



"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16

Sanctification

By John G. Lake

Reading Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 5

Beloved the thought that is in my spirit tonight is the truth from the words we have just read, the sanctification of spirit and soul and body. Paul says,

"I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

Most of us in our reading of the Scriptures have this difficulty, and it is perfectly natural one, of recognizing body and soul only. And man is generally spoken of as a duality of body and soul. However, the scriptures do not recognize man as a dual being, but a triune being like Himself.

Therefore, the apostle says:

I pray God your whole *spirit* and *soul* and *body* be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

One difficulty we have in the study of this subject is that in the common translation of our English Bible there is very little distinction made between soul and spirit. It is one of the most difficult things in world to express the common truths we teach in another language. Paul coined seventeen distinct words in his letter to the Ephesians to express the fine distinctions of soul and spirit.

Paul declares in the book of Hebrews the possibility of divisibility of soul and spirit. He says:

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Beloved, the spirit of man is a great unknown realm in the lives of most men. My judgment is that the spirit lies dormant in most men until quickened by the living Spirit of God and until fertilized by the real Spirit of Jesus Christ. But when touched by the Spirit of God, a quickening takes place. The spirit of man comes into activity and begins to operate within him. It not only discerns things in this life, like the spirit of another, or in another, but it reaches way beyond this present life and becomes that medium by which we touch God Himself and by which we know and comprehend heavenly things.

In my judgment, the spirit of man is the most amazing instrument of God that there is in all the world. We have this declaration in the book of Job concerning man's spirit:

There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

When a soul comes to God and surrenders his life to Him we say he is converted, and by that we mean changed, born again of God so that the common things which were evident in his life as a fleshly being fell away and were gone, and the spiritual life appeared in him, and in the truest sense he began his walk as a child of God.

I believe a real conversion is the awakening of the spirit of man to the consciousness of the Fatherhood of God through Jesus Christ. In order to be aware of that consciousness of union with God, it is necessary that everything be removed that hides that consciousness and dims the knowledge of God.

Sin is that peculiar thing in the life of man which dims the consciousness of man so he cannot comprehend God. When sin is removed, the veil over the soul of man is gone and the spirit of man looks into the face of God and recognizes that God is his Father through the Lord Jesus Christ. Bless God, the spirit of man ascending into union with God brings into our soul the consciousness that God is our all and in all.

The *soul* of man is that intermediate quality between body and spirit. The soul, in other words, comprehends all the action of our mental powers - the natural mind. The soul of man is that which reaches out and takes possession of the knowledge that the spirit has attained and expresses that knowledge through the outer man. The soul of man is the governing power in the constitution of man.

I feel in my heart that one of the things we need to learn very much is this; that the soul of man, not the spirit, has a marvelous power.

If I were to endeavor to define in terms I feel the people would understand, I would speak of the action of the soul of man as that which is commonly spoken of by students as the subconscious. As you read the writings of psychic authors, you will observe the actions and powers they define are not the powers of the spirit in union with God but the action of the soul of man. The soul of man is the real ego. When the Word of God speaks of the salvation of the *soul* it speaks in truly scientific language. **For unless the soul, the mind of man, is redeemed from his own self into the Spirit of God that man is, in my judgment, still an unredeemed man.**

Sanctification is calculated to apply to the needs of all our nature, first of the spirit, second of the soul, third of the body. Over and over again I have repeated those blessed words of John Wesley in his definition of sanctification. He said: "Sanctification is possessing the mind of Christ, and all the mind of Christ."

The ultimate of entire sanctification would comprehend all the mind of Christ. Christians are usually very weak in this department of their nature. Perhaps less pains have been taken by Christians to develop their mind in God than almost anything else.

We pay attention particularly to one thing only - the spirit - and we do not comprehend the fact that God purposed that the things God's Spirit brings to us shall be applied in a practical manner to the needs of our present life.

I was absolutely shocked the other day beyond anything I think my spirit ever received. A dear lady who professes not only to live a holy life but to possess the real baptism of the Holy Ghost and who discusses the subject a great deal, was guilty of saying one of the vilest things I ever heard concerning another. I said in my own soul, *That individual has not even discerned the outer fringes of what sanctification by the Spirit of God means.* I do not believe there is even an evidence of sanctification in that life. Certainly a mind that could repeat such a damning thing gives no evidence whatever but of a very superficial knowledge of God, very superficial indeed.

It shows us this thing, that people are placing their dependence in the fact that in their spirit they know God, that they have been saved from sin, and are going to heaven when they die; but they are living like the devil in this present life, talking like the devil. It is an abomination. It spells a tremendous degree of ignorance. It shows that that individual does not comprehend the first principles of the breadth of salvation as Jesus taught it to the world - a holy mind, a sanctified spirit.

Beloved, I tell you with all candor, a holy mind cannot repeat a vile thing let alone be the creator of the vile suggestion. It is an unholy mind that is capable of such an act. And I say with Paul, mark such a person. Put your finger on him. Just note it. He can talk, but he does not know God. **He does not comprehend the power of His salvation.**

But bless God, here is the hope, here is the strength, here is the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ - that the power of God unto salvation applied to the mind of man sanctifies the soul of man and makes the mind of man like the mind of Christ.

Who could imagine from the lips of Jesus an unholy suggestion that would jar the spirit of another? The mind could not conceive of such a thing. Never could the mind conceive ought from God but the outflow of a holy life, quickening his mind, infilling it with love and purity and peace and power.

