

**"THE  
WORSHIPPERS  
ONCE  
PURGED"**

**Roger L. Decker  
Earl R. Borders**

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**Printed June 2015 by:**

The Church of God, God's Acres  
675 N. Cedar Street  
Newark, OH 43055

*GodsAcres.org  
GospelTrumpeter.com*

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# **DEDICATION**

**We dedicate this book  
in loving memory of our pastor,  
PASTOR EMERSON A. WILSON,  
a man who was true to us and to the Truth!**

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

**We want to acknowledge the tireless efforts  
of Sister Sheri Strelecky, who served as our editor,  
and Brother Jeff Carr, our printer, who labored vigorously to  
bring this book to the position in which you see it now.**

**We appreciate their devoted dedication  
to the Lord and to this effort.**

## PREFACE

When the beloved physician, Luke, felt the divine prompting of inspiration to set down the Gospel account, which bears his name, he penned these words: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, . . . It seemed good to me also, . . . to write unto thee . . ." (Luke 1:1, 3). More than forty years ago now, the Lord began to bring understanding on a line of truth that had been reserved for this seventh-seal period of time, a day when "the mystery of God should be finished" (Revelation 10:7). This understanding was concerning the doctrine of entire sanctification, which encompasses a whole host of other doctrinal areas. Through the past years, "many have taken in hand to set forth" the understanding we have concerning this truth. However, it has largely been in more abbreviated writings that deal with singular aspects of the teaching. A whole generation of brethren has arisen since the Lord has revealed the truth to us on this matter, and there are some who have expressed honest inquiry concerning "those things which are most surely believed among us." Therefore, a burden struck our hearts "to set forth" in a singular, more comprehensive volume "those things . . . believed among us." Allow us to quickly clarify that we realize it is difficult, if not impossible, to address every Scripture and every question in one writing, but we have attempted to be as complete as possible in a one-volume exposition.

It is our burden to use this venue to clear away the confusion that surrounds what we feel the Lord has revealed to us and what we actually teach on this matter. It certainly is not our desire to gender any greater confusion or division. We would trust that the Holy Spirit would use this writing to effect a greater unity amongst God's people and His ministry. Also, please allow us to say, we are not so presumptive as to state that what is contained within is what every dear brother among us either understands or teaches, but in general, it is a fair representation.

Let us hasten to add that although there may be some who have taken extreme positions, we *do not* make understanding these truths a test of fellowship. We fully acknowledge that there are many good brethren who disagree with us, and certainly, that is their liberty. We must each "walk in the light" (1 John 1:7) as we see it. Fellowship is divine; it is "truly . . . with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). Every brother or sister who is walking "in the light" and has "fellowship . . . with the Father, and . . . Son" is our brother or sister and in "fellowship" with us. "We reach our hand in fellowship to every blood-washed one" ("The Church's Jubilee," verse 3).

It is our desire only to dispel the misunderstanding and confusion surrounding what is "believed among us" and to encourage each reader to give prayerful consideration concerning what is written within. Perchance it could be that there is truth written in these pages that the Lord desires to reveal to you. All we ask is your prayerful and thoughtful consideration. Regardless, of your conclusion, we remain,

Your humble servants,

Pastor Roger L. Decker  
Pastor Earl R. Borders  
June 2015  
Newark, Ohio

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Part I – The Purpose of Man

To properly understand the plan of redemption and its operation as set forth by the Scriptures, it is essential that we first understand the purpose of man. To understand man's purpose requires us to view God's nature, as this purpose emanates from His nature. In Isaiah 57:15 the Lord proclaimed, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy." From this we understand that God views matters on the eternal scale and that the operation of His plan and purpose must be compatible with His holiness. In 1 John 4:8 we have the famous expression "for God is love," or the Greek word for love is *agape*. The original word *agape* speaks not to an emotion or feeling, but rather it is defined as "a commitment to action for the object's highest good." Since it requires a "commitment," there must of necessity be an "object." One of the more predominate features of love is that where it is compelled to commitment, it desires reciprocation, a return of that love, hence the purpose of man.

We know that in eternity past, there was "a multitude of the heavenly host" (Luke 2:13), or as Hebrews 1:6 defines it "all the angels of God," but these were creatures that had no exercise of free will. "Love" is not truly such when it is not the product of free will or choice. Thus, God made man to be the object of His love with the design to present man with choice (the purpose of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"; Genesis 2:17), yet, with the desire that man would choose to return that love and commitment. By manifesting divine love in return for what was extended to him, it would put man in the position of enjoying fellowship with God. The Revelator told us in Revelation 4:11, ". . . thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Man's purpose is to bring God "pleasure." In Genesis 3:8 we see a record of "the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Man enjoyed fellowship with God prior to the advent of sin, and this was the purpose for God's creation: to have a creature that reflected God's nature, holiness, that chose to return the love exhibited toward him, to enjoy fellowship with God, and thus bring Him "pleasure."

### Part II – The Original State of Man

In Genesis 1:26 we read a conversation amongst the Triune Godhead: "Let us [the Triune Godhead] make man in our image, after our likeness . . ." These expressions portray the design of a trichotomous, or threefold nature of man, as a result of a Triune Godhead. When this verse says, "Let us make man," in the Hebrew language, the word for "man" is actually "Adam" and denotes the physical species or the physical part of man, the body. Where this passage speaks of the "image," this speaks of the spiritual component of man. When 1 Thessalonians 5:23 refers to the complete man as "your whole spirit and soul and body," it is describing the threefold nature, or trichotomy, of man. The "image" is the spiritual portion. Colossians 3:10 tells us when man is re-created through salvation and becomes a "new man," he is "renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Ephesians 4:24 reveals that the image is "righteousness and true holiness." This is why the presence of God could fellowship with man: his spiritual nature was compatible with God's holiness. The third aspect of man's nature is that part in God's "likeness"; this is the soul. Deuteronomy 33:27 refers to God as "The eternal God." Likewise, there is a part of every man that is like God, and that is his eternal soul.

### Part III – What Happened in the Garden?

Let us consider what occurred in the garden. There are those who propound the thought that it is man's depraved nature, or carnal nature, that causes man to sin. However, Adam and Eve are evidence of the fact that this is not so. If indeed it is a depraved nature that causes man to sin, what caused Adam and Eve to sin? The reality is that it is not a depraved, or carnal, nature, but rather, all temptation works on our human nature. When Adam and Eve were in the paradise of God, they were perfect creatures, enjoying the presence of God, without any depravity whatsoever. Yet, they were subject to and succumbed to temptation. We must remember some established Biblical principles. No less than five times (2 Samuel 14:14; Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:25), the Scriptures repeatedly tell

us "God is no respecter of persons" or "there is no respect of persons." James 1:14 tells us that "every man is tempted." Why? It goes back to man's purpose: to be presented with choice and to show our love and commitment in the face of that choice. Therefore, God designed man in his original form to be subject to temptation. Romans 8:20 says, "For the creature was made subject to vanity . . ." *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* renders the word "vanity" as "frailty." God intentionally gave man a body (Genesis 2:7) and made it frail and subject to temptation.

How did temptation approach Eve? Remember, "God is no respecter of persons." Temptation approached her in the same manner it approaches each of us. James 1:14 clearly tells us, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust [*The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says 'inordinate desires'], and enticed." A more accurate description is "desires exercised in an inordinate manner." The Greek word rendered as "lust" is *epithumia*. It merely means "desire" with no evil or sinful connotation whatsoever. This same word is used by Jesus in Luke 22:15 when He said, "With *desire* I have desired to eat this passover with you . . ." Certainly, there was no sinful association in this "desire." The same Greek word is used in Philippians 1:23 where Paul said, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a *desire* to depart, and to be with Christ." Surely, this was a very commendable desire, it was certainly not one denoting depravity or carnality! This same word, *epithumia*, is used in 1 Thessalonians 2:17 when the Apostle wrote, "But we . . . endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great *desire*." It is clear in each of these Scriptures that the word *epithumia* is not speaking of some depraved predilection or predisposed sinful nature, but rather its incorporation in James 1:14 reveals that all temptation appeals to our human nature and entices us to fulfill lawful desires in an unlawful manner.

John revealed to us how this works in 1 John 2:16, when he wrote, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life . . ." This is the avenue of temptation—"such as is common to man" (1 Corinthians 10:13). Consider how "the tempter" (Matthew 4:3) approached Eve through the serpent, and notice what he appealed to, where the allure or enticement worked. Genesis 3:6 tells us clearly, "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, [There is 'the lust of the flesh.' There was nothing wrong with her desire for food, but it was wrong to satisfy a lawful desire unlawfully. She knew the commandment to 'not eat of it' (the 'tree of the knowledge of good and evil'; Genesis 2:17). Each aspect of her temptation worked in the same manner, and so does all of mankind's.] and that it was pleasant to the eyes [there is 'the lust of the eyes' ], and a tree to be desired to make one wise [there is 'the pride of life'], she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat . . ." And that, as James 1:15 describes, is when "lust hath conceived, [and] bringeth forth sin." Eve did not have a depraved, or carnal, nature. From this we see that a depraved, or carnal, nature was not and is not needed for temptation to be presented and sin chosen.

Let us consider another example: our Lord. Hebrews 2:14 tells us, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." Verse 16 says, "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Verse 17 reads, "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren . . ." According to this text, if man, subsequent to Adam, inherited a depraved, or carnal, nature, then Christ must have had one as well. If indeed there is "inherited sin," or "inbred sin," transmitted from generation to generation, then according to Hebrews 2:17, Christ must have inherited it too in order to "in *all* things . . . be made like unto his brethren." Some would claim, "Oh, no! Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit [Luke 1:35] and then 'made of a woman' [Galatians 4:4]."

From this, there are only three possible conclusions we can draw: (1) Christ was born with a depraved nature or inherited sin; thus, He was not "an high priest . . . who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26). I think this is a conclusion that everyone would reject. (2) The depraved nature, or inherited sin, is not possessed by women. Mary (a human agency) was employed in the incarnation and Christ did not have this nature or sin; thus, because He came through Mary, then women must not have this nature or sin. Think of the extension of this conclusion and how foolish it becomes. If women do not have this depraved nature or inbred sin, then only men have it, and it is transmitted through the marital relationship. I think every sound-thinking person would immediately discount and disregard such a unsound thought. There then remains only one conclusion to be drawn: (3) "All things" do not include a depraved nature, or inherited sin. Christ did not inherit this because "his brethren" did not either.

I think it is an agreeable conclusion that Christ did NOT inherit this nature or sin, yet was "in all points tempted like as we are" (Hebrews 4:15). How? In the same manner that James and John specify: "drawn away of his own lust [or human desires]," or the *Twentieth Century New Testament* renders it as "tempted by his own passions." John told us the avenues of which this consists. When we view the temptation of Christ, recorded in the Synoptic Gospel



accounts, we see Christ approached through the avenues John mentioned: ". . . command that these stones be made bread" (Matthew 4:3). This appeals to "lust of the flesh." Here is an enticement to satisfy a natural human desire (hunger) but in an inordinate, unlawful manner. Each of these aspects of Christ's temptation worked in the same manner. In Matthew 4:6 the enemy entreated Christ to "cast thyself down . . . He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: . . . they shall bear thee up." Here he appealed to "the pride of life." Finally, in Matthew 4:8 we read that "the devil . . . sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world." There is "the lust of the eyes." So, we can clearly see from both Eve's and Christ's temptations that a depraved nature, or inbred sin, is not required for one to have an inducement to sin, or to commit sin. It is "common to man" (1 Corinthians 10:13) and works through man's human nature.

God in His omniscience knows "the end from the beginning" (Isaiah 46:10). Before He made man, He knew the choice man would make, and therefore, in the council halls of eternity past, God formulated a plan of redemption. In the mind's eye of God, "Christ, as . . . a lamb . . . was foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:19-20). (See also 1 Corinthians 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2; Revelation 13:8.) The plan of redemption was designed to restore man to his original condition of "righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24) so that God could once again take pleasure in man, enjoy fellowship with him, and so that man's and God's nature would once again be compatible, holy. In this manner, man could "love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

#### **Part IV – The Results of the Fall**

In Genesis 2:17, concerning "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," the Lord told Adam, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." We know this refers to spiritual death because Adam did not physically die when he sinned. According to Genesis 5:5, he lived a total of "nine hundred and thirty years." Sin produces spiritual death (Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23). When spiritual death occurs, it changes a man's position and nature. The "image" Adam enjoyed was marred and lost. When he came under "the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2), he became carnally minded. Romans 8:6 tells us, "For to be carnally minded is death." Adam's nature changed. But the question that must be addressed is this: "Is that spiritual state, that condition, subject to being transmitted physically?" There are those who advocate that because of Adam's sin, every person now is born with inherited sin, or inbred sin, and a depraved, or carnal, nature. Let us consider this claim.

First, can sin be inherited? Can it be inbred? The word "inbred" does not appear in the Scriptures, so we must resort to the dictionary to define it. *Merriam Webster's Dictionary* defines it in this manner: "rooted and ingrained in one's nature as deeply as if implanted by heredity." This begs several questions, such as, "Can a spiritual condition be transmitted physically?" If this is possible, then why are the children who are born of saved and sanctified parents not born in the same state as their parents? The next question that begs to be addressed is, "Where do the Scriptures teach sin in two forms?"

Let us consider what occurs at conception. We know that God charged man in Genesis 1:28 to "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Now, what can man reproduce? When God made Eve of Adam's rib, Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23). Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Man can only produce the physical portion through procreation. Job spoke of this in Job 10:10-12. In verse 10 he wrote, "Hast thou not poured me out as milk [copulation], and curdled me like cheese [conception]?" This is the part for which man is responsible. The psalmist described it in Psalm 139:15 when he wrote of "when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." This speaks of the marital act that produces conception. This psalm also reveals that the real "me" is the soul. Verse 13 reads, ". . . thou hast covered me in my mother's womb." Who is the real "me"? Verse 14 tells us it is "my soul." So, God places the soul in at conception.

In Ezekiel 18:4 the Lord clearly states, "Behold, all souls are mine." Now consider, if the Lord is the One who places the soul in at conception (and He does; this is why abortion is murder) and man can only reproduce the flesh, would God place a "soul" with sin in it in a child? Galatians 2:17 asks the question, ". . . is therefore Christ the minister of sin?" According to some good brethren, "Humanity is sinful by birth and even from conception" (*Bible Readings for Bible Students*, The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1902, page 186). This writer goes on to say, "Thus being transmitted down through the entire human family." But what does the Bible say? Notice the preceding words when the Lord spoke of

souls in Ezekiel 18:4. In verse 2, He posed a question, then gave a charge in verse 3. Verse 2 inquires, "What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?" In verse 3 He gave a clear injunction, stating, "As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel." In verse 4 He made it clear that "the soul that sinneth, *it* shall die." This conclusively proclaims that "sin" is a matter of each individual soul and its actions, not a product of inheritance.

In Jeremiah the same truth is substantiated. In Jeremiah 31:29-30 these words are recorded: "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth [not his children's or his heirs'] shall be set on edge." These verses demonstrate that the spiritual state of man is contingent on "his own" choices and activity. Nowhere do the Scriptures teach that sin is inherited or that a spiritual condition can be transmitted by conception, a physical act. There are Scriptures that convey the truth to us that man subsequent to the fall is "made . . . upright" (Ecclesiastes 7:29).

Again, we must remember that no less than five times expressly, and many more implied, the Bible tells us that "God is no respecter of persons." Adam was created in God's image (Genesis 1:26), and to be "a just God" (Isaiah 45:21), He must afford every subsequent individual who graces the shores of time the opportunity to come into life in the same manner. The wise man told us that He does. In Ecclesiastes 7:29, which was penned in the proximity of 977 B.C., approximately 3,027 years after Creation, we read, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright." The Hebrew word for "upright" is *yashar*, which means "righteous." According to *Strong's Concordance*, this word is translated as "right" 53 times, "righteous" 9 times, and "straight" 3 times. In any case, it portrays not a "depraved" state, but a "right" or "righteous" state, and this is 3,027 years after the fall of man.

When does one cease to be "upright"? Read the remainder of the verse. It says when "they have sought out many inventions." Again, this is a depiction of individual choice and action. The Prophet Ezekiel also verified this truth in Ezekiel 28:15. According to verse 12 in this passage, the Lord was addressing the "king of Tyrus" (this was in 588 B.C., another 389 years further into history and approximately 3,416 years from the Fall), and the Lord said, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created . . ." In the original Hebrew, the word for our English word "perfect" is *tamiym* and means "without blemish." *Tamiym* means (according to *Strong's Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words with Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary*) "perfect; blameless; sincerity; entire, whole, complete; full." It goes on to further define this word as "incontestable or free from objection." It is used when speaking of an unblemished sacrifice (Leviticus 22:18-21).

Ezekiel 28:15 speaks of "the day that thou wast created." The Hebrew word for "created" is *bara* and means "to create, make." *Strong's Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words with Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary* states: "This verb is of profound theological significance, since it has only God as its subject. Only God can 'create' in the sense implied by *bara*." This intimates that when this verse speaks of "perfect . . . from the day that thou wast created," it is speaking of man's spiritual state, since man procreates the body, but only God creates life when He places a soul within. This text again substantiates the truth that there was no depraved nature or inbred sin passed upon man. Otherwise, this king would not have been "perfect." This verse proceeds to reiterate the truth that "perfection" was marred when "iniquity was found in thee." Again, it is an act of the will.

This raises these questions: "Do the Scriptures speak of sin in two forms?" and "Does the Bible teach there can be sin without an act of the will?" Let us again consider the words of the inspired penman James, concerning sin. James 1:15 says, "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin . . ." The Greek word for "conceived" is *sullambano*. *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* defines it as "to conceive, of a woman" (often so in the *Septuagint*). Physically, "to conceive" requires "twain shall be one flesh" (Matthew 19:5). So it is with "sin." To conceive "sin," two things must come together: first, the draw of being "tempted" (James 1:14) and second, an exercise of free will.

James 4:17 tells us, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." This verse teaches us and we must recognize that before there can even be an exercise of the will, there first must be knowledge: ". . . sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Romans 5:13). Romans 4:15 tells us, ". . . for where no law is, there is no transgression." The Apostle Paul was relating his experience prior to New Testament conversion when he wrote in Romans 7:9, "For I was alive without the law once [this was prior to the age of accountability, prior to when he had any knowledge or understanding]: but when the commandment came . . ." Came where? The commandments were

given on Mount Sinai in 1491 B.C. Paul was born approximately 1,500 years after they "came." So, what did he mean when he said the "commandment came"? It "came" to him. This text tells us that where there is no knowledge, there is no sin. Sin requires a knowledge: "to him that knoweth" (James 4:17). Then, this verse in James proceeds to tell us there must be an act of the will, a willful choice: "doeth it not." This clearly indicates the exercise of will. Then, "it is sin."

The Scriptures do not teach that sin enters into the heart of man in either two forms or two ways. We must ask, "If this teaching is not Biblically sound, whence did it gain such notoriety and inclusion into most of what is considered Christendom?" It began to be propounded during the morning-time apostasy. It gained its greatest influence from the teachings of Augustine of Hippo (A.D. 354-430). According to an article on original sin, published by Auburn University, we are told: "According to Augustine, all of humankind, existing in seminal form in Adam, participated in Adam's first sin in the garden (Genesis 3). Adam fell from a state of perfect holiness and immortality into a state of moral corruption, and his free will became enslaved to his sinful nature. All of Adam's descendants, having sinned 'in Adam,' are born in a state of 'original sin.' . . . Augustine taught, we are born *already* bearing the *guilt* for Adam's sin."

I say it with kindness, but the teaching of "original sin," or "inherited sin," is a product of the Dark Ages. Because the light of truth has been a gradual restoration, many notable Protestant reformers embraced this teaching, reformers such as John Calvin (1509-1564) and John Wesley (1703-1791). As we can see, this teaching was incorporated into both segments of the Protestant Era ("the cloudy and dark day"; Ezekiel 34:12). These two segments were A.D. 1530-1730 and A.D. 1730-1880. So, we can see this teaching came right up through the Gospel Day.

