

**"Ye shall be
my witnesses"**

SHARING YOUR FAITH



By
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IX. COMMITMENT of ourselves to the atoning death of Christ as our only hope.

"He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (He. 11:6).

through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

"Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21).

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn. 6:44).

"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" (Ep. 2:8-9).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro. 10:9-10).

"Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, . . . for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (He. 12:2). The Lord Jesus made claims during His brief sojourn on earth that no other man had ever made. He claimed to be unique as to His person and ministry in the absolute sense. His unique claims of Deity were so well understood by His religious persecutors that they "took up stones again to stone him." This was the only answer to their gnawing consciences. The Lord Jesus did not die as a martyr who could no longer hold off his opponents, but as "the good shepherd" who "giveth his life for the sheep" (Jn. 10:11). Victory could only be won the hard way by meeting all the problems for man's full deliverance. There was only one Gospel. To submit to the loving forgiveness of God the Father through the atoning death of Christ, was a state so logical and beautiful, and to refuse so illogical and rebellious, that the Apostle Paul was moved to write: "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be a curse" (I Co. 16:22).

In the section on repentance or abandonment, it was said that salvation or reconciliation is a voluntary agreement on the part of both God and man to have a changed relationship. A "condition" is something established or agreed upon as a requirement to the fulfilling of something else. It is not something for the sake of which something else is done, but rather that without which that something cannot be done. A condition is thus to be distinguished from a cause. We have seen that repentance, or a total abandonment of supreme selfish interest, is the first condition of salvation or reconciliation to God. We now observe that saving faith is the second condition of salvation or reconciliation to God.

1. What objects or areas of truth must saving faith consider and take action towards?

Saving faith is a sincere facing of the full truth of reality and an elimination of every internal tension caused by our having rejected the truth of God in any area. Saving faith must involve all that the mind perceives to be true concerning the Godhead and man's relations. It is not that profound enlightenment must precede saving faith, but rather that nothing that we do understand shall be resisted. An open-hearted attitude must prevail toward every aspect of truth that we do perceive. Our life before coming to Christ in salvation consisted in a concentrated effort to "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Ro. 1:18 ASB). We sought to thrust out of our minds everything that disturbed us in our selfish manner of life. This attitude must be terminated before saving faith can possibly become a reality. We cannot keep on trying to flee from Divine evidences and truth, but must face it and allow it to affect us. Saving faith cannot cover up any negatives for it is a facing of the great reality of what God has done to redeem us.

- (1) In saving faith there must be an acceptance of every revealed truth that the Bible as the Word of God imparts to us. What we do not know of its wonders does not become an issue for action, but what we have learned and been persuaded of from its pages cannot be rejected if saving faith is to arise within us.

What the Bible tells us about the Godhead, and particularly about the true Deity and miraculous incarnation of the Lord Jesus and His atoning work, cannot be doubted or rejected. What the Bible tells us about our own persistent sinfulness and moral responsibilities must be received with appropriate realization of guilt. When the Bible affirms that we are dreadfully responsible for our guilt, we cannot go into self-pity and blame Adam or our circumstances, but only ourselves. The Bible is the only source-book we have on the very facts that saving faith must embrace. If we doubt any part of its revelations, how can we truly believe any part of it? "While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 12:36). "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (Jn. 12:46). "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life" (Jn. 5:24). Men are to be saved "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (II Th. 2:13). They must receive "the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2:10). All who are to be saved must receive the Bible, "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (I Th. 2:13).

- (2) Saving faith must be directed to God the Father, as a God of love and kindness who is willing to extend mercy and forgiveness when this can be done consistent with all His moral obligations as a righteous Moral Governor. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (He. 11:6). "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (He. 4:13), and thus faith must be operative toward the Father. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me," declared Jesus (Jn. 14:6). Saving faith involves a recognition of the greatness and majesty of God, which makes pride a double crime and total humility entirely appropriate. It involves a recognition of the relationship of the Divine Personalities (Jn. 14:10-11). "Ye believe in God, believe also in me" (Jn. 14:1). Faith in one cannot exist without faith in the other. Other passages indicating that faith toward God the Father must be involved in saving faith are: Jn. 5:24; 12:28, 44-45; Ro. 4:24; I Co. 2:5; He. 6:1; I Pe. 1:17, 21; Jas. 2:19; I Jn. 4:16; 5:10.
- (3) Saving faith must be directed toward the Lord Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the blessed Trinity, as true Deity who became incarnated into human flesh by means of the virgin birth for the purpose of revealing the Godhead and suffering unto death as "the Saviour of the world." Many passages make it clear that we must receive the Lord Jesus for all that He is said to be or we do not receive Him at all. We may group passages directing faith toward Christ as follows:
 - a. Those passages stressing the whole advent and saviourhood of Christ: Jn. 7:38-39; 8:24; 11:25-26; Acts 11:17; Ro. 3:22; Ga. 2:19-20; 3:22, 26; I Tim. 1:16; I Jn. 5:13.
 - b. Those passages stressing the Deity and Lordship of Christ: Jn. 1:1; 3:15, 16, 18, 36; 6:40, 46-47; 6:69; 11:27; 20:31; Acts 8:37; 16:31; 20:21; Ro. 10:9; Tit. 2:13 ("the great God even our Saviour Jesus Christ"); I Jn. 3:23; 5:1, 5, 10.
 - c. Those passages emphasizing Christ as Saviour: Jn. 1:12, 14; 4:42; 14:1; Ro. 3:26; I Tim. 4:10; Tit. 3:4, 6.
- (4) More specifically, saving faith must be directed to "the Gospel" or the atoning death of Christ: I Co. 15:1-4; Mk. 1:15; 6:50-58; Acts 15:7; Ro. 1:16; 3:25; 10:16-17; I Co. 1:23-24; Phil. 1:27; II Th. 1:8; 2:14.
- (5) The resurrection, ascension, and present glory of the incarnated Christ is set forth as a necessary object of saving faith: Lk. 24:39-41; Jn. 20:26-29; Acts 5:31; Ro. 4:24-25; 10:9; I Co. 15:4, 12, 14, 17; Phil. 2:9-11; I Th. 4:14; I Pe. 1:21.

2. Why is a climax of faith necessary to salvation?

The New Testament sets forth salvation as the outstanding climactic experience of our entire lives. The strongest contrasts from our daily observations are used to set forth this instantaneous transformation. Man is to pass

from spiritual death to spiritual life, from alienation from God to fellowship with God, from darkness to light, from disobedience to obedience, from supreme self-love to virtuous love, from loving the world to loving God, from a corrupt tree to a good tree, from a state of lawlessness to loving conformity to God's reasonable requirements. Nothing except a profound climax could introduce such a revolutionary change.

- (1) Every benefactor offering special privileges or blessings requires ratification on the part of the recipient, indicating that the offer has been accepted. God in this dispensation of special grace has issued "glad tidings" to whosoever will come. This calls for a formal acceptance on the basis of God's conditions.
 - (2) God is no respecter of persons and therefore there must be an opportunity given for man's response or reaction, which God can point to as the reason why special favors and blessings are granted to some and not to others.
 - (3) The forgiveness of sins and the inner transformation of the repentant sinner is a climax and requires a climax to initiate it. "Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit" (I Pe. 1:22).
 - (4) Man needs the opportunity to require him to take climactic action to terminate the life of selfishness or the "old man" and emerge into "the new man" of virtuous love. Much persuasion and consideration enters into man's capitulation to Christ, but when man finally yields it is a sudden experience. It is described as a crucifixion "together with Christ" and is an unlovely struggling death to the self-life. "The old man must be scratched to death with briars and thorns," said a saintly writer.
 - (5) In this "Dispensation of the grace of God," God is proposing to institute a new method of control in the lives of those who submit to His grace. God proposes to bring redeemed men into such an intimate relationship to the resurrected Christ in their inner lives that such will no longer need to be controlled or constrained by law or rules of action. A regulation of life is to be substituted for a regulation of law. Such a new and vital relationship requires a means of union. "The just shall live by faith" (Ro. 1:17). The beginning of this life of faith involves a climax, when man swings open the door of his innermost being to the heavenly guest who has been seeking admission. Whereupon the Saviour says: "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Re. 3:20).
3. Has a climax of faith always been required and is it now required as a condition of salvation and reconciliation to God?

There has been a great enlargement in the scope of faith as God's revelations to man have increased, but there has been no change in the requirement of faith as a condition of salvation. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Sarah are said to have "all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them" (He. 11:13). "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (Jn. 8:56). "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me" (Jn. 5:46), said the Saviour. "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and search diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you" (I Pe. 1:10-12). Faith always has been and always will be the meeting place between a loving and forgiving God and repentant sinners, as testified to in the following representative passages:

- (1) Old Testament passages set forth the requirement of faith under the Old Covenant.
 - a. With their system of animal sacrifices, faith was more external in its manifestations and therefore is often implied in the command to bring certain sacrifices at certain times. It was not enough to believe in animal sacrifices; they had to be actually brought in the prescribed way as a fulfillment of faith: Ge. 4:4; 8:20; 12:7-8; Le. 4:1-6, 35; 16:6, 15-16; 6:6-7.
 - b. Words used to describe the climax of saving faith and continued trust in God:
 - (a) To believe or to trust—Properly to stay, to sustain, to build up or support; thus to lean upon, to build upon, to trust, to confide in, to

believe upon, to become sure or certain: Ge. 15:6; Ex. 14:31; Nu. 14:11; De. 9:23; II Chr. 20:20; Ps. 19:7; 78:21-22; 111:7; Is. 28:16; 43:10; 53:1; Jonah 3:5.

(b) To trust or to confide—To confide in anyone, to set one's hope and confidence upon anyone; to be secure, to fear nothing for one's self: Ps. 9:10; 13:5; 33:21; 37:3, 5; 112:7; 143:8; Prov. 3:5; Is. 12:2; 26:3-4; 50:10; Jer. 17:7-8.

(c) To trust or to take refuge—Properly to flee for protection, to take refuge; hence to trust in someone: Ps. 2:12; 18:2; 31:1; 57:1-2; 71:1; Is. 57:13; Nahum 1:7.

(d) To rest or to stay upon—To prop, to lean upon; to place or lay something upon anything, so that it may rest upon and be supported by it; to lay the hand upon anything so as to lean upon the hand; to uphold, to sustain, to aid: Le. 1:2-5; 4:4, 15; II Chr. 32:8; Ps. 37:17, 24; 51:12; 112:8; 119:116; Is. 26:3; 48:2.

(2) New Testament passages set forth the requirement of faith with greater definiteness and frequency. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching (as the world views it) to save them that believe" (II Co. 1:21):

a. To believe—To believe a person, or a statement made by a person, to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit or place confidence in, to rely upon, to cast one's self upon something or someone as stable and trustworthy, to trust in or commit one's life to: Mk. 1:15; Jn. 3:15, 16, 36; 7:38-39; Acts 10:43; I Pe. 1:8; I Jn. 5:10. The passive voice is used in the following, where faithful men have been entrusted by God with the Scriptures and the Gospel: Ro. 3:2 ("committed"); I Co. 9:17; Ga. 2:7; I Th. 2:4; I Tim. 1:11; Tit. 1:3.

b. Faith—Belief, firm persuasion or conviction of the truth of anything, generally of the leaning of the entire personality upon God or Christ in absolute trust and confidence: Acts 15:9; Ro. 3:25; 5:1; Phil. 3:9; He. 11:1.

c. To receive—To take, take with the hand, lay hold of any person or thing in order to use, to admit, receive a person, give him access to one's self: Jn. 1:12. See Re. 3:20 for what is meant by receiving Christ.

d. To receive to one's self—To take or join to one's self, admit, acknowledge, receive something transmitted, to receive with the mind; properly, to take to one's side: Jn. 1:11; I Co. 15:1; Col. 2:6; I Th. 2:13; Jn. 14:3.

e. To trust or be persuaded—To persuade or urge, apply persuasion, seek to persuade, to be persuaded, to trust, have confidence, be confident: Acts 17:4; 28:23-24; II Co. 1:9; He. 2:13; Acts 18:4; 19:8, 26; 26:28.

f. To obey—To hearken to a command, be obedient unto, submit to, give ear to, listen to, render submissive acceptance; from a preposition, under, and a verb, to hear: Acts 6:7; Ro. 6:17; 10:16; II Th. 1:8; He. 5:9.

g. Obedience—As above: Ro. 1:5; 6:16 (compare with 10:10); 16:26; I Pe. 1:22.

h. To trust or hope—To direct hope towards something or someone, hopefully to trust in, to repose hope and confidence in: Mt. 12:21; Ro. 15:12; I Tim. 4:10; 5:5; 6:17; I Pe. 3:5.

i. Trust or hope—Expectation of good, trust, confidence: Ro. 8:24; 12:12; I Pe. 1:21.

j. To eat, in a spiritual sense of partaking intimately: Jn. 6:33, 35, 48, 50-51, 58; 6:53-57 (referring more particularly to Christ's essential life and sufferings).

4. What is not saving faith?

(1) Saving faith is not merely an intellectual state which professes belief in the facts of the Gospel and of the Bible.

(2) It is not to believe that one is saved. This is to believe the result before the actual event.

(3) It is not a self-energized and laborious effort to reach out into the unknown and "dare to believe." As we shall see, saving faith is a total committal of will to the sufferings of Christ as made real by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. It is a taking action on what we clearly perceive in our minds.

- (4) It is not a partial commitment of some sort that does not involve the whole life.
- (5) It is not a so-called receiving Jesus as Saviour and not as Lord, or a supposed optional discipleship. We either receive the Lord in all His august majesty as Lord and Saviour or we do not. A partial reception is impossible.
- (6) It is not merely an emotional climax brought about by fear of punishment and hell.

5. What is saving faith?

Saving faith is an intelligent committal of ourselves to the atoning death of Christ as the only means of forgiveness of past sins. It is an act of will upon an enlightened intelligence of all that is involved, with a deep realization of our guilt and our absolute dependence upon the mercy of God through the sufferings of Christ which we are permitted to have a personal interest in. It is a believing with the whole heart, the very center of our personalities: Ro. 10:9-10; 6:17. It is a firm belief in the testimony of the Word of God and in the impartial love of God, that the atoning death of Christ was made equally for all men, with no qualifications whatever. Therefore each one of us as individuals may enter into something that was actually made for us: Is. 53:6; Jn. 1:29; 3:17; 6:51; II Co. 5:14-15; I Tim. 2:3-6; He. 2:9; I Jn. 2:1-2. Also see Is. 1:18; 45:22; 55:1; Eze. 18:30-32; Mt. 23:37; Mk. 16:15; Acts 10:34-35; Ro. 2:11; Re. 3:20.

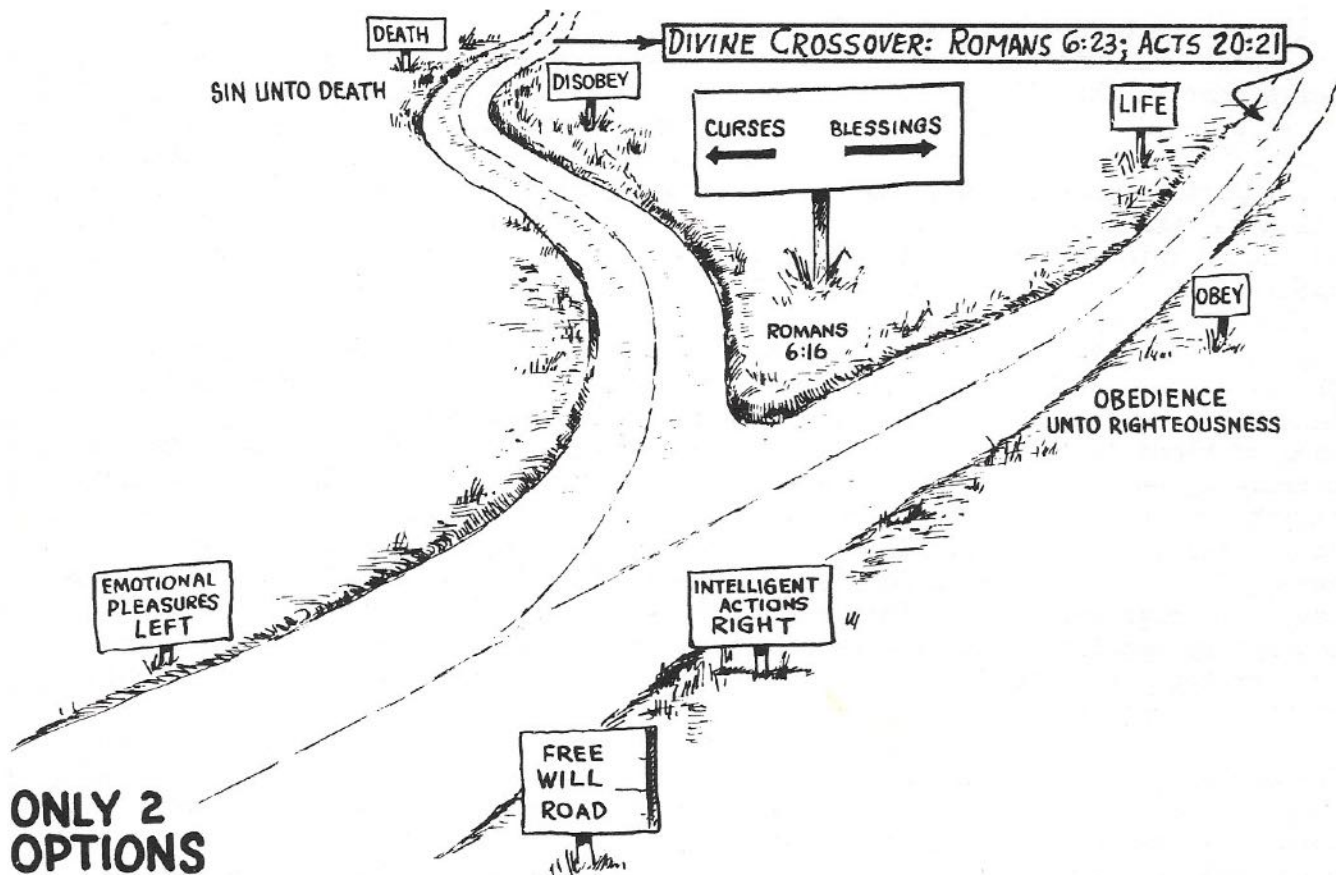
Repentant sinners are saved by a full committal of will, or by faith in the fact that the Lord Jesus has died or sacrificed His holy and sinless life that they might be forgiven of the sins upon their darkened consciences. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (He. 9:22). The repentant sinner accepts this terrifying necessity, with a broken and contrite heart, and experiences in actuality the power of the Cross through identification with Christ, who has "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (He. 9:26). Unto us who are being saved, "it is the power of God," wrote the Apostle Paul (I Co. 1:18). Men are not saved by believing in certain theories or mental deductions which they have learned, but by totally committing themselves to the absolute necessity and accomplished fact that the Lord Jesus Christ has suffered unto death that their very sins might be forgiven.

