impulse was to run. But God was there with me at that time also.

We sing a song about the "Blood-washed Pilgrim," that says God appeared in the flame beside him when he in was in the furnace of affliction. That was my experience there in the flames that wrapped around my face when the Son of God appeared. I heard His voice as distinctly as though some human were standing beside me. He told me what to do, and I did it. At that instant the flames went out. I thank God for His presence with me.

I stood and looked at myself. I held up my charred arms and looked at them and said to myself, "I wonder if I will ever move them again?" Streamers of burn and torn flesh hung from my arms, chest, ears, and face. One bone was exposed. My lips and nose were burned, from the flames, which I had inhaled. I was a terrible sight—third degree burns from my waist to the top of my head, with only a small area down my back and my two eyes remaining untouched.

Down through the mountains they brought me—a three-hour ride of torture. One of the men, a sinner, looked at me and said, "Why don't you swear? I'd be cursing with all my might if it was me." But I did not need to swear and neither did I feel like doing it. God was with me.

The doctor who gave me first aid told those who were with me that I was dying. I lay on the operating table for four hours while they dressed the burns: my condition so bad they dared not give me an anesthetic for fear it would kill me. I was fully conscious all the time and talked with eight doctors and nurses who worked on me for that time. Then for ten days I lay between life and death. But in that whole time God and His people were at my side.

Often I would open my eyes and see, through the tiny slits in the bandages, one of the ministers or saints standing there. These people were praying for me. My name was mentioned many times in their prayers, and God undertook and healed those burns in better than record time. I was told a year later that another man, burned at the same time as I and in about the same degree, was still in the hospital. He was depending entirely upon man for his healing. I depended on God and was back at my desk in less than two months' time. I have much for which to thank God.

God has given me some wonderful opportunities to work for Him. I gave Him my life and He has let me go more than halfway around the world, into places that I never dreamed I'd ever visit, to tell people about Jesus.

I recently returned from a trip to Africa where it was my privilege to worship with many of those dear people who have come to know our Lord. I found God was there, too, when sickness overtook me, or when I needed help in any other way. God is my dearest Friend, the One who never forsakes me, and Who is always at my side. I love Him with all my heart.

Charles Rodman, Out of the Presbyterian Church



My name was put on the church roll when I was a very young boy. I considered myself a Christian, but I did not know what it meant to live a Christian life. Nobody ever told me that I needed a change of heart.

In my parents' home, the Bible was an open book, and I was brought up under the atmosphere of the church and Sunday school. The district school I attended was a two-mile trek from my home. It was a plain wooden building without any paint. We sat on plank benches at plain desks, many of which had several years' worth of initials carved into them. At these desks we learned our lessons, and during the

morning sessions, a chapter from the Bible was read to us. My mother was the school teacher. With all this background, God's Word was planted in my heart early, and I never got away from it.

As a young man, I began to study for the ministry because I believed the Bible was true; I found no reason to doubt it. I spent sixteen years in preparation for the ministry. For eight years I was in theological training under the very best of instructors at Princeton University. I majored in the Greek language, went through the whole routine, then returned home with three diplomas, but my life was still full of discouragement.

My church assigned me to pastor a congregation in the State of Washington. I used to face my parishioners on Sunday mornings knowing my life was not what it ought to be, knowing I had fallen short of the commandments and precepts of God's Word. I was preaching a standard for the Christian, but I myself failed to measure up to it.

I used to read in God's Word about the victory that a follower of Jesus has. In Romans 8:37, I read where Paul said, "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us," yet I was a defeated man. In John 14:27, I read where Jesus said, "My peace I give unto you," but I had no peace; there was nothing but discontent and unrest within my soul. Many times I wondered why, if I were a Christian, I did not have what the Word promised. Why could I not live up to the standard of the Bible? My peers confessed the same defeat, but said that we could not expect anything different this side of the grave. They said no man could live twenty-four hours without sin, so instead of my getting better and becoming more like Jesus, I began to stray further away from Him. I loved the things of the world, and there was no desire in my heart to praise God or to be thankful to Him. I had just about reached the point where I believed there was nothing to religion after all. Then I came to Portland, Oregon.