What about the evening time? How did this become a teaching of the beautiful Church of God that came back into visible view in A.D. 1880? Certainly, it was through the influence of a great man of God, Brother D. S. Warner, but how did our brother come to embrace this teaching? He did not originally adhere to it. *Birth of a Reformation, Life and Labors of D. S. Warner*, page 115 states, "He had been for some years honestly prejudiced against the doctrine." What happened? Page 115 continues, letting us know, "It was doubtless largely through the influence of his father-in-law's family that he began to be won to the doctrine." It also states, "The one minister who perhaps more than any other led him into the experience of holiness was C. R. Dunbar, a Baptist who was laboring in connection with the Holiness Alliance."

I trust we can see that our brother embraced this doctrine through sectarian influence. Let me hasten to say, I am not impugning Brother Warner's honesty, spirit, ministry, or effectiveness, nor any of the brethren who hold to these teachings. Brother Warner and those sixth-seal brethren walked in what light, or understanding, that was available in their day. The sixth-seal period of time (1880-1930) was not a time when "the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days" (Isaiah 30:26). They were in a time when the seventh seal had not yet been opened. Therefore, their understanding was not as complete and clear in some areas as it is in this seventh-seal period of time that God has privileged us to enjoy. So, I trust we can see that this teaching has been carried down throughout the periods of the Gospel Day as "a Babel stone," not Biblical truth (*The Holy Remnant*, D. S. Warner).

## CHAPTER TWO

### Part I – Examination of Supposed Proof Texts

The Apostle Peter enjoined us to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you" (1 Peter 3:15). There are those who honestly question the reconciliation of other Scriptures with those presented thus far in this book. As Isaiah admonished, "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18). I will address a host of Scriptures, but let us begin by considering one passage where much confusion arises. That passage is Romans 5:12-21. First, rather than isolating verses 12-14, which are commonly cited, we must view them in the greater context. When viewed as such, they give rise to real questions concerning what verses 12-14 are conveying. Consider verse 15b, which reads, "For if through the offence of one many [not all] be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many [not all]." This indicates that "*many* be dead." If it were a universal inheritance, it would be *all*. Look at verses 18-19, which state: "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon *all men* to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon *all men* unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

If, as claimed, "all" (verse 18) are automatically depraved and have inherited sin because of what Adam did, then this Scripture would indicate that "all" (verse 18) are automatically given spiritual life because of what Christ has done. We know men are not automatically saved because of what Christ did. We know salvation involves our will, our response to the Gospel, and meeting Bible conditions. It is not something automatic because of what Christ did, neither is man's spiritual state predetermined by what Adam did. Again, verse 19 says, "For as by one man's disobedience many [again not all; if this verse was speaking of inbred sin, it would be all; but it is not] were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many [not all] be made righteous." This passage is not advocating an inherited nature from Adam. If these verses are teaching this, then they would, by virtue of having to be consistent, teach that Adam's inheritance only affected the Old Testament dispensation, but that since "the obedience of one" (Christ) occurred, everyone in this New Testament dispensation is "made righteous."

Let us examine this passage to see what the Apostle was truly conveying. In verse 12 we read, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world . . ." It does not say "into the *heart* of man," but "into the *world*." Let us consider some other Scriptures that speak of "into the world." John 1:9, speaking of Christ, says, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Is this to teach us that since Christ's Advent, "every man that cometh into the world" is saved? That everyone now has salvation? Of course not! No more does every man because "sin entered into the world" come in with inherited sin.

John 3:19 speaks of "light is come into the world." Several other Scriptures refer to Christ or light as "come into the world." (See John 6:14; John 11:27; John 16:28; John 18:37.) It would be ludicrous to assume from those Scriptures that because Christ and light "came into the world," man did not have any role to play in his own salvation, that it just automatically occurred. If indeed by "sin entered into the world" all men became sinners, then by "the true light" and His Advent "every man" would automatically be saved. We know this is not so.

What, then, does the expression mean? When "sin entered into the world," it entered (or the Greek word is translated as "come in" 19 times) the same as Christ "came into the world." It is using the expression to relate the entrance of an arrangement or principle. The word "world" in both John and Romans is the Greek word *kosmos*, and it means "arrangement" or "order." It reveals in Romans 5:12 that "sin" brought a new order, a new arrangement. Up until that time, man had enjoyed the Eden of God, but sin brought a new "arrangement." So with the entrance of Christ "into the world," it brought a "new order," or a "new arrangement" as well. It did not cause anything to automatically appear within the heart of man but did present the opportunity for a new "arrangement."

In like manner, what Romans 5:12 describes was an arrangement or principle that was loosed. The word "world" has varied meanings based on its context. John 3:16 tells us that "God so loved the world," but then in 1 John 2:15, we are told to "Love not the world." Obviously, these Scriptures are speaking of "the world" in two different manners. So it is in Romans 5:12. This expression in Romans is revealing how the arrangement of sin came to have to be dealt with by mankind. The scholar Albert Barnes stated it in this manner in his writings (*Barnes' Notes*), commenting on this phrase, "The apostle here evidently is not discussing the doctrine of original sin, but he is stating a simple fact,

intelligible to all: "The first man violated the Law of God, and, in this way, sin was introduced among human beings."

Verse 12 continues, speaking of "death by sin." Is this implying that every man died because of what he inherited from Adam? No, it is telling us that when "sin entered into the world" and presented a new arrangement and when men came to a choice and embraced it, the product was "death." Ezekiel 18:4 tells us that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Romans 6:23 declares that "the wages of sin is death." Sin produces spiritual death, but as we examine these verses, we must ask ourselves, "Why did these people experience this 'death'?" Romans 5:12 goes on to say that "death passed upon all men, [why?] for that all have sinned." It is not an inherited attribute, but the result of choice and action.

Again, I would like to quote Albert Barnes, because I think he succinctly explained this expression "all have sinned." He wrote: "The apostle in this expression does not *say* that all have sinned in Adam, or that their nature has become corrupt . . . nor that the sin of Adam is imputed to them; but simply affirms that all men have sinned. . . . He is not settling a metaphysical difficulty; nor does he speak of the condition of man as he comes into the world." He continued, stating, "If men maintain that it refers to any metaphysical properties of the nature of man, or to infants, they should not infer or suppose this, but should show distinctly that it is in the text. Where is there evidence of any such reference?" (*Barnes Notes, Romans*, pages 128-129). Although Barnes was an adherent of the teaching of original sin (as were most teachers of his day), even he contested the application of this text to substantiate the teaching of that doctrine.

As we advance in this Scripture passage, even more problems present themselves for proponents of the inherited sin, depraved nature position. Romans 5:14 tells us, "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses . . . ." If this is because of the depraved nature, what happened with Moses? Did the institution of the Law and the Levitical Era eradicate this nature? Was man subsequent to Moses not subject to it? It is obvious to see that this is not the issue the Apostle was addressing in this text. When these verses are viewed in the larger context, it is apparent that the Apostle Paul was endeavoring to put the position of the old economy and Mosaic Law in proper perspective and to contrast them with what Christ instituted in their place.

As we survey the preceding portions of this letter, which were originally penned in continuity (the Geneva Bible being the first Bible with chapter and verse division; A.D. 1560), we see where Paul set forth the premise, "For there is no respect of persons with God" (Romans 2:11). Why did he raise this truth? Because of those who were adherents of the Jewish law, who thought that brought a distinction and special favor between them and the Gentiles. "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God" (Romans 2:17). They were resting in the flesh, in the literal features of Judaism. They were legalistic. Throughout the second chapter of Romans, Paul was placing the Law and its advocates in proper perspective, and then in verses 28-29, he clearly told us that with Christ and the new economy, there has been a transition from a literal measurement to a spiritual. (Though we know there were those who were "just men" [Hebrews 12:23] not by "the deeds of the law," but by it "there shall no flesh be justified in his sight" [Romans 3:20]. They were "justified by faith" [Romans 3:28].)

This is the same truth being conveyed in the fifth chapter, which speaks of "Adam to Moses." "Moses," through the Law, brought us all the way up to the New Testament dispensation. Those who were holding to the practices of the old dispensation that Moses represented were gauging things by physical, literal measurements, but Paul was informing us that Christ ushered in a new dispensation, with a new measurement and a new arrangement. Romans 5:20 substantiates that Paul was distinguishing between the dispensations when he told us: "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." So, I trust we can see that Romans, Chapter 5, is not advocating the doctrine of an inherited, or depraved, nature or inbred sin whatsoever, but rather distinguishing between those who were under the old economy or dispensation and that which became available through Christ.

One paramount question we must address is, "Why does one go into sin once he reaches the age of accountability?" Romans 5:6 provides an insight, telling us that "we were yet without strength." As an innocent infant, we did not possess the Holy Spirit—the strength needed to live above sin. When one reaches that fateful age, Isaiah 53:6 tells us, "All we like sheep have gone astray; [Why? When do we go astray?] we have turned every one to his own way." Selfishness is the cause of sin, and when it is chosen is when sin is conceived in the heart and becomes a reality.

## Part II – Other Proof Texts

There are many other passages of Scripture that have connotations associated with them which when one has the preconceived thought concerning the inheritance of sin, or a sinful nature, would appear to validate such a thought. However, let us give them an honest consideration. In Genesis 5:3 it is recorded that "Adam . . . begat a son in his own likeness, and after his image." This is supposedly a proof that after the Fall, children came into the world with a different nature, but if this were so, why did not Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-2) have that nature, being that they were also born subsequent to the Fall? Hebrews 11:4, concerning Abel, informs us that "he was righteous." In Genesis 4:6 we read where the Lord spoke to Cain and in verse 7 said, "If thou doest well [a matter of choice], shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." The word "sin" used here denotes a clear matter of Cain's choice.

If there was a change of nature, a depravity, then why did not Cain and Abel have it? Why is there no mention until Seth? Many generations following Seth, we can read of Enoch. Genesis 5:24 tells us, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Hebrews 11:5, concerning Enoch, reveals that "before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." If Genesis 5:3 was indicating a change of human nature, why does it only refer to "a son . . . Seth"? Genesis 5:4 says that "he begat sons and daughters." Why does it not speak of them as having a changed or depraved nature? Because they did not.

Genesis 5:3 in the *Septuagint* (the Greek Old Testament in use at the First Advent of Christ) renders it as "begot a son after his own form." Also, we see in Genesis 4:25 that "Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth [according to *Cruden's Complete Concordance*, 'Seth' means 'appointed']: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel . . ." Would God have "appointed" a depraved Seth for a "righteous Abel"? Psalm 145:17 proclaims, "The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." He does not place sin in a soul at conception or birth. What then is being conveyed in Genesis, Chapter 5? Very simply, it is "the generations of Adam" (Genesis 5:1). If because of Adam's sin man's nature became depraved and sinful, who are "the sons of God" in Genesis 6:2? We must in honesty dismiss the thought that this passage presents depravity. Some would quote Genesis 8:21 as an evidence of an inheritance: ". . . the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." However, this does not say "birth," and in the chapter following, when God instituted capital punishment after they came off of the ark, the Lord said man is "in the image of God" (Genesis 9:6).

Another Scripture commonly referred to is Psalm 51:5, which states, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Please read this the way the psalmist penned it. He did not say, "Sin was conceived in me," but rather "*in sin* did my mother conceive me." This is simply saying that David's "mother" was "in sin" when he was conceived. Remember, they were under the age of the Mosaic Law. Galatians 3:22 reminds us that "the scripture [the Old Testament at this juncture] hath concluded all under sin." Because "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4), David was not saying that any predisposition or inheritance was responsible for his sin. He plainly said: "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil . . ." (Psalm 51:3-4). He acknowledged that he alone was responsible and that it was an act of the will which he had "done."

If we would examine 2 Samuel, Chapter 11, we would find that David's temptation and sin followed the same pattern as Eve's and Christ's temptations: "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:16). In reality, David was comparing the hidden, private act of conception (Psalm 51:5) with the "hidden part" (verse 6) of man, the soul, and was telling us that God "desirest truth [or honesty] in the inward parts." David had initially been dishonest and tried to cover his sin. The comparison is that just as it is a personal, private act which creates physical life, it is a personal, private act to be right in our spiritual lives. Just as the results of what is done physically in private cannot be hid but will be manifested, so what is done spiritually in private cannot be hidden and will be made manifest.

Let us consider another Scripture, Psalm 58:3, which states, "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." This presents several questions: "Is all mankind to be considered 'wicked'? Is this the psalmist's intent?" In a succeeding verse, he wrote, "Break their teeth . . ." Do newborns have teeth? In verse 7 he said, ". . . let them be as cut in pieces." Verse 8 reads, ". . . let every one of them pass away." If this text is indicative of the whole of humanity, the psalmist is desiring that all mankind be "cut in pieces" and to "pass

away." I think it becomes evident that this text is not speaking of humanity as a whole, nor is it to be taken in a literal vein.

Verse 3 says, ". . . as they be born, speaking lies," yet newborns in reality do not speak at all. In this psalm David, as with many of his writings, was dealing with a specific situation and people, not making a sweeping, universal statement. Notice the caption preceding this psalm. It proclaims that it is a *Michtam of David*. Charles H. Spurgeon, in *The Treasury of David*, Volume III, page 62, wrote, "This is the fourth of the Psalms of the Golden Secret." On page 66 he quoted John Jebb in *A Literal Translation of the Book of the Psalms*, stating, "The proper meaning of the root of *Michtam* is *to engrave* . . . . It, therefore, in strictness, means, *an engraving* . . . ." The writer continued, telling us that this was one of the psalms "composed by David while flying and hiding from the persecutions of Saul." He also let us know it is possible these psalms were "inscribed on the rocks and on the sides of the caves which so often formed his place of refuge." John Gill says that "this Psalm was written on account of Abner, and the rest of Saul's princes." So, this text is not addressing the state of all mankind. In Psalm 116:11 the psalmist wrote, "I said in my haste, All men are liars." Here the Scripture clearly lets us know that to claim "all men are liars" was a hasty and faulty conclusion.

### Part III – Consideration of Other Scriptures

Another point we must consider is this: "If there is sin in the heart of an infant and the child dies, what is the state of the child?" We know "sin" precludes one from making Heaven their home (John 8:21). Some may say, "The blood atones," but there is no place in the Scriptures that teaches an application of the blood without confession (1 John 1:7, 9) and in reality it is "faith in his blood" (Romans 3:25). An infant cannot confess nor operate faith, and there are not any Scriptures that teach a blood cleansing without these being operational. The doctrine of original sin is what gave rise to the Roman practice of christening and infant baptism. The catechism of Roman Catholicism states, when they are engaging in this practice, ". . . since baptism signifies liberation from sin . . . we pray for this child: set him (her) free from original sin." This is not a sound Biblical doctrine nor practical, and the position held by many is just a carryover from this dark age position and practice.

On a chart entitled *The Fall and Redemption of Man*, there is a section entitled "Results of Depraved Nature," and this chart cites several Scriptural references. I would like to consider these Scriptures to see if in the light of truthful examination they teach what this chart advocates. This chart references Matthew 7:17-18 and Luke 6:43-45. Let us consider these passages. In Matthew's account, it reads, "Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Matthew 7:17). Rather than substantiate that as claimed—"all are born with a depraved nature" (chart)—it would appear from the words of Jesus that not all are "a corrupt tree" or bring forth "evil fruit," that there are indeed those who are "a good tree" and "bringeth forth good fruit." If this was teaching concerning man's depraved nature, they would all be evil trees, and there would not be any good trees or good fruit.

Luke's account makes this even more explicitly clear. In Luke 6:45 Luke recorded the words of our Lord thus: "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart [That certainly does not sound like a heart with inbred, or inherited, sin! That would hardly be considered 'the *good* treasure of his heart.'] bringeth forth that which is good." Certainly, this in no way validates "results of a depraved nature"! What was Jesus speaking of in these passages? Again, we cannot be "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15) when we approach any text with a preconceived idea and then proceed to isolate it from its context. Read the surrounding contexts in these passages. In Matthew, Chapter 7, Jesus talked about "broad is the way" (verse 13) and "narrow is the way" (verse 14). Then He warned of "false prophets" (verse 15) and told us how to distinguish them: "by their fruits ye shall know them" (verse 20). In Luke's rendering, it is preceded by talking about "the blind" (verse 39) and one styled as "Thou hypocrite" (verse 42). In neither case is it speaking of anything inherited, but rather that "every tree is known by his own fruit" (Luke 6:44). That is how you distinguish "false prophets" and a "hypocrite."

There are other Scriptural references cited on the chart. Some we have already given an exposition of, others we want to consider. Colossians 3:5-6 is mentioned. This is referenced on the chart as "Results of Depraved Nature." These verses relate sinful activities, such as "fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." All of these are products of "the children of disobedience," but this text does not say there is a depraved nature that removes man's free moral agency and forces him into "disobedience." One is not one of

"the children of disobedience" until he disobeys. Disobedience is an act. To disobey requires knowledge and exercise of will. "To him that *knoweth* to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Strangely enough, this is another verse cited on this section of the chart that I have referenced. However, this verse flies in the face of thinking of "sin" as other than an act of the will, something either you "do" or "doeth it not" (James 4:17).

Hebrews 10:26 is also referenced: "For if we sin wilfully . . ." I suppose the intent here is to say that this verbiage implies that there is "sin" that is not wilful. Again, I implore, please consider the context in which the passage is contained. This is speaking of those who were entertaining "forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" and worse yet were considering reverting back to old Judaism and other "sacrifice for sins." The writer was letting them know that when "we have received the knowledge of the truth," to go back, to back up on it, is to "sin wilfully." To back up on light, to fail to walk in it, is an act of the will; and thus, it constitutes sin, because all sin is an act of the will.

There are two more Scriptures cited we want to consider before we conclude this portion of our study. First Timothy 5:6 is one. It says, "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." Surely this verse is true. One may be physically alive and also be spiritually dead. However, there is nothing in this verse that even remotely hints that "she . . . is dead" because of a depraved nature. Conversely, it indicates "she . . . is dead" because of how she has chosen to live. The last verse we want to consider is Isaiah 59:2. Personally, I do not know how much clearer a verse could be in dispelling the thought of Adam being responsible for man's condition and sinfulness. This verse expressly states, "But *your* iniquities [not Adam's] have separated between you and your God, and *your sins* [not Adam's] have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Verse 3 goes on to assign personal responsibility, stating, "For *your* hands are defiled with blood, and *your* fingers with iniquity; *your* lips have spoken lies, *your* tongue hath muttered perverseness." I think it is exceedingly clear who is responsible in these verses. They were personally responsible. There is absolutely no intimation in these verses that the responsibility lies with Adam, or Adamic depravity. If this was what was being indicated, it would have said, "Adam's sin has separated between you and your God." However, it does not say such because it does not do such.

One question I would pose, "If an Adamic nature is inherited and one becomes saved and then sanctified but later backslides, where does this nature come from after they backslide if it was inherited and then eradicated?" Also, there have been those in times past who have told the saints, when they acted in a manner that they deemed was not sanctified, that they had "lost" their "sanctification." However, think of the ramifications of such a thought. If they "lost" their "sanctification," did their depraved nature return? If it was eradicated, where did it come from? If they "lost" their sanctification, did they lose the Spirit of God? If so, then they are "none of his" (Romans 8:9). I trust you can see the traditional teaching presents more questions than answers and poses great difficulty in being compatible with the harmony and scheme of the Scriptures.

I have attempted to give a fair, accurate, and in many of the passages considered a contextual exposition of the passages in question. I encourage you to rather than merely hold and perpetuate teachings that have traditionally been embraced, to do as the saints in Berea: ". . . they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). Truth will stand examination, and I encourage you to search "whether those things were so." I have every confidence that if you will do so with honest inquiry, that "The eyes of your understanding [will be] enlightened" (Ephesians 1:18).