6. How and when does the climax of saving faith actually occur?

Saving faith will become a glorious vital experience in our innermost consciousness when God the Father is so convinced of the sincerity of our repentance that He gives us over to be intimately exposed to the atoning death of His blessed Son (Jn. 6:37). "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," said the Lord Jesus (44). "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (45). The Father, then, is active in the crisis of saving faith and draws us into a consciousness of the sufferings of the Son.

Saving faith is "not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ep. 2:8), in the sense that our minds must have vividly portrayed before them an object for faith to commit itself to before it can act. Saving faith is always our own act, a total committal or trust in the sufferings of Christ as our only hope of obtaining the forgiveness of the dreadful guilt of our sin. But faith cannot act without a full persuasion of the reality of its object. Faith is induced, not self-generated. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit" (I Co. 12:3). Saving faith is not a reaching out into the thin air of our imagination and "daring to believe" upon what we think may be true. It is not to "try Christ" to see if there is any reality to salvation. It is rather to be so overwhelmingly convinced of the certainty of the sufferings of Christ for our sins that we yield up our wills in total to be forgiven and transformed through God's great and solemn remedy. "Therefore said I (the Lord Jesus) unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (Jn. 6:65). When we allow the Holy Spirit to relive the cross of Christ before our minds until our own sin breaks down our hearts completely as it did the Saviour's, then will be inspired within us the look of faith out of desperation, even as many of the dying Israelites did to the serpent of brass (Nu. 21:7-9; Jn. 3:14-15; 12:32).

GOD RULES MORAL REALM BY PENALTIES-REWARDS



"Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Romans 6:16.

X. TRANSFORMATION or purification and renewal of our whole inner being.

- "Except a man be born again (or from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:3).
 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I Jn. 1:9).
 "God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, . . . purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9).
 "The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Tit. 3:5).
 "When we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ" (Ep. 2:5).
 "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us" (Ro. 5:5).

God endowed man's constitution with profound abilities and reactions to enable him to achieve great heights of comprehension and moral character in the imitation of his Creator. Just as virtuous actions would deposit uplifting characteristics in the inner personality, so sinful indulgences would degrade our inner beings and bring about disturbing agitations. "From within, out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts . . . and defile the man," declared the Saviour (Mk. 7:21-23). A "hardness and impenitent heart" (Ro. 2:5) becomes entrenched with each persistent action. A mighty tyrant is developed in the emotional life. "Fleshly lusts (or desires) . . . war against the soul" (I Pe. 2:11). "The motions (or passions) of sins . . . work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death" (Ro. 7:5). Men are "serving (or being a slave to) divers lusts (or desires) and pleasures" (Tit. 3:3), "fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind" (Ep. 2:3). They have become "unholy and profane" (I Tim. 1:9). There is a "filthiness of the flesh and spirit" (II Co. 7:1). God has had to give man up to "uncleanness" (Ro. 1:24). "Their mind and conscience is defiled" so that "nothing (is) pure" (Tit. 1:15). "Their conscience (is) seared with a hot iron" (I Tim. 4:2). Man's heart condemns him so that he cannot have "confidence toward God" (I Jn. 3:20-21). Man is in a state of "darkness" (Ep. 5:8), is "dead in . . . sins" (Col. 2:13), "having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God" (Ep. 4:18). "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest. . . There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Is. 57:20-21).

God in great mercy has made plans to bring about a full reconciliation or restoration of repentant sinners by transforming their whole inner personalities from the devastations of sin so that they can be admitted back into the circle of loving fellowship that the Godhead experience together (Jn. 17:21-23). Man does not need any new faculties or abilities to prepare him for such profound relationships, but needs a supernatural transformation from the moral chaos into which he has brought himself and an admittance back into a consciousness of the Divine life.

In describing this wonderful transformation, the Bible uses various analogies or comparisons with things that we have some knowledge of in its endeavor to enlighten our understanding. It is essential in understanding analogies that we do not press their interpretation too far, otherwise we are apt to miss the central point that is being stressed and go off into erroneous details. There is generally one feature of a particular truth that is being elucidated by an analogy. We must seek this out for our own enlightenment and then return to the main channel of truth with this added concept.

1. The Godhead made long-range plans to bring about the profound blessings that we are privileged to partake of in this "dispensation of the grace of God" (Ep. 3:2).
 - (1) Man cannot be regenerated or controlled by sheer force or by Divine omnipotence, but only by the application of appropriate means. Regeneration is a moral change in which the subject himself also has an active part. Therefore some means must be brought into existence that both God and man can use in this complete inner renovation of personality and also in sustaining spiritual life.
 - (2) The blessed atonement of Christ has become the means used by the Holy Spirit, in response to our faith, to purify our innermost being as we repent and induce us to live a new spiritual life in victory over sin. The advent and sufferings of Christ now accomplishes what the prefigured types could not (He. 9:24-26; 10:1-4, 9-14).

- (3) A chain of blessed prophecies were given to portray the exceedingly great blessings of Divine relationships that have now come to be bestowed through the agency of the Holy Spirit:

I Pe. 1:10-12.	Mt. 3:11-12.	Jn. 15:26.
Nu. 11:29 (24-29).	Lk. 3:21-22.	16:7-15.
Is. 11:1-4; 61:1-3.	4:18-19.	20:19-22.
55:1-3.	Jn. 4:13-14.	Mk. 16:14-18.
Joel 2:28-29.	7:37-39.	Lk. 24:44-49.
Lk. 1:67-68, 76-79.	Lk. 11:13.	Acts 1:3-8.
2:25-32.	Jn. 14:15-17, 25-26.	

- (4) These blessed prophecies were fulfilled:

- To Christ's disciples who were either Jews or Jewish proselytes on that first Day of Pentecost after His ascension: Acts 2:1-18, 33, 37-39.
- Upon Gentiles seeking the face of God in repentance apart from Judaism some ten years later: Acts 10:1-11:18. This was a true turning point in God's dealing with repentant sinners, Acts 11:18 indicating this change.
- Upon the Samaritans who turned to God at the preaching of Philip a few years before, a less important fulfillment: Acts 8:5-17.

- (5) These profound promises involved the formation of a new organism called "the Church" (or called-out ones from the world), in which the life of the risen Christ was to become a living reality through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit (Mt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; Ep. 1:22; 5:25).

- This intimate Divine relationship with repentant sinners is called a "mystery" (a secret or hidden thing) and was revealed particularly through the Apostle Paul: Ro. 16:25-26; Ep. 3:3-5; Col. 1:26-27; 2:2.
- The unity of the members of our physical body as related to our mind is used to illustrate the oneness of spiritual life which Christ purposes to live within us through the Holy Spirit, believers being called "the body of Christ:" Ep. 1:22-23; Ro. 12:5; I Co. 10:17; 12:13, 27; Ep. 3:6; 4:4; 5:23, 29-30; Col. 1:18; 3:15; also see I Co. 6:15, 17.
- This intimate relation with Christ through the gift of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit is said to be the blessed fulfillment of "the promise:" Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:4; Ga. 3:14, 22; Ep. 1:13; 3:6; He. 8:6; II Pe. 1:4.
- The Godhead is said to live or dwell within the very beings of believers through the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:17; Ro. 8:9; Col. 1:27; I Jn. 4:4), who have replaced the Old Testament Temple as God's dwelling-place (I Co. 3:9; 6:19-20; Ep. 2:22) and the priesthood (I Pe. 2:5, 9; Re. 1:6).
- Believers as indwelt by the Holy Spirit are in happy submission to and are owned by God: Lk. 17:21; I Co. 6:19-20; Ga. 5:24; Ep. 1:14; 5:25-27; Col. 1:13; Tit. 2:14; I Pe. 2:9.
- The frequent use of the word "grace" as characterizing "the dispensation of the grace of God" is to be viewed as the greatest condescension of the Godhead to bless totally-undeserving mankind since the fall, and not in any sense of leniency or as compromise with the unchanging demands of repentance and submission as the first condition of salvation: Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30; 20:21, 24; 26:19-20; Ro. 6:14; Ep. 2:5, 8; I Pe. 5:5.

2. This blessed transformation of heart and life from the defilement of sin (Tit. 1:15) to the glorious deliverance from sin (Jn. 8:36; Ga. 5:1) is described in the New Testament by many profound words and analogies:

- (1) The contrasting words of physical death and life are applied to the revolutionary moral change in passing from a self-centered existence, with all its emotional chaos and frustrations, called death, to a completely new satisfying state of love in a partaking of the life of the Godhead, called life:

- Living a life that is real and genuine, an emergence from "death" (Ep. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13; Ep. 4:18, "alienated from the life of God"): Jn. 4:14; Acts 11:18; Ro. 6:4; 8:6; Col. 3:3-4; I Jn. 5:11-12; Jn. 4:10; 7:38; Ga. 2:20; I Jn. 4:9.

- Pass or go over from one place to another: Jn. 5:24 (out of from); I Jn. 3:14.

- c. Make alive, give life, cause to live: Jn. 6:63; II Co. 3:6.
 - d. Make alive together with: Ep. 2:5; Col. 2:13.
 - e. Raise up together: Ep. 2:6; Col. 2:12; 3:1.
 - f. Transformed or changed into another form: Ro. 12:2; II Co. 3:18; Mt. 17:2 (transfigured, the same word used of Christ).
 - g. Partaker, sharer or partner: II Pe. 1:4; Lk. 5:10 (of James and John).
- (2) Words used of parenthood and of the bringing of new life into existence, applied to the radical newness of spiritual transformation and the beginning of a new life in relation to God:
- a. Beget or be born, to be begotten, to bear, bring forth, or give birth to, to be a parent to anyone, to impart or induce spiritual life: Jn. 1:13; 3:3, 5, 6, 7, 8; I Co. 4:15; Phil. 10; I Jn. 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18.
 - b. The preposition rendered "out of from" occurs without the above verb, but with the same meaning: I Jn. 3:10; 4:6, 13; 5:19.
 - c. Bring forth, give birth to, or generate by spiritual birth: Jas. 1:18.
 - d. Regeneration, a new birth or a re-birth, a re-creation or a moral renovation, a restoration or a bringing back again of a former state or condition: Tit. 3:5.
 - e. Beget again or be born again, a preposition back or again prefixed to the above verb to beget: I Pe. 1:3, 23.
 - f. Newborn or just born, a prefix "just now:" I Pe. 2:2.
 - g. Create, transform or completely change, properly to make habitable or reduce from a state of disorder and wildness, thus to create, call into being (as Col. 1:16; Re. 4:11; 10:6), frame, form or shape: Ep. 2:10; 4:24.
 - h. Creation or creature (the noun from above), a new spiritual creation, a renovated creature, a creature new in kind, character or mode, used for creation (Ro. 1:20; 8:22, 39; Re. 3:14): II Co. 5:17; Ga. 6:15.
 - i. Workmanship or work, that which has been made: Ep. 2:10.
- (3) Words for physical eating and drinking to sustain and energize physical life applied to a spiritual partaking of the atonement of Christ and the life-giving energy of God: Jn. 6:48, 50, 51; 6:54, 56, 57, 58 (another verb, present tenses); Jn. 4:13-14; 7:37-39 (of living water); I Co. 10:4.
- (4) The putting off and putting on of a garment is likened to a termination of a self-centered manner of life and the beginning of an entirely different life of devotion to God and to our fellowmen: Ep. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9-10; Ro. 13:14.
- (5) Words for darkness and light applied to the contrasting moral character of a life lived for one's self with a life lived for God and our fellowmen: Mt. 6:22-23; Jn. 3:19-21; 8:12; II Co. 6:14; Ep. 5:8; I Pe. 2:9; I Jn. 1:5-7.
- (6) Words for love, a deliverance from a state of self-centeredness into a state of good-will or devotion, a voluntary purpose of mind:
- a. To love: I Pe. 1:8, 22; I Jn. 3:14; 4:7-8, 19; 5:1.
 - b. Love: Ro. 5:5; Ga. 5:22; Col. 1:8; I Jn. 2:15; 4:16; 5:3; Re. 2:4.
- (7) Word to become, used of marriage, applied spiritually: Ro. 7:4-6 (Ep. 5:23-32).
3. Words and descriptions that stress the NEGATIVE ASPECTS of this glorious transformation, indicating a miraculous removal of and deliverance from the seemingly indelible defilements of sin in our innermost being and a restoration of proper moral balance:
- (1) Words indicating our condition as we present ourselves for the transforming operations of the grace of God:
- a. Defilement (several different words): Mk. 7:23; I Co. 8:7; II Co. 7:1; Tit. 1:15; Re. 3:4.
 - b. Filthy (properly of filthy or dirty clothing): Re. 22:11.
 - c. Unrighteous, not only in conduct but in character: I Co. 6:9; II Tim. 2:19; Re. 22:11.
 - d. Uncleanliness, unchastity, lewdness, impurity: Ro. 1:24; Ga. 5:19; Ep. 4:19; 5:3, 5; Col. 3:5; II Pe. 2:10, 20.
 - e. Nature, our inner personality, modes of feeling and acting which by long habit has become a part of us: Ep. 2:3.

- (2) Words associated with water and the idea of removing physical dirt from our bodies or clothing, applied figuratively to the inner removal of the stains of personality through the application of the atonement of Christ:
 - a. Water used in washing or bathing, symbolizing the idea of spiritual cleansing or purification: Mt. 3:11, etc.; He. 10:22; Jn. 3:5; Ep. 5:26 (Jas. 1:18).
 - b. Wash or washing (several words): Jn. 13:10; Ep. 5:26; Tit. 3:5; He. 10:22; II Pe. 2:22; Rev. 7:14; 22:14; Acts 22:16 and I Co. 6:11 (off or away from).
 - c. Idea of white garments associated with washing: Mt. 17:2 (of Christ); Re. 3:4-5, 18; 7:13-14; 16:15; 19:8 (righteous acts of the saints).
 - (3) A family of words meaning clean, to cleanse or make clean, applied in a spiritual sense: Mt. 5:8; Tit. 1:15; Jas. 1:27; Jn. 15:2-3; Acts 15:9; II Co. 7:1; I Jn. 1:7, 9; He. 9:13-14; II Tim. 2:21.
 - (4) Associated words meaning pure, to make pure or cleanse: I Jn. 3:3; I Pe. 1:22.
 - (5) The word fire, as having special significance of God's presence in Old Testament times, is associated with cleansing and purifying: Mt. 3:11; I Pe. 1:7; Re. 3:18.
 - (6) A family of words meaning holy, holiness, or to make holy: Ro. 12:1; I Co. 3:17; Re. 22:11; I Pe. 1:15; He. 12:10; I Th. 3:13; I Co. 1:30; II Th. 2:13; I Co. 6:11; II Tim. 2:21; Ep. 4:24; I Pe. 1:2.
 - (7) A family of words meaning righteous, righteousness, or to make righteous, also to declare righteousness: Mt. 5:45; I Jn. 3:7; Ro. 6:18-19; 14:17; II Co. 6:14; I Pe. 2:24; I Co. 6:11; Tit. 3:7; Tit. 2:12; Ro. 8:4; Rev. 22:11
 - (8) Words for death, indicating a separation and deliverance from our old manner of life and its disturbing forces: Ro. 6:6-8; Col. 3:3; I Pe. 2:24; Ga. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14.
 - (9) The word heal, to cure or make whole, applied spiritually: I Pe. 2:24.
 - (10) Words to loose or make free from what is binding one: I Jn. 3:8; Re. 1:5; Jn. 8:36; Ro. 6:18, 22; Ga. 5:1; Tit. 2:14.
 - (11) Words that describe vividly the net result of the cleansing and purifying operations of the Holy Spirit: Col. 1:21; Ep. 5:27; II Co. 3:18; II Pe. 3:14; I Jn. 3:21; II Tim. 1:3.
4. Words and descriptions that stress the POSITIVE ASPECTS of this glorious transformation, portraying the invasion of the manifested life of the Godhead to fill our cleansed and purified personalities with invigorating spiritual life and refreshing God-consciousness:
- (1) Words indicating that the Holy Spirit is a special gift from the Father and the risen Lord Jesus, which repentant believers receive or partake of: Lk. 11:13; Jn. 14:16; Acts 5:32; 15:8; Acts 2:38; 10:45; Ga. 4:6; Jn. 7:39; He. 6:4; Ro. 8:9; I Co. 6:19.
 - (2) Words indicating that the Holy Spirit is not to be a mere addition to our personality but is to permeate our entire being and enter into all our living: Ro. 8:9, 11; Ep. 3:17; Jn. 14:17; I Jn. 2:27; Ro. 8:15; Ga. 3:28; Ro. 5:5; Jn. 14:17; Ro. 14:17.
 - (3) Analogies that illustrate the intimate relationship of the Holy Spirit:
 - a. Vine and branches, a partaking of the risen Christ's life: Jn. 15:5.
 - b. Seal, to mark distinctively or confirm: II Co. 1:22; Ep. 1:13; 4:30.
 - c. Anoint or anointing, a raising to privilege: II Co. 1:21; I Jn. 2:20, 27.
 - d. Earnest, a somewhat given beforehand: II Co. 1:22; 5:5; Ep. 1:14.
 - e. Marriage relation in all sacredness: I Co. 6:15-17.
 - (4) The words baptize and baptism appear to represent a twofold symbolism in the New Testament. The words basically mean to dip, immerse, submerge, to cleanse or purify by dipping or submerging, to wash or make clean with water.
 - a. Baptism in water, to which Christ submitted (Mt. 3:16) and instituted as a symbol of Christianity (Mt. 28:19-20), also by the Holy Spirit through the apostles (Acts 2:38), was given to symbolize profound spiritual transactions that were taking place or had taken place.
 - b. Baptism in a spiritual sense refers to a most sacred and holy experience in being overwhelmed in God-consciousness: Mt. 3:11; Jn. 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16;

I Co. 12:12-13. The word conveyed the idea of being completely permeated and overwhelmed in our innermost consciousness by a strong manifestation of His presence, or that the Holy Spirit would be liberally bestowed or poured out upon repentant believers. This baptism in the Holy Spirit also involves the idea of "fire" (Mt. 3:11). In the Old Testament, fire was associated with the idea of cleansing and purifying from sin and spiritual defilement (as Is. 4:4; 6:4-7; Mal. 3:2).