During the summer of 1913, a nondenominational convention was being held in Portland for individuals from all parts of the world. About 12,000 people attended this gathering, which was called the Good Citizenship Conference—the only one of its kind ever held. The governor of the State of Oregon talked on prison reform; a religious leader from Ireland was one of the chief speakers; another speaker, the editor of the Toronto Globe, had been a member of The Hague conference for preserving peace; and another was a prominent minister and social worker from Seattle, Washington. Great issues of the day, such as legislation, reforms, and social conditions were

discussed at length. With all the talk that went on among these learned minds about the disease of sin, one would expect to go away with some answers, but I never once heard them offer an adequate remedy.

At the close of one of the sessions, I happened to go down in another part of the city just in time to hear some born-again Christians tell the story of victory. They were at a street corner in what was called a "Gospel auto," and several of them were telling how God had wonderfully come into their hearts and changed the entire course of their lives. They were men who had been out in the world and received their education amid the "hard knocks" of life. When their resolutions and will power had failed, when their homes were broken up, and when every hope was crushed because sin had the mastery of them, they called upon God and He heard and answered. In evidence of that fact, they became sober men, went to work and earned an honest day's wage, and provided for their families.

Those men knew God in a way I had never known Him. To me it seemed a wonderful thing for an unseen, mighty power to sweep into a man's life, change the whole scene, and give victory over sin. As I heard those men tell that through one simple prayer to God their whole lives were changed, I knew I had found the answer to the questions the learned men up at the convention were trying to solve.

It wasn't a question of great learning, legislation, or prison reform; it was getting right with God through repenting of sin. It wasn't a matter of having to struggle against sinful desires, but it was the supernatural power of God coming down into a human heart and life. These people had found something between the lids of the Bible that all my education and church influence had never given me. My eyes were opened to what it really meant to be a Christian. I knew I needed to be born again.

Then and there, I determined to become a real Christian. I went up to my room at the Y.M.C.A. and sent a wire to my church in Washington, telling them that I would not be there to preach on Sunday. I also wired a minister and asked him to fill my place.

While meditating on some restitutions I needed to make, I decided to go and check out the campground those "street-meeting" men had told about. It was in the Fulton district of the city. I did not plan to attend a service, but when it started, I found myself sitting in the rear of the canvas tabernacle, trembling under the mighty convicting power of God. Someone invited me to pray at the altar, and I knelt there

trembling like a leaf. I prayed until there were only a few people left in the tabernacle, but I did not get saved, so I took the streetcar and returned to town. While I was aboard the streetcar, everything cleared up for me—God came into my heart and life that night and became real to me. No one can ever tell me that a man can become a Christian and not know it! That night God opened the heavens to me, brought the joy and peace of another world, and best of all, He gave me power and victory to live as a Christian ought to live.

When I got up the next morning, the peace was still in my heart. I went out to the campground again, and there I met the man who had been in charge of the street meeting I had listened to. I told him that God had saved me the night before—my first testimony.

On the following Sunday, God sanctified me. Then on the next Tuesday, I was baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, and spoke in another tongue as the Spirit gave utterance. A German minister, praying at the altar, understood what I was saying, and interpreted it.

I purposed to follow the Lord all the way. I resigned my position in the church in Washington. The head of the presbytery at that time was one who had been a chief speaker at the convention. He sent a man down to the Apostolic Faith Church to talk to me. I told him all about my experiences, and explained to him that I had never been saved before, had never known what a Christian really was, though I had been preaching the Gospel to others. He said, "If at any time you want to come back, it is open to you." But I never went back there.

This Gospel is the greatest thing in the world. That is why souls are being saved and testimonies are given of God's saving grace. I can say with Paul, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16). How thankful I am that I found Jesus—the answer to all man's problems.

On July 8, 1913, Reverend Rodman affiliated himself with the Apostolic Faith Church. From that time until his death on September 14, 1949, he dedicated his life to the Lord's work. He was a minister and an office worker at the headquarters office in Portland, where his duties included answering the foreign mail. He was Sunday School Superintendent for a number of years, and also wrote much of the Sunday school literature. Notable among his teachings was a special course of study given on the Book of Hebrews.