## John, Chapter 15

There is another passage of Scripture text that is referenced to support the position of a definite second work of grace, and that is found in John, Chapter 15. In *Christian Theology* (The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1925), in the chapter entitled "Entire Sanctification," under Section 3, "A Definite Work," these words are found on page 463: "The purging of John 15:1-6 is a definite work. Its purpose is that those already in Christ and who are bearing the fruit should bear more fruit." Let us consider these verses and see what they actually convey to us. As we begin to do so, we must remember again the words of the Apostle Peter, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20). As we consider John, Chapter 15, we cannot get the true sense of the text if we isolate, or private, it from its surrounding context. John, Chapter 15, is a part of a much larger discourse by our Lord. In reality, it began in John, Chapter 13, and continues through the end of John, Chapter 16. Then, John, Chapter 17, relates



His high priestly prayer offered in Gethsemane.

Let us consider the overall tenor of this final discourse of Christ to His disciples. In John 12:23 Jesus told them, "The hour is come." What hour was He speaking of in those words? "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John 12:31). In verse 32 He stated, "And I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men unto me," and verse 33 tells us, "This he said, signifying what death he should die." What we see in these words is the fulfillment of the oldest prophetic utterance in the Scriptures. When man sinned, God Himself stepped on the stage of action and pronounced the first prophecy recorded in the Scriptures. In pronouncing judgment on the serpent, the Lord said, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). Christ, "when the fulness of the time was come," was "sent forth . . . made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). In His cruel, inhuman passion, certainly the prophecy was fulfilled concerning "thou shalt bruise his heel," but in the triumphant redemptive work, Christ indeed did "bruise thy head."

What we see portrayed in this final discourse is a description of the climatic changes that would occur in this prophetic fulfillment of a change of ages, or dispensations. Christ proceeded in Chapter 13 to further fulfill the old by the observance of the Passover, and then He established the institution of the New Testament ordinances of feet washing and the Lord's Supper. In Chapter 13 He told Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter" (John 13:7). This is a reference to the understanding that would be given when the dispensations changed and the Holy Spirit was given; that would bring understanding. Chapter 14 follows with our Lord saying, "I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2b). Contrary to popular sectarian teachings, we know this has no reference to Heaven. In Matthew 25:34 Jesus clearly told us the place for the "blessed of my father" has been "prepared . . . from the foundation of the world." Again, this fourteenth chapter has reference to the changes afforded by His redemptive work and the change of dispensations. The Day of Pentecost saw the institution of the Holy Ghost dispensation, and Jesus spoke much, in what we call Chapters 14, 15, and 16, of the Holy Spirit and what He would do. He spoke in much of this discourse concerning the changes that would come with a new dispensation.

Now the question may arise, "What bearing does this have concerning John 15:1-6?" The answer is a great bearing. Let us look at these verses in view of the context we have considered. Jesus began with the proclamation: "I am the true vine . . ." (John 15:1). Why did He employ such an analogy? Remember the tenor of this discourse had been what the change in dispensations would bring. Why did Jesus proclaim, "I am the true vine"? The famed Scottish scholar, Dr. William Barclay, tells us this, ". . . over and over again in the Old Testament, Israel is pictured as the vine or the vineyard of God." A whole host of Scriptures substantiates this statement. Isaiah 5:1-7 verifies this truth speaking of old Israel. In verse 2 the Lord said He "planted it with the choicest vine." In Jeremiah 2:21 the Lord, speaking through the prophet, said, "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" Ezekiel, Chapter 15, likens Israel to the vine, as does Ezekiel 19:10. In Hosea 10:1 the prophet again likened Israel to a vine, stating, "Israel is an empty vine . . ." History tells us: "The vine had actually become the symbol of the nation of Israel. It was the emblem on the coins of the Maccabees. One of the glories of the temple was the great golden vines upon the front of the Holy Place" (*Barclay, The Daily Study Bible Series, The Gospel of John*, Volume 2, page 172).

In view of our text, what do these facts reveal to us? Again, they reveal that there was a change coming. Old Israel had been "the choicest vine" (Isaiah 5:2), but it became "the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me" (Jeremiah 2:21). The Jewish nation as a whole "received him not" (John 1:11). They were "an empty vine" (Hosea 10:1), and as such "because of unbelief they were broken off" (Romans 11:20). Since they did not accept Christ, they bore not fruit. Thus, first we must view the prophetic aspect of this text. In these words, "I am the true vine," we see the end of an old order or economy and the institution of a new.

Let us progress to view this text practically. First, let us consider some questions. Verse 2 says, "Every branch *in me* . . ." If you do not receive the Holy Ghost until you are sanctified, how can you be "in me"? Romans 8:9b clearly tells us, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If you are "in me" (verse 2), Christ, "the true vine" (verse 1), with a corrupt, carnal, sinful nature, would that not be a "fellowship" of "righteousness with unrighteousness" (2 Corinthians 6:14)? Would that not be contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures? The truth is the branches have the nature of the vine. If they are "grafted in" (Romans 11:19), they acquire the vine's nature when they are "grafted in."

The traditional teaching has been that this refers to those saved, "that beareth fruit" (verse 2), and that they need

sanctified to "bring forth more fruit" (verse 2). But let us consider this position. How can a "branch" bear "fruit" (verse 2) if that branch is corrupt? If the "branch" (and verse 5 tells us "ye are the branches," speaking of the individuals) still has a root, a sinful nature, and inbred sin is still in the heart, how can it "bring forth good fruit"? Jesus plainly told us, and this is "the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:3), that neither can "a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Matthew 7:18). In "simplicity" Jesus told us there are only two positions an individual can occupy: a "good tree [that] bringeth forth good fruit" or "a corrupt tree [that] bringeth forth evil fruit" (Matthew 7:17). One could not be a "branch in me" and yet be "corrupt," or have a corrupted sinful nature, and bring forth "good fruit." In reality, this "branch that beareth fruit" already possesses the nature of the vine. Its sap, a picture of the Spirit, is already running through it, else it would be dried up and dead. "The Spirit is life" (Romans 8:10). "The Spirit" is the sap that keeps that vital connection with Christ, "the true vine."

As we progress in this passage, verse 2 tells us that "every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." This "branch" we know is a saint (verse 5) that "beareth fruit," not a corrupt fruit, but one that bears the nature of the vine. This verse tells us "he purgeth it." *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says "prunes." What is the pruning for? To enable it to "bring forth more fruit." Notice this is "more" of the same kind of "fruit." The pruning does not change the nature of the branch or of the fruit. It only enables more of the same to be produced. This purging, according to *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, referring to this verse means "to prune." This pruning is not a washing nor a cleansing. In Hebrews 10:2, when it speaks of being "purged" in reference to sacrifices offered, it is the same Greek word, and in that context does mean "to cleanse." But that does not fit this analogy. Branches are not washed or cleansed to produce "more fruit," but they are pruned, or cut back. Also, branches are not purged or pruned by blood. There is absolutely no blood cleansing alluded to in this passage. It is also an horticultural fact that a branch which is pruned is not pruned once and for all, as is taught by proponents of a second work of grace, but rather to remain fruitful is pruned periodically and repeatedly.

Notice this text teaches a progression. Verse 2 speaks of "beareth fruit," then "more fruit," and then verse 5 speaks of "much fruit." This text portrays a progressive work. In reality, this text is not speaking of a work of the Spirit but of the Word. In verses 3, 7, 10, and 14, Jesus spoke of the Word or commandments: "The word which I have spoken unto you" (verse 3); "my words" (verse 7); "my commandments" (verse 10); "whatsoever I command" (verse 14). Let us get the real essence of this text. It is teaching us how to keep that vital connection with Christ. It is this connection that enables you to "have your fruit unto holiness" (Romans 6:22). Think with me, when did you start bearing "fruit," bearing "fruit unto holiness"? This began when you were saved, when you were "grafted in" (Romans 11:19) and you took on the "divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4) of "the true vine" (verse 1).

How were you purged, or cut back? Just as Jesus said, through the Word, through the preaching of the Gospel. In Ephesians 4:11-12 the Apostle Paul told us, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; [What for? What is their purpose?] For the perfecting [the Greek word means 'complete furnishing'; *Strong's/Vines*] of the saints . . ." What does this "furnishing" provide? The charge to the ministry is to "Preach the word" (2 Timothy 4:2). As the ministry fulfills this charge, what does it furnish? What does it enable the saints to do? To "grow up into him" (Ephesians 4:15), to enable the saints to come to "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13), to Christian maturity. When we are first saved, there are a lot of things we do not have any knowledge of, but through the preaching we gain understanding and are purged, pruned, or cut back. Our understanding, our thoughts, are pruned, or cut back, when understanding from God's Word is revealed to us through the preaching.

When we are initially saved, we are perfect as far as the soul is concerned. Peter told us, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit . . . love one another with a pure heart fervently, Being born again . . ." (1 Peter 1:22-23). This reveals that when we are "born again," "ye have *purified your souls*," and you have "a *pure heart*," not one with inbred sin yet in it. You are spiritually in a state of perfection. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:6, "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect." However, there is an ongoing aspect of this perfection as well. There is present spiritual perfection that we attain with conversion, but there is also progressive spiritual perfection, or maturity, that the Apostle referred to when he spoke of "the perfecting of the saints" (Ephesians 4:12). We are perfected, or furnished, through the preaching of the Word.

In 2 Corinthians 7:1 the Apostle Paul told us, ". . . let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." This reveals that there is a cleansing and perfecting we need to do as the Word

of God goes forth and we gain understanding. This is the purging or pruning being referred to in verse 2. As we hear and understand more of the Word, the flesh and our humanity is cut back more and more. As we continue to measure to the Word of God, we perfect holiness and bring forth more "fruit unto holiness" (Romans 6:22). This is why the Lord has given pastors.

Jeremiah 3:15 prophesies, "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, [why?] which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." Also, Ephesians 4:11 tells us this prophecy has been fulfilled, stating, "And he gave some . . . pastors." This is why every individual needs a pastor. The pastor is the one the Lord uses to bring "knowledge and understanding" to perfect the saints in the way. Also, being in an established congregation provides you the benefit of the other ministerial offices as well, "evangelists" and "teachers," etc. These enhance the "perfecting" as well. As the Corinthian letter reveals, this perfection applies to both the inward and outward man: "the flesh and spirit" (2 Corinthians 7:1). Progressing through pruning does not lessen the standards of holiness, but rather strengthens them as it brings us "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

I trust we can clearly see that this passage in John, Chapter 15, has no reference whatsoever to two works of grace. Prophetically, it reveals the contradistinction between old Israel, a "degenerate" vine, and Christ, "the true vine," and the New Testament economy. Personally and practically it portrays, concerning those "in me" (verse 2), the practical, progressive "perfecting of the saints." This purging or pruning is an ongoing, progressive work. No diligent "husbandmen" only prunes once or twice, not if he wants "much fruit" (verse 8). It is a continual work.

### Children of Wrath

Let us proceed to another passage that is often cited to indicate "all are formed with a depraved nature." Ephesians 2:3 is referred to indicating that all are "by nature the children of wrath." Unfortunately, many try to view Scriptures in an isolated context. The Apostle Peter told us that "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20). We must not isolate or private any text from its surrounding context. To do so enhances the possibility that we erroneously misconstrue the tenor of the text. In the epistle to the Ephesians, we must recognize whom Paul was addressing: "the saints which are at Ephesus" (Ephesians 1:1). What were they? "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles . . ." (Ephesians 2:11).

Notice the expression "*in time past* Gentiles." We see the same expression used in Ephesians 2:2, which states, "Wherein *in time past* ye walked . . ." In verse 12 we are told, "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." So when verse 3 speaks of "nature," what was this "nature"? Galatians 2:15 speaks of, "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles." Romans 2:27 says, "And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature . . ." These passages reveal to us how the Apostle used the word "nature." Those who were "Jews" were "Jews by nature," and those who were "uncircumcision" or "Gentiles" were so "by nature." This was their physical disposition, but he turned the word, as Hebrew teachers often did, to reveal what their spiritual nature had been and why. Paul was writing to those who were naturally "Gentiles" (Ephesians 2:11), "strangers from the covenants of promise" (verse 12), the Old Testament Covenant.

Consider Paul's words as he began Chapter 2. These had been "dead in trespasses and sins" (deeds and acts in the plural). They had been "quickenened," or made alive. Now, why had they been "in trespasses and sins"? Verse 2 goes on to tell us, "Wherein [in trespasses and sins] in time past ye walked [an act of the will] according to the course of this world, [Why? Why do people follow this 'course'? Is it inbred? Read the remainder of this verse.] according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Now think with me—you cannot be one of "the children of disobedience" until you disobey. What caused them to disobey and walk "according to the course of this world"? It was "the prince of the power of the air." There was "the spirit" of the enemy that "worketh in."

They were not born with "the spirit" of the enemy within them! Other Scriptures that speak of "the children of disobedience" refer explicitly to sinful acts. Consider Ephesians 5:3-6. Verse 6 tells us (after enumerating sinful attributes in verses 3-5), ". . . because of these things [sinful actions, borne of choices] cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." Why do people engage in such behavior? They are following a "course" (Ephesians 2:2), but who is directing this "course"? When they choose to become disobedient, a "spirit . . . worketh in" them. We see the same truth depicted in Colossians 3:5-6.

As we consider Ephesians 2:3, notice that verse 2 ends with a colon. Thus, verse 3 is a continuation of verse 2. Verse 2 has told us why they had been "dead in trespasses and sins"—because they became disobedient, imbibed a spirit, and it dominated their "course" of life. In verse 3 Paul said, "Among whom also we all had our conversation [in the Greek it means 'to conduct oneself'] . . . ." Verse 2 tells us how: "disobedience." Notice what he said his "disobedience" prompted by a "spirit" caused him to do: "had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath . . . ." When did his "nature" change? Not through Adam, not at birth, but rather his "nature" changed and made him one of the "children of wrath" when he became one of "the children of disobedience," when he disobeyed and "the spirit" of the enemy "worketh in" his life. When man sins, his nature does change, but a depraved nature does not compel him to sin and invalidate his free moral agency. A depraved nature does not cause one to sin. When one sins, it changes and perverts his nature.

In verse 2 Paul let us know when ones enter "disobedience," their "nature" is changed. Further in this chapter, he reminded them that they were "Gentiles" (verse 11), "having no hope" (verse 12). In other words, he was letting them know that because they were "uncircumcision . . . by nature [physically]" (Romans 2:27), "Gentiles . . . by nature [physically]" (Romans 2:14), and "strangers from the covenant" (Ephesians 2:12), when their spiritual "nature" changed and they became "children of wrath," under the old covenant they had "no hope" (verse 12). However, thank God because of Christ, both Jews and Gentiles have been "quickened . . . together with Christ." The Jews had been "committed the oracles of God" (Romans 3:2). So under the old covenant there was a manner in which the Jew could deal with sin: ". . . there is a remembrance again made of sins every year" (Hebrews 10:3). The "Gentiles" had no such provision and were considered "sinners of the Gentiles" (Galatians 2:15), because their physical nature provided no remedy for their spiritual nature. In Ephesians, Chapter 2, the Apostle was telling them that "with Christ" (Ephesians 2:5) new provisions were made and that he "hath made both one" (verse 14), subject to the same benefits. So, again, Ephesians 2:3 is not setting forth something inherited.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Part I – What About Types?

We realize the Old Testament is replete with typical truths. First Corinthians 10:11 tells us, speaking of Old Testament occurrences, that "all these things happened unto them for ensamples," or the Greek word is *typos*, from which our English word "type" is derived. *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* offers this portion of the verse as "these things occurred to them typically." So we readily admit the Old Testament contains a host of beautiful typical truths. However, we must recognize the limitation of types and shadows. Hebrews 10:1 informs us, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and *not* the very image of the things . . ."

Let us consider a couple of types that are used to seemingly typify two works of grace. First, let us look at the two crossings—the first crossing of the children of Israel at the Red Sea out of Egyptian bondage (Exodus 14:16-31) and the second crossing at the Jordan River into Canaan land (Joshua 3:14-17). These two crossings are taught as typifying two works of grace: the Red Sea crossing representing justification and the Jordan crossing representing sanctification. Let us consider this and ask these questions: "Why were there two crossings? Why did they have a crossing at the Jordan River?" In 1491 B.C. Moses said unto the people, "Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Exodus 13:3). In 1490 B.C. they reached "the wilderness of Paran" (Numbers 12:16) and sent the spies "to Kadesh" (Numbers 13:26), to spy out the "land of Canaan" (Numbers 13:17). It was the Lord's plan that they cross at Kadeshbarnea (Deuteronomy 1:19) into Canaan land. They spied out the land (which was never God's will; Deuteronomy 1:19-22; Psalm 106:15) for "forty days" (Numbers 13:25).

When they came back, the majority were filled with unbelief. Because of this, God pronounced judgment on them and told them "your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years . . . until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness" (Numbers 14:33). The Hebrew writer told us, "But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?" (Hebrews 3:17). Why did their carcasses fall? ". . . they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:19). So, it was after "forty years" of wandering that they crossed at the Jordan. Why was there a crossing at the Jordan? It was because of "them that had sinned" and "because of unbelief." Do we really want to use the result of sin and unbelief as a type of sanctification? Had the children of Israel all been as Joshua and Caleb, who declared, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Numbers 13:30), there would only have been *one* crossing. Also, there were many who made the first crossing but never made the second: their "carcasses fell in the wilderness" (Hebrews 3:17). And the many children born during those forty years made the second crossing but had not made the first crossing. Remember, there would not have been two crossings at all if there had not been "sin" and "unbelief." Had they been obedient to God and His plan, there would have only been *one* crossing.

### Part II – Another Type: The Old Testament Tabernacle

With the greatest respect and reverence for the brethren who have gone before, I would like to quote from *Christian Theology* (The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1925). In Part V, Chapter 5, entitled "Entire Sanctification," under the section entitled "Two Cleansings in Old Testament Type," I would like to quote page 459. The following is written: "The Tabernacle contained two rooms—the holy place and the holiest place. There were two veils, one at the entrance of each of these rooms. Two altars were placed one before each of these veils. There were two sprinklings of blood, one on each of these altars. What could better symbolize two distinct cleansings . . . The first altar typified justification. . . the second room is typical of sanctification." Let us consider this allusion to the old tabernacle and its practices.

First, why were there "two rooms"? Hebrews 9:8 tells us because "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all [after the second veil . . . is called the Holiest of all; Hebrews 9:3] was not yet made manifest . . ." Why? What separated man from God under the Old Testament economy? Obviously, it was sin (Isaiah 59:2). Those Old Testament "gifts and sacrifices . . . could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience" (Hebrews 9:9). This conscience was the "conscience of sins" (Hebrews 10:2), and "the blood of bulls and of goats" could not "take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4). "Once every year" (Hebrews 9:7; 10:3) there was a Day of Atonement. On that day there was "a sin offering" that made "atonement," and the people were "forgiven" (Leviticus

4:20).

However, under that old economy, they were not taken away nor delivered from its power. Because of this, man was separated from and could not enjoy the presence of God. God's presence overshadowed the mercy seat in the second room (Exodus 25:22). "But into the second went the high priest alone once every year . . ." (Hebrews 9:7). Only the high priest could enter God's presence, and even he could only do so "once every year" on the Day of Atonement. Even on that day he went "not without blood, [why?] which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." His sin needed to be atoned for as well. You can see where this was originally instructed in Leviticus 16:6. Hebrews 9:8 tells us that "the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." Why? Because those Old Testament sacrifices, although enabling people to be forgiven, were a ceremonial work and could not really bring deliverance. It could not "take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4); it could not remit or remove them; and in that regard the high priest was in no better position spiritually than the people.