By using the two common illustrations of water and fire in connection with the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit, it appears that we have symbolized the twofold idea of a complete exposure and cleansing from all sin (Acts 15:9) and an overwhelming manifestation of God's presence and power to deliver from the power of sin and energize for Christian service. This was the manifestation on Pentecost, where "there did appear to them tongues (or tongue-like flames) dividing into parts and distributing themselves like as of fire, and it sat down upon every one of them" (Acts 2:3).

- (5) Various words are used to describe the wonderful blessings of this intimate relationship of the Holy Spirit with the Christian:
- a. Fellowship with and direct access to the presence of the Godhead: Ep. 2:18-22; II Co. 3:18; 4:6; 5:14; I Jn. 1:3; Re. 3:20.
 - b. Know or knowledge, to become acquainted with or come to know by direct personal experience in our consciousness, which does not depend upon mental observation or deductions as do three other Greek words for know: Jn. 7:17; 14:17, 20; 17:3; Ro. 15:14; II Co. 4:6; Phil. 3:8, 10; II Tim. 2:19; II Pe. 3:18; I Jn. 2:3; 3:24; 4:6, 13, 16; 5:13, 20.
 - c. Know thoroughly or have a precise and correct knowledge grounded in personal experience or acquaintance (the above words with a preposition "upon" prefixed for emphasis): Ro. 1:28; Ep. 1:17; 4:13; Col. 1:6; 3:10; I Tim. 2:4; He. 10:26; II Pe. 1:2, 3, 8; 2:20, 21.
 - d. Renew or renewing, to renovate, restore, transform, refresh, invigorate, make new, cause to grow up anew: Ro. 12:2; II Co. 4:16; Ep. 4:23; Tit. 3:5; He. 6:6. This renewing takes place in the mind and must be a continuous action. It is a "newness of life" (Ro. 6:4) and a "newness of spirit" (7:6).
 - e. Water represented as bestowed freely and in abundance typifies the rich availability of refreshing experiences through the indwelling Holy Spirit: Jn. 4:10, 14; 7:37-39; Re. 7:17; 21:6; 22:1, 17. The idea is also expressed in I Co. 12:13 (all one Spirit were given to drink).
 - f. Full or filled with the Holy Spirit is to be the constant experience of the Christian, a continuous succession of climaxes as we look in faith to the Holy Spirit for delivering and transforming power: Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 6:3, 5, 8; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:9, 52; Ep. 3:19; 5:18; I Jn. 1:4.
 - g. Power, strength, might, energy, ability or efficacy is to characterize the Christian in his personal life and service for Christ: Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8; 6:8; Ro. 15:13; I Co. 2:4; I Th. 1:5. Also see Ro. 1:16; I Co. 1:18, 24; Ep. 1:19; and Ro. 6:4; 8:4; Ga. 5:16 for the victorious spiritual walk.
 - h. Fruit, that which originates or comes from something, an effect or result, used concerning the graces of character in the life of the Christian which are continually generated by the Holy Spirit if allowed to do so: Ga. 5:22-23. They are in sweet contrast to the crude "works of the flesh," 5:19-21.
 - i. Comfort or inner re-inforcement of the Holy Spirit as a Comforter or helper: Jn. 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; Acts 9:31; II Co. 1:3-6; 7:4.
 - j. Grieve and quench represent actions which the Christian may take in opposition to the Holy Spirit only because of His intimacy and involvement in our lives: Ep. 4:30; I Th. 5:19. To grieve is to affect with sadness or sorrow, to offend. To quench is to suppress, extinguish, hinder, thwart or dampen, properly of fire or things on fire, to stifle or smother.

5. The words and analogies used, and verb tenses, overwhelmingly indicate that this grand transformation of heart and life is of a climactic or sudden nature. It is the most vital and consuming experience of our lives. Most of the verbs used are

in tenses that indicate a climax, in addition to the very nature of the words. The verb in the Greek language has tense, mode, and voice. The main idea of tense is to define the kind of action represented. The Greek aorist tense represents always a distinct, sudden, or climactic action. The following aorist tenses, therefore, demonstrate beyond all doubt the glorious climactic nature of the transforming grace of God, which the blessed Gospel promises to repentant sinners as a vital experience in their innermost consciousness. Some Greek perfect tenses are also included, which are marked by an (*). These also represent climactic action, including previous progress and the existence of the completed action.

(1) Those verbs that describe the **WHOLE** climactic experience of transformation:

- a. Saved, through washing and renewing: Tit. 3:5.
- b. Born (spiritually): Jn. 1:13; 3:3, 5, 7; I Co. 4:15; Phile. 10; I Jn. 5:1 ("beget"); 5:18 ("begotten"). Also see the following perfect tenses*: Jn. 3:6, 8; I Jn. 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1 ("born" and "begotten"); 5:4; 5:18 ("born").
- c. Born again or beget again (above with prefix "again"): I Pe. 1:3, 23.
- d. Bring forth, give birth to: Jas. 1:18.
- e. Make alive together with: Ep. 2:5; Col. 2:13.
- f. Created (transformed or completely changed): Ep. 2:10.
- g. Put off (the old manner of life) and put on the new: Ep. 4:22-24.
- h. Know thoroughly by experience: Col. 1:6; II Pe. 2:21*.
- i. Open the ("heart") door, whereupon Christ spiritually manifests Himself; Re. 3:20.
- j. Passed out of from death into life: Jn. 5:24*.

(2) Those verbs that stress the **NEGATIVE ASPECTS** of the climactic experience of transformation:

- a. Died: Col. 3:3; Ro. 6:7 (to sin); 6:8 (with Christ).
- b. Crucified (in a spiritual resemblance): Ro. 6:6 ("our old man"); Ga. 5:24 ("the flesh"); 6:14* ("the world"); 2:20* ("I" together with).
- c. Set you free (by Christ, "free indeed"): Jn. 8:36.
- d. Loosed us ("from our sins by his blood," ASV): Re. 1:5.
- e. Washed ("in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God"): I Co. 6:11.
- f. Cleansed: Acts 15:9 ("their hearts by faith"); Ep. 5:26 ("by the washing of the water by word"). Also see kindred word "purified:" I Pe. 1:22*.
- g. Rendered fit or glorious: Col. 1:12.
- h. Healed (spiritually): I Pe. 2:24 ("to sins having died, to righteousness we might live," aorist tenses, climactic).

(3) Those verbs that stress the **POSITIVE ASPECTS** of the climactic experience of transformation. These all relate to the blessed bestowal of the promised Holy Spirit as the inner abiding Comforter, who is the special Agent of the Godhead to manifest the Divine life and power in this "dispensation of the grace of God." After cleansing or purifying, He takes up His abode in a climactic manner:

- a. Become "partakers (companions, partners, or sharers) of the divine nature:" II Pe. 1:4.
- b. Becoming "partakers (sharers or participators) of the Holy Spirit:" He. 6:4.
- c. Filled "with the Holy Spirit:" Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31.
- d. Poured out: Acts 2:33; Tit. 3:6 ("shed on us abundantly"); Acts 10:45*; Ro. 5:5* ("the love of God . . . in our hearts by the Holy Spirit").
- e. Fell on (of the Holy Spirit upon a group of Gentiles): Acts 10:44; 11:15.
- f. Did give (the Holy Spirit): Acts 5:32; 15:8; Ro. 5:5 ("given to us").
- g. Sent forth (the Holy Spirit "into your hearts"): Ga. 4:6.
- h. Baptized (in the Holy Spirit): I Co. 12:13.
- i. Given to drink (of the Holy Spirit in a baptism): I Co. 12:13.
- j. Received (the Holy Spirit): Acts 10:47; Ro. 8:15.
- k. Anointed (by the Holy Spirit, I Jn. 2:27): II Co. 1:21.
- l. Sealed (the Holy Spirit's presence is the seal): II Co. 1:22.
- m. Endued with power (the promised coming of the Holy Spirit): Lk. 24:49.
- n. Raised up together (with Christ to partake of His resurrection life): Col. 3:1.

6. Sanctified (or made holy by the vital life of the Holy Spirit): I Co. 6:11 (follows "washed"); Ep. 5:26 (follows "having cleansed," an aorist participle auxiliary to the main verb).

The evidence that this blessed transformation has taken place is an overwhelming consciousness that the loving disposition of the Godhead has moved into our innermost beings with overflowing joy (Ro. 5:5) and changed our entire outlook and purpose in life (Phil. 1:20-21). The atoning love of Christ our Saviour has exposed and conquered our hearts by compassionate forgiveness (Ga. 2:20), so that we now serve our heavenly Father and our fellowmen "in newness of spirit" (Ro. 7:6):

- (1) There is a direct witness of the Holy Spirit with our spirit, the highest part of our being where God-consciousness resides, that we have in fact been reconciled to God: Acts 15:8; Ro. 8:15-16; I Co. 12:13; Ga. 4:4-6; I Jn. 5:10; Re. 3:20.
- (2) There is a fullness of warm-hearted love to God and to our fellowmen in happy submission to the guidance and deliverance of the Holy Spirit, our new-found Companion and Comforter: Jn. 13:35; Ro. 5:5; 6:22; 9:1-3; I Co. 6:20; 10:17; 12:3; 16:22; II Co. 3:18; Ga. 5:22-23; I Jn. 4:7; 5:1; Re. 2:4.
- (3) The Holy Spirit may choose to manifest His presence and His approval of our full reconciliation by bestowing miraculous gifts of grace for various purposes, as was often true in the introduction and establishment of the early Church: Mk. 16:17-20; Acts 2:4, 8, 11; 8:17-18; 10:45-47; 19:6; I Co. 12:11.
- (4) There cannot but be a deep inner consciousness that we have been cleansed from the defilement of all sin and delivered from its power, since "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" and the renewing of the Holy Spirit permeates into the deep recesses of the mind and heart: Jn. 8:34, 36; I Co. 6:11; II Co. 5:17; II Th. 2:13; He. 6:4-5; 13:12; I Pe. 2:3; I Jn. 3:21.
- (5) Victory over sin through the indwelling Holy Spirit is the predominant characteristic of daily life, lapses into periods of selfish indulgence being the exceptions: Ro. 6:2, 4, 14; 7:6; 8:4, 14, 26-27; II Co. 4:16; Ga. 5:16-18, 25; I Jn. 2:12-14; 3:4-10; 5:3-5.
- (6) There is a greatly-enlarged knowledge of the nature and Being of God, and the whole realm of truth: Jn. 17:3; Ro. 15:14; I Co. 2:12; Phil. 3:7-11; Col. 1:6; I Th. 5:5; II Pe. 1:2; 3:18; I Jn. 2:20, 21, 27; 5:20.
- (7) The coming of the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts always brings great rejoicing, which is only a beginning of serene times of worship and great blessing in the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The cares of life are cast into oblivion and we are "anxious for nothing" in overwhelming eternal consciousness. A very vigorous word is used, to rejoice exceedingly or be glad with exceeding joy, properly meaning to jump or leap for joy. This word was used by our blessed Lord as He pondered the mercy of the Father in blessing men (Mk. 10:21). He looked beyond His burdens to the joy of accomplishing His mission (He. 12:2). Another word used means full assurance, firm persuasion, or the most certain confidence. Even this did not express what took place in Thessalonica, so the Apostle Paul had to prefix another superlative "much." Such is the riches of our glorious salvation: Acts 16:34 ("rejoiced exceedingly"); Ro. 14:17 (a state of "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"); Ep. 5:18-20 ("singing and psalming in your heart to the Lord"); Col. 3:16 (similarly); I Th. 1:5-6 ("much full-assurance"); I Pe. 1:6-8 ("ye are rejoicing exceedingly with joy unspeakable and having come to be made glorious").

7. This blessed moral transformation of heart and life takes place through the co-operative effort of three free moral agents: The Holy Spirit, the servant of Christ, and the subject being transformed. All agents employ the one instrument—the Word of God, particularly as it presents the record of the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ and His accomplished sufferings for the sins of the world:
- (1) The Holy Spirit, as the delegated Agent of the Godhead, takes the initiative to transform the whole personality of the repentant sinner through the application of the atoning sufferings of Christ and the gift of His energizing presence. The Holy Spirit is said:

- a. To give spiritual birth: Jn. 1:13; 3:3-8; I Jn. 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18.
The Father is also said to be involved (Jas. 1:18; I Pe. 1:3) and also the Son (I Jn. 2:29).
 - b. To create or make alive through Christ: II Co. 5:17; Ep. 2:5, 10.
 - c. To cleanse: Acts 15:9; Ep. 5:26; Tit. 2:14; I Jn. 1:7, 9.
 - d. Washing of regeneration: Tit. 3:5.
 - e. To sanctify: Jn. 17:17; I Co. 6:11; Ep. 5:26; Re. 22:11.
 - f. To transform: Ro. 12:2; II Co. 3:18 (same word concerning Christ, Mt. 17:2).
 - g. To be renewed: Ep. 4:23 ("in the spirit of your mind").
 - h. Renewing: Ro. 12:2 ("of the mind"); Tit. 3:5 ("of the Holy Spirit").
- (2) The servant of God is represented as having a vital active part in the transformation of a soul by the use of the same word, to beget, and the same climactic tense as is used concerning the agency of the Holy Spirit. The human agent is regarded as a spiritual parent because: (1) Of a voluntary loving sacrificial life manifesting the compassion of Christ (Jn. 15:8; Acts 20:33-35; I Co. 4:9-13; 9:19-23; 10:33; II Co. 12:14-15; I Th. 2:6-9; II Th. 3:8-9); (2) of a faithful witness to the truth of the Gospel (Acts 1:8; 8:4; Ro. 1:15-16; 10:15; I Co. 15:1-4; I Th. 2:3-4, 13); (3) of earnest Spirit-anointed persuasion (Acts 6:10; 18:4; 26:18, 24, 28; I Co. 2:1-5; II Tim. 4:1-2; Jude 3); and (4) of persisting on in a great burden of prayer and spiritual travail in faith for specific souls (Jn. 15:5; Ro. 9:1-3; II Co. 11:28; Ga. 4:19; Ep. 3:14-19; Mt. 17:19-21). Such intense agency of concern and prayer enables the Holy Spirit to do more for souls without being accused of partiality.
- a. To the Corinthians the Apostle Paul wrote: "In Christ Jesus through the glad tidings (or the Gospel) I myself did beget you (did give birth to you, did bring you forth, or did impart spiritual life unto you). I am exhorting you, therefore, imitators of me become" (I Co. 4:15-16).
 - b. To Philemon he wrote: "I am beseeching thee concerning my child (or son--literally, the of me child, or the child of mine), whom I did beget in the bonds, Onesimus" (10).
- (3) The subject himself is an agent in his own transformation of heart and life by actively applying in absolute faith and trust the sufferings of Christ, as made real by the Holy Spirit, to his needy soul. He must:
- a. Open the door of his needy heart to the resurrected Christ, who is humbly and gently knocking: Re. 3:20. Man must awake from spiritual "sleep" (Ep. 5:14).
 - b. Apply "eye salve" to his dull spiritual vision which he has neglected so long in his resistance to all moral enlightenment surrounding him: Re. 3:18.
 - c. Grant access to the implanted Word of God: Jas. 1:21.
 - d. "Wash" himself: I Co. 6:11; Re. 7:14; 22:14.
 - e. Purify himself: Jas. 4:8; I Pe. 1:22; I Jn. 3:3 (at the provided remedy).
 - f. Cleanse himself: II Co. 7:1.
 - g. Be willing to pursue sanctification: He. 12:14.
 - h. "Eat" and "drink" or partake of the Lord Jesus Christ and His sufferings: Jn. 6:50-51, 53-56.
 - i. "Put off" the old manner of life and "put on" the new: Ep. 4:22, 24; Col. 2:11; 3:9-10; Ga. 3:27.
 - j. Consent to an unhappy "crucifixion" of his selfish life in order that a new happy blessed life with the risen Christ may become a reality: Ro. 6:6; Ga. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14.
- (4) The accomplished life and atoning sufferings of Christ, as recorded in the Word of God, provide the means through which the innermost being of the repentant sinner is purified and quickened to a newness of life: Jn. 8:32, 36; 17:17; I Co. 4:15; Ep. 5:26 ("washing of the water by word"); Jas. 1:18, 21; I Pe. 1:22-23.

Thus in the transformation of the repentant sinner, the Holy Spirit illumines and applies the sufferings of Christ and bestows spiritual life; the servant of Christ is the human agent to proclaim, pray, and influence with compassionate firmness; the subject is drawn to the suffering heart of Christ in spite of painful self-disclosures and actively partakes of the blessed remedy to pass from the abyss of ugly selfishness and be "translated into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13).

XI. C O N T I N U A T I O N in the love of God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

"Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 20-21).

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; . . ." (Jn. 15:9-11).

"When he (Barnabas) came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23).

"Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Tim. 4:16).

"And you . . . hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel" (Col. 1:21-23).

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest . . ." (He. 12:14-17).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. . . For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (He. 3:12-15).

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Re. 3:5, 3-5).

We have seen in previous studies that sin is a refusal to live intelligently toward God and toward our fellowmen, or a refusal to regard God's welfare supremely and our fellowmen's equally with our own. Sin has resulted in guilt of conscience, separation from God, bodily weakness and the toil of life, and death, after which comes judgment for sin and eternal remorse. Salvation is to be rescued from the consequences of our sin and reconciled back into the favor and blessing of God. The conditions of this restored relationship with God are things that must take place before salvation from the solemn perils of our present life can become a certainty.

Spiritual victory or deliverance in temptation is not to be achieved as we first think. Sadly enough, we have all exercised our natural tendencies to fight temptation and overcome sin in our own strength, either because we were never taught the promises of the Gospel or because we failed to apprehend what was taught to us. This led to the gruesome experiences of defeat and frustration that the Apostle Paul recorded in Romans 7:7-24. This took place either before his conversion after his mind had perceived much truth, or after his conversion but before he himself had learned the secret that unlocks the power of God. As he looked away from himself to his glorified and loving Saviour, he experienced the relaxation of deliverance and could truly worship in the words, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro. 7:25).

The first condition of salvation we have abundantly seen to be repentance, or a turn from all rebellion of heart against the loving and intelligent will of God. It is a willingness to forsake and die out to our own selfish ways, and seek the happiness of God supremely and that of our fellowmen equally. Certainly, God can never reconcile rebels to Himself. How could sinners be cleansed from sin if they insist upon continuing to defile themselves with it?

The second condition of salvation is the committal of faith. The repentant sinner must commit his whole case for the forgiveness of past sins to the substituted sufferings of Christ as the only possible way in which God could extend mercy consistent with His moral obligations. Thereupon there takes place the gracious pardon of past sin and the transforming grace of God, so that the renewed soul looks to God in profound gratitude and happily resolves that there shall be no more sin to cloud the horizon of his being and bring unhappiness to the Godhead and to his fellowmen.

It is now affirmed that there is a third condition of salvation--that both the Old and New Testaments insist that future salvation is conditional to the Christian who has been truly reconciled to God. As the Lord Jesus said, the restored soul is to "sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (Jn. 5:14). Every possible Divine aid is promised to the Christian to keep him in a happy state of deliverance from sin. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free

indeed," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 8:36). But there are solemn possibilities of apostasy, which has called forth endless warnings in the Word of God. Although the Holy Spirit is taking the initiative and is working within the believer's heart and mind in the direction of happy obedience, it is we ourselves who must "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12-13). Man is still profoundly endowed with free moral agency and responsibility, which God will not violate. It is "Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (He. 3:7-8).

We will consider passages mostly from the New Testament, since this more specifically relates to our present situation. However, although the blessings of salvation have greatly multiplied in the present age of God's special grace, the requirements for salvation have always remained the same and always will until the end of man's earthly probation. We will present some of the many Scriptures which, it is affirmed, establish the proposition that the saints of God must continue in happy submission to their most holy faith until the end of their earthly lives if their souls are to be finally saved. The passages relating to the Christian sojourn will be grouped under various questions relating to the proposition:

1. What is meant by continuation in the love of God?

Through the blessed gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ we have been brought into the most intimate relationship of life. Transformation has reached into our innermost beings. God has imparted Divine life to us (II Pe. 1:4) in a habitation of friendship (Jn. 15:14-15; Ep. 2:22) and absolute intimacy (I Co. 6:17; 12:12-13), resulting in total voluntary ownership (I Co. 6:19-20). With hearts full of love and gratitude our minds are overwhelmingly persuaded that we have found the true way of life for which we were created. We exclaim with Peter of old, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn. 6:68). We can only pray, "Lord, evermore give us this bread" (Jn. 6:34). This profound background of Christian experience must always be kept in mind in considering the subject of continuance in the faith. The Christian is not to be considered as persevering in something that he is not happy over and therefore is exceedingly laborious, but rather in a life that he is very much attached to and rejoices in. It is to be like the experience of the two discouraged disciples who journeyed to Emmaus, with the sadness of the crucifixion filling their hearts. They were joined by the risen Christ, who veiled His identity. At the end of the journey, the Lord revealed Himself and banished. "They said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" (Lk. 24:32).

- (1) To continue in the love of God is to continue in that happy state of obedient submission to intelligent truth, into which we were brought by our exposure to the tender suffering love of Christ through our repentance and faith—in "thy first love" (Re. 2:4).

Love is not a mysterious emotion which descends upon us and automatically captivates us. Love has previously been defined as a voluntary state of impartial good-will toward all moral beings, which results in a conduct according to intelligence and truth without any admixture of arbitrariness (W-Me-II-3-(3)). Love is a willingness to be intelligent in our attitude and actions toward other moral beings. To be intelligent is to face reality or to view our relations to other moral beings as they actually exist and to do what we reasonably can to fulfill our obligations. To live according to intelligence is to conform our lives according to what is right and proper in our moral relations, for we will not allow ourselves to think upon those relationships of life that we are unwilling to make place for. Love is thus to delight in the obligations that these relationships impose upon us because we are fully convinced that this is the only manner of life that is right and proper. It is to abide in "the love of the truth" (II Th. 2:10). It is to have pleasure in righteousness rather than in unrighteousness (2:12).

The Godhead, by virtue of Their infinite greatness, moral character, and creator of all life, must have the supreme place in our thinking and acting. God can never accept anything less than this attitude from His creatures because anything less than this is not right. Our fellowmen, by virtue of

their equal importance to ourselves, cannot be shunned or taken advantage of in our manner of life because this is not right. Love, then, is to allow ourselves to be guided in our lives by an open-minded perspective that gives proper regard for all moral beings that enter our sphere of knowledge, according to their true relative worth.

"God is love" (I Jn. 4:8, 16) in essence of moral character, or the Godhead continually chooses to be guided in all actions by absolute intelligence of the moral worth of all moral creatures. The Godhead can accept nothing less as being right and proper in Their moral character. Perfect knowledge and unlimited ability enables God to produce perfect actions. It would be wrong for God to give approval to any moral beings who are unwilling to be guided in life by the intelligence which they possess. This intelligence is not perfect, nor in proper perspective as viewing all the facts involved, as God views it. Nor is the resulting conduct of moral creatures perfect or all that it might be. But in the kingdom of God it can never be accepted that its members shall refuse to live according to the intelligence of truth which they do possess.

The unwavering requirement of man's relation to God must be, "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Pe. 1:16; Le. 19:2). Or, conform your lives to your intelligence or understanding of truth as I am conforming to Mine. Have the same voluntary disposition of benevolent love that the Godhead have chosen to have. Live in "the way of truth" (II Pe. 2:2), even as the Lord Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6). Keep on doing "truth" (Jn. 3:21) or walking "in the light, as he (God) is in the light" (I Jn. 1:7). Just as physical light reveals all objects, so moral light or true intelligence develops what is true and right in our moral relations and obligations. Truth is simply a true perspective, or a true picture in all proper proportions, of what exists. In salvation the repentant sinner is brought "unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4), or experiences spiritual illumination of the majesty of God, of compassion and mercy through Christ, and of personal sinfulness and guilt. According to this revealed truth the transformed believer is to live. It is most exciting to observe that the Greek word translated "knowledge" in this passage denotes a full knowledge, or a precise and correct knowledge grounded in personal experience. It is more than a perceived knowledge; it is a persuaded knowledge involving full conviction because of what the mind has seen.

To continue in the love of God is for one to "deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk. 9:23), as the Master pleaded. He said, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Mt. 11:30), because as we join in His burden of life to save as many souls as possible we partake of His great loving heart and affection. To continue in the love of God is to "be about my Father's business" (Lk. 2:49), as the youthful Jesus declared. It is to continue being a disciple of the Lord (Lk. 14:26-27, 33) and not break the Saviour's heart as many did (Jn. 6:66-67). The disciples "must through much tribulation (mental mistreatment if not physical) enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

(2) To continue in the love of God is to continue in that attitude and conduct prescribed by Divine revelation in the Ten Commandments, as further simplified and enlarged upon by the Lord Jesus and later New Testament revelation:

- a. The Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17; De. 5:1-22) is simply God's endeavor to sum up in words the conclusions of Divine intelligence upon what our reasonable requirements of life are in view of our moral relations. It is a true intelligence of our situation reduced to words (see W-Me-II-3). The Ten Commandments did not create obligation; they merely defined obligations which already existed by the very nature of our moral relations to God and to our fellowmen. The key idea that the Ten Commandments sought to convey was a true and sincere love to God and to our fellowmen, with all the resulting blessings (De. 6:4-5; 10:12-13; 11:1, 13-14, 22-23; Le. 19:18; Micah 6:8).

- b. As previously discussed (W-Me-II-3), the Lord Jesus affirmed that the Ten Commandments were reducible to or founded upon love manifested in two directions—toward God and toward man (Mt. 22:36-40). Love toward God will bring about the fulfillment of the first four commandments; toward man, the last six.
- c. In later New Testament revelation, the Apostle Paul particularly was inspired to simplify further the Ten Commandments by showing that if there is a disposition of love in our innermost being they will be fulfilled. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro. 13:8-10). The bestowal of the Holy Spirit to climax our repentance and faith results in "the love of God" being "shed abroad in our hearts" (Ro. 5:5). The life lived by faith in the delivering power of the Holy Spirit (Ga. 5:16) maintains this attitude of love, which is the fulfillment of "the righteousness of the law" (Ro. 8:4). (See also W-Me-II-3).

2. Why must those who have been reconciled to God continue in the love of God?

Those passages of Scripture which stress how we are to continue in the love of God and those which solemnly warn against the danger of apostasy and eternal loss of reconciliation to God will be presented in later groupings.

- (1) The following passages of Scripture, in their plain and obvious meaning, command, describe, or imply the necessity of this happy continuance in the love of God as a condition of attaining final salvation. Under this grouping are gathered those passages which stress the positive admonitions and characteristics:

a. Those setting forth a continuing in a state of faith and submission to God:

Josh. 23:8	Jn. 11:26*	Ro. 1:16*	Col. 2:6-7
Mt. 24:13	12:36*	6:11	I Tim. 4:16
Jn. 3:16*, 36*	15:4-5, 9	11:22	He. 3:6
5:24*	Acts 11:23	12:1	4:14
6:54-58*	13:43	I Co. 16:13	10:39
8:31-32	14:22	Col. 1:21-23	Re. 2:10

*Present tenses denoting a continuous believing or partaking of Christ.

b. An inner attitude of faith, love, humility, forgiveness, peace, joy, confidence, and hope:

Le. 19:18	Jn. 15:12, 17	Ep. 5:18	He. 10:38
De. 30:16	Acts 10:34-35	I Tim. 1:19	(Ro. 1:17)
Josh. 23:11	Ro. 8:4	6:17-19	He. 12:14
Micah 6:8	13:8	Tit. 2:13	Jas. 1:12
Mt. 22:37-40	14:17	He. 3:7-8, 15	I Pe. 5:5
Mk. 11:25	I Co. 16:14	3:14	(Jas. 4:6)
(Mt. 6:14)	Ga. 5:6	6:12	I Jn. 3:21
Lk. 6:37	5:16	9:28	Re. 2:4

c. Holiness, submissiveness, and purity of heart:

Mt. 5:8	I Co. 6:20	He. 12:14	Re. 22:14
Ro. 6:13	II Co. 7:1	I Pe. 1:15-16	
12:2	He. 12:2	Re. 3:4	

d. Taking heed, watchfulness, carefulness, soberness, diligence, and prayerfulness:

De. 4:2, 23	I Co. 10:12	He. 2:1, 3	II Pe. 3:14, 17
Josh. 23:11	15:2	3:12	II Jn. 8
Mk. 13:22-23	15:34	6:11-12	Re. 3:3
14:38	16:13	12:15	16:15
Lk. 11:35	Ep. 5:15-16	I Pe. 1:13	
21:34, 36	I Tim. 4:16	5:8	
Acts 20:31	Tit. 2:12	II Pe. 1:10	

e. Obeying, following, walking, and keeping commandments:

De. 11:26-28	Lk. 3:8	Jn. 12:35	I Co. 4:16	I Pe. 1:14
30:16, 20	11:28	15:10	11:1	4:17
Josh. 23:6	14:27	Ro. 6:19	Ep. 5:8	II Pe. 1:10
Micah 6:8	Jn. 8:51	15:18	He. 5:9	

f. Overcoming trials and subduing temptations:

Mt. 7:13-14	Ro. 8:13, 17	I Tim. 1:18	I Pe. 5:9
Jn. 5:14	13:14	Jas. 1:12	Re. 2:7, 11, 17, 26
8:11	I Co. 16:13	I Pe. 1:5	3:5, 12, 21
Ro. 6:12	Phil. 2:12	4:18	21:7

g. Striving for maturity of knowledge, understanding, and life:

II Co. 13:11	Col. 2:7	II Pe. 3:18	Re. 3:22
Ga. 4:19	He. 13:13	I Jn. 2:24	

- (2) The following passages of Scripture reveal that all sin is a revolt against the heart and moral government of God and brings guilt and condemnation which must be repented of, confessed, forgiven, and cleansed away, with a renewed access to the atoning death of Christ in humble faith, or eternal spiritual death in final separation from God will inerrantly result. We look in vain for any qualifying words to the many solemn warnings that would exempt those who have been truly reconciled to God from applying them to themselves. In many instances it is specifically stated or implied that these warnings apply to true Christians. In a later section it will be discussed how the tender compassions of God, operating through the Christian's two Advocates, seeks to keep those truly reconciled to God in a state of affectionate and humble relationship. In this grouping we face the revealed fact, agreeable to common sense, that when we came to the Saviour in humble repentance and faith all our sins, or all wrong attitudes and actions that had been committed up to that moment, were freely and graciously forgiven, but not any future sins that we might fall into. They, being then nonentities, could not be repented of, confessed, and mercifully dealt with until they became actualities.

Nothing is said in the Bible as to the forgiveness of present sins being indulged in, nor of the present forgiveness of future sins that we may commit in the process of time. Since forgiveness is the setting aside of guilt and condemnation, it cannot occur until the voluntary events in question have taken place. It would certainly take a lot of biblical explanation to show how the credit of forgiveness could exist before the debit of guilt. This explanation is lacking. Therefore, as we would expect, all acts of sin come up for review in the august moral government of the great righteous and compassionate God, who is totally free from all favoritism and partiality, and are dealt with as they occur. We need, therefore, to continue in the love of God to remain in a state of merciful forgiveness and avoid awful guilt and condemnation, with dreadful eternal doom, if our sinful actions are allowed to remain registered against us unforgiven:

- a. Eternal death or woeful separation from God's presence the destination of all who live a life of self-indulgence and sin, with no qualifying words to limit application to those who have never been reconciled to God:

Mt. 16:27	Jn. 5:28-29	Ga. 5:21	II Pe. 2:9
Lk. 9:24-25	Ro. 2:5-11	6:7-9	I Jn. 2:17
(Mt. 16:25-26)	8:13	Ep. 5:5	Re. 2:23
(Mk. 8:35-37)	I Co. 6:9	Phil. 3:18-19	20:13
Lk. 13:27-28	16:22	He. 6:7-8	22:11-12

- b. Every act of sin or persistence in rejection of our moral understanding brings guilt and condemnation, with resulting eternal death, unless repented of, confessed, forgiven, and cleansed:

Eze. 18:20	Lk. 12:8-9	I Co. 11:27-32	I Jn. 5:16-17
18:24, 26	(Mt. 10:32-33)	11:34	Re. 3:4
33:12-13	Lk. 15:6-7, 9-10	Ga. 1:8-9	14:9-11
33:18	15:32	Col. 3:25	21:8
Mt. 5:22	Jn. 5:14	I Tim. 3:6-7	21:27
18:34-35	Acts 8:20-23	5:24	
Mk. 11:25-26	Ro. 6:16, 23	He. 12:14-17	
(Mt. 6:14-15)	I Co. 3:17	Jas. 1:13-16	
Lk. 9:26	8:11-13	5:9, 12	
(Mk. 8:38)	9:27	5:19-20	

c. Some climactic wilful sins against clearly understood moral enlightenment which are unpardonable and result in apostasy and eternal condemnation:

Ex. 32:33	(Mt. 12:31-32)	He. 10:26-29	I Jn. 5:16
Nu. 15:30-31	(Lk. 12:10)	10:30-31	Re. 22:18
Mk. 3:28-29	He. 6:4-6	II Pe. 2:20-22	22:19

d. God eternally opposed with righteous indignation to all falsehood and sinful revolt in whoever is involved:

Ps. 7:11	Ro. 1:18	Ep. 5:6-7	I Pe. 3:12
Mk. 3:5	2:5, 8	Col. 3:6	5:5 (Jas. 4:6)

e. Forgiveness of sins not automatic in the Christian life--requires repentance, confession, and the exercise of a humbled faith in the atoning death of Christ (really a re-opening of the Saviour's wounded heart) before forgiveness and cleansing can take place:

Ex. 32:30-35	Joel 2:12-14	Ro. 6:1-2	He. 10:26, 29
Ps. 32:1-5	Lk. 22:31-32	I Co. 5:4-5	Jas. 5:19-20
51:1-4	Acts 8:20-24	II Co. 7:9-11	I Jn. 1:9
Prov. 28:13	Ro. 5:9-10	He. 6:6	

(3) Those reconciled to God must continue in the love of God because only thus can we contribute to the happiness of the Godhead and avoid bringing unspeakable grief to our Creator and Benefactor.

It is most difficult for us to realize how important we are to the happiness of the great God. The Psalmist experienced this when he wrote: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (8:3-4). We have seen that man has been endowed with the moral nature of his Creator, so that he is a micro-miniature replica of the Divine Beings. Obviously, this remarkable reproduction was brought about for a purpose. Moral abilities are restless without their proper exercise. The Godhead proposed to exercise Their moral abilities in happy manifestation toward man, with infinite comprehension of blessed experiences. Man was to have blessed exercises of his moral nature in the great expanse of the Divine nature and in the realm of physical consciousness. Love is simply the virtuous outflow of the moral abilities of personality. "God is love" in very essence and therefore can only find full happiness toward moral creatures when they are willing to be intelligent and submissive toward their Divine Benefactors. Can there be any greater objective in life than for you and I to live so that we can make our intended contribution toward the unlimited experiences of happiness and joy that the Divine contemplation is capable of?