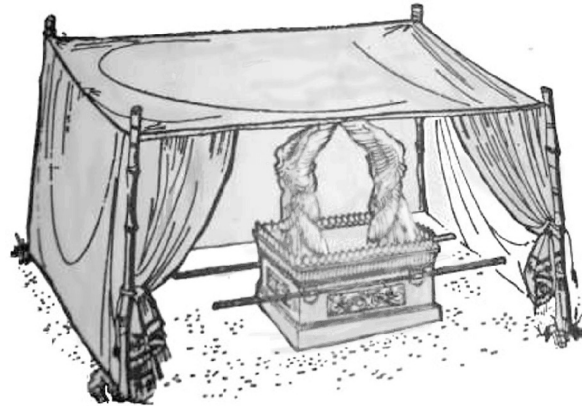
Notice that there was a change with Christ, according to Hebrews 9:11, which states, "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come . . ." He came "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by *his own blood* he entered in *once* into the holy place" (Hebrews 9:12). He was able to do what those Old Testament sacrifices could not. Hebrews 10:19 proclaims, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." He did not just provide the ability to "be forgiven" (Leviticus 4:26), He provided "remission" (Hebrews 10:18) and not just remission but regeneration, "a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Hebrews 10:20). When Christ gave "the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:26) and "put away sin" (9:26), when His "veil," or "his flesh," was offered, consider what happened: He "yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matthew 27:50-51). The two rooms became one! Man was no longer separated from God. God could now come out and fellowship and be one with man through this sacrificial work of Christ. Christ's death made the two rooms one!

Hebrews 10:16 says, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." God now tabernacles with man; "the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them" (Revelation 21:3). The two rooms were because of sin, two blood applications were because of sin, but Jesus' death made the two one! Notice when the writer spoke of "a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil" (Hebrews 10:20), he told us to "draw near with a *true* heart . . . having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" (Hebrews 10:22). Hebrews 10:2 tells us it is the "conscience of sins." In this tenth chapter of Hebrews, the Hebrew writer was speaking of the inadequacy of those Old Testament sacrifices but told us had they been adequate, "the worshippers *once purged* should have had no more conscience of sins" (Hebrews 10:2). Their blood was inadequate, but Christ's was adequate: ". . . the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience . . ." (Hebrews 9:14). Purge it from what? "Conscience of sins" (Hebrews 10:2). It is claimed, because we hold to the truth of being "once purged," or one blood cleansing, that we are "one workers," that we only believe in one work of grace. That is not true. We believe in as many works of grace as long as grace works. Paul said he was put into the ministry by a work of grace (1 Corinthians 15:10). In truth, the works of grace in a saint's life are innumerable, but we are dealing with how many blood purgings, or cleansings, are necessary.

The two rooms and their practices were only "imposed . . . until the time of reformation," or when "Christ . . . come" (Hebrews 9:10-11). Since then, we have "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 8:2). In Acts 15:16 James quoted prophecy (Amos 9:11), telling us the New Testament reality, a true type of the New Testament church, is "the tabernacle of David." In 2 Samuel 6:17 we read, "And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it." First Chronicles 16:1 clarifies what the tabernacle was when it says, "So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it."

The old Mosaic tabernacle remained in Gibeon (1 Chronicles 21:29) with all the articles of furniture, except the Ark of the Covenant. David's tabernacle was unique; unlike the Mosaic tabernacle, it only had one room, the "holiest of all" (Hebrews 9:3) where the ark was placed right "in the midst of the tent" (1 Chronicles 16:1). If you study this "tabernacle of David," it provided new access to the presence of God and the privilege to worship at all times. What a beautiful type of what Christ said He would build: "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18), and James was quoting Amos when he said in Acts 15:16, ". . . I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David . . ." Isaiah 16:5,

prophesying of Christ, tells us, "And in mercy shall the throne be established ['Christ to sit on his (David's; Acts 2:29) throne'; Acts 2:30]: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David . . ." This one room tabernacle is the type of "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 8:2). I trust we can see that the two rooms were "for the time then present" (Hebrews 9:9), but not for this "time of reformation" (Hebrews 9:10). They needed continual comings and blood applications in that dispensation, but praise God, we do not today!



**The Tabernacle of David**

## CHAPTER FOUR

### What Position Did the Apostles Hold Prior to Pentecost?

In *Bible Readings for Bible Students* (The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1902, page 27), under the heading of "Sanctification," it is written: ". . . the disciples were converted before the day of Pentecost . . ." We want to consider this statement and ask if that position is sustainable by the Bible. What was the position of the Apostles prior to Pentecost? Were they "converted"? Did they have New Testament salvation, or regeneration? Was it possible? Let us lay "precept upon precept, line upon line" (Isaiah 28:13) and see what seventh-seal light reveals to us.

First, I think everyone would agree on the purpose for which Christ made His Advent onto the shores of time: ". . . the angel of the Lord appeared unto him [Joseph] in a dream, saying, . . . thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:20-21). Jesus proclaimed, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). But the questions that must be addressed are: "How was New Testament salvation made available? What does it consist of? When did it become available?" We have seen that under the old economy, "the scripture [Old Testament] hath concluded all under sin" (Galatians 3:22). The legal era, which was in force when Christ came, "in those sacrifices . . . made . . . every year," could not "take away sin" (Hebrews 10:3-4). Those sacrifices were inferior and inadequate.

Hebrews 10:5-10 gives us a great deal of insight to how New Testament salvation became available to mankind. "Wherefore [or because 'it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins'; verse 4] when he cometh into the world [the First Advent of Christ], he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me" (verse 5). Why did Christ come? "Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O God" (verse 7). What was that "will"? "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ . . ." (verse 10). Sin required a "sacrifice," an "offering." Why? "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Christ came in "the fulness of time" (Galatians 4:4) because the first covenant had "fault" (Hebrews 8:8). So, He "taketh away the first, that he might establish the second" (Hebrews 10:9).

If you study the Book of Hebrews, you will see the predominant word is "better." There are thirteen chapters in Hebrews, and the word "better" is mentioned thirteen times, an equation of once per chapter. Hebrews 9:23 speaks of "better sacrifices." Hebrews 7:22 speaks of a "better testament." Hebrews 8:6 speaks of a "better covenant." We know Hebrews 9:26 tells us, concerning Christ, ". . . but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin [Old Testament sacrifices could not do that; they went 'every year with blood'; verse 25] by the sacrifice of himself." Christ became our "sacrifice," our "offering." This is what paid man's sin debt.

The Apostle Peter told us, ". . . ye were not redeemed with corruptible things . . . But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19). Why was Christ a superior "sacrifice"? Notice it refers in Hebrews 9:23 to "better sacrifices" in the plural. There was not only "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ" (Hebrews 10:10), but Hebrews 9:14 says, ". . . who through the eternal Spirit offered himself [speaking of Luke 23:46, which says 'into thy hands I commend my spirit'] . . ." Isaiah 53:12 tells us that "he . . . poured out his soul unto death." These are the "better sacrifices." Animal sacrifices could never remotely compare to "the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:26)—body, Spirit, and soul. These all had to be offered to provide redemption completely to man, who is trichotomous.

In Hebrews 9:13-14 the Hebrew writer contrasted "the blood of bulls and of goats" (verse 13) with "How much more shall the blood of Christ [a willing sacrifice], who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge [in this context means 'to cleanse'] your conscience ['conscience of sins'; Hebrews 10:2] from dead works to serve the living God?" Now, how was this purging made available? By the work He accomplished; He "offered himself." He became the "author of eternal salvation" (Hebrews 5:9). He came to usher in "the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2), to "establish the second" (Hebrews 10:9), or the New Testament.

The paramount question then is, "When was the New Testament established?" When did it and its benefits come into focus? Let us consider the words of the Hebrew writer: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament [how did it come into force?], that by means of death . . ." (Hebrews 9:15). Verses 16-17 very clearly tell us: "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead:



otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." This is exceedingly clear. The New Testament had no "force" and "no strength at all" until "after" Christ died. Why is this so? It is just like any of us who has a last will and testament. It has no "strength at all" while we are living. Why? It is revocable; we can change it. It is only "of force *after* men are dead." Why? Because then it cannot be changed, its terms are sealed, and it becomes irrevocable and "of force."

The "redemption of the transgressions" only became possible "by means of death" (Hebrews 9:15). Plainly stated, the New Testament was not "of force" until after the sacrifice was made, the price for sin's ransom paid, and "the testator" died. There had to be an acceptable sacrifice and death of "the testator" first. So when did New Testament salvation become available? It certainly was not before the New Testament came "of force."

Let us go back into the Gospel accounts and see what they tell us. Consider the words of Jesus, recorded by John in John 16:7, which reads, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Certainly, the Holy Spirit performs many roles, but what is one very primary role He fills? Jesus said he "will reprove the world of sin [a depiction of conviction], and of righteousness" (John 16:8). Paul wrote, ". . . the Spirit is *life* because of righteousness" (Romans 8:10). One key primary role of "the Spirit is life." Jesus, in talking to Nicodemus, distinctly mentioned the expression "born of the spirit" twice (John 3:6 and 8). It is the "spirit [that] giveth life" (2 Corinthians 3:6).

Jesus told those disciples in John 16:7, "It is expedient for you that I go away: [Where was He going? John 16:28 tells us, 'I came forth from the Father, and . . . I leave the world, and go to the Father.' This will take on greater significance as we progress in our study.] for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Notice what John wrote in John 7:39, ". . . the Holy Ghost was not yet given [why?]; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." He could not be "glorified" until after His terrible passion. He told the disciples: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again" (Matthew 20:18-19). It was after ransom's terrible price was paid (by the "sacrifice of himself") and after He arose (the "third day") that He was able to be "glorified."

Reason with me, if "the Spirit is life" (Romans 8:10) and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ ['the Holy Ghost'; Luke 4:1], he is none of his" (Romans 8:9) and if Jesus had to "go away" to the Father after He was "glorified" to "send him," how could it be possible for the disciples to have this "newness of life" (Romans 6:4) prior to Christ sending the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost? Remember, John wrote that "the Holy Ghost was not yet given" (John 7:39). If this is so, then "life" was not yet given. What were these brethren still under? Look at what Jesus told the lepers in Matthew 8:4: ". . . go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded . . ." He also told the ten lepers He cleansed the same thing: "Go shew yourselves unto the priests" (Luke 17:14). Why? Because the Old Testament was still in force.

The New Testament was not "of force" yet because "the testator liveth" (Hebrews 9:17). ". . . the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, [was] took . . . out of the way [by] nailing it to his cross" (Colossians 2:14). There of necessity had to be death, burial, resurrection, and ascension before He could "send him [the Holy Ghost] unto you" (John 16:7). Let us examine some other Scriptures that make this truth clear. We must bear in mind that until "he is come" (John 16:8), speaking of the Holy Spirit, there cannot be any "newness of life," because it is the Spirit that births the believer and brings the new life. John said Christ had to be "glorified." When He was "glorified," what did He do? "He ascended up on high" (Ephesians 4:8). He was "set . . . at his own right hand" (Ephesians 1:20), or as Hebrews 8:1 tells us, "set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."

Notice in Matthew 19:27-28 Peter's question and what Jesus said concerning regeneration: "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore [from this question it is apparent that he did not have it yet]? And Jesus said unto them [all of 'them,' not just Peter], Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me [they had already done that], in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory . . ." This reveals to us that it would happen when He "shall sit in the throne of his glory." That is when "regeneration" would become available. In this verse He used the future tense, stating, "Son of man *shall* sit" and "ye also *shall* sit." Regeneration became a possibility once ransom's cost was paid, and the Testator sealed the covenant, "ascended up on high," and sent the Holy Spirit that could birth the believer.

Let us consider "regeneration." The Greek word is *paligenesia* and comes from two words: *palin*, which means "again," and *genesis*, which means "birth." Together these two words mean "new birth." *Strong's Concordance* tells

us, "Regeneration stresses the inception of a new state of things in contrast with the old." Again, we must ask, when did that "new state" become available? And what divine agency brings it? This expression is also used in Titus 3:5 where it elaborates on how "he saved us." It is "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

What enables man to enjoy "a new state of things"? It not only is "his mercy" (Titus 3:5), thank God, that "mercy" that "he delighteth in . . . [that] cast all . . . sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:18-19), but there is a "washing of regeneration" that "the Holy Ghost" does. This "washing" is when the Spirit of God cleanses a man's spirit, when a stronger than the strong man comes in and "the unclean spirit is gone out of a man" (Luke 11:22 and 24). Then there is "a new state of things." The Spirit cleanses man's spirit, his nature is changed, he "hath begotten us" (1 Peter 1:3). We are "alive unto God" (Romans 6:11), and we become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). But this "regeneration," or "new birth," is a work of the Spirit (John 3:5-8). Since the Holy Spirit was not given until the Day of Pentecost, it was not possible for them to experience this regenerating power prior to that. Consider Jesus' words to Peter in Luke 22:32, which reads, ". . . when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." At this juncture, it is apparent Peter was not converted.

It may be said the Gospels plainly say that Jesus "gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases" (Luke 9:1). And so He did. It says He "*gave* them power." This was a dispensed power for a purpose: "he sent them to preach" (Luke 9:2), just as in the Old Testament: ". . . holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). They were not "regenerated," or "converted," nor did the Old Testament brethren have the abiding, indwelling presence. There may have been rare exceptions, but the fulfillment of "I will pour out of my Spirit upon *all flesh*" (Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28) did not occur until Pentecost. The disciples received a special dispensation of power for a purpose, just as the prophets did.

With all due respect, let us look at the lives of the disciples prior to Pentecost. In Luke 9:46 we read, "Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest." Is this evidence of a humble, regenerated heart? No doubt, some would say, "That is evidence of their carnal nature and their need to be sanctified with a second, definite work of grace!" But look farther in this ninth chapter of Luke, when the Samaritans "did not receive him." We read that "his disciples James and John . . . said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" (Luke 9:54). Notice Jesus' response: "But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Luke 9:55). Why did He say this? Because they had not had "the washing of regeneration." Their spirit had not been cleansed, or washed, yet.

It was not a "regenerated," or "converted," state that the disciples were in and needing eradication of an inherited carnal nature, but rather they were still under the Old Testament, awaiting "the death of the testator" (Hebrews 9:16), His glorification, and the giving of the Holy Ghost so they could "be born [again] of water and of the Spirit" (John 3:5). Certainly, Peter did not exhibit a new state of things when he cut off Malchus' ear (John 18:10). The disciples were dominated by the flesh because they were still under the legal era, and "the law . . . was weak through the flesh" (Romans 8:3). Yes, they received a special dispensation, or dispensing of power, from Christ to fulfill the purpose for which He chose them, but until the Day of Pentecost, conversion was not available.

Again, let us be reminded of the words of the Hebrew letter. Let us assume the disciples prior to Pentecost did have an Adamic nature, inbred sin, a carnal nature that indeed needed a blood application for eradication. Hebrews 10:2 is very clear that if the blood was efficacious (effective, effectual, successful), "the worshippers *once purged* should have had *no more* conscience of sins." There would only have been a need for one blood cleansing. But the truth is at the juncture of what we are considering, the sacrifice had not been made, the blood had not been shed, and there was no purging at all. So, they could not have enjoyed New Testament salvation prior to when the Spirit made it available to "all flesh" on the Day of Pentecost. I trust we can see this clearly through these Scriptures.

The period of time prior to Pentecost was a time of transition. Jesus said in Luke 16:16, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached . . ." Jesus was not indicating that the Old Testament or the legal era ended with John, but rather that the Gospel began to be introduced. Adam Clarke explained it this way in his writings: "The law and the prophets continued to be the sole teachers till John came, who first began to proclaim the glad tidings of the kingdom of God" (*Clarke's Commentary*, Volume 5, page 463). Jesus was not indicating that a new dispensation commenced with John, but rather a new message to prepare mankind for the new dispensation. So John and Christ both were in a transitional time, setting down the tenets of the new economy. Mark 9:1 speaks to this truth when it records where Jesus said, "That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till

they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Everyone would agree this was a reference to what occurred on the Day of Pentecost, but it also substantiates that John and Christ, "preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Matthew 4:23), were occupying a transitional time. I trust we can see the position occupied by the disciples prior to Pentecost.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Clarification of the Accounts in Acts

There are numerous Scriptural passages in the Book of Acts that are referenced to teach that the people in those texts were being sanctified or receiving a second definite work of grace. The chapters cited are generally Acts 2, 8, 9, 10 and 19. As we begin this segment of our study, we want to consider some passages commonly referenced to substantiate that the doctrine of two works of grace was practiced and recorded in the Book of Acts. In the book *What the Bible Teaches* (The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1913, pages 177-178), under the heading "Apostolic Examples of Two Works," it is written: "The crowning proof of this twofoldness, however, is the recorded fact that the apostolic churches were saved according to this plan. We shall notice several examples." Then he cited:

1. The Apostles Themselves (Acts 2)
2. The Jerusalem Church
3. The Samaritan Church (Acts 8)
4. The Household of Cornelius
5. The Disciples at Ephesus

With all due respect to the writer, we want to consider these passages. A survey of these chapters will reveal that the words "grace" and "work" do not appear in any of these chapters, and the word "works" (plural) appears twice: (1) in Acts 2:11, "do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God," and (2) in Acts 9:36, speaking of Dorcas and her "good works." We want to examine these passages and see what they truly depict. Let us begin with the most famous account, found in Acts, Chapter 2. As we begin to examine this passage, we must ever recognize and recall the truths we have considered previously. In Romans 8:10 we found that Paul expressly told us "the Spirit is life," and in the prior verse (verse 9) he wrote, ". . . if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." We must recognize they could not possess the Holy Spirit because He "was not yet given" (John 7:39).

#### Part I – Acts, Chapter 2

We must also recognize what the promises to those disciples were and why they had to "tarry." Jesus told the disciples, "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). Luke reiterated the same instructions of Christ in Acts 1:4 when he wrote, ". . . wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me." The promise Christ referred to that He said "ye have heard of me" is recorded in John's Gospel, Chapters 14-16. What was that "promise"? John recorded the words of our Lord, writing in John 14:16, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." In verse 17 he said, ". . . he dwelleth with you, [How? Through Christ. 'Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost'; Luke 4:1.] and shall be in you." How? As an abiding presence.

This is not, as some have supposed, telling them that they were saved and needed to be sanctified. Some good brethren use this verse to teach yet today that when you are saved, in a justified state, that the Holy Spirit is "with you" and when you are sanctified, He is "in you." *Christian Theology* (The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1925), page 469, says, "Yet in some sense, the Spirit of God is *with* every regenerated person." Then the writer references John 14:17. But I ask, when are you "born of the Spirit"? When do you receive life? For that which births the believer is "the Spirit." He "is life" and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:9).

In John 3:6 Jesus plainly told us, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." (You have never seen anyone "born of the flesh" that did not have "flesh.") He continues on, saying, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." It is also impossible to be "born of the Spirit" and not have "the Spirit." What was "the promise"? John 14:26 reads, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father *will send* in my name . . ." John 15:26 states, "But when the Comforter *is come* . . ." John 16:7 tells us, ". . . if I depart, I will send him unto you." That is *what* "the promise" was, and Acts, Chapter 2, is the event totally premised upon "the promise."

Why was this "the promise"? Why did they have to "tarry," or "wait"? Because this was a change in dispensations. Acts, Chapter 2, is the commencement of the Holy Ghost dispensation. Verse 4 in this chapter is the key verse, and it reads, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost . . ." The Greek word for "filled" is *pletho*, and in this context it means "supply" or "furnish." They were being supplied or furnished with what had not been previously available. This is the commencement of a dispensation where it was the fulfillment of prophetic promises where God said, "I will pour out of my Spirit upon *all* flesh" (Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28).

Again, why did they have to "tarry," or "wait"? Jesus told us in Matthew 5:17-18, in His very first recorded message after beginning his public ministry: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle [those smallest portions of a Hebrew letter, as small as a dot or a comma] shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." In Matthew 26:56a Jesus said, "But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." The word "fulfilled" is recorded some thirty-nine times in the Gospel accounts. There is a scheme, a harmony, a compatibility to the Scriptures. Paul told us the Old Testament occurrences were "for ensamples" (1 Corinthians 10:11), or types. In Acts, Chapter 2, we see this outpouring of the Holy Ghost came on a specific day, "the day of Pentecost" (verse 1). Why? When we understand this, we will understand why they were instructed to "tarry," or "wait." They had to "wait" because they had to "wait" for that specific "day." It was "*the day* of Pentecost" that fitted into the scheme and harmony of typical truth.

Let us consider a couple of types that come into focus with these Scriptures. In Exodus, Chapter 12, the Lord instructed Moses to institute the Passover. In these instructions He told Moses to have each "household" slay a lamb: "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male . . ." (Exodus 12:5). He proceeded to say that "when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). This became known as "the LORD's passover" (Exodus 12:11). This was to be observed on "the fourteenth day" (Exodus 12:6) of "the first month of the year" (Exodus 12:2), "the month Abib" (Exodus 13:4). Leviticus 23:5 tells us, "In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD's passover." Then later in this chapter, it proceeds to inform us, "Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days" (verse 16). This was "the feast of harvest, the firstfruits" (Exodus 23:16), "the day of the firstfruits" (Numbers 28:26), the "feast of ingathering" (Exodus 23:16). It also became known as the Feast of Pentecost, because "Pentecost" (Acts 2:1) is from the Greek word *pentekoste*, which means "fiftieth," so named because it was fifty days after Passover. Also, it was fifty days after the Passover when the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai and the Law was given to Moses.

These are the types set forth. Now let us consider the antitypes. Christ is our lamb: "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29); "a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19). First Corinthians 5:7b tells us, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." And indeed He not only is "our passover," but He was crucified at the time of "the passover" (John 18:39). So, "Christ our passover [was] sacrificed for us" at the time of the Feast of Passover, thus a fulfillment of the type. In Acts 2:2, fifty days later, we see another typical truth being fulfilled. Moses received the Law "in tables of stone" (2 Corinthians 3:3), representing that dispensation, a time when men possessed a "stony heart" (Ezekiel 36:26), or as Jesus described it, "the hardness of your hearts" (Matthew 19:8), we see the antitype that Ezekiel prophesied of being fulfilled in Acts, Chapter 2.

Ezekiel 36:26-27 reads: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh [what does He put in that 'heart'?]. And I will put my spirit within you . . ." What does that "spirit" do? "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts" (Hebrews 8:10). How is this accomplished? ". . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (2 Corinthians 3:3). This is why the disciples were instructed to "tarry," to "wait." Why? Just as Jesus told John, concerning His baptism, ". . . it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15).

In the Old Testament, fifty days after Passover, the Israelites were at Sinai and received the Law. It was fifty days after Passover when they had the Feast of Firstfruits, or Festival of Ingathering, and it was on the "day of Pentecost," fifty days after "our passover [was] sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7) that the firstfruits, "about an hundred and twenty" (Acts 1:15), were brought in. Then there was indeed an ingathering: "three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41) and another of "about five thousand" (Acts 4:4). This is why they were instructed to "tarry." This event in Acts, Chapter 2, was a fulfillment of type and a fulfillment of prophecy. The Apostle Peter preached on that "day" that this day commenced a prophetic era, known as "the last days," and in this dispensation the Holy Spirit would be an availability

for "all flesh" (Acts 2:17). This was the first time in history that this became a possibility and an availability.

The "day of Pentecost" (Acts 2:1) was both a seminal event and a singular event. It was a "fulfillment." It was the realization of both prophecy and type. It was the commencement of a new dispensation, the Holy Ghost dispensation. There will never be another Pentecost. There is no need for another Pentecost. The types have found their antitypes, the prophecy has been fulfilled, the dispensations have changed, and man no longer needs to "tarry" or "wait" to receive the Holy Ghost. When we look closely at Acts, Chapter 2, nowhere in this chapter is anything mentioned about being sanctified or about a second work of grace, because that is not what occurred on that day. Peter quoted the Psalmist David and revealed what this new dispensation made available to man and what they were enjoying: "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life" (Acts 2:28; Psalm 16:11). I trust we can see what really occurred on "the day of Pentecost." I also trust we see that in fairness to the Scriptures, we cannot tell saved people that they must "tarry" to receive the Holy Ghost. He is now available to "all flesh" who will meet Bible conditions to be saved.

## Part II – Acts, Chapter 8

There is another portion of the Book of Acts which is used to teach that people who had been saved were then later sanctified and that is what occurred in Samaria (recorded in Acts, Chapter 8). Let us consider this text (Acts 8:4-24). We find that "there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem" (verse 1). So, the saints "were all scattered abroad." Verse 4 tells us they "went every where preaching the word." One of those men was "Philip" who "went down to the city of Samaria" (verse 5). Samaria had been under the influence and power of one man: "But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they *all gave* heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God" (verses 9-10).

Ancient society was extremely superstitious, subject to sorceries, and extremely fickle in their regard of men. When the Apostle Paul was used by God to heal the cripple, Acts 14:11-12 says: "And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius . . ." They were moved by wonders and miracles, yet were a very fickle folk, for later in this same chapter they "stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead" (verse 19). In another instance, when Paul was gathering wood for a fire, after experiencing shipwreck, "there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand" (Acts 28:3). Immediately, the people judged, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live" (verse 4). Yet, as soon as it was apparent that the Lord had protected him, "they changed their minds, and said that he was a god" (verse 6).

We see this same manner of influence and thinking in Acts, Chapter 8. Verse 11 says, "And to him [Simon] they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries." It was into this condition that Philip came. It tells us in verse 6, "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, [Why? What had moved them?] hearing and seeing the *miracles which he did*." What was occurring here? We know they could not have been genuinely getting saved because "the Holy Ghost . . . was fallen upon none of them" (verses 15-16). Again, the "Spirit is life" (Romans 8:10), and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:9). Are we to conclude that if there are two definite works of grace, Philip would preach one and not the other? What was actually happening here? "Simon . . . used sorcery," and "they *all gave heed*" (verses 9-10). Their allegiance and following of Simon was because of the works he did and what they saw.

When Philip came and they were "seeing the miracles which he did" (verse 6), then verse 12 says that "they believed Philip." In other words, they switched their superstitious, fickle loyalties from Simon to Philip. Some may say, "They must have been saved, for verse 12 says that 'they were baptized, both men and women.'" That is true, but verse 13 tells us, "Simon . . . was baptized," and according to Peter in verses 20-23, we know Simon had not really been saved. Look at how strongly Peter spoke to him in verse 21, which reads, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: [why?] for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." Notice what Simon had really been after. He lost his following when the people's allegiance shifted from Simon to Philip. Thus, he feigned to follow Philip as well, but look where his interest lay: ". . . he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done" (verse 13). Simon wanted to figure a way he could be able to do this and get in a position where he could get his followers back. In reality,

he was in "the gall of bitterness" (verse 23), because he had lost his standing and hold over the people.

Let us come to verse 14, where we read, "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John." We must ask the question, "Why did this occur?" Who were "Peter and John"? First Peter 1:1 tells us that "Peter [was] an apostle," and Luke 6:13-14 tells us that "John" was one of the "apostles." So, Peter and John were Apostles. Acts 21:8 calls Philip, "Philip the evangelist." We see these brethren had different callings and hence different gifts. It is the role of an "apostle" to go into virgin areas and raise up congregations.

The Greek word for "apostle" in every New Testament text (with one exception, found in 2 Corinthians 11:13, speaking of "false apostles") is the word *apostolos*. This word is formed from two components: *apo*, meaning "from" and *stello*, meaning "to send." It means "one sent forth" (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*). This call is where "one sent forth" to sow or plant the truth and raise up congregations. The Apostle Paul wrote, "I have planted" (1 Corinthians 3:6), and "I have laid the foundation" (1 Corinthians 3:10). He referred to himself as "a wise master builder." There are gifts that go along with the office of an "apostle." One is "the word of wisdom" (1 Corinthians 12:8), but there is also another very vital gift: "discerning" (1 Corinthians 12:10). This is necessary because when going into new areas one does not know the people and does not always have time to get to know them. Thus, discernment is essential to be an "apostle."

Peter had this gift as evidenced in Acts 5:1-10 when he dealt with Ananias and Sapphira. Philip, however, was an evangelist—a greatly different call with different gifts and abilities. It was Philip whom the Spirit of God led to go down to Gaza and preach to the eunuch who got saved. He had been successful with his family and had four Godly daughters "which did prophesy" (Acts 21:9), but in Acts, Chapter 8, Peter and John were sent down because they were Apostles. They had gifts and discernment that Philip did not have. I am certainly not casting any aspersions on dear Brother Philip, but it is clear that he did not possess the discernment that Peter had. How do we know? In verse 13 he baptized Simon, yet in verse 21 Peter let him know he was not even saved ("Thy heart is not right") and told him in verse 22 to "Repent." I do not believe Philip would have baptized him had he discerned this, but he did not. Neither did he discern that the people had merely shifted their superstitious allegiance from Simon to him, but Peter and John did. This is why "when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost," they were not being sanctified, or receiving a second definite work of grace (none of which words or expressions are used in this chapter), but rather Peter called it "the gift of God" (verse 20). And the Bible tells us that "the gift of God is eternal life" (Romans 6:23). This is what they were receiving in this passage.

### Part III – Acts, Chapter 9

Some would raise the account recorded in Acts, Chapter 9, and advocate that Paul was saved on the road to Damascus and later sanctified when Ananias laid hands on him. Let us examine this chapter. Verse 3 tells us, "And as he journeyed . . . suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven." When this occurred, he "heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (verse 4). It is the response that is considered to be proof of his conversion when he responded, "Who art thou, Lord?" (verse 5) and "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (verse 6). It is claimed this acknowledgment as "Lord" is evidence that here is when he was saved. However, this is a very thin thread upon which to make this claim. Twelve times this same Greek word is rendered "sir" or "Sir." One such case is found in Matthew 27:63, which reads, "Sir, we remember that this deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again." This was addressed by "the chief priests and Pharisees . . . unto Pilate" (verse 62). The same word is used concerning Philip (not the evangelist; Acts 21:8; Acts 6:5) but the Apostle (Luke 6:13-14) when the Greeks said, "Sir, we would see Jesus" (John 12:21). When it was used of Pilate or Philip, it was hardly evidence of conversion. *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* defines it as a "term of respect of various force."

Let us look further into this passage. In verse 6 Saul cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" It is evident at this juncture he had not done anything other than be "astonished" (verse 6). There are things we are "to do" to be saved. Acts 3:19 says, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted . . . ." First John 1:9 tells us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." There is no record of any of this in those verses. The most outstanding feature is Saul's astonishment, for he truly thought "he doeth God service" (John

16:2). Concerning being "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious," Paul said, "I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (1 Timothy 1:13).

Paul was so struck with incredulity and astonishment that all he could say was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (verse 6). In this account, and in Acts, Chapters 22 and 26, where he related this event, Saul only spoke two sentences in this entire encounter: "Who art thou, Lord?" (verse 5) and "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (verse 6). Christ's response substantiates a truth, the truth that He has chosen to use human instrumentality and that He will not circumvent that process. In Acts, Chapter 8, when He saw that the Ethiopian eunuch was ripe for salvation, notice there was "an angel of the Lord" involved who "spake unto Philip, saying, . . . go . . . unto Gaza" (Acts 8:26). "Then the Spirit said unto Philip . . . join thyself to this chariot" (Acts 8:29). Although an "angel" and "the Spirit" were involved and although the eunuch was reading "the scripture" (verse 32), this did not circumvent God's plan of using human instrumentality. God's plan is that "some man should guide me" (Acts 8:31).

Then "Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture and preached . . ." (Acts 8:35). The Lord has chosen to use human instrumentality. Acts, Chapter 9, is no different. Christ did not circumvent the divine plan. Once he secured Saul's attention, the Lord said, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6). This chapter goes on to tell us that "he was three days without sight, and neither did eat or drink" (verse 9). That is what old-fashioned conviction will do. What was he doing during those "three days"? The Lord told Ananias, ". . . behold, he prayeth" (verse 11). Here is where opportunity was afforded him to "repent" and "confess." How do we know? Look at what Ananias told him: ". . . wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

In verse 17 when he was "filled with the Holy Ghost," this is when he was converted, again, because "the Spirit is life" (Romans 8:10). This is when he was "born of the Spirit." Some may tenaciously say, "No, this is when he was sanctified and received a second work of grace," but I kindly ask, when did he receive the first work of grace in this text? It can hardly be substantiated simply because he "fell to the earth" and said "Lord" or "Sir"! Mary wept and used the same word in John 20:15 when she said, "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me," and she was "supposing him to be the gardener."

I trust we can see from a consideration of this ninth chapter of Acts that contrary to the thought and teaching that has been traditional, it is not advocating that Paul was saved on the road to Damascus and then later sanctified. No, dear heart, he was saved just as we are—after he prayed, met Bible conditions, and received the Spirit of God through a born-again experience. I again must hold on to the truth that before he had the Holy Ghost, he did not have "life" and if he did not have life, he was "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). It is through the "Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead" (Romans 8:11) that we are quickened or spiritually resurrected to "newness of life" (Romans 6:4). This is all an operation of the Spirit of God, and without the Spirit of God one does not have an experience of salvation. It is a spiritual work.

#### **Part IV – Acts, Chapter 10**

Another portion of Scripture we want to give consideration to is Acts, Chapter 10, where the account of "Cornelius the centurion" (verse 22) is related. There are those who would claim Cornelius was already saved and that when "the Holy Ghost fell" (verse 44) he was sanctified. But is that so? Is that what really occurred? Is that what is being related in this passage? Again, Romans 8:10 tells us that "the Spirit is life." How would it be possible for Cornelius and those involved in this account to have already been saved, to have "newness of life" (Romans 6:4) without the Holy Spirit? It is not possible. Thus, we must ask and address what actually occurred and why.

First, we must consider who was Cornelius, what was Cornelius, and in what position did he stand? Verse 1 tells us, "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band." The name "Cornelius is a Latin name and shows that the man was doubtless a Roman" (*Barnes Notes, Acts*, page 170). He was a centurion, "one who was the commander of a division in the Roman army, consisting of a hundred men" (*Barnes Notes, Acts*, page 170). The men he commanded were "of the band called the Italian band" (verse 1), or composed of soldiers from Italy. From the natural perspective, they were "Gentiles" (verse 45). However, verse 2 informs us that although physically he was one of "the Gentiles" that spiritually he was a "devout man, and one that feared God with all his house." Verse 22 says he was "a just man, and one that feareth God, and of a good report among all the nations



of the Jews."

Adam Clarke and Neander, along with other scholars, denote Cornelius as "a proselyte of the gate." This expression is derived from Exodus 20:10, where it speaks of "thy stranger that is within thy gates." Jesus let us know that the Jews were both famous and fervent in their efforts to make proselytes: ". . . you, scribes and Pharisees . . . ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte . . ." (Matthew 23:15). There were two categories of proselytes, but suffice it to say that the position Cornelius occupied was a "proselyte of the gate." According to *Strong's Greek Dictionary of New Testament Words*, the Greek word for "proselyte" means "convert to Judaism." So Cornelius was a Jewish proselyte converted to Judaism. It is needful we understand this, because prior to Peter's arrival and preaching, what Cornelius and "his house" had, the position they occupied was only what was available through Judaism. At the time the angel appeared to him, he knew nothing of New Testament salvation and little of what Christ accomplished in Jerusalem, except perhaps a very prejudiced account from either Jewish or military associates.

According to *The New Chronological Bible*, it was in A.D. 37 when this event took place. Notice the message of the "angel of God" (verse 3): "And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter . . . he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do" (verses 5-6). Verse 24 tells us while "Cornelius waited for them, . . . [it was after they entered into Caesarea, that he] called together his kinsmen and near friends." He was readying an audience for this man whom "the angel" had designated they should send for to come. Now, when Peter asked, "For what intent ye have sent for me?" (verse 29), look at Cornelius' response. He first related what the "angel" instructed him: ". . . call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter . . . who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee" (verse 32). Then Cornelius said, "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God" (verse 33b).

A very notable truth as seen portrayed in the words of the "angel" is a consistent truth being reiterated that was depicted in Acts, Chapters 8 and 9, as well. It is the truth of the usage of human instrumentality in the plan of God. In the Great Commission, Jesus made it imminently clear, "Go ye therefore" (Matthew 28:19); "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel" (Mark 16:15). In Acts, Chapter 8, we saw where "the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip" (verse 26), where "the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot" (verse 29), and he was reading from "the prophet Esaias [Isaiah]" (verse 30). Yet, God's plan was that "some man should guide me" (verse 31). Thus, "Philip . . . preached unto him Jesus" (verse 35).

So it was in Acts, Chapter 9. Jesus said to Saul, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (verse 6). Then He sent Ananias to Saul. We see the same truth portrayed in the tenth chapter. The angel did not preach to Cornelius, but rather guided him to send for one who could preach to him. Once Peter inquired why he had been sent for and Cornelius related his story, Peter understood that "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34), and he began to convey the Gospel. In verse 36 he preached, "The word which God sent . . . preaching peace by Jesus Christ." He started through the message of "Jesus Christ, . . . How God anointed Jesus . . . with the Holy Ghost . . . who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil" (verses 36-38). Then verse 39 proceeds to say, ". . . whom they slew and hanged on a tree." Verse 40 states, "Him God raised up . . ." If they had New Testament salvation, they would have heard and known these things, but they had not heard and did not know. This is why Peter said, "And he commanded us to preach unto the people . . ." (verse 42).

Let us put this passage in perspective. It was approximately A.D. 37 when Cornelius was in "Caesarea" (verse 1); the events concerning Christ occurred in Jerusalem some 70 miles away. The angel instructed them to send for Peter because he was in "Joppa" (verse 5), only 30 miles away. We must recognize that neither travel nor communications were as they are in our day. In this twenty-first century, an event can occur on the other side of the world and we can receive news of it almost instantaneously. It was not like this in the first century. The initial Gospel message in the morning time was similar to throwing a rock in the center of a pond and watching its effects ripple out. This is much of what we see in the Book of Acts. We see it here and will see it again in Acts, Chapter 19.

Cornelius and "his kinsmen and near friends" (verse 24) had been exposed to and became proselytes of Judaism. That was where the truth was in the Old Testament, "unto them [the Hebrews] were committed the oracles of God" (Romans 3:2). The honesty of their hearts caused them to subscribe to the tenets of Judaism, but all they had was the "schoolmaster" designed "to bring us unto Christ" (Galatians 3:24). Peter in his preaching was used "to bring [them] unto Christ." In Acts 11:13-14, when Peter related to the brethren what occurred, look how he described what the angel said to Cornelius: ". . . call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved [not sanctified, but *saved*]." He goes on to say in verse 15, "And as I began to speak, [What was

he speaking? He was 'preaching peace by Jesus Christ'; Acts 10:36.] the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning." This reveals at least two things to us: (1) the Holy Ghost falling on them was them getting "saved." (2) When Peter said "as on us at the beginning," he was referring to Acts 2:4, when the Holy Ghost fell on them on the Day of Pentecost, revealing when they got "saved," or received New Testament salvation (the Day of Pentecost).

When the brethren heard this, look at their reaction and what they said. They "glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted *repentance* unto *life*" (Acts 11:18). They were receiving "life"; they were being saved. Peter preached, and they understood, repented, and were saved; they received New Testament salvation. See, there was a time of transition. People are only responsible to walk in the light that is available to them. This is why Cornelius was "a just man" (Acts 10:22). He walked in what he knew. A new dispensation had commenced and a new experience was available, but he did not know that. The message had not yet made it to his area. But, thank God, when Peter came and preached, "the Holy Ghost fell on *all them* which heard the word" (Acts 10:44).