Job was such a blessing to God, millenniums ago, that God bragged about him to His great antagonist Satan (Job 1:8). God called Abraham and Moses His friends and condescended in a special way to them (II Chr. 20:7; Jas. 2:23; Ex. 33:11). God is pictured as identifying each moral creature willing to live in right relation to Him and singling such out for special manifestations (II Chr. 16:9; II Co. 6:16-18). The Divine joy is limited only by the immeasurable Divine capacity to experience (Zeph. 3:17). But, tragically beyond words, the Divine capacity to experience disappointment and grief is also immeasurable. Think of God's suffering such grief that He experienced a climax of regret that man had ever been created (Ge. 6:5-7)! The Divine grief over the nation Israel's rejection of the continued overtures of Divine love, and the necessary unhappy measures of judgment that had to be taken, were summarized on pages W-Me-IV-1 to 3.

The Lord Jesus wanted to raise men in moral resurrection until they would be more than servants--they were to be friends (Jn. 15:13-15) that He could relax with and enjoy along with the other Members of the holy Trinity (Jn. 14:23, 17; Re. 3:20; Ro. 14:17). Our Lord was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Is. 53:3) during His earthly sojourn, first and foremost, because He was "the Lamb of God" to suffer unto death for the sins of the world (Jn. 1:29), but also because the great mass of mankind did not want to experience the great love and endless blessings that filled His bosom, as has been discussed. His own dear ones whom He "loved . . . unto the end" (Jn. 13:1) also caused Him grief and disappointment.

Only God can discern the fine dividing line between sluggishness and stubbornness or indifference. Our Lord was often pained as He looked through the externals and evaluated the heart motives of His disciples. He reprimanded them on occasions, as when He said, "O ye of little faith," when they had awakened Him in panic during a storm (Mt. 8:26) and when they failed to see obvious truth (Mt. 16:8)--"Have ye your heart yet hardened?" (Mk. 8:17). They could not cast out a demon "because of your unbelief" and prayerlessness (Mt. 17:19-21). When the Master poured out His heart as to the spiritual intimacy He desired to have with them, many said, "This is a hard saying" and "went back, and walked no more with him" (Jn. 6:60, 66). Most pathetically, He said to those closest to Him: "You also are not wishing to go away, are you?" (6:67). His sensitive heart wanted them to do more than merely stay with Him; He wanted them to want or desire to stay. "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" He had to say as the shadow of the cross was approaching Him (Mt. 26:40-41). His instances of joy over men's faith did not seem to have been numerous, but drew forth appreciative response (Mt. 8:8-10; 15:28).

The intimate personal relationship of the resurrected and glorified Christ with those who have embraced His gospel in repentance and faith is revealed as a "mystery" (Ep. 3:3-6). The Holy Spirit has been given to indwell the believer with a unique relationship of absolute intimacy--not dependent for communication upon the five senses as every other relationship of man's is. The Lord Jesus was active in man's creation and was to have complete prominence (Col. 1:16-18). Christ and His Church was to be an organism, animated by Divine life, not a mere organization (Col. 1:27). The Lord Jesus has redeemed repentant mankind for Himself, a people for His own possession (Tit. 2:14). They have been brought into a "first love" for their Saviour (Re. 2:4), even as the Apostle John testified: "We are loving, because He first did love us" (I Jn. 4:19). This unity of love was to have moved the world toward God (Jn. 17:23) and bear much spiritual fruit (Jn. 15:5, 8, 16).

Because of this extremely intimate personal relationship, any problem that enters to obstruct the free flow of loving fellowship between God and ourselves brings disappointment and grief to the loving Godhead. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," we are admonished (Ep. 4:30). If God must rebuke us for our conduct and bring about chastisement to restore us to loving relationship, this must be contrary to the way God would like to manifest His love (He. 12:5-11). Our departure from an attitude of loving response appears to deeply affect the Godhead (Re. 2:4-5). Spiritual immaturity is as unbecoming and depressing as physical retardation (He. 5:12-14). We may resist the recovering measures of the Holy Spirit to the point of quenching or extinguishing His operations within us (I Th. 5:19). Then takes place the sin of apostasy which we have been warned against (He. 6:6; 10:29). God wants to bless man in every way through the Gospel (Ro. 8:32). How must the Godhead feel when all Their provisions for blessing become vain or to no permanent profit (II Co. 6:1; I Th. 3:5)?

The greatest motivation to continue happily in the love of God, therefore, is to contribute to the Divine happiness and thereby have the privilege of multiplying ourselves in Divine greatness and avoid being the occasion of an abyss of grief that rejected Divine love must be capable of experiencing.

- (4) Those reconciled to God must continue in the love of God because only thus can we experience the full orbit of blessed relationships with the Godhead and with our fellowmen for which we were created and endowed.

We must avoid the wretchedness of a life of sin and defeat, which brings separation from the energizing life of the Godhead or present spiritual death. "The wages of sin is death" (Ro. 6:23). "The minding of the flesh is death" (8:6). "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (I Tim. 5:6). "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest... There is no peace .." (Is. 57:20-21). "Evil things come from within and defile the man" (Mk. 7:20-23). "Fleshly lusts (or desires) . . war against the soul" (I Pe. 2:11). "Even their mind and conscience is defiled" (Tit. 1:15).

"Thy heart is not right in the sight of God. . . Thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8:21, 23). Such are in "the snare of the devil, . . . taken captive by him at his will" (II Tim. 2:26). Being "again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning" (II Pe. 2:20). This state of "serving divers lusts (or desires) and pleasures," leads to a "living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another" (Tit. 3:3).

When a person must exclaim in total spiritual defeat, "O wretched man that I am!" this is certainly a radical contrast to the victory of faith, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro. 7:24-25). It is the difference between the slavery of sin and the freedom of deliverance (Jn. 8:34, 36). In this state of selfishness and spiritual defeat we cannot but contribute to our own unhappiness and of all we come in contact with. "Day and night thy hand was heavy upon me," said the Psalmist David in his defeat and guilt (32:3-4). We radiate to others what we are in the depths of our own beings. We cannot lead others into a restful and buoyant spirit unless we have one ourselves.

"I am come that they might have life," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 10:10). This life is a state of being "reconciled to God" (II Co. 5:20), a turn about from continually "going astray . . . unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls," the Lord Jesus Christ (I Pe. 2:25). It is a renunciation of the life of unintelligent and restless concentration upon one's own happiness to enter the realm of true intelligence and live a life according to our true relations to God and to our fellowmen. It is to be admitted into "the kingdom of God" and live a life of "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Ro. 14:17). It is a state of being able to live quietly with ourselves, with a good conscience and "confidence toward God" (I Jn. 3:20-21; Acts 24:16).

We ought, therefore, to be continuing in the love of God, not only to be a blessing to God and contribute to the Divine satisfaction and happiness, but to be a blessing to our fellowmen and to ourselves in maintaining that intelligent composure of personality which alone can bring happiness. The Holy Spirit has been bestowed as the special Agent of the Godhead in this age of grace to "reprove (or convince) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (Jn. 16:8). Because the Lord Jesus was no longer putting God on exhibition in His earthly life (Jn. 1:18), the world was to be shown what heart righteousness was like by the resurrected and glorified Christ living out His life in the hearts of those reconciled to God, through the enthroning operations of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:10). "We will come unto him, and make our abode with him," said the Lord Jesus of Himself and of the Father (Jn. 14:23). "I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (14:21). "I in them, and thou in me, . . . that the world may know . . . that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them; . . . that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (Jn. 17:23, 26, 13); "that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn. 15:13). "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (Jn. 13:17). With all these glorious promises, no wonder the Apostle Paul wrote: "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (I Tim. 4:8).

3. How are those reconciled to God to continue in the love of God in victory over sin?

In Old Testament times men were saved by accepting God's revelation through the nation Israel, repenting of their sins, and bringing the prescribed animal sacrifices in the exercise of faith. They experienced forgiveness and many blessings, but were to be guided in life by God's revealed written declarations through the law of Moses as to how they were to live. Under the New Covenant of New Testament revelation, new internal forces were to be substituted for the external directives of the Old Covenant (He. 8:6-13; 12:24). The Old Testament revelation was blessed and could produce a happy and blessed deliverance, but lacked motivation and dynamic (Ro. 8:3-4). Motivation to continue in the faith under the Gospel is not by duty but out of constraining love (II Co. 5:14). Enforced regulation was not to be a part of this glorious "dispensation of the

grace of God" (Ep. 3:2). The relationships of salvation are now of such a glorious nature that God is not supposed to have problems in keeping His own dear ones in happy submission.

The Epistle to the Hebrews has for its main thrust to show that the New Covenant is far superior to the Old. Thus the fullness of the Holy Spirit brought great victory over sin in early New Testament times: Acts 2:4, 46-47; 4:8, 13, 31, 33; 13:52; Ro. 8:37. This blessed victory over sin is the very core of Gospel truth, not a voluntary addition: Jn. 8:36; Ro. 6:1-2, 4, 14; 7:6; 8:2, 32; 14:17; I Co. 15:57; II Co. 3:17; Ga. 5:16, 18; Ep. 5:18-20; I Pe. 1:6-8; I Jn. 2:12-14; 3:9-10; 5:3-5.

- (1) Remarkable Divine relationships and initiatives have been provided, so that God can say that everything possible has been done to make man a happy, forgiven, and delivered being—bringing joy to both God and man in fulfillment of God's plan of creation.

In Old Testament times those especially called of God were given many profound experiences of God's presence and deliverance from sin: Is. 57:15; Go. 17:1-4; Ex. 3:2-8; 33:9-11; Is. 6:1-5; II Chr. 16:9. But in New Testament times these blessed experiences of God's intimate presence is intended to be given to all who come to Christ in sincere repentance from all known sin and in the committal of faith.

a. Passages describing intimate fellowship with the Triune Godhead:

Jn. 4:13-14	Ro. 6:14	I Co. 6:19-20	Ep. 5:18-21
7:37-39	7:6	II Co. 5:16-17	Col. 1:27
14:16-17	8:9-11	6:16-18	I Th. 5:10
14:21, 23	8:15-16	11:2	I Jn. 1:3
15:14-15	I Co. 1:30	13:5	2:27
17:23, 26	3:16	Ga. 2:20	5:12, 20
Acts 17:27-28	6:17	Ep. 2:18, 22	Re. 3:20

b. The resurrected and glorified Lord Jesus has become our heavenly Advocate and Intercessor:

Mt. 28:20	Jn. 17:9-13	He. 4:14-16	He. 9:24-26
Lk. 22:32	Ro. 4:25	5:8-10	10:12-14
Jn. 10:3-4	5:9-10	7:24-27	10:19-23
10:11	7:4	8:1-2	I Jn. 2:1-2
15:17-19	8:34	9:11-15	

c. The Holy Spirit our Comforter, Guide, and Energizer:

Lk. 24:49	Jn. 16:7, 13-15	Ro. 8:2	II Co. 3:17
Jn. 14:16-17	Acts 1:8	8:14, 26-27	Ga. 5:18
14:26	9:31	I Co. 10:13	Phil. 2:13
15:26	Ro. 5:5	12:3	I Jn. 2:20, 27

- (2) Christian watchfulness, obedience, continuance in the faith, and prayerfulness imperative for spiritual victory.

Deliverance from sin as promised in the Gospel is impossible unless we are willing to live a life in communication with God, for it is the Godhead who must deliver us. If we do not want to take the trouble to maintain this happy submissive life, then we are left to fight our own battles—with gruesome defeat on every hand. If we "hunger and thirst after righteousness," we "shall be filled," said Jesus to the mountain multitude (Mt. 5:6). Therefore, the blessed instructions on the "how" of Gospel deliverance must be addressed to those who want it. The following passages indicate the necessity of this constant and persistent attitude of sincerity:

Mt. 4:4	Jn. 14:15, 21	II Co. 7:11	Col. 1:9-12	He. 12:28-29
5:6	14:23	11:3	3:16-17	I Pe. 1:13, 17
Lk. 8:15	15:9-10, 12	13:5	I Tim. 4:16	4:7-8
12:15	Acts 9:31	Ga. 6:8	He. 2:1, 3	5:5-6
15:17-24	Ro. 6:19, 22	Ep. 5:15-16	3:6, 12	II Pe. 1:5-8
18:1	8:4	Phil. 1:9-11	4:11, 14, 16	3:14, 17
21:34-36	11:20	2:5	6:11-12	Jude 20-21
22:31	I Co. 9:25	3:7-14	10:23	
Jn. 6:53-58	11:28-29	4:8-9	10:35-36	

- (3) There must be a climactic renunciation of the principle of supreme self-gratification in each crisis of temptation or solicitation to indulge in what we know to be wrong.

Deliverance from sin is not automatic. These endless climaxes of will are in essence a renewal of our repentance, or of an attitude of self-denial. There was a total renunciation of self-supremacy when we first came to Christ: Lk. 14:26-27, 33; Jn. 12:25; Ro. 6:6; Ga. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14. The endless series of climaxes that must take place for spiritual deliverance are set forth, for example, in the words: "Yield yourselves unto God" (Ro. 6:13) and "Yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness" (Ro. 6:19). "Yield" is in the Greek aorist tense, imperative mode, and is thus a command for punctiliar or climactic action, a simple act without regard to progress, and thus may be endlessly repeated. The verbs "present your bodies a living sacrifice" (Ro. 12:1), "put off . . . the old man" (Ep. 4:22), and "put on the new man" (24) are aorist infinitives and thus indicate climactic or instantaneous actions, without regard to time, and thus are to be repeated endlessly to maintain our consecration to Christ.

In each challenge to our consecration that faces us, the Holy Spirit is seeking to persuade us by all sorts of approaches to renew our renunciation of self, but in each case it is we ourselves that must instantly respond, or no deliverance can be granted. Passages describing the climactic and sometimes violent nature of this self-renunciation are:

Mk. 9:43-48	Ro. 12:1-2+	Ep. 4:27	He. 5:14	Jas. 4:7*
Lk. 9:23*	13:14*	4:30	12:9	*Aorist imperatives
Ro. 6:11	I Co. 9:26-27	I Th. 5:19	Jas. 1:12	+Aorist infinitives
6:13, 19*	Ep. 4:22, 24+	He. 3:7-8, 15	1:14-16	(Climactic actions)

- (4) This climactic renunciation of self must be followed by aggressive actions of faith if spiritual victory is to be achieved.

The Godhead are seeking to inspire or draw out this faith by all means at Their disposal. Faith "is the gift of God" (Ep. 2:8) in the sense that it is Divinely induced. Faith is always our own act in the sense that it is our response to Divine condescension. It is climactic in the sense that it is an arousal of all our energies of confidence and trust to overcome a particular crisis:

- a. Examples of and admonitions to faith, which achieved the power of God in men's lives:

Mt. 8:8, 10, 13	Mt. 17:20	Mk. 9:23-24	Lk. 11:9-10	Jn. 16:24
9:28, 29	Mk. 4:40	9:28-29	11:13	Ro. 7:18, 21
14:29, 31	5:28, 34	11:22, 24	17:5-6	7:24, 25
15:25, 28	5:36	Lk. 5:5	Jn. 11:25-26	

- b. Blessed spiritual victory is to be achieved only by aggressively exercising faith or trust in God for deliverance after each instance of self-renunciation. Some passages may be duplicated to convey the idea of the positive. We cannot turn from something into a vacuum. When we turn from sin we must turn to God in faith (I Th. 1:9). When we refuse to yield ourselves to sin, we must by that act yield ourselves to God to do what our enlightened conscience tells us to do. The passages follow:

Mt. 26:41	I Co. 10:12	Ep. 3:16	Col. 1:23	Jas. 4:8
Acts 11:23	15:10	3:17-19	2:6-7	I Pe. 1:5
Ro. 1:17	II Co. 1:24	4:23	I Th. 3:8	5:8-9
7:25	3:18	5:14	I Tim. 1:18-19	I Jn. 5:4
8:3-4	5:7	5:18-21	6:12	Jude 24
8:13	Ga. 2:20	6:10-18	He. 10:38-39	Re. 12:11
12:2	5:16	Phil. 2:12	12:1-2	
13:14	5:25	4:1	Jas. 4:7	

- c. This faith is cultivated and inspired by the loving illumination of the Holy Spirit, as previously outlined:

Jn. 3:27	Jn. 16:13-15	Ro. 10:17	II Co. 3:18	Ep. 3:16-17
6:37, 44	Ro. 5:5	I Co. 2:4-5	Ep. 1:17-19	Phil. 2:13
6:45, 65	8:14, 26-27	12:3	2:8-9	Col. 1:27

4. Do the Scriptures solemnly warn against the dreadful possibility of apostasy?

We have seen that salvation involves a submission to truth and a choice to forsake all known sin and commit ourselves to the atoning death of a loving Saviour to be forgiven and restored. Only the action of our innermost being or "heart" could bring about such complete revolution of life. Profound evidences from our own personalities and experiences with the world of men and nature had pressed upon us the urgency of seeking the great Source of all existences in proper respect and worship. In addition, Divine revelation of biblical truth multiplied this enlightenment and urgency. We had resisted this sum total of moral illumination from the dawn of our moral accountability—until the moment of our conversion, when we submitted to the whole enmass and took appropriate action to enter into the beckoning mercy of God.

The glorious joy of reconciliation to God made the thought of rejecting what the Holy Spirit desired to teach us from day to day unthinkable. We said with the enthusiastic Israelites of old: "All the words which the Lord hath said will we do" (Ex. 24:3). Our hearts were mellow and tender "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us" (Ro. 5:5). We had one essential thing to do: "Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live?" (He. 12:9). We had "ears to hear" and a submissive heart to obey all that our blessed Saviour taught us and our heart "burned" within us in exquisite fellowship. But we are not mechanical robots operated by pushbuttons of causation, therefore God has had to make a very great effort in revelations of Scripture in an endeavor to keep us in that happy submission, apart from which neither God nor man can be happy:

- (1) Those happily reconciled to God may resist the truth that they have come to perceive by refusing to obey or remain submissive to increased understanding. This the Scripture calls a hardening of the heart, which is a choice of our wills not to conform our lives to new perceived obligations. There is no reason why we choose to resist the continued loving manifestations and leadings of the Holy Spirit, except that we ourselves of our own volition mysteriously so choose. There is no causation back of our wills except we ourselves, nothing to blame except our own abuse of solemn responsibility. Since such choices are the origination of our own personalities, they form the basis of reward and condemnation from a loving and righteous Moral Governor. We have seen from a multitude of revelations how impartial God is.

This process of hardening has no gauge of intensity except the decision of a great loving God as to how serious our resistance is, which must involve our ability, enlightenment, experiences, and the Divine measures taken in our behalf. We always begin the pathway of resistance over small and sometimes relatively insignificant objects of enlightenment. Heart resistance develops like a callus on our hand. The more the resistance encountered in muscular exertion, the greater the build-up of skin tissue. When the Holy Spirit seeks to turn us from a wrong attitude that we have gotten into, we must increase our resistance or hardness of heart to keep ourselves from breaking down our rebellion and submitting to God. We are frequently warned against this build-up of resistance. Some of these passages appear to relate to those who have never been reconciled to God, but the principles of developing resistance are the same:

Mt. 13:15 Mk. 8:17, 21 Ro. 2:5, 8 Ep. 4:17-18 He. 3:12, 13
Mk. 6:52 Acts 7:51 I Co. 11:27-29 He. 3:7-8, 10, 15 4:7

- (2) The Holy Spirit and faithful servants of Christ take various measures to get us to reverse our rebellious attitude and return to submission, before we develop a more impossible hardness of heart. The Holy Spirit has taken up an absolutely intimate association in our lives and we are warned not to "grieve" Him (Ep. 4:30). Tragically, all we Christians seem to have resisted the Holy Spirit in His loving recovery measures. Submission is a state of repentance. When we resist God's enlightenment, the Holy Spirit is seeking "to renew (us) again unto repentance" (He. 6:6). True servants of God are working along with the Holy Spirit in this great restoring operation. One of the most moving

self-prostrations ever recorded was when Moses interceded for Israel over the golden calf apostasy (Ex. 32:30-33), when he earned the title of being "very meek" (Nu. 12:3). Some of the blessed New Testament recovery operations are as follows:

Mt. 18:12-14 Acts 8:18-24 Ga. 6:1-2 I Jn. 5:16-17 Re. 3:3-5
 Lk. 13:6-9 I Co. 5:4-5 II Tim. 2:24-26 Jude 22-23
 22:31-32 11:27-34 Jas. 5:19-20 Re. 2:4-5

- (3) Solemn warnings are given on every hand in Scripture in an endeavor to persuade those who have been truly reconciled to God to be on constant guard that they do not develop a resistance against the loving manifestations of God's will, to the point of apostasy or eternal loss of their souls:

De. 4:23-24 Eze. 33:7 Lk. 12:4-5 II Co. 11:2-3 He. 12:28-29
 11:26-28 33:12-13 (Mt. 10:28) 13:5 Jas. 1:12-16
 29:25-28 33:18 Lk. 12:45-46 Ga. 1:6-8 5:19-20
 Josh. 23:11-13 Mt. 3:10 13:6-9 3:3-4 I Pe. 1:17
 I Kgs. 9:6-9 (Lk. 3:9) 22:31-32 4:9, 11 II Pe. 1:10
 I Chr. 28:9 Mt. 3:12 Jn. 15:2 4:19-20 3:17
 II Chr. 15:2 5:13 Acts 8:18-24 Phil. 2:12 Re. 2:4-5
 Ezra 8:22 (Lk. 14:34-35) 20:29-31 2:14-16 3:3-4
 Ps. 125:5 Mt. 7:19 Ro. 14:13, 15 Col. 2:8 3:5
 Is. 1:19-20 18:12-14 I Co. 5:4-5 I Th. 3:5-8 21:27
 1:28 24:48-51 8:11-13 II Tim. 2:11-13 22:18-19
 Jer. 17:5-6 25:24-30 9:25-27 2:24-26
 Eze. 18:24, 26 Lk. 8:14 II Co. 6:1 He. 6:7-8

- (4) There are also a great many solemn warnings against the danger of our resisting God's loving will and measures of recovery to the point of a wilful crisis of apostasy.

The apostasy is a climactic operation of God whereby the curtain of His loving and gracious operations with our souls is forever drawn. In many of the following passages aorist tenses of climactic action occur, indicating that there is a last wilful rebellion on part of those whom God sees the necessity of rejecting. No one just drifts into apostasy; such must rebel their way into it. Judgment may not follow immediately, but it is as certain to occur as the eternity of God Himself. There may be a relative calm from the former climax of resistance. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace," said the Lord Jesus (Lk. 11:21). "Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them" (Jer. 6:30).

This rupture of God's heart as far as His relation to a particular soul is concerned hurts the Godhead more than the tragic subject. Such have "trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace" (He. 10:29). Such have said with Israel of old, when confronted with great moral light and persuasion: "Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us" (Is. 30:11). God has had to comply reluctantly with their wishes, to their own eternal mournful and regretful remorse. Such solemn warnings of the danger of approaching this climax of resistance are as follows:

Ex. 32:33 (Mt. 12:31-32) Ro. 11:20-22 I Tim. 6:9-10 He. 12:14-17
 Nu. 15:30-31 (Lk. 12:10) I Co. 3:17 He. 3:12-15 II Pe. 2:20-22
 De. 29:18-21 Mk. 9:43-48 11:27-34 4:1, 11-13 I Jn. 5:16-17
 30:16-19 (Mt. 18:8-9) Ga. 5:1-4 6:4-6 Re. 3:15-16
 Mt. 5:22 Lk. 9:62 I Th. 5:19 10:26-29
 5:29-30 11:24-26 I Tim. 1:19 10:30-31
 Mk. 3:28-29 Jn. 15:6 5:11-12 10:38-39

5. Do the Scriptures narrate instances of tragic apostasy from the faith?

The Apostle Peter was directed to write that "the righteous scarcely (or with difficulty) are being saved" (I Pe. 4:18). It is not that the Gospel is weak and deficient in delivering repentant sinners, but rather that redeemed men are still free moral beings and thus must be controlled by moral forces. It is with difficulty, therefore, that God keeps His true spiritual children in that blessed state of submission into which they were brought when embracing the Gospel. God is continually on the alert to use means to restrain His children from departing from the way of righteousness and holiness.

"He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (I Co. 6:17). "Ye are the temple of God, and . . . the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (I Co. 3:16). With one Advocate with the Father and one Advocate or Comforter in the heart, God has established relationships with man that enable the strongest of moral forces to be exerted. Although the obstacles to man's spiritual success are very great, once repentant sinners have experienced the blessings of reconciliation to God, have been brought into intimate fellowship with the glorified Christ, and have been spiritually energized by the indwelling Holy Spirit, these strong moral forces are so effective that relatively few ever rebel against God's loving measures to their own destruction. Nevertheless Scripture narrates a number of personal tragedies and also refers to groups who were successful in revolting against the love of God to their own destruction:

- (1) The most awful instance of apostasy from God's loving reconciliation was the Apostle Judas. We may outline the facts concerning his life as follows:
 - a. The Lord Jesus, after a night of prayer (Lk. 6:12), declared His purpose in calling forth the Twelve: Mk. 3:14-15. Notice that they were all His Disciples (Lk. 6:13).
 - b. Judas most certainly must have been in a state of salvation when chosen and sent out to represent Christ: Mt. 10:5, 6, 7, 8 (Lk. 9:1; Mk. 6:13; Mt. 12:25-26); Mt. 10:13, 14, 16, 20 (Jn. 8:44), 22, 25, 40; 7:6; Mk. 6:7, 11, 12, 13, 30; Lk. 7:39; 9:1, 2, 5, 6; 10:20; 22:3-6 (Jn. 13:2); Jn. 13:20.
 - c. As Jesus spoke more particularly of the requirements of salvation in His later ministry, His popularity greatly declined (Jn. 6:51-60, 66).
 - d. Some of those close to Jesus turned back in unbelief, the instant of their forsaking the path of submission and faith, along with the secret plans of Judas, being supernaturally known to Christ (Jn. 6:64). "Should betray him" is better rendered "would deliver him up."
 - e. It is declared in Jn. 6:70 only that Judas then was a devil, with a strong implication that he was not such when called out to serve Christ in an intimate way: "Did I not choose out for myself you the twelve, and out of you one a devil is?" "Should betray him" (6:71) is better rendered "was about to be delivering him up." It is unthinkable that the lowly sincere Master would choose "a devil" for Himself, with the object of representing Him in ministry to needy souls on the brink of eternal doom. No present day leader (political, moral, or religious) would think of choosing an opponent to receive all his secrets and help in furthering his cause.
 - f. Judas, who was trusted as treasurer (Jn. 13:29), showed himself out of sympathy with Christ's mission (Jn. 12:4-6), made his dreadful covenant with Christ's enemies (Mt. 26:14-16), and braced himself against the kind overtures of his best Friend (Jn. 13:21, 26).
 - g. His doom became sealed (Jn. 13:27); he had rebelled beyond the recovering mercy of God and was abandoned to Satan, his now-chosen master. Going out into the night, morally as well as physically (Jn. 13:30), he could now kiss his former Master with a cold and calloused heart (Mt. 26:47-50).
 - h. He became conscience-stricken after the Lord was condemned to die and repented, but too late for forgiveness. He went out and hanged himself, entering into eternal remorse as he is endlessly and persistently haunted by the Saviour's love which he had spurned (Mt. 27:3-8). He had received the highest ministry possible to man, but had successfully turned aside in rebellion against the most dynamic moral force that man has ever been confronted with—a personalized Divine love (Acts 1:17, 25).

- (2) Various references and tense structures in the New Testament indicate that other apostasies took place;
- a. I Co. 10:5-12—This solemn passage refers to many disappointing experiences which God had with the nation Israel, with the judgments that had to be taken. Their doom is set forth as a warning to those reconciled to God under the Gospel.
 - b. I Tim. 1:5-7—"From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling."
 - c. I Tim. 1:18-20—"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning the faith have made shipwreck; of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander."
 - d. I Tim. 5:15—"For some are already turned aside after Satan."
 - e. I Tim. 6:9-10—"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."
 - f. I Tim. 6:20-21—"Which some professing have erred concerning the faith."
 - g. II Tim. 2:16-18—"Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."
 - h. II Tim. 4:10—"For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world."
 - i. II Pe. 2:22—"But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."
- (3) King Saul in Old Testament times represents a tragic instance of apostasy, causing God to repent that He had made Saul king of Israel: I Sam. 15:10-11, 23, 26, 35; 16:1, 14.
- a. Saul appears to have been a most impressive person in appearance and heart, transformed and anointed by the Holy Spirit: I Sam. 9:1-2, 15-17; 10:1, 6, 9-11, 24-26; 11:6-7.
 - b. The conditions of happy relationship with God were respect and obedience: I Sam. 12:13-15, 20-25; 15:22.
 - c. Saul began to manifest a presumptuous and disobedient spirit: I Sam. 13:11-14 (usurped the priestly functions); 15:9 (failed to destroy the Amalekites whom God purposed to judge for their wickedness, 15:1-3, 18); 15:13-14, 19-21 (was presumptive and deceitful, excusing himself).
 - d. Saul's professed repentance was doubtless insincere and too late for God to pardon: I Sam. 15:23-26, 35; 16:1, 14.
 - e. Saul was afflicted with evil spirits and lived a greatly agitated and revengeful life until he finally took his own life: I Sam. 16:14-16, 23; 18:29.
- (4) Solomon, although beginning his reign as king of Israel in a most humble and God-approved manner, amazingly made shipwreck of his noble life upon the sea licentiousness;
- a. Solomon began his public life in a manner pleasing to God, not seeking self-glorification or materialistic prosperity: I Kgs. 3:3 ("Solomon loved the Lord"); 3:5-14 (his humble requests "pleased the Lord" (10), who richly bestowed abilities and blessings upon him).
 - b. The luxurious temple was built in Jerusalem and humbly dedicated to the Lord: I Kgs. 5:3-5; 7:51; 8:22-30 (prayer of dedication); 8:54-61 (conclusion with conditions of blessing); II Chr. 6:3 (Solomon most humble); 7:1 (God's answer by fire); 7:8-11 (an obedient happy nation).
 - c. Solomon, and Israel through him, was sternly warned of the dangers and consequences of apostasy, and the conditions of mercy and renewal: II Chr. 7:12-22; also see I Chr. 28:9-10; I Kgs. 6:11-13; 9:1-9.
 - d. The wisdom which God had given Solomon became world-renown (including 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs): I Kgs 4:29-34 (3:16-18); II Chr. 9:5-8, 22-24; Mt. 12:42.
 - e. Solomon's empire was greatly prospered and he became known as the great commercial king of Israel: I Chr. 29:23-25; I Kgs. 9:26-28; 10:22.

- f. Amazingly enough, this wise man did not continue to apply his supernaturally endowed wisdom to the regulation of his own life, but disobeyed God (De. 17:17) and built up an even greater establishment of lust than the heathen kings, to his own moral destruction and eternal ruin: I Kgs. 11:1-3 (he involved himself with many heathen women); 11:4-8 (which turned away his heart from the Lord); 11:9-13 (and led to the judgment of God).
- g. In view of God's loving but firm warning (I Chr. 28:9) and the absence of any record of repentance, but rather of a rebellion against God's judgment (I Kgs. 11:40), we can only conclude that eternal remorse is now his portion in dreadful remembrance of his forsaken blessing and God-given wisdom. He made shipwreck of his fervent faith and submission to God upon the sea of licentiousness.



Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life:

no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

XII. ESTABLISHMENT in the life of sanctification through the Holy Spirit.

"Dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Co. 7:1).

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Ga. 5:16).

"Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ep. 5:18-20).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Pe. 2:2).

"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pe. 3:18).

"It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace" (He. 13:9).

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith" (Col. 2:6-7).

"My little children,... I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (Ga. 4:19).

"To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God" (I Th. 3:13).

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;... being rooted and grounded in love" (Ep. 3:17).

We have abundantly seen from Scripture testimony the necessity of persistent watchfulness against all forces that would turn our hearts away from a happy relationship with our Saviour. All too often we have experienced a struggle to get our own consent to give up wrongful gratifications (sometimes seemingly small and insignificant). "The breast of every Christian is a field of battle where sometimes benevolence and sometimes selfishness gains the victory," wrote one theologian. Is there no let-up from these constant struggles? Is there no point that can be reached in Christian experience when intermittent waverings in our consecration are eliminated, or at least reduced to momentary less passionate departures? Is there no point that can be reached where the balance scale is slanted to the side of virtue? Is there no plateau of spiritual experience that can be reached where we may become established in the faith, so that it becomes easier and more natural to abide in Christ?

Most happily, the New Testament sets forth very frequently, by using many words of different shades of meaning, that a more permanent state of abiding in Christ is not only possible but is according to the plan and provisions of a loving God. In fact, God is so determined that all those reconciled to Him shall become spiritually mature that lack of progress toward this achievement is very grievous to Him (I Co. 2:14-16; 3:1-4; He. 5:11-14).

1. What is not the manner of attaining a firmly established life of continuing in the love of God.

- (1) Those truly reconciled to God do not become firmly established in a life of spiritual victory by making a single full consecration of themselves to Christ.

Those who affirm that a single once-for-all consecration of ourselves to Christ brings full and constant deliverance have usually held that there is a salvation apart from a full consecration, and thus that self-dedication is a hopeful option in the Christian life that does not affect one's standing before God. On the one hand, there are those who hold that repentance from all known sin, or total submission to God, is not a requirement for salvation, that only a single climactic act of faith in Christ is required. Others hold that repentance is in fact required, but that repentance may be partial because of the possibility of mixed moral action. Men may partly obey what they perceive to be their moral obligation, and partly disobey at the same time. Full consecration is attained when we are willing to obey fully or totally submit to Christ. Even so, many holding this view do not appear to believe that man ever does fully obey God, but that man's apparent outward obedience is always tainted by an inner mixed motive—partly virtuous, partly selfish.

We have seen that moral action is of a simple nature; it is either this or that, but not this and that. We either obey and submit to all the moral light we possess at a given moment, or we do not. We may obey one hour and disobey the next, but to do both at once is just as impossible as walking forward and backward at the same time. The blessed Gospel is a remedy for the devastations of sin, and unless we are willing to repent of everything we understand to be sin, no application of the remedy can take place. A loving God could

not tolerate man continuing in stupid rebellion when He fully knows that the only way man can be blessed is to forsake his rebellion enmass. There may and must be endless acts of re-consecration in the Christian life, but never a first full consecration because this is its entrance requirement.

- (2) Nor by the eradication of a so-called "sinful nature," "inbred sin," or a "root of sin."

If this view of personal psychology is true, then such eradication would enable the Christian to pursue a life of holiness unhampered by past sinful experiences, since the source of sin with all its developments is supposedly gone. Watchfulness would not be necessary, since there is nothing left to need watching. The source of sin is totally gone. We are involved here with two important questions—whether our depravity of constitution causes our wills to act under a law of cause and effect, and whether this depravity is in itself sinful before crystallized in actions of will.