Caesarea was ripe for truth. "The Gentiles [were] granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18), which has a prophetic fulfillment and was an historic act as well (Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 49:6; Isaiah 60:2). This text is a proof of dispensational change and the first incorporation of "the Gentiles" (Acts 10:45) into the New Testament church. I trust we can see what truly transpired in this chapter. There is no Scriptural inference to sanctification as a definite second work of grace whatsoever in this chapter. I trust you will be able to clearly see the truth being set forth in this passage.

## Part V – Acts, Chapter 19

Let us consider one more passage of Scripture in the Book of Acts that many use as an instance to substantiate two works of grace—Acts, Chapter 19. In this passage the expression that is always emphasized is, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (verse 2). Supposedly, this points to their need of sanctification, but let us view this in the context. Verse 1 says, ". . . Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples." Dr. Laurence Chestnut in his book entitled *True Bible Tongues* tells us these "twelve" (verse 7) disciples were Samaritans. He wrote: "A close study of this will reveal that these men were at or near Jerusalem, approximately twenty-six years prior [*Clarke's Commentary* states this as well] to the time Paul found them in Ephesus. They had heard John preach, and were baptized by him, and during the course of years they had migrated as far as Ephesus" (page 40). So, again we see the common element of what we saw in Acts, Chapter 10, concerning Cornelius and his house: communication traveled slowly.

When Paul posed the question, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" carefully consider their response: "*We have not* so much as *heard* whether there be any Holy Ghost" (verse 2). Here we are several years into the Holy Ghost dispensation, years after the wondrous events on the Day of Pentecost (in Jerusalem), yet these men "have not . . . heard." When they responded in this manner, the Apostle Paul immediately queried, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" (verse 3). They replied, "Unto John's baptism." Once they stated that, the Apostle knew immediately where they were spiritually. His words should clarify what their state was, what he did, and what actually occurred. In verse 4 Paul told these men, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance." (What was John's role? "Prepare ye the way of the Lord"; Matthew 3:3.)

Notice particularly the balance of Paul's words in verse 4, which reads, ". . . saying [John's words] unto the people, that they should believe on him which should *come after* him [John], that is, on Christ Jesus." Then, verse 5 tells us, "When they heard this . . ." What? About "him which should come after . . . Jesus Christ." At this juncture they had not even heard about Christ. John preached concerning "he that cometh after me" (Matthew 3:11). There were many, and it is obvious these twelve men were among that number, who heard and embraced the truth concerning "he that cometh after," but were not exposed to the truth that this was "Christ Jesus" (verse 4). They, no doubt, were removed from the area before Christ commenced His ministry, or they would have had a knowledge. When verse 1 says that they were "disciples," it is plain they were "John's" (verse 3) disciples. John had many disciples, and those who were privileged to be there when Christ was anointed and began His ministry became disciples of Christ.

John 1:35-37 tells us: "Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." These Samaritan disciples did not have the benefit of the "two disciples [who] heard him speak." When Paul asked, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (verse 2), the reason they were mystified was because they had only

"believed" what they had heard, which were "John's" teachings. So, it is clear Paul preached "Christ Jesus" (verse 4), and they were ripe for the message. When they embraced it, "the Holy Ghost came on them" (verse 6).

Remember, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," and "the Spirit is life" (Romans 8:9-10). These men did not have New Testament salvation until they "heard" (verse 5) the message: ". . . how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14). When they "heard," they embraced the truth, and "the Holy Ghost came on them" (verse 6). They received "the like gift" (Acts 11:17), "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). They received "life" and were enabled to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

We have attempted to give a clear and concise exposition of these passages in Acts that a host of older brethren referenced to substantiate the teaching of two works of grace. We realize what we have set forth is contrary to traditional teaching, but if you consider these texts prayerfully, we believe the Spirit of God will reveal both what they are truly teaching and what they are not. We must remember, light is progressive. This is why the Scriptures repeatedly use the term "walk" (John 12:35; 1 John 1:7). We are to "walk" (progress, advance, move) in the "light," which Psalm 119:130 tells us is "understanding." We certainly in no way desire to speak derogatorily or disparage any good brethren of the past nor those of today. But those brethren in the sixth seal did not have all the light available in their day. They walked in what was available, as we must do as well.

The seventh-seal light or understanding is doing as the songwriter penned, "The mists of confusion are passing away" ("Light Breaks at Last," D. O. Teasley, verse 3). Brother D. S. Warner wrote, in the beautiful song "Prophetic Truth," verse 3, "We stand in the glory that Jesus has given, The moon, as the dayspring doth shine; The light of the sun is now equal to seven, So bright is the glory divine." Here our brother was alluding to Isaiah 30:26. We are in that day when Christ has "opened the seventh seal" (Revelation 8:1), a day of revelation, a day when truth is becoming clearer and brighter. There were things it was not time for in the sixth seal, but now "the mystery of God should be finished" (Revelation 10:7). As truth reveals tradition, may God help us each to have "an honest and good heart" (Luke 8:15), a heart where truth can grow and develop. The Lord certainly does not want us stagnant. As long as time remains, "light" will continue to shine brighter, and we will see that "Brighter days are sweetly dawning" ("The Evening Light," D.S. Warner, verse 1).

We must be willing to "walk," or progress, as greater understanding is revealed. This in no way diminishes the great work of great brethren of the past, but they were great and accomplished great things because they were true to the light revealed in their day. We can do no less. We must be faithful to embrace the truths of our day. When those sixth-seal brethren initially embraced the Church of God message and began to herald the truths concerning the evils of sectism, the "Come out" (Revelation 18:4) message, and the beauty of the church, that message seemed radical. For them to accept it, many had to radically change their thinking and doctrinal stance. I am certain by many they were deemed heretics. Paul said, ". . . after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers . . ." (Acts 24:14). To accept what has not been traditional, or commonly accepted, has always been considered radical or heretical. Those brethren who blazed the trail in this evening time were not afraid to be called such. They revered truth above tradition. May the Lord provide that same courage to us to whom the torch of truth has been passed.

## CHAPTER SIX

### What Really Occurs in New Testament Salvation

With so much teaching in the past speaking of "full salvation" with reference to two definite works of grace, we must ask, in view of what we have studied thus far, what really occurs in New Testament salvation? We have already seen that man goes into sin, not because of an inherited Adamic nature, but because he is "without strength" (Romans 5:6). When he comes to an age of accountability, he chooses "his own way" (Isaiah 53:6). Now, what happens after that? In John 16:8 Jesus told us that the Holy Spirit "will reprove the world of sin." In *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott*, it is rendered as "convict." The Greek word means "convict, convince." It is a word that is used as though a case was being presented to a jury and one is trying to convince the jury of the defendant's guilt and so obtain a conviction. This is what the Holy Spirit does. He takes one's exposure to "the gospel of Christ . . . the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16) and uses it "that sin . . . might become exceedingly sinful" (Romans 7:13).

The Holy Spirit begins to use the Word as the facts, and begins to present His case to convince and convict us of our guilt. When this office work of the Holy Spirit is done upon "an honest and good heart" (Luke 8:15), this conviction produces "godly sorrow" (2 Corinthians 7:10). In this verse in 2 Corinthians 7:10, the Apostle Paul told us that "godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation." When real "repentance" (*metanoia* in the Greek, meaning "a turning from sin and a turning to God"; *Strong's Concordance*) takes place, several things occur. (The only way an individual can get saved is "by grace . . . through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" [Ephesians 2:8]. This "faith cometh by hearing" [Romans 10:17]. When we hear and our faith is inspired and "the Father . . . draw him" [John 6:44], we begin to turn.)

When ones are persuaded, convinced, convicted, inspired, and drawn, they repent, turn, are ready to change directions. They turn from sin to God when their faith takes hold. Then, "through faith in his blood," there is "remission of sins that are past" (Romans 3:25). This "remission" is spoken of in the beautiful expression of the psalmist when he proclaimed, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12). Micah wrote, ". . . thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19). Thank God for the "remission of sins that are past"! This was not possible under the Old Testament. The Old Testament sacrifices could not "take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4), but Christ became our "propitiation" (Romans 3:25), or *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says "mercy-seat."

When our faith is inspired to bring repentance, we first receive "remission of sins that are past." This puts us into a justified position: "Therefore being justified by faith . . ." (Romans 5:1). This verse goes on to tell us "we have peace with God," not the "peace of God" (Philippians 4:7), but we are now cleansed. First John 1:7 tells us, ". . . the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from *all sin* [if there was inbred, or inherited sin, it would be cleansed at this point]." We have "peace with God." Why? Because once repentance takes place on earth, then a legal declaration is made in Heaven that we are "justified." Yet, this is only a portion of our salvation. Romans 5:2 goes on to say, "By whom also we have access into this grace . . ." Without the declaration of justification, we would not have "access" for "we know that God heareth not sinners" (John 9:31). However, because "faith" was inspired and we repented and received "remission," we now "have access into this grace."

What else occurs in this experience? In prophecy Zechariah proclaimed, "In that day [this Gospel Day] there shall be a fountain opened . . ." (Zechariah 13:1). When he spoke of this "fountain," he let us know it would be "for sin and for uncleanness." This reveals there are two things that must be dealt with: "sin" and "uncleanness." This is why when the fount was opened in the Savior's side, "forthright came there out blood and water" (John 19:34)—one to deal with "sin" (the "blood") and the other to deal with "uncleanness" (the "water"). Let us consider this. "Sin," according to *Strong's Concordance*, is "a path, a life style, or act deviating from that which God has marked out." Thus, "sin" is the "act" or the deeds of a deviant lifestyle. "The blood" addresses "sin," but Zechariah proceeded to talk about "uncleanness." Where "sin" is the act or deed or lifestyle, this "uncleanness" is what produced it.

In Zechariah 13:2, God revealed what this is, saying, ". . . I will cause . . . the unclean spirit to pass out . . ." It is the spirit a man possesses that motivates and causes him to do what he does. This is the beauty of New Testament salvation. God does not, as many sectarian bodies teach, merely just forgive sins and leave man in a powerless condition to where he continues to commit sin. No! He gives "remission of the sins that are past," and "the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us of all sin." Then we have "access . . . into this grace" (Romans 5:2). Then the next aspect of the

"fountain" begins to work: the "water" for "uncleanness."

What does the "water" (John 19:34) represent? Jesus spoke of "rivers of living water," and John told us, "This spake he of the Spirit" (John 7:38-39). Titus 3:5 speaks of "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." There is a "washing" the Holy Spirit does, but it is not a blood cleansing and does not deal with sin. Jesus spoke of it in Matthew, Chapter 12, and in Luke, Chapter 11. In these Scriptures, He told us of the "strong man" (Matthew 12:29; Luke 11:21). This "strong man" represents "the unclean spirit" (Luke 11:24), the "spirit" that once a man enters into sin perverts his nature and binds him to where "the lusts of your father ye will do" (John 8:44). This "washing of regeneration," this "water" from the "fountain" deals with the cause of sin: "the unclean spirit." This "washing" is where the stronger than the strong man, "the Spirit of God" (Matthew 12:28), binds him and expels him, and "the unclean spirit is gone out of a man" (Luke 11:24).

This "washing or regeneration" is when "the unclean spirit is gone out of a man" and his spirit is cleansed. When this "unclean spirit" is removed, the stony heart is taken away. Then man has a new birth, a new heart that brings new life is given, and regeneration occurs. This washing is when the "old man is crucified" (Romans 6:6). Some might say this occurs in a second definite work of grace. I would ask you to consider the balance of Romans 6:6, which reads, ". . . that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." When do you quit serving sin? Romans 6:20 tells us, "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness."

Consider Galatians 5:24 where we are told, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." When does this occur? Some may say, "When you are sanctified," but read the context. He referred to this in conjunction with "the works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:19) and "the fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22). If this having "the flesh" crucified does not occur until we receive a second work of grace, then contextually we will not have "the fruit of the Spirit," which is love, joy, peace, etc. Do we not have these when we are saved? What about "the works of the flesh"? It is only "through the Spirit [that we] do mortify the deeds of the body" (Romans 8:13). If we do not have the Spirit, then do we continue "the works of the flesh," which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, etc. until we are sanctified? I think all would readily agree the Scriptures teach no such thing!

Let us examine this closer concerning when man has a new nature. When Romans 6:6 speaks of "the body of sin might be destroyed," it is obvious the Apostle was not speaking of our physical body. Kenneth Wuest, in *The New Testament: An Expanded Translation* (of the Greek language), states it in this manner: "Our old [unregenerate] self was crucified once for all with Him in order that the physical body [heretofore] dominated by the sinful nature might be rendered inoperative (Romans 6:6)." This "body of sin" is "the sinful nature" we received when we became "children of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2) and our "nature" (Ephesians 2:3) changed. Second Peter 1:4 tells us when we "obtained like precious faith" (verse 1), we became "partakers of the divine nature" (verse 4). We do not receive this "divine nature" when we supposedly receive a second work of grace. We receive it when we "obtained like precious faith." This is when we "escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (verse 4). When the stronger than the strong man breaks the power of "the unclean spirit" that was holding us in bondage and producing sin and expels him, this is when our nature is changed. This is when "the sinful nature," "our old man," "the body of sin be destroyed." To use the language Paul used in Romans 6:11, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin . . ."

Once the "washing" has cleansed our spirit, enabled the old man to be crucified, removed the stony heart and the perverted nature, "regeneration" now comes more into focus. The word "regeneration," you will recall, means "new birth." Titus 3:5 speaks of the "renewing of the Holy Ghost." It is the Holy Ghost that makes us new. He is the Divine Agent, in conjunction with the Word, that brings the "new birth." Jesus made this very plain in John 3:5, stating, "Except a man be born of water [the word; Ephesians 5:26] and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." It is the Spirit inspiring faith in the message that brings this spiritual birth. He is the One who renews, or makes new.

Colossians 3:9-10 tells us after "that ye have put off the old man with his deeds," that we "have put on the new man, which is *renewed*." How? By the "renewing of the Holy Ghost." This is something the "Holy Ghost" does. He brings this renewal. He produces this new birth (John 3:5) and provides new "life" (Romans 8:10). When this renewal occurs, it has made a "new man" who is "after the image of him that created him" (Colossians 3:10). What is this "image"? Ephesians 4:23-24 tells us this "image" is "righteousness and true holiness." We are "conformed [or *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says 'copies'] to the image of his Son" (Romans 8:29) and are indeed "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4).

Where "remission" and cleansing from sin is a function of "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son" (1 John 1:7), "regeneration" is a function of the Holy Spirit. Again, this is why the "fountain" came forth with "blood and water"

(John 19:34). This is what constitutes real salvation. So, then we must ask, when does one receive a "new heart" (Ezekiel 36:26)? If we receive a "new heart," which gives us a new life, would God put a "new heart" in with sin in it? I think every Bible student would agree, it requires "a new heart" to become a "new creature" (or *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says "creation"). Consider the words of our Lord, recorded in Matthew 15:18-19 where He described that which comes "forth from the heart . . . [is what] defile the man" (verse 18). Then He proceeded to say, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (verse 19). Now, if we do not receive a "new heart" when we are regenerated, then according to Jesus all of these sins will continue to "come forth from the heart" (verse 18). I do not think any saint would say that salvation or regeneration would leave one in such a state. The Apostle Peter told us in 1 Peter 1:22 that "ye have *purified* your souls" and have "a *pure* heart." How? Verse 23 tells us it is by "being born again." It is evident from both the words of our Lord and Peter that man receives a "new heart" when he is regenerated. Certainly, the activities Jesus described in Matthew 15:19 do not continue subsequent to conversion. The evidence of this change in an individual's life is confirmation that the new heart is a product of regeneration.

This "new heart" is a pure, holy heart. Ezekiel called it "an heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26), and the Apostle Paul told us these "fleshly tables of the heart" are "written" upon "with the Spirit of the living God" (2 Corinthians 3:3). The Hebrew writer told us what is written on them. He wrote, "I will put my laws *into* their mind, and *write them in* their hearts" (Hebrews 8:10). Notice the remainder of the verse: ". . . and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." When do we become "a people"? We certainly do not have to wait until we have experienced a second work of grace to be His "people." All of this occurs in conversion or regeneration.

The new heart gives us "newness of life" (Romans 6:4) and a new nature, a "divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). Ezekiel wrote that when we receive "a new heart," God said that "I will put my spirit within you" (Ezekiel 36:26-27). Why? To "cause you to walk in my statutes." This occurs at the same time, and it is necessary, for without the Spirit being given at the same time to empower us, the new heart that was given would not stay new. It is imperative that we understand the "remission," the "washing of regeneration," and the "renewing of the Holy Ghost" are all part and parcel of the experience of salvation, all parts or aspects of the whole. They work as part of one experience. Regeneration must immediately succeed the remission and the washing instantaneously or there will be no power to remain justified. Together they compose the experience of salvation.

Next we must ask if it is possible to be "born of the Spirit" (John 3:8) and not have "the Spirit." Is it possible for "the Spirit of the living God" to write God's Word "in their hearts" and not be in our hearts? Can we be saved and not have the Spirit? If "by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13), can this spiritual induction be performed if we do not possess Him? I would hope we can see the answer to each of these questions is clearly NO. Some advocate when you get saved, you receive a portion of the Holy Ghost. *Christian Theology* (The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1925, page 469) states, "Yet, in some sense the Spirit of God is with every regenerated person." But remember, the Holy Ghost is a Person. He does not come in portions. He is referred to repeatedly by Jesus by the usage of a personal pronoun. Just in John 16:7-15 alone, speaking of "the Comforter" (verse 7), "which is the Holy Ghost" (John 14:26), Christ employed the personal pronouns "he" or "him" twelve times.

The Holy Ghost is a Person, and you cannot get part of a person. You either have His presence or you do not. He is not an *it*, a gas, oil, or liquid, but He is a Person. John 3:34 tells us that "God giveth not the Spirit by measure." Someone may say, "You omitted the last two words of that verse, where it says 'unto him.'" No, I did not. Notice that those two words are italicized. They are not in the original text. The Greek actually reads, "He gives not the Spirit by measure" (*The Emphatic Greek Diaglott*). He is a Person. You either have His abiding presence in your life or you do not. There are proponents of the thinking that there is a distinction between "the Spirit of Christ" (Romans 8:9) and "the Holy Ghost" (John 14:26), but Ephesians 4:4 clearly establishes that "There is . . . *one* Spirit." The Spirit of Christ is "the Holy Ghost" (Luke 4:1).

Let us address one of the previously mentioned questions: "Is it possible to be 'born of the Spirit' (John 3:8) and yet not have 'the Spirit'?" Not according to Jesus. He said in John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh [you have never seen a fleshly birth where one did not have flesh]; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." To have a spiritual birth requires the Spirit, and when it occurs, one who has had a spiritual birth possesses "the Spirit." I trust we can see what occurs in a New Testament experience of salvation and also see that we receive the Holy Spirit when we are born of "the Spirit." He births the believer, He brings new life, and He only is the empowerment to "serve him . . . In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" (Luke 1:74-75). The only means to live "in holiness," or "soberly,

righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12), is to have "the spirit of holiness" (Romans 1:4). Without the Holy Spirit, it is impossible to live "in holiness." This is why He must be an indwelling reality when we are regenerated. Without His presence, we would not be able to remain victorious and above sin for a day. This is the purpose of the Holy Spirit—to enable us to live a holy life. I trust we can see these truths in a clear manner.