We have concluded that depravity is not an isolated tangible something lodging somewhere in our personality, but rather the permanent damage that we have done to our whole sensitive personalities because of our persistence in wrongful indulgences or experiences. This habit of thought and emotions is a mighty dynamic to keep on doing what we have been doing, only with deeper penetration. This strong tendency to continued action is not, however, a compelling force and does not cause the will to act. By virtue of our mysterious endowment of free will, our innermost personalities alone have the power to originate action. Thus our depravity not only cannot be removed without evaporating our whole personalities, but it need not be removed to make its dynamic relatively ineffective. The wonderful experiences of the love of Christ in the Gospel can bury our depravity under an avalanche of heavenly visitations and give us a new slavery, endless thanks to God's grace (Ro. 6:22; II Co. 5:14). If simmering steaks are waiting to be eaten from a new oven, why bother with cheap hamburger on the old burner?

The other question relates to the nature of sin. All surely hold that submitting to wrongful desires is sinful. These are acts of will. The question is, is this urgency of depravity sinful before submitted to in acts of will? Is sin not only a dynamic something of action, but also a static something of inaction, before moral actions or choices are brought to pass? If so, then depravity must be eradicated before the holiness of personality so often described in the New Testament could exist. But if sin is a wrong action, a choice of our wills to indulge the impulses of depravity, as our study has abundantly concluded, then no eradication of the impossible is necessary to enable us to live holy lives before the Lord. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust (or desires) of the flesh" (Ga. 5:16). Spirituality is not an eradication of selfish desires, but a conquest of them and a starvation of them by victorious neglect.

- (3) Nor by claiming to have an established constant victory over sin when we do not in fact have the reality.

From the many blessed words studied, it is most evident that sanctification or holiness reaches to the innermost depths of our personalities. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Mt. 12:34). "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; . . . a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit," said the Lord Jesus (Mt. 7:17-18). A life lived in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit will unmistakably be recognized in the struggles of daily living. The outward manner of life will testify to all of an inward reality. Therefore, it is entirely unnecessary to tell anyone that we have experienced the grace of God in sanctification or inner purification and deliverance from sin—they will automatically know it by our works.

The Apostle Peter was moved to write some good advice: "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (I Pe. 3:15-16). In other words, we are to concentrate upon maintaining a humble heart before the Lord and tell people the secrets of sanctifi-

cation only when the net product in our manner of life has caused them to be curious as to why and how we live as we do. If we go about claiming an advanced state of sanctification, we are setting ourselves up as possessing more than others, whereas we need to prove it by our lives if this is so. The Apostle Paul said: "In simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation (or manner of life) in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward" (II Co. 1:12). "But by the grace of God I am what I am" (I Co. 15:10). He proved the depth of penetration of the grace of God into his personality by laboring for his Master "more abundantly than they all."

2. Many different words with various shades of meaning are used in the New Testament to indicate not only the possibility but the expectancy that all those reconciled to God should attain an established or mature state of sanctification.

The various usages of these words that relate to the subject of the perfection of personality are given for study. Transliterations of the various Greek words into English letter equivalents are given, along with the number references from the Greek Dictionary portion of Strong's Concordance, for identification:

- (1) Perfect (télios, S-5046)—Full-grown, fully-developed, matured, or complete; fully accomplished in Christian enlightenment: Mt. 5:48; I Co. 2:6; 14:20; Ep. 4:13; Phil. 3:15; Col. 1:28; 4:12; He. 5:14; Jas. 1:4; 3:2; I Jn. 4:18.
- (2) Perfection (teliótees, S-5047)—Moral and spiritual perfection or completeness: Col. 3:14; He. 6:1-2.
- (3) To perfect (telióo, S-5048)—To complete, to make perfect or complete, to bring to maturity (of character) or completeness, to bring to the end or goal proposed, to develop fully: Jn. 17:23; II Co. 12:9-10; Phil. 3:12; He. 2:10; 5:8-9; 7:19, 28; 9:9; 10:1, 14; 11:40; 12:23; Jas. 2:22; I Jn. 2:5; 4:12, 16-17, 18.
- (4) To perfect (fully) (epiteléo, S-2005)—To complete (fully), to make (fully) perfect or complete, to accomplish, finish, fulfill, bring about, realize, perform, or bring to an end or goal: II Co. 7:1; Ga. 3:3; Phil. 1:6.
- (5) Perfectly (holoteleés, S-3651)—Completely, perfect, complete in all respects, also complete to the end: I Th. 5:23-24.
- (6) To perfect (katartízo, S-2675)—To complete, prepare, readjust, restore, render fit, put in order or in proper condition, equip or furnish completely, qualify fully, mend, repair, or adjust thoroughly: Lk. 6:40; II Co. 13:11; Ga. 6:1; I Th. 3:10; He. 13:21; I Pe. 5:10.
- (7) Completeness (panteleés, S-3838)—Completely, perfectly, fully, wholly, entirely, absolutely, or utterly: He. 7:25.
- (8) To establish (bebaíoo, S-950)—To make firm or sure, strengthen, confirm, make steadfast, constant, and unwavering, fix on a firm basis: I Co. 1:8; II Co. 1:21; Col. 2:7; He. 13:9.
- (9) To establish (sterízo, S-4741)—To make stable, firm, or steadfast, to fix or place firmly, set or make fast, render constant, confirm, strengthen, or settle: Lk. 22:32; Ro. 1:11; 16:25; I Th. 3:2, 13; II Th. 2:17; 3:3; Jas. 5:8; I Pe. 5:10; II Pe. 1:12; Re. 3:2.
- (10) To cause to take root (rizóo, S-4492)—To strengthen with roots, to firmly root, firmly fix, establish, cause a person (figuratively) or thing to be firmly rooted, grounded, or fixed, to put on a firm foundation: Ep. 3:17; Col. 2:7 (both perfect passive participles).
- (11) To ground (themelióo, S-2311)—To found, to lay the foundation of, to found firmly, establish, make stable, render firm and unwavering, or settle: Ep. 3:17 and Col. 1:23 (both perfect passive participles); Mt. 7:25; He. 1:10; I Pe. 5:10.
- (12) To form (morphóo, S-3445)—To shape, mold, fashion, to give form or shape to; used of the development of the embryo into the fully formed child; used of artists who shape their material into an image, especially an idol: Ga. 4:19.
- (13) To strengthen (krataíoo, S-2901)—To make strong, to become strong, to increase in vigor, to empower, acquire strength, to be firm: Lk. 1:80; 2:40 (of Jesus); I Co. 16:13; Ep. 3:16.

- (14) Steadfast (hedraios, S-1476)---Firm, settled, constant, steady, or immovable, of those who are fixed in purpose: I Co. 15:58; Col. 1:23.
 (15) To confirm (episteeizo, S-1991)---To make or render more firm, to make stronger, to strengthen more, to support further, establish further or reestablish: Acts 14:22; 15:32, 41.

3. From the above references have been gathered the passages that more particularly instruct us upon the nature and manner of experiencing a maturity of spiritual development or stability of life, as follows:

Mt. 5:48	Ep. 3:17	I Th. 3:12-13	He. 13:21
Lk. 6:40	4:12-15	5:23	Jas. 1:4
II Co. 1:21	Phil. 3:12-15	He. 5:12-14	1:5-8
13:11	Col. 1:23	6:1	3:2
Ga. 4:19	2:6-7	13:9	I Pe. 5:10

Not included in the above list of words is the designation "spiritual," as describing a manner of life being lived in vital relation to God, as contrasted with "the natural" or soulish man (not reconciled to God) (I Co. 2:14-16; also Ga. 6:1), and with the "carnal" or fleshy man (I Co. 3:1-3) as being an unestablished "babe" in Christ. We also have the spiritually-unhealthy "babe" distinction made in He. 5:12-14.

Of particular interest are the various Greek tenses used in the above list of passages. We have aorist tenses, indicating that climactic or sudden actions are being brought to pass in connection with our being established (as I Th. 3:13, "stablish"), or an overall process is viewed as a climactic whole (as Ga. 4:19, "should be formed"). We have present tenses, indicating that the established deliverance must be maintained (as He. 13:9, "established;" and Col. 2:7, "built up" and "stablished").

Then of great interest we have perfect tenses, which involve a process, a climax, and the continued existence or influence of the climax (as Ep. 3:17, "rooted and grounded;" Col. 1:23, "grounded;" and Col. 2:7, "rooted"). To convey the thought, Ep. 3:17 would have to be rendered: "To dwell Christ through the faith in your hearts, in love having come to be (and remaining) firmly rooted and grounded." This would indicate that there is some sort of a climax involved in our becoming established in the spiritual walk of faith. Perhaps this is when we discover, with great blessing and thanksgiving, that faith in our risen Saviour really brings deliverance from temptation and sweet rest of heart amidst the turmoils of life. In answer to the question, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" the Apostle Paul wrote: "I have come to be (and continue to be) persuaded" that nothing is able to separate us from the love of God (Ro. 8:35-39), using the perfect tense. Perhaps the apostle is referring back to the climax of Romans 7:25.

4. How is this matured spiritual life of victory over sin to be achieved?

The habitual life of spiritual deliverance is achieved when we learn the profound secret, through many sad experiences of defeat, that victory over our own selfishness and sin is accomplished by looking in faith to our heavenly Lord and Saviour in a climax of self-renunciation at critical moments of evil suggestions or temptations. According to the promises of the Gospel, when this is done the energizing power of the indwelling Holy Spirit is loosed within us in blessed worshipful victory. "The just shall live by faith" (Ro. 1:17; He. 10:38).

We must not only learn the "how" but also the "when." We must not only learn how to look to the Lord in faith but must become sharpened in our spiritual perception and sensitivity to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that we instantly recognize when we need to look to the Lord for deliverance. Spiritual rest is attained through Holy Spirit illumined contemplation of our heavenly Master (II Co. 3:18). This illumination takes place when with tear-stained defeat we look to the Saviour, "the author and finisher of our faith" (He. 12:2). When we recognize our personal failures and want deliverance enough to arouse ourselves to seek the face of God for ~~whatever~~ we need to know and do, with great joy God will lead us and grant our request.

We may summarize the detailed steps involved in achieving this wonderful fullness of life, where "we walk by faith, not by sight" (II Co. 5:7) and where "his working" is working in us "mightily" (Col. 1:29), by saying that it is a development that comes about:

- (1) Through the enlightenment, affectionate pleadings, and continual guidance of the Holy Spirit: Jn. 16:13; Ro. 8:14, 26-27; I Co. 10:13; Phil. 2:13; I Jn. 2:20, 27.
- (2) Through the loving fellowship and ceaseless intercession of our glorified Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: Mt. 28:20; Lk. 22:32; Jn. 10:3-4; 17:9, 11, 15, 17; He. 7:25; I Jn. 2:1.
- (3) Through the help and prayer of other Christians who have learned to practise spiritual victory and a ministry of faith: Ga. 4:19; Ep. 3:14-19; Col. 1:9; 4:12; I Th. 5:23.
- (4) Through our own longing and sincere determination to grow or mature in our spiritual life and have victory over all obstacles: Mt. 5:6; I Pe. 2:2; II Pe. 3:18.
- (5) Through diligent and prayerful application of our minds to the revealed truth of God, so that we may become greatly enlarged in our understanding of our moral relations to God and man and of our antagonists: Mt. 4:4; Jn. 8:32; 17:17, 19; Phil. 1:9-11; Col. 1:9-12; II Pe. 1:5-8.
- (6) Through a thorough arousing of our minds to a new energy of perception and observation: Ep. 5:14; He. 5:14; I Pe. 1:13.

In He. 5:14 we have a perfect tense, with a verb which means to be trained or disciplined vigorously, trained as in gymnastic discipline, and may be rendered: "But of perfect (ones) is the solid food, who because of habit the senses have come to be (and are continuing to be) exercised vigorously."

- (7) Through the painstaking moment by moment application of our aroused and developed perception to recognize tendencies and occasions of temptation before they become strong enough to challenge us: Ep. 5:15-16; Phil. 1:9-10; He. 5:14.

In Phil. 1:9-10 we read: "That your love yet more and more may abound in full knowledge and all perception in order that ye may be proving (continually examining, scrutinizing, distinguishing, discerning, proving by trial) the things which are differing (excelling, superior, of greater value)." In He. 5:14, the senses are to be exercised vigorously "toward a discerning (distinguishing or judging) both of good and of evil."

- (8) Through the willingness and know-how of instant self-renunciation and the look of faith to our heavenly Lord and Saviour for immediate deliverance, thanking Him in advance for glorious victory: Ro. 6:11, 13, 19; 12:1; He. 12:2; I Pe. 1:5; I Jn. 5:4; Col. 1:11; I Co. 15:57.

Reconciliation to God took place when our wills responded to truth or intelligence. Likewise, spiritual victory and the establishment of Christian consistency must involve the highest exercise of intelligence. If we want spiritual victory because of the consequences that sinful indulgence brings, we will be left to grind away at our own mill. We must turn from sin because of its relative emptiness and utter inconsistency with the great moral worth that we see ourselves to have in our relationships to the great God and the universe. Sin can only be defeated by contrast. To view our true moral worth to God and the universe of moral beings is like shaking a beautiful rattle before a small child, who quickly puts down a harmful toy that we wish to rid him of. When our concepts are enlarged so that we really see that manner of life in solemn relationship to the great benevolent God and our fellowmen that is worth living, we put down with joyful relief those gratifications which are inconsistent with this Divine eternal viewpoint. When sinful gratification is viewed as the real value in life, it is a struggle to deny ourselves and give it up. But when by contrast these gratifications are seen to be totally inconsistent with the Divine perspective of our moral worth, the struggle to give up the unworthy ceases.

5. Is the achievement of spiritual maturity any kind of a permanent state of being, where deliverance from sin is automatic, without the confident abiding in Christ?

Spiritual victory is not something that we achieve by ourselves in a state of isolation, something that we have as a personal possession. Rather, it is an achieved state of relationship with God. Christ is the Head; we are the body (Ep. 5:23, 30). Just as our head is the nerve center and source of life, so our Lord is the source of spiritual life through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Obviously, therefore, if we stupidly rebel against and forsake the source of life, we will have nothing left except an agonizing memory of what was.

To be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (I Pe. 1:5), is to be "partakers of the divine nature" (II Pe. 1:4). Just as the power from the generating station passes into our electrical appliances when they are plugged into the line, so the life of God flows into the life of faith to deliver from the lesser appeals of our former self-hood. The power flow ceases if the line connection is broken. Just so, the Divine energy and life ceases to dominate and deliver us from the appeals of selfishness, if we choose the gratifications of sin or cease to maintain the look of faith. Continual deliverance depends upon our having learned the secret of continual abiding in Christ; and, therefore, is not automatic. "Without me ye can do nothing," said the Saviour (Jn. 15:5). "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (II Pe. 3:17).

The modern Hovercraft rides smoothly and swiftly above the churning waves of the sea by a continuous blast of air directed downward under a surrounding enclosure and by a large propeller thrust at the rear. The comfort and speed of the craft depends upon the continuous operation of the engines. If the engines are shut off, the craft will rest down upon the turbulent waves and be tossed to and fro. The turbulent sea may be likened to the disturbing encounters of life, which often bring a fluttering response of one sort or another in our emotional reactions. As with the Hovercraft, our spiritual deliverance rests upon a steadfast abiding in Christ. If the flow of life and power becomes shut off, the turmoil and chaos of our former lives will rise up to do us battle and bring us back into bondage, if possible. We are left to grit our teeth and fight the waves, so to speak, in our own strength because we have lost the buoyancy of Gospel deliverance.

There is, however, a deepening of affection towards those we have loved. God experiences this and refers to His submissive spiritual children as "beloved" (Col. 3:12, for example, where we have a perfect tense, "having come to be (and continuing to be) beloved," involving some kind of a personal attachment or development of love). The broken but restored Apostle Peter said thrice to his loving Lord, "Thou knowest that I love thee" (Jn. 21:15-17). He used the word for affectionate love and refused to use the word for objective virtuous love that the Lord twice used. In His third question, "Simon, . . . lovest thou me?" our Lord changed to Peter's word for affectionate love. Perhaps Peter was so warmly attached to his loving Master for His double rescue of his soul, that he could only think in terms of the deep affection of his heart for his loving Friend. O sweet conquest of the pure virtuous and yet affectionate love of God! "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you," said the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls (Jn. 15:14).

The walk through life becomes more and more blessed as He talks with us "by the way." The two discouraged Emmaus disciples said, "Was not our heart burning within us as He was speaking to us in the way, and as He was opening to us the Scriptures?" (Lk. 24:32). The tenses indicate a continuous duration of blessing. Attachment deepens with fellowship and continually makes abiding in Christ easier and departure into sin more stupid and unlikely. There is a new sweetness in God's reasonable requirements, a new trustfulness, a new relaxation that knows no termination of development. "Perfect love casteth out fear. . . He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (I Jn. 4:18).

The M E T H O D Must Participate in God's Loving Purposes and Activities (I Co. 3:9)

"We are laborers together with God," or are God's fellow-workers (I Co. 3:9).
 "We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God" (II Co. 5:20, ASV).
 "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (I Co. 9:22, Paul).
 "Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (Col. 1:29, Paul).
 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me . . ." (Acts 1:8).
 "With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).
 "They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake" (Acts 6:10, Stephen).
 "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6).

We have seen that the Lord Jesus viewed the winning of one soul as of such great value that all the possessions of the world would not balance it. As He was departing into heaven in resurrection glory, He commissioned His own spiritual children to be His representatives on earth. The progress of the Gospel was dependent upon their sincerity and efforts. They must represent Him not only in word and truth but in manner of life and approach. Men would judge the Godhead by the disciples of Christ. Abundant provisions were made and bestowed upon the servants of Christ to endue them with power for deliverance and holy living. They must also be supernaturally endued by the Holy Spirit in wisdom and understanding to present the truth of God. "We are laborers together with God" (I Co. 3:9). The representatives of God must speak God's message in God's way. Exactly what is spoken and how it is spoken will make a great difference, because men are subject to moral influence and effective presentation of truth. "It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak," said the Lord Jesus (Mt. 10:19-20). We are to be "watchmen" for God and "hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me" (Eze. 3:17). God desires that His servants should be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Mt. 10:16). When the religious leaders perceived the wisdom and boldness of Peter and John, "they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). Paul was not accused of being ignorant, but as having "much learning" (Acts 26:24). He had spent countless hours in the presence of the living Christ. He spoke "forth the words of truth and soberness" (25). "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5).

1. What are the Members of the Godhead seeking to accomplish?

Common sense can only dictate that if God is going to energize us in our ministry and witness, He can only do this in proportion as we are laboring in accordance with His will and purpose. It is to be feared that many zealous Christians are unwittingly opposing the very effort that they are giving themselves for by failing to discern clearly the mind of God as revealed in His Word. The Lord Jesus said to the strongly religious Pharisees: "Thus have ye made the commandments of God of none effect by your traditions" (Mt. 15:6). Theological tradition and philosophies are a great hindrance if they are not based upon a simple interpretation of the Word of God. We stress the word "simple," for the Bible is a plain message to plain people and develops simple concepts of truth that we are to live by. In connection with laboring for God, we have the admonition in I Corinthians 3:9-15 that much of our effort may be "burned." This passage does not have to do with so-called worldly Christians, but with those who are laboring unwisely for God—not according to God's heart nor the true terms of salvation. They think they have won multitudes to Christ which God will not be able to recognize.

It is God's objective that the whole world should be saved, as was brought out in connection with repentance and the Atonement. This is in line with the obvious truth advanced that it was never God's will that sin should have spread its darkening veil over the world in the first place. We need never pray, "Lord, if it be Thy will, save such a one." If we do, we will be like the Pharisee who

"stood and prayed thus with himself." God cannot join in such a prayer. The Lord Jesus prayed: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Mt. 6:10). God commands and anxiously desires that all men should repent, submit to His transforming grace and be forgiven through faith, and enter into the joy of His presence: Acts 17:30-31; II Pe. 3:9; I Tim. 2:4; I Jn. 2:17.

2. How is a person brought to repentance and salvation? What agencies are involved?

We have seen that Scripture reveals the sad fact that no one is seeking after God out of his own initiative to be reconciled and forgiven. Not a person on earth would ever be saved, therefore, apart from the investment of great effort on the part of some one else. "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance" (Ro. 2:4). Christians are more than mere instruments that God uses to further His work. "We are laborers together with God" (I Co. 3:9), or are God's fellow-workers. We are active voluntary agents who are to go forth in the name of the Lord "to the pulling down of strongholds" (II Co. 10:4). "He that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30). The following three agencies co-operate together in bringing about the salvation of a soul:

- (1) The Holy Spirit as the Divine Agent in great mercy enlightens every man as to his moral obligations, seeks to restrain every man from sin, exerts powerful convictions of guilt, manifests the moving love of God through the Gospel proclamation, and seeks to persuade all to renounce sin and be saved: Ge. 3:8-10; 6:3; Prov. 1:24; Is. 1:18; 55:2-3; Eze. 33:11; Jer. 25:31; Lk. 14:17-18, 23; 19:10; Jn. 1:9; 4:23; 12:32; 16:8-11; Acts 7:51; I Th. 5:19; Re. 3:20.
 - (2) God's servants as free moral agents make choice to exert similar persuasion and have an active part in turning men from disobedience to obedience, and in addition have the privilege of prayer to travail with God over souls: Ge. 6:8 (II Pe. 2:5); Hosea 10:12; Jonah 3:4; Mt. 3:2, 8; 28:19; Lk. 14:23; 16:15; Jn. 15:16; Acts 26:18, 20, 28; Ro. 11:14; I Co. 9:19-23; II Co. 5:11; Jas. 5:19-20.
 - (3) The sinner, who is able to resist all the measures that can be taken toward his salvation, must of his own free will as a moral agent respond to the truth, break down his heart before God, and turn from all known sin in response to the appeals of the Godhead and the servants of God: Acts 17:30-31; Is. 55:7; Eze. 14:6; 18:30-32; Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 20:21; Ep. 5:14.
 - (4) The truth as revealed in the Word of God, the Bible, is used as an instrument by both the Holy Spirit and the servants of God in this process of moral enlightenment and persuasion: Ps. 19:7; Lk. 8:11; Jn. 8:32; He. 4:12; I Pe. 1:23.
3. What has been God's manner of approach in seeking to turn men from sin into a warm-hearted Divine relationship?

The Godhead have approached sinful man by patiently reasoning with man over the issues of life and eternal truth. The only way that the heart of man can be humbled in true repentance is for man to be led to reason out his situation and his obligations and come to intelligent conclusions. All professed humility which is not based upon a satisfying understanding of the problems of life is superficial. The Bible inspires the mind to think through every problem and doubt. When we understand God's point of view and intelligently acknowledge our true rebellion and false accusations against God, then for the first time with openness and honesty we can meet God "face to face" over the sin question in our lives.

"And the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, . . ." (Le. 1:1-2). Later on the question was raised: "Is there any word from the Lord? And Jeremiah said, There is . . ." (37:17). With great effort God invites men to reason out their situation with an eternal viewpoint and understand the requirements of the Gospel, and sends forth His ambassadors to do likewise, with the promise that the Word of God will bear fruit. Man is admitted into the secrets of the Godhead, with the promise that the Holy Spirit will enlighten our minds and reason with us as we read. God wishes us to understand why certain dispensations have been taken. The Bible is not an account of the arbitrariness of God,

but of the reasonableness of God. God was under no obligation to reveal all that He has of the Divine secrets, but has done so to inspire confidence in man that He is a God of intelligence and truth. God must win man through an enlightened understanding so that man will declare himself "without excuse" and capitulate to the overtures of God's mercy.

The following passages of Scripture are examples of God's intelligent approach toward man in seeking to persuade men to turn from sin:

Ge. 6:13; 7:1—God explained to Noah the reason for the flood and for His plans.

Ge. 18:17-19—When Sodom and Gomorrah were about to be destroyed, God revealed to Abraham the reasons. Then went on that wonderful intercession when Abraham reasoned with God. God was prayed down from 50 to 10 righteous as a condition of sparing these cities (18:23-33). Who knows whether the great compassion of God could have been prayed down to five or less, if Abraham's confidence in God's goodness had been greater?

Ex. 3:7-15; 4:1-9—Think how God reasoned with Moses in his call to deliver Israel when Moses hesitated.

Ex. 32:9-14—Consider how Moses reasoned with God in his greatest intercessory prayer when God was determined to destroy Israel over the golden calf rebellion. Moses had the opportunity to replace Abraham as the head of a nation, but humbly declined. God harkened to his petition (30-33).

I Sam. 12:6-7—Samuel reasoned with the nation Israel in behalf of God when they were determined to have a king. He reviewed some of the main points of God's dealings with them (8-12) and stated their present case (13-15). Samuel had many times of blessed fellowship with God during these times of stress (8:6-9; 15:10-11).

II Kgs. 20:1-7—King Hezekiah of Judah reasoned with God to be healed and had given to him an extension of life.

Is. 1:18-20—God desires to reason with man about his own situation and the invitation of reconciliation being extended.

Is. 41:21—God beckoned to Israel to give reasons for their disobedience and their rejection of mercy, if they could.

Is. 43:22-26—Again we have God inviting an examination of the situation.

Is. 55:8-9—God seeks to lift man's thoughts to the level of His, particularly on the necessity of repentance (6-7).

Jer. 2:1-5, 13—Think of this tender pleading on the part of the great God for man to reason on the foolishness of his ways!

Jer. 29:10-14—God thinks thoughts of good-will towards man, and strongly desires man to know His processes of thought.

Micah 6:2—God not only invites man to think with Him upon their differences, but pleads with man to do so.

Ro. 8:32—Here the Apostle Paul expresses his great confidence in the goodness and mercy of God.

I Co. 2:9-13—The Word of God was designed to be an intelligent communication from the Holy Spirit to our spiritual understanding so "that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (12).

He. 4:12-13—God designed His Word to be so plain that it would pierce through the mental "fog" which we have generated for ourselves and bring full understanding of ourselves, when read with humility in the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Re. 1:1-2—God has taken great pains to reveal many details of the future course of this world, which He knows must end in judgment.

4. What was the approach of the Apostles and servants of Christ in New Testament times, and particularly the Apostle Paul?

The Lord Jesus said to His disciples after His resurrection: "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn. 20:21). The Apostle Paul received a most energetic commission (Acts 26:17-19), in response to which he could faithfully say: "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (20). Men must "repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." His God-appointed

task was "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," by powerful, Spirit-anointed reasoning on the truth of God. Thus the early servants of Christ went forth to persuade men to repent and embrace the Gospel by reasoning with them "with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven" (I Pe. 1:12).

Acts 2:4-11—On the Day of Pentecost they spoke forth with great learning and intelligence "the wonderful works of God" in languages which they had never learned, after the Holy Spirit was granted according to the promise of the risen Christ (1:8).

Acts 4:2, 4, 8, 13—Peter and John, with fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit, reasoned with the people so 5000 men (no doubt plus a great number of women and older children) were converted to the Gospel. The conclusion of the rulers was that they spoke with such brilliance and persuasion that they must have had some direct connection with the greatest teacher that they had ever heard, Jesus of Nazareth (13).

Acts 5:19-20, 25, 29, 33, 42—Peter and other Apostles were miraculously delivered from prison to continue their persuasive teaching (backed up by miracles as Christ promised, Mk. 16:17-20), with such force that those who refused to submit "were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them." The Apostles were so satisfied in the revealed truth of God that they said with overflowing enthusiasm: "We must obey God rather than men" (29).

Acts 6:10—The religious opposition who were disputing with Deacon Stephen, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit" (5), were completely defeated and had to resort to violence. "They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." Their violence turned out to be for Stephen's good, for he received a home-going from his kind Master that he might not have otherwise known (7:55-56, 59-60), as he sweetly "fell asleep." In his going he no doubt did irreparable damage to a violently intelligent young man named Saul (58), who could not but have been confounded with his Spirit-given reasoning powers and compassionate departure from this life.

Acts 17:30—"God . . . now commandeth all men every where to repent." This was the heart and commission of Paul's message. This repentance, apart from which was no salvation, was such a change of mind that a changed life always resulted. There was only one final approach to such a revolution of life, only through the reason as the powerful claims of truth were presented. Thus the great Apostle Paul went everywhere with God-given intellectual understanding to confound men's minds.

Acts 17:2-3—This is how the fervent church in Thessalonica was founded.

Acts 18:4, 11—Likewise at Corinth, where he "reasoned" and "persuaded."

Acts 19:8-10, 20—Likewise at Ephesus, where he spoke "boldly . . . disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God . . . daily."

Acts 24:25—The Roman ruler Felix was overwhelmingly convinced but refused to yield to God.

Acts 26:24-25, 28-29—King Agrippa concluded that Paul's Spirit-anointed persuasion showed "much learning," and said: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

5. How does the wisdom and energy of God come to be released through the servants of Christ?

As Christian workers we can accomplish nothing except we labor "together with God." The Lord Jesus, after illustrating how penetrating salvation must be by the camel and the needle, was confronted with the question from His amazed disciples: "Who then can be saved?" Our Lord bluntly said: "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible" (Mk. 10:26-27). Viewing this same most difficult problem on a later occasion, He said: "Without me ye can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5). The servants of Christ need Divine wisdom which they do not possess (Prov. 11:30). In our relationship to our risen Saviour we find "treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3), which will be imparted to us as we walk day by day in the illumination of the Holy Spirit upon the Word of God.

In his life of making known the treasures of the Gospel to the world, the Apostle Paul described both his own energetic activity and the mighty power of God upon him: "Unto which also I am (continually) laboring (or toiling), (continually) struggling according to the energy of Him who is (continually) operating in me in power" (Col. 1:29). The word "continually" is inserted to stress the present tenses. The Lord Jesus promised the mighty endowment of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8), just before His departure into heaven. This power was greatly manifested in the Pentecostal outpouring, when all the disciples who had banded together (about 120) presented the claims of God fluently to the multitudes gathered in the Temple area, in languages which they had never learned. Peter concluded the powerful manifestation, which resulted in multitudes being "pricked in their heart" in great urgency to be saved.

In Acts 4:8, Peter again experienced a climax of being filled with the Holy Spirit, as he was called to defend himself before the rulers. The rulers immediately perceived the boldness and power manifested through Peter and John (13). After they were released and returned to the company of the disciples, an earnest united prayer brought a further infilling upon all and "they spake (or were speaking, giving the idea of fluency) the Word of God with boldness" (4:31). It appears that there was no once-for-all filling of the Holy Spirit, but that God expects us to look to the Holy Spirit in faith for a climax of power to meet the occasion of service or deliverance. This is what the Lord Jesus had promised (Mt. 10:19-20).

- (1) We must distinguish between the gift or bestowment of the Holy Spirit upon repentant believers to become the indwelling Comforter, illuminator, and energizer, as promised by the Lord Jesus, and the future unending gifts of the Holy Spirit for ministries or Christian service. We are not to look upon any single infilling of the Holy Spirit as any kind of a final climax of God-consciousness, as though we had arrived at a certain plateau of spiritual elevation, but are to press onward and upward to greater and greater heights of mighty power within our lives to flow out to a needy world. This attitude was expressed by the Apostle Paul in Phil. 3:8-15. Let us always remember that there is no such thing as an infilling of the Holy Spirit in mighty power for Christian service without that infilling first purifying our whole inner being (Acts 15:8-9). God's power cannot flow through contaminated channels. God will not grant His power so that selfish pride may be elevated. This is what Simon wanted, as recorded in Acts 8:18-24, calling forth Peter's stern rebuke. James wrote that we ask amiss if we want to consume God's bestowments upon our own desires (4:3). We may make professions of great gifts, but the calm reality of God's mighty power will be absent. God cannot and will not contribute to our selfish indulgence.
- (2) The functioning of the Church of Christ is distinguished from that of the nation Israel, in that God's program now is for the whole Church as "the body of Christ" to be an integral operating unit, animated by the indwelling Holy Spirit, whereas Israel functioned primarily by an endowed leadership. If we study the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times, we find that all the essential New Testament gifts were functioning there among chosen leaders, often times without regard to their personal uprightness. But in this glorious Gospel age, the prayer of Moses (Nu. 11:29) has been answered, at least in God's plan for the Church. God's plan now is that every single member of "the body of Christ" should humble and even prostrate himself before his Lord to become partaker of some gift of the Holy Spirit for the mutual edification of the whole Church and the furtherance of the Lord's work (I Co. 12:7). All are to desire or "covet earnestly the best gifts" (12:31). We have here a most urgent admonition, the word meaning to burn with zeal for, aspire eagerly after, or be ardently devoted to, the greater (the more exalted or important) gifts of grace. This diversity of operation is illustrated in the different kind of members composing our human body, all of which are necessary (I Co. 12:14-27). Spiritual gifts, then, are to be the rule in the Church, not the exception, with every true member participating.

(3) In connection with spiritual gifts, it is most important that we understand two central facts concerning their bestowal:

- a. Spiritual gifts are modes of operation of the Holy Spirit within and through us, and not deposits given to us as our own possession and independent control and use, as we choose. This is brought out in I Co. 12:4-11, where we have present tenses of durative action. "Now to each one is being given the manifestation of the Spirit towards that which is profitable" (7). "For to this one through the Spirit is being given a word of wisdom, but to another a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit" (8). "Now all these things is working the one and the same Spirit, distributing (or dividing into parts) separately to each one according as He is willing" (11).

We do not travel to some place to receive a particular gift of the Holy Spirit, therefore, with the idea of carrying it back with us as some kind of possession, because if the Holy Spirit does not come back with us and operate through us day by day there will be no gift. We are like light-bulbs through which electrical power is manifested. We partake first of the illumination and then pass it on to others, and thus the work of the Holy Spirit within us becomes a part of us, always to reside in our memories. But if the switch is turned off, we have nothing left but our memories to torment us, somewhat like the disciples in their walk to Emmaus after the risen Saviour had left them (Lk. 24:32), although they had no guilt as we would have if we grieved the Holy Spirit into ineffectiveness.

- b. The Holy Spirit is absolutely sovereign as to what gifts He may choose to manifest in each one of us. As quoted above, He is "distributing separately to each one according as He is willing (purposing or desiring)" (I Co. 12:11). In this individual choice for each one of us, the blessed Holy Spirit is not in the least arbitrary. He evaluates our characteristics and qualities, with the care of the potter mending a valuable vessel, and decides wherein we can best serve for the glory of God and the blessing of our fellowmen. Then He operates within us in this direction. Do we know enough of ourselves to tell Him what gift we want? Do we know what the greatest specific need is? Do we know where we can best serve our blessed Lord? If not, then let us humble ourselves for the Holy Spirit's directive "toward that which is profitable (advantageous or expedient)" (I Co. 12:7). The kind Master saw what He could make out of an oscillating and eccentric Simon and called him Peter (a little rock) ahead of time (Mt. 16:18). We all are, however, "to covet earnestly the best (or greater) gifts" (I Co. 12:31), which are defined for us in this chapter (I Co. 12:7-11; 28-30).

(4) The following enumerations of spiritual gifts appear in the New Testament, some of which have been quoted or referred to. "The body of Christ" is to function as a unit to the glory of God through the animating Holy Spirit, who conveys the life of the risen Christ to us as our Head. There are no divisions in "the body of Christ" as to any who have a special status or class distinction, although there is a called-out ministry who are to take the earthly leadership through the direction of the Holy Spirit.

- a. Ephesians 4:7, 11-16—Here we notice that the saints are to do the greater part of the ministering or Christian service of one form or another, and that "pastors and teachers" (apparently one office) are to prepare and guide them in their service.
- b. I Corinthians 12:7-11—The general concept seems to be that each one of us will possess or receive the Holy Spirit's operation in only a few of these gifts, and to possess all nine would be an extreme rarity. Then again, the Holy Spirit may stress one area of operation in our lives, or in the Church at large, at one period and another at a different period.
- c. I Corinthians 12:28-31—This passage establishes beyond any question the Divine order of importance of the various spiritual gifts. The gifts are viewed as embodied in individuals, established or appointed in the Church.
- d. Romans 12:4-8—The expression "according to the proportion of the faith" indicates our response and initiative in bringing about a greater maturity and development in spiritual gifts. Where is the limit of the look of faith?