**Part I – Baptized With the Holy Ghost**

One teaching that unfortunately is enveloped in much confusion is what the Scriptures actually teach when they speak of being "baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 1:5). There have been writers who have claimed, "The Holy Spirit baptism is, like entire sanctification, distinct from and subsequent to the work of regeneration" (*Christian Theology*, The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1925, page 468). On page 470 of this tome, the writer continued, stating, "The work effected in us by the baptism of the Spirit or the subjective results are especially entire cleansing from depravity." In *What the Bible Teaches* (The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1913), Chapter 9, entitled "Sanctification as a Bible Doctrine," under the section entitled "Conditions for Sanctification" (pages 129-130), it says, "It is in our special effort to live a holy life that we are made painfully conscious of the presence of that evil nature within." The author went on to say, "When . . . perfect consecration is made, God will be pleased to send His Holy Spirit in sanctifying power, purging the heart from the very nature of sin." Now, with all due deference and respect to the dear brethren who penned these writings, which indeed contain a whole host of precious, precious truths, and in full agreement with the need of complete consecration, we must ask from the perspective of seventh-seal understanding, "Is this what being 'baptized with the Holy Ghost' accomplishes?" These statements again beg several questions, which we have already addressed to some measure, but in view of these statements, let us consider them.

If, indeed, "the Holy Ghost baptism is . . . subsequent to the work of regeneration" and provides "cleansing from depravity," can one be truly saved and depraved? Can one be living "a holy life" and have an "evil nature within"? The Apostle Paul was clear when he asked, ". . . what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14). These are obviously not compatible and certainly not within the same heart! The truths we are asking you to consider do not lower the standard of holiness, as some charge, but rather raise it.

So, then we must address several questions to clear away the mists of confusion. Questions such as: "What is this Holy Ghost baptism? When do we receive it? Is it some supposed second work of grace? Is it the same as sanctification? What is meant by being 'filled with the Holy Ghost'? Is it the same thing?" First, we must pose and consider the question of, "Why did Christ employ the term 'baptized'?" This expression concerning baptism or being "baptized" was not novel to Christ. This term and practice was common in Judaism. Hebrews 9:10, speaking of the Old Testament economy, relates the practice and says, "Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings . . ." *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* renders it as "various immersions." *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* clarifies it farther and offers it as "various baptisms." So the term "baptisms" was a familiar expression amongst Hebrews.

All four of the Gospel writers in unique unison related the prophesy of John the Baptizer: "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; and with a slight variation, John 1:33). It is also notable that in every case it is specifically referenced in the Scriptures, it is always "baptized with the Holy Ghost." Not once in the Bible does it say baptism of the Holy Ghost, as commonly quoted. Now, why was this word used? We know this baptism does not have reference to water. Notice how this word (and the words "baptize," "baptized," "baptizes," "baptizeth," and "baptizing" are all the same word in the original Greek: *baptizo*) is used in the Scriptures. In Romans 6:3 we read, ". . . that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" This is not speaking of water baptism.

Consider Paul's words to the Corinthians, when he wrote: ". . . how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea [Exodus 14:19-22]; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Corinthians 10:1-2). It is obvious there is a depth to the expression "baptized." These people, Paul said, "were all baptized . . . in the cloud and in the sea," yet, "the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground" (Exodus 14:22). So, they never got any water on them, and how are you "baptized . . . in the cloud"? The Apostle Peter told us in 1 Peter 3:21 that "baptism" is a "figure" (*The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says "representation"). In other words, it is a "representation"; it brings an image or a truth to mind. Think of these Scriptures: "baptized into his death" (Romans 6:3) and "baptized unto Moses" (1 Corinthians 10:2).

The Greek word *baptizo* means "immerse" (*New Analytical Greek Lexicon*), "emerge, submerge" (*Thayer's Greek-*



*English Lexicon of the New Testament*). What does this convey to us? When one is immersed or submerged, they become one with what they are immersed in. They become associated and identified with it. To be "baptized into his death" is to become one with His death, to be recognized as associated and identified with it. So were the Hebrews in the Exodus irrevocably one with, associated with, and identified with Moses. That "baptism" is an identification factor is clearly portrayed in Acts 19:3. Those Samaritan disciples who identified with John responded to Paul's question by associating themselves with "John's baptism." So, when several scriptural texts speak of being "baptized with the Holy Ghost," they are speaking of becoming one with the Spirit. Being as Paul wrote, "he that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:17), becoming associated and identified with "the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). This being "baptized with" is being immersed and merged together as one with the Holy Ghost.

Now, when do we receive this baptism? Is it as represented, "distinct from and subsequent to the work of regeneration"? Is it a supposed second work of grace? Let us consider the words of the Apostle Peter and what he related to the brethren in Acts, Chapter 11. In this chapter, he was rehearsing to "the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea" (verse 1), concerning what happened at Cornelius' house. We read in verse 14 where he related what the angel told Cornelius as to why he should summon Peter. It reads, "Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be *saved*." Then he continued to relate to them that "as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning" (verse 15). Notice what he correlated it to: "Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (verse 16).

Peter clearly told them that what transpired at Cornelius' house was a fulfillment of John's and Jesus' prophesies. He referred to when "the Holy Ghost fell on them" (verse 15) with being "baptized with the Holy Ghost" (verse 16). But let us view the context. The angel said Peter would "tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be *saved*" (verse 14). We can only draw two conclusions from these words. Either the angel severely misinformed Cornelius or being "baptized with the Holy Ghost" equates to being "saved." Look at the succeeding verses. Verse 17 says that "God gave them the like gift as he did unto us." In Acts 2:38 Peter spoke of "the gift of the Holy Ghost," not *gifts* (plural) of but "the gift of [what?] the Holy Ghost." In other words, receiving the Holy Ghost. When do you receive the Holy Ghost? Peter told us in Acts 2:38, "Repent, and be baptized." Here he was not speaking of water baptism, but the "one baptism" Ephesians 4:5 speaks of: a spiritual experience.

In Acts 2:38 Peter told us what "repent, and be baptized" does. "Repent" provides "the remission of sins," and this spiritual baptism, the "one baptism," provides "the gift of the Holy Ghost." What does "receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" do? Come back to what the brethren said in Acts, Chapter 11. After Peter "rehearsed the matter" (verse 4), "When they heard these things, they . . . glorified God, [Why? What happened at Cornelius' house? What did it mean when Peter said they were 'baptized with the Holy Ghost'; verse 16?] saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted *repentance to life*." This was not something "distinct from and subsequent to the work of regeneration." No, this being "baptized with the Holy Ghost" is what brought regeneration.

The angel did not say, "Send for Peter and he will tell you how to have a second definite work of grace and get entirely sanctified." No, he said he will "tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be *saved*" (verse 14). Verse 18 says they were "granted . . . life." When do we receive "life"? When we are born again, when we experience a new birth. Someone may say, "But Jesus said in Acts 1:8 that 'after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you . . . ye shall be witnesses.'" That is true, but the power of conversion evident in a life provides the most powerful witness. There is no question this baptism equips one for service and enables them to be a "witness," for now they have a testimony.

The question may arise, "Is being 'baptized with the Holy Ghost' and sanctification the same thing?" We must respond, no. This baptism is a part of that instantaneous experience of salvation. Sanctification, as we see later in this book, is a progressive process. In reality, they are two totally separate aspects of salvation: one instantaneous and one progressive. How do we know sanctification is progressive? Because Jesus prayed in John 17:17, concerning sanctification, to "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." We are sanctified by the "word." Our understanding and enlightenment concerning the "word" is progressive throughout one's experience and one's life, but being "granted . . . life" (Acts 11:18) is an instantaneous experience. This is why it is referred to in the Scriptures as being "born."

This baptism is an expression of being saved. In Acts 2:47b we read, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Clearly one is "added to the church" when they are "saved." In 1 Corinthians 12:13 the Apostle told us, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized in one body . . ." This substantiates the truth that being "saved" and

being "baptized" represents different expressions, to speak to different facets of the one and selfsame thing. I trust this clears away "the mists of confusion" and clarifies what the Scriptures teach on this vital truth.

## Part II – Filled With the Holy Ghost

We have studied the Biblical expression "baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 1:5) and found that, according to Acts 11:14-18, it is an instantaneous experience, in reality being "saved" (verse 14) and receiving "life." Now we want to address the question of, "What do the Scriptures mean when they speak of being 'filled with the Holy Ghost' (Acts 4:31)?" Is this the same experience as being "baptized with the Holy Ghost"? Is it an instantaneous, singular experience? If you are "filled," can you be refilled? If the Holy Ghost is a Person, as the Scriptures clearly teach, can you get more or less of a person? These are very valid questions that we want to address.

In *Christian Theology* (The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1925, page 471), the author subtitles a heading "One Baptism, But Many Fillings." He begins this section by stating, "The baptism with the Holy Ghost is also described in the Scriptures as being 'filled with the Holy Ghost.' That the baptism may be a filling with the Spirit is certain from Acts 1:5 and Acts 2:4. Yet, the two expressions are not always used synonymously. After one has been baptized with the Holy Spirit, however great may have been the degree of his working then, one will need to be filled with the Spirit again and again subsequently." On page 472, this text continues, "To be filled with the Spirit does not mean one receives a greater measure of the Spirit himself. He is a Person, and if we have him, we have him in his entirety." To this we agree wholeheartedly.

As we begin to examine these questions and the truth concerning being "filled with the Holy Ghost," in comparison and contrast with being "baptized with the Holy Ghost," we must recognize as our brother so aptly observed and stated, "The two expressions are not always used synonymously." Part of the confusion arises because in the English language, the word "filled" is offered in numerous verses, but in the original it is drawn from two different Greek words that, based on how they are contextually used, could mean "supply," "furnish," or "influence." As we consider the most familiar accounts, we know Jesus said to those disciples in Acts 1:5, ". . . but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." We clearly know that this *is* synonymous with Acts 2:4, which tells us, "And they were all *filled* with the Holy Ghost . . . ." In this verse the Greek word for "filled" is *pletho*.

One of the meanings of the word "filled," according to *Strong's Concise Concordance and Vine's Concise Dictionary*, is "supply." It is translated in Matthew 22:10 as "furnished." This is truly what occurred on the Day of Pentecost. They were being supplied or furnished with what they did not have or possess previously. This is exactly what occurs when one is "saved" (Acts 11:14). They receive, or are supplied or furnished with, "the Spirit of life" (Romans 8:2). In the case of the Day of Pentecost, the two expressions are synonymous. However, though they were "filled" in Acts 2:4, we see where "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" again a scant two chapters later (Acts 4:31). This causes us to ask the questions: "What happened? Did they lose the Holy Ghost? Did they need a re-baptism of the Holy Ghost? What was this 'filling'?"

If we read Acts, Chapters 3 and 4, we can see that after the miraculous healing of the lame man (Acts 3:1-11), Peter and John were called in to question before the Jewish Sanhedrin (Acts 4:5-20). At the conclusion of this examination, it tells us, "When they had further threatened them, they let them go . . ." (verse 21). Once "they went to their own company" (verse 23), they went to prayer. ". . . they lifted up their voice to God with one accord" (verse 24). A portion of their prayer was, "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word" (verse 29).

Notice the divine response in verse 31, which reads, "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all *filled* with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." How is the word "filled" used in this context? Obviously, they were not receiving a "supply" or being "furnished" with the Holy Ghost, but rather they were coming under His "influence." The Greek word is the same as in Acts 2:4 (*pletho*). However, here it has a different meaning. Their prayer had been "behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants that with all *boldness* they may speak thy word." Then "they were all filled [or came under the 'influence'] with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with *boldness*." They prayed for "boldness," and under the "influence" of the Holy Ghost, they received "boldness."

There are places in the Scriptures where this being "filled" is being supplied or furnished and is indicating a receiving of the Spirit. We see that when Ananias spoke to Saul of Tarsus and said, "be filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 9:17). But there is a host of Scriptures where the indication is that one was under the "influence" of the Holy Ghost. Consider these Scriptures: "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said . . ." (Acts 4:8); "Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said . . ." (Acts 13:9-10). It is evident the word "filled" in these contexts means "influence" or under the "influence." *Christian Theology* (The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1925, page 472) tells us, "Such re-fillings of the Spirit are important to the greatest usefulness in Christian service." And this is very, very true. May God help us as true disciples to both apply for and receive more of these fillings.

The question is, "What are these fillings?" We have found that being "baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 1:5) is an instantaneous, singular experience. It is being supplied or furnished with what you did not have previously—the Holy Ghost. But the expression "filled" is not always spoken of in that manner in every context. Let us consider the Apostle Paul's words recorded in Ephesians 5:18. Here Paul wrote, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Paul set up an analogy and comparison we can easily grasp. The first expression is one with which we can relate: "drunk with wine." We understand that when one is "drunk," we refer to him as being "under the influence." Many of our states refer to drunken driving as "driving under the influence" (DUI). When this occurs a person is not acting in the manner they would normally act, not making decisions as they would customarily.

Being "under the influence" causes people to lose their inhibitions, it makes them bold, it causes them to speak in a manner they would not normally speak and say what they would not normally say. Here we begin to see why Paul employed this particular analogy. He contrasted "be *not* drunk" with "be filled," but he also drew a comparison. The word "filled" here is *pleroo* and means "influence" in this context. Paul was encouraging us to come "under the influence" of "the Spirit," to be influenced to where we do not act as we would normally act, and do not make decisions as we ordinarily would. Then we lose our inhibitions and become bold for Christ and truth, speaking in a manner we normally would not, but rather be under the "influence" of the Holy Spirit. This will cause us to say things we would not normally say. It will be speaking "as the Spirit [gives] utterance" (Acts 2:4).

When we think of this apostolic admonition to "be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18), if indeed the Holy Ghost is a Person and "if we have him, we have him in his entirety" (*Christian Theology*, The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1925, page 472), then how do we become "filled" and even have "many fillings" (*Christian Theology*, The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1925, page 471)? Again, we must recognize this is speaking of influence, not being supplied. Many of our songs, unfortunately, create a false impression. Songs which make such statements as "More of You . . . all I want is more of You." We cannot get more of a Person. When you are speaking of a person, you cannot get more or less of a person. He does not come in portions or pieces. You either possess His presence or you do not. It is commonly spoken of as a need to "get more of the Holy Spirit," when in reality the truth is He needs to get more of you. This being "filled" is coming under His "influence."

I once heard it illustrated in this manner, and I think it explains it well. Consider you came to my home, and you are sitting in my living room. I have your presence, you are there in your entirety, because you are a person and do not come in portions. As you are sitting there and conversing, my lamp begins to flicker. I say, "That lamp has begun to do that recently, and I do not know what is wrong with it or how to fix it." You say: "I am licensed for electrical work. Let me take a look at it." So, I gladly yield to your superior knowledge of the subject, and I come under your influence in the matter. I do not have any more of your presence than I did, but I have found you have a capability that I did not. I yielded to your influence and let you work what I could not. That is what being "filled with the Spirit" is like. We do not know what to do, how to handle matters, or service needs that are beyond our abilities, but they are not beyond the Holy Spirit's abilities. As we recognize this and pray and yield and come under His influence, we are directed and enabled for the task. The brethren in Acts, Chapter 4, prayed for "boldness" to "speak [the] word" (verse 29). When they were "filled" (under the influence), they spoke the "word of God with boldness" (verse 31).

Many are under the mistaken impression that because they are saved, because they have received the Holy Spirit, there is no need for anything subsequent. Nothing could be further from the truth, and much harm has been done by those who embraced such flawed and faulty thinking. When Paul compared "be filled with the Spirit" to one "drunk," this analogy also provides another insight. How does one stay "drunk"? They keep drinking. They stay under the influence by decided action. This is how we are "filled" or stay under the influence—by decided action. Just as the brethren in Acts, Chapter 4, recognized their need and prayed and applied for the divine influence, so must we

continually as well. In Acts 4:8 Peter was "filled," or under the influence, and "they saw the boldness" (verse 13), but after their "threatenings," they prayed to maintain their "boldness" (verse 29), and in verse 31, they received the power of Holy Ghost influence. If we are to be successfully used in sacred service, we must continually seek to "be filled" and operate under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### The Question Concerning the Church

There is another discrepancy we must address. We all hold to the truth that "All scripture is given by inspiration" (2 Timothy 3:16). We hold to the truths that "all scripture" is inspired, inerrant, infallible, and as Brother C. W. Naylor penned in the beautiful song "The Church's Jubilee": "The Bible is our rule of faith." Every dear brother who stands for the glorious Church of God message gladly proclaims the truth of Acts 2:47b, which states, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." We proclaim, as much of our literature states, "Salvation makes you a member." We are firmly convinced that this verse is truth. There is another verse of Scripture we hold dear as well. It is the words penned by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:27, stating that the church is "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be *holy* and *without blemish*!" Now, if the traditional teaching is true that when an individual is saved, he still has "sin" in his heart until he is sanctified, then one of the two Scriptures above cannot be true!

If "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" and there is still "sin" in the heart after one is saved, then the church is not "holy and without blemish." If it is indeed "holy and without blemish" and there is sin in the heart after one is saved, then the Lord cannot add that one to the church until the person is sanctified. I believe most everyone would agree we must use "the Bible," for it "is our rule of faith." If, as we know, Acts 2:47b and Ephesians 5:27 are both true, then the position that there is sin in the heart subsequent to salvation is not true. Some may say, "Well, it is inbred, or inherited, sin." *Christian Theology* (The Gospel Trumpet Co. © 1925, page 449) states, "The fact of two forms of sin makes room for the possibility of two distinct cleansings from sin." Respectfully, there is no such "fact" at all. As we have considered, there is no Biblical basis for two forms of sin. However, even if there were, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all* sin [inherited, inbred, committed]" (1 John 1:7). This "blood of Christ" (Hebrews 9:14) that is "better" than "the blood of bulls and of goats" (Hebrews 9:13), even *if* there were two types of sin, would only require "the worshippers [to be] *once* purged" (Hebrews 10:2).

The church is "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or *any such thing* [including inbred sin]; but that it should be *holy* and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27). And the Lord *does* add "to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Dear brethren, there is *no* sin in the heart of one saved. No where does the Bible advocate two forms of sin. This came from Roman Catholicism and the Dark Ages, but if there were two forms, being "once purged" would "cleanseth us from *all* sin."

Can we see how the traditions of men cross the teachings of God's eternal Word? There are those who are fearful to embrace anything they consider new, but this is not new. Our burden is the same as that of the Apostle John when he wrote that his desire was to get them back to "That which was from the beginning" (1 John 1:1), back to the original. Too many people are desirous of getting back to the reformers. We need to get past the reformers and get back to the former! We need to get back to Jesus Christ, as Brother Teasley wrote, "Back to the light of the morning, Jesus our Captain leads" ("Back to the Blessed Old Bible," verse 1). When a teaching is truth and light, it will always tend toward more godliness and holiness.

The truths we have set forth portray that man does not have an excuse (Adam) for his sins or spiritual condition, that "they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20), that they must "*choose* you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15). Man is a free moral agent, and the Gospel firmly places choice within his grasp and holds man personally responsible for the power of choice he exercises. When one does truly get saved, they "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12). This is what "the grace of God that bringeth salvation" (Titus 2:11) is "teaching us" (Titus 2:12). One cannot "live . . . righteously" if there is still the root of sin within. Paul's letter to Titus lets us clearly see that "salvation" enables one to live in the manner God intended.

"Rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15) will not leave a supposedly saved individual living in a wrong manner and claiming he is not sanctified yet. No, truth will require he conduct himself "holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27) from conversion. It lifts holiness to a higher plane, not a lower one. The enemy from time immemorial has been trying to place sin in the church in some form. The Scriptures do not permit it and neither should our doctrine. Rather than trying to get Scriptures to fit our doctrine, we should seek divine direction to make certain our doctrine fits the Scriptures. We have a glorious message on the church! Let us not allow a traditional teaching to dilute or confuse it.

## CHAPTER NINE

### Part I – A Consideration of Carnality in Corinth

Now we want to address the issue of carnality. First Corinthians, Chapter 3, has been used for years to support a traditional teaching of two works of grace. It has been taught that the need of the Corinthian brethren was to be sanctified. To understand if this is what is truly being taught in this chapter, let us look at it more closely. The Corinthian church was a diverse congregation. It had many different cultures that comprised, or made up, the congregation. Because of the cultural diversities of this congregation, as was the city of Corinth, there were many problems associated with the congregation at Corinth. Paul learned of those problems through two different sources. We read in 1 Corinthians 1:11 where Paul learned of the problems by word of mouth: "For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you." Paul also received word about some of the problems and the factions at Corinth by letter. First Corinthians 7:1 says, "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me . . . ."

By reading Paul's letter to Corinth, you can understand that the problems in this congregation were things such as division, immorality, judging of one another, lack of discipline, problems with marriage, divorce, eating of meat, public worship, the Lord's Supper, uses of spiritual gifts, love, misuse of tongues, and the Resurrection. From one chapter to the next, all the way through that epistle, you can find problem after problem that the Apostle Paul dealt with. It took the wisdom of God bestowed upon him to do this, and it is very evident throughout this epistle that God gave him the needed wisdom.

It is obvious that there were two aspects concerning the issues in Corinth: (1) coming from a predominately heathen, Gentile background, they severely needed to be taught; and (2) their carnality needed to be addressed. In this chapter we want to deal with the second of the main contributors to the problems that had arisen in the congregation at Corinth, and that was carnality. The word as it is used in the third chapter comes from the word *sarkinos*, which means "to govern by human nature, controlled by animal appetites instead of the Spirit of God." It also means "fleshly." What was happening at Corinth? Why was Paul so burdened concerning the congregation at Corinth? He realized that the church was not mature, the church was not progressing. First Corinthians 1:6-7 says: "Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The gifts were present, the gifts were available, the gifts were active, but Corinth was in a carnal atmosphere.

Traditionally, it has been taught that they needed to be sanctified, or have another work of grace. It was taught that what was holding the congregation at Corinth from progressing was inbred sin, or inherited sin, and that they possessed a carnal nature which needed an instantaneous eradication by entire sanctification. Yet, according to what the Apostle Paul wrote earlier in this letter, this is not true. They were very much sanctified. First Corinthians 1:2 says, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are *sanctified* in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." First Corinthians 6:11 says, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are *sanctified*, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Thus, the problems at Corinth could not have arisen from a lack of sanctification.

Notice Paul mentioned in that first chapter of this letter that they needed to "all speak the same thing" (verse 10). Why did he say that? It was because what they were speaking was causing division. Let us look at a few verses. These are very essential. We read in 1 Corinthians 1:10-13: "Now I beseech you, [look at what he called them] brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

Paul said that they needed to "speak the same thing . . . that there be no divisions among you." What the Corinthian brethren were speaking was causing division. What did they have to be in agreement on? What was he rebuking them for? They needed to preach that Christ is not divided. We know that what they were preaching was causing division, because Paul brought up one point when he mentioned "Cephas" and "Apollos" and "Paul." One of the first signs of

carnality is when people divide over preachers. All this stems from carnality. Paul told them they needed to "speak the same thing." What did they need to speak? Christ is not divided. Who were those ministers? They were nothing more than laborers for God. Paul called them "brethren." It was almost like a rebuke, as if to say: "You are of the same household, and you should be perfectly joined together. You should have the same mind and judgment."

This division that Paul had dealt with had not broken away from the congregation, but it was gathering strength. It needed to be headed off before it broke out of the congregation. There were four factions mentioned: there was a faction that followed after Paul, another faction followed after Apollos, another faction followed after Cephas, and lastly there were those that said they were following Christ. These were leaders who influenced this congregation, but there was no division between them; they were of the same mind. Those leaders were picked out without their knowledge or without their consent.

There were some reasons why those names were chosen. One commentator said that Paul was picked because he preached the Gospel of Christian liberty in the end of the Law. Apollos was very elegant and well versed in the Scriptures. Cephas was one of the most legalistic of the twelve. No doubt, there were ones in the congregation who were still kind of iffy about turning from the old Law. Cephas would have appealed to them. Lastly, there were those who said they belonged to Christ. These factions were of a great concern, and Paul let them know this by sending them a letter that told them, in so many words, "You are fleshly, you are carnal, you are walking as a natural man walks." In other words, it was not an inherited depraved nature they were dealing with; they were already sanctified. It was spiritually uneducated human inclinations, walking according to their own human thoughts rather than according to divine influence. The carnality exhibited in Corinth had nothing whatsoever to do with a supposed depraved, carnal nature.

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 3:1-9: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal [what is carnality?]: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted [he was a wise master builder], Apollos [he was very elegant, a very good minister] watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."

The conditions the Corinthians were in were very troubling to the Apostle. It was not the fact that the Corinthians were made of flesh, for everybody is, but rather that they were allowing the flesh to guide their actions. Paul called them "babes [or we could use the word 'babies'] in Christ." Who are babes, or babies? They are those who lack spiritual understanding and knowledge. If you think back in your own experience to when you were first born into the kingdom, you will remember that you lacked knowledge, you lacked understanding, you lacked the guidance as a young Christian that you would receive later on through teaching and preaching. You were like a baby.

When a baby is first born, it relies completely on its mother and father. How it cleaves to its mother! She is the first one that baby sees when he or she comes into the world. The mother feeds and nourishes that baby, taking care of him or her. The people at Corinth were babies; they lacked spiritual understanding and knowledge. They were recently born into the kingdom, and as babies were unable to understand the profound doctrines of the Christian faith. They were believers in Christ, they were converted persons, yet were still as babies in understanding and knowledge and experience.

Why did the Apostle Paul level such a strong rebuke on them? It was because of their partisan attitude, their strife, and their factions. That is what stirred him up. He took communication with the house of Chloe, and that is what he dealt with in about the first seven chapters. From the seventh chapter on, Paul dealt with the things that were written to him in a letter. Paul was writing to them from Ephesus. The letter written to Paul, must have said something like: "Paul, you have to do something. There is division working right here in the congregation. Paul, there is a group following after Peter; there is another group following after Apollos; and another group is following after you, Paul. This is causing a separation." So, Paul wrote back, telling them, "You are carnal."

That congregation had stalemated. They could not go forward. They could not mature as they ought until they ceased from allowing human wisdom to guide them and be turned over to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They were

still in the baby stage; they were carnal. There were some things working among them that were very evident to those who had informed the Apostle Paul. Again, 1 Corinthians 3:1-2 reads: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, [When? When you were a baby.] neither yet now are ye able." Otherwise, you are still a baby.

What comes out of carnality? What happens when divisions break out in a congregation? Well, Paul brought it up—envying and strife. There are three things here that are worthy of noting: these people were wrong in their thoughts, in their words, and in their deeds. Envy refers to the state of the soul. They had inward grudges and disaffection toward each other. It was not long before they were separating from each other within the congregation. Strife, or contention, refers to their words. They were disputing, contending for whose party was the best. Each was endeavoring to prove that he and his party alone were right.

In every division those things are present: envy, strife, and ones contending for their rights. Divisions refer to their conduct. They could not agree, they contended with one another until envying and grudging lead to strife and evil speaking, and this led to divisions and fixed parties. In this state it is no wonder that the Apostle said, "Are you not carnal, and walk as men?" Otherwise, he was saying, "You act like the people of the world, and you manifest no more spirit of religion than they do." They were acting by being guided by their fleshly, human thoughts.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:5-6: "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but [it was] God [who] gave the increase." Let me give you an illustration. If I were to go out and plant a garden and put in a seed and one of my sons comes along and waters the seed that I have planted, neither of us can take credit for making that seed grow. Neither of us can take credit for the increase that comes out of that garden. It was God who gave the increase. First Corinthians 3:7-8 reads: "So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one [or are supposed to be one]: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour." Is that not amazing? Two or three people could be working on one project, and God rewards each one individually.

First Corinthians 3:9 tells us, "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." We cannot take credit for the increase in the congregation any more than we can take credit for any increase in a garden. We might have labored, but it was God who gave the increase. We might have prayed with them, we might have prayed for them, we might have visited them many times, but it is God who gives the increase. We are nothing more than servants, or laborers. There are no big I's or little you's, but we are all laborers together. We are one, and God will not leave any one of us out. Each one receives rewards for his own labor. We are one together with Christ.

Look at what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 6:1. He stated: "We then, as workers together with him, [When you start working and you are working without divine guidance, you have a problem. You have received your reward. What is it? The applause of men.] beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." At Corinth, carnality had gained such momentum that they were ready to break out into division outside the congregation.

What is the answer? Paul, writing in Ephesians 5:18, said, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled [or 'under the influence'] with the Spirit." The Christian wants to stay under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and I say that is the only way to keep from coming under the influence of carnality. That is the only way to keep envy and strife and division out. Corinth was spiritually stalemated, and it really troubled the Apostle Paul. That becomes apparent as you read his writings. He kept mentioning this over and over: walking as men, carnality, separations, divisions. It is obvious that this was a heavy burden to Paul. The solution is to not "walk as men" (1 Corinthians 3:3), but rather under the influence of the Spirit of God. This is not something done once and for all, as advocates of a second work teach, but something that must be done continually on an ongoing basis. The issue at Corinth was not carnality as an inherited depraved nature but rather their need of teaching and learning to operate under the influence of the Spirit of God. I trust this puts the expressions concerning carnality in the Corinthian letter in a clearer light.

## **Part II – Sanctification**

In this section, we would like to look at what sanctification is and what it is not, using the Word of God as the final authority on doctrine and all spiritual matters. A doctrine, such as sanctification, definitely could not be completely



covered in just one section, but we can get a little insight into what it is and what it is not. The church that Jesus built does believe, teach, and practice sanctification. It is a necessary doctrine.

In the Old Testament the word "sanctify" came from the Hebrew word *qadash*, and it means "to make or pronounce or observe as clean ceremonially or morally, people, places, objects, days, and seasons." There were many things that were sanctified unto the Lord. Let us look at a few Scriptures to support this. In Exodus 13:2 we read of sanctification of the firstborn. It states, "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine."

In Exodus 29:44 we read that the altar and tabernacle were sanctified. It says, "And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office." Deuteronomy 5:12 tells us that a day was sanctified. It states, "Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee." In these few Scriptures, we have found that the firstborn, the altar, the priesthood, the congregation, and a day were all sanctified. In other words, they were separated from worldly use and consecrated to ceremonial service of the Lord.

It is believed by some that sanctification is a second work of grace. However, in reality, the Bible speaks of many works of grace. Paul was made a "wise masterbuilder" by "the grace of God" (1 Corinthians 3:10). Ephesians 2:8 tells us that we are saved by grace. It reads, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." With every gift received by the child of God comes grace to operate the gift. Romans 12:6 says, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith." The truth of the matter is that it takes the work of grace in our hearts daily to be what God expects of us. In the New Testament, the word for "sanctification" is *hagiazō*, and it means "to purify, consecrate, make holy, to separate things profane." In reality, sanctification is a process that begins working on a soul before conversion. It continues working during conversion and will work on us until we lay this robe of flesh down and enter into eternity.

First, let us look at the sanctification of the sinner. Before one is saved, the work of sanctification begins. Salvation begins with a call from God. We read in 2 Thessalonians 2:13, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." It is through God choosing you that brings you to salvation. How are we called? We are called through the Spirit of God. John 6:44 says, "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." It is God who opens the door of salvation; it is God who sends out the call; and salvation is always on God's terms, never on ours. We are to line up with the truth of God's Word; the truth of God's Word does not line up with us.

God puts out a call to the sinner who has his roots in the world. In John 16:8 we read, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." The Spirit of God reproves, or convicts, the world of their sin and shows them the righteousness of Christ. We can see this occurring in Acts 24:25, when Paul was standing before Felix. It says, "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." The convenient season is not when we call, but the convenient season is when God calls for us. That was "sanctification of the Spirit" pleading with Felix, but he thought the cost was too great to accept Jesus Christ.

The sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit always calls one to Christ. It does not call you to join an organization, but it brings you to Jesus Christ, who is truth. We read in Revelation 22:17, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Sanctification is part of one's call to be saved. The first basic truth that the Spirit of God calls you to is "unto holiness" (1 Thessalonians 4:7). God reveals to the sinner that he cannot continue to live that way and have Jesus Christ in his life. This involves counting the cost, and one must count the cost before coming to an altar of prayer. I will prove it to you by the Word of God.

When I was in sin, I knew there were things I was doing that I could not continue doing and be a Christian. When I heard the message of truth that was preached, the Spirit of God dealt with my soul. Yet, I had to count the cost before I came to an altar of prayer. One does not come to the altar of prayer and then count the cost, but one must count the cost before coming to an altar of prayer. Let us prove it by the Bible. The Bible says this in Luke 14:28-33: "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, [What is the first thing that you do? You count the cost.] and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able

to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

When do you become a disciple? When you are saved. But first you must count the cost. Now, there is a definite dividing line between the child of God and a child of the devil. First John 3:9-10 says: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest [or made known], and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." You cannot live in or practice sin and be accepted of God; there is a dividing line. A child of God lives free from sin. As long as he stays free, he lives free from sin. John 8:32 tells us, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Not just free from hell, not just free from trouble, but you are free from sin.

Sanctification works on a sinner and causes him to separate himself from the world and yield his life unreservedly to the will of God. The Spirit of God convinces the sinner that he is guilty. That is why Paul wrote in Romans 7:7 that he "had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." What happened? Sin came to life, or to his knowledge. Sin has a power. No matter how hard you try, when you live in sin, you are going to serve the devil. The Prophet Jeremiah said in Jeremiah 13:23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin [of course not], or the leopard his spots [of course not]? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil [of course not]." It takes God in one's life to live free from sin. The Spirit of God always brings you to Jesus Christ.

There is also sanctification at conversion. Another separation takes place: you are separated from your sins at conversion. Ephesians 5:24-28 states: "Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself."

This Scripture is not dealing with a second work of grace but rather what took place at Calvary. It says, ". . . and he gave himself for it." You can read in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The Church of God is a blood-bought church, again, referring to the work on Calvary. Hebrews 10:10 tells us, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Hebrews 9:13-14 reads: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" In Bible conversion, when one repents, the blood of Jesus Christ covers and cleanses from sin, and the conscience is purified. The church was bought and sanctified when Jesus died on the Cross. In conversion, one is separated from sin, cleansed, made a member of the kingdom, or the Church of God. First Corinthians 12:13 reads, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." So there is sanctification, a separation from sin, at conversion.

What about after conversion? Are we sanctified after conversion? First Thessalonians 5:23 tells us, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The word "wholly" means complete to the end. There is progression in the Christian's life; there is room for growth. As one continues to follow Christ, there is spiritual growth, there is sanctification of the soul, the spirit, and the body. There is a spiritual progression in the life of the child of God. You can read the words of the Apostle Peter in 2 Peter 3:18. He said: "But *grow* in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen." First Peter 2:2 reads, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may *grow* thereby." When an individual first gets saved, there is a real desire to get into the Word of God, to learn the doctrines. The Word of God still thrills the newborn babe! They "desire the sincere milk of the word."

Peter wrote, telling the newborn babes that they needed to grow, they needed to be perfected. In Hebrews 10:14 the writer said, "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Peter said that newborn babes are

to grow, to be perfected, and the writer of the Hebrew letter spoke of "them that are sanctified" being "perfected." Man is a compound creature. He has a soul, a spirit, and a body. It is God's will that all three be separated from things profane and dedicated unto God. All three—your spirit (which is the life of the soul), the soul (which is the life of the body), and the body—need to be dedicated to the will of God.

How does one progress in sanctification? When one hears the preaching of the Word, that sets him apart. At conversion one is instantly set free from all sin, the sin that one knows at that time. But as the new Christian continues, as he progresses, in his walk with Christ, the Word of God will make him more and more like Jesus (if he allows it), and there will be less of self. The Spirit of God always leads a Christian farther and farther from self and from the world. Sanctification is not a single act of grace. If it were, the saints would not need any perfecting. They would not even have to go to church services. But what does the Bible say?

Ephesians 4:11-12 states: "And he gave some [not all], apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints . . ." These were not given for the perfecting of the world, but for the "perfecting of the saints." When you get saved, you are perfect, as far as your soul is concerned, but there is a perfecting work that needs to be done on every individual until he leaves this world. When you are first saved, you do not know it all. You do not know all the things that could be a hindrance in your spiritual life. That is why you need to sit under the teachings of the Word of God anointed by the Holy Spirit.

Paul continued in Ephesians 4:12, saying, ". . . for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." The word "edify" means building up. In other words, the building up of the body of Christ. After conversion there is a cleansing work that you and I must do. Now that we are saved, there are some things that we need to do. When we hear the Word of God and God tells us to lay aside some things that are weights, then we need to walk in that light that God has given us. God holds us responsible to do it. God is not going to deal with us as He dealt with us before we were saved. When we, as children of God, hear the Word of God, God expects us to obey it. Of course, His Holy Spirit will help us, just as God helped Israel over in the Book of Numbers, when He told the Israelites to drive out the inhabitants of the land. God promised to give Israel the power, but they had to drive it out. Likewise, today people expect God to take away the sinful habits. He never gave them to you, and the devil cannot make you practice them. So, it must have been you that did it. He will give you the power, but you have to drive them out. And the words *drive out* let us know that they will not go easily.

Sanctification after conversion includes driving some things out of our life. We read in 2 Corinthians 7:1, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves [just like a self-cleaning oven] from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." First John 1:7 tells us, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." The blood will *cleanse you* from sin, but the blood does not *keep you* from sin. It is God's Holy Spirit that keeps you from sin.

There is sanctification before conversion, there is sanctification at conversion, and there is sanctification after conversion. When you are walking in the light, you will separate yourself (sanctify) from all things profane (unholy). First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I ask this question, "After conversion how much sin is left?" There cannot be any sin (inbred sin or inherited sin) left, for the Scripture says *all* sin. All sin is forgiven when you confess your sins. Your soul has to be perfect, or you are not going to get into Heaven.

The basis for fellowship is the blood of Christ and walking in the light. This continual walking as we gain understanding is the progressive work of sanctification. Jesus said in John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." As we gain more and more understanding of the "word" and we incorporate the understanding into our lives, we become more and more sanctified, or set apart. I trust we can see that sanctification is not a one time work, but rather an ongoing and progressive work.

## EPILOGUE

As we stated in the Preface, it has not been our intention to "gender strifes" (2 Timothy 2:23) or cause greater contention, confusion, or division. It has been our burden to clear away "the mists of confusion" and trust that the Lord will use this writing to bind up "the breach of his people" and help heal "the stroke of their wound" (Isaiah 30:26). It is imperative that we recognize that we can do more against the forces of evil that face us standing together as opposed to being separated. Separation among brethren grieves the great heart of God, and it grieves us, dear brethren. It is our desire to see a greater unity effected by the presentation of these truths. We trust the Holy Spirit has used the presentation of "those things which are most surely believed among us" (Luke 1:1) to enable the "eyes of your understanding [to be] enlightened" (Ephesians 1:18). If so, we praise God that we have had some small part in seeing it accomplished.

If you are yet uncertain, all we ask is your prayerful consideration and keeping an ear attuned to "hear what the Spirit saith" (Revelation 3:22). If you cannot see as we do, we humbly ask that "there be no divisions" (1 Corinthians 1:10). Please do not allow the enemy to make this teaching a test of fellowship and divide the body of Christ. This, my dear brethren, is giving place to the devil (Ephesians 4:27). We are convinced that what we have set forth is clear, pure, seventh-seal light. We cannot compromise on it and be clear with God. However, we give you the prerogative to "walk in the light" as the Lord reveals it to you. Please afford us the same privilege. I am confident if we each keep "an honest and good heart" (Luke 8:15) and truly "hear what the Spirit saith" (Revelation 3:22), He will bring us together, standing "on the sea of glass" (Revelation 15:2). It is our prayer that the Lord will use this writing to that end. May God hasten the day!