Beloved, in our home, in our life, in our office, wherever we are, we leave the impression of our thoughts there. If our thoughts are pure and holy like Christ, people will walk into the atmosphere and instantly discover it.

PRAYER

God, I pray that the power of God will come upon the Christian people, that they may feel, oh God, the necessity of submitting the wicked, accursed, vile mind of man to the living God to be purged and cleansed and remolded, that it may become in deed and in truth the mind of Christ.

If there is any particular place in our lives where as a rule Christians are weak, it is in the consecration of their minds. Christians seem to feel as if they were not to exercise any control over the mind and so it seems to run at random, just like the mind of the world.

Real Christianity is marked by the pureness, by the holiness of the thoughts of man, and if Christianity - the kind you have - does not produce in your mind real holiness, real purity, real sweetness, real truth, then it is a poor brand. Change it right away.

Beloved, there is relief for such; there is a way of salvation. It is in the submission of that mind to the Lord Jesus to be remolded by the Holy Spirit so that that mind becomes the pure channel of a holy nature.

Beloved, surely we who profess to know the living God, who profess to live in union with Him, ought to present to the world that attitude of mind, that pureness of mind, that holiness of mind which needs no recommendation. The people know it, they-feel- if, they smell it. They know it is the mind of Christ. I love that definition of John Wesley's which says, "Possessing the mind of Christ and *all* the mind of Christ."

PRAYER

Oh God, I ask Thee that Thou wilt help me and the soul of this people to submit our minds to God so that they may be remolded in love and sweetness and purity and holiness, so that in the name of Jesus they are the minds of Christ.

Beloved, we are going a step further - the effect of a pure mind on the body of man and in the flesh of man. Do you know that the sins of vileness in men's lives originate in the mind? A man's life will be of the character of his thought. If he thinks evil he will be evil. If he thinks holy he will be holy. His outward life will be as the inner impulse is. Jesus said,

From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

They were troubled because Jesus and the disciples were eating and drinking from dishes which were not ceremonially cleansed. Jesus was trying to teach the great lesson of the deep and inner life. He said, "Out of the heart cometh evil things."

"That which goeth into the mouth cannot defile a man," etc.'

Beloved, our minds need to be stayed in Christ, kept by the power of God, infilled with the Holy Spirit of Christ so that we reflect His beauty, we show forth His love, we manifest His sweetness, and evidence His power.

Long ago I learned this splendid lesson. One night I was in a strange city and was sick. I wanted somebody to pray for me. A person was present, and they suggested that they would pray. I knelt by a chair on the floor and they put their hands on me, and I arose from that chair with one of the most tremendous passions in my nature, one of the most terrible conditions of sensuousness in me. It was days before I felt that I got back again where I was pure and holy in the sight of God. I did not understand it at the time, but afterward that individual came to me with the confession of the character of their life and I understood then. I received the condition of that nature, and in my receptive attitude I received of the vileness of that person in my nature. It seemed my soul was soiled for days in consequence.

That taught me, beloved, to be careful who laid their hands on me. After that, I waited until the Spirit of the living God indicated in my soul that the person who offered to perform such a ministry was pure.

Isn't it marvelous, beautiful, wonderful to realize that mankind can receive into their nature and being the power and spirit of the living Christ, which contains the purging power to drive forth from the being every particle of evil, every sensuous thing in the thought and nature so that the man becomes what Jesus was. That is what the blood of Jesus Christ is calculated to do. That is what the spirit of Christ is purposed to do in the soul of a man - the cleansing of a nature from the power and dominion of sin.

Beloved, the inflow of holy life into our body must produce holiness in the body, just as it does in the soul. We cannot even think beautiful thoughts, we cannot think holy thoughts, without them leaving their impression in our nature, in our very flesh.

That same divine power in us dissolves disease, restores diseased tissues. Our flesh is purged by the divine power being transmitted from our spirit, through our soul, into our body.

I have always loved to think of the holy flesh of Jesus, not just His beautiful mind, not just the pure Spirit; but is it not blessed and sweet to contemplate the flesh cleansed and purified until His very body - His hands, His feet, His person - were just as pure by the Spirit of God as His pure soul and His pure Spirit were.

That is why Jesus was the wonderful channel He was. The Spirit of God would flow through Him just as freely, just as fully, just as powerfully as it was possible for it to flow through a holy, purified personality.

I like to contemplate the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration and think of the radiant glory that came through His flesh, not just the illumination of His spirit, but the holy glory emanating through His flesh until He became white and glistening, until His clothes were white and His face shown as the light. It is that radiant purity of God that my soul covets. It is that radiant power, evidenced in the pureness of my spirit, my mind, my very flesh that I long for.

So beloved, we see that when something impure, of the character of disease, appears on your flesh and mine and we feel we are being soiled by an unholy touch, in the name of Jesus our spirit reaches up and rebukes that devilish condition, and by the Spirit of the living God we stand, believing that the Holy Spirit of God will flow through the spirit, flow through the soul, through the flesh, and remedy and heal that difficulty that is in the person.

An old Baptist brother was in to see me about his wife. As I sat reasoning with him, I said, "Brother, I would just as soon have my brother commit a sin as to have sickness in his person. One is the evidence of an impure mind, the other is the evidence of an impure body. And the salvation of Jesus was intended to make him pure in spirit, in soul, and in body."

I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it.

There is a stream of life that God permits to flow from your nature and mine to all men everywhere. That blessed stream will be either sweet and pure as the stream that flows from the throne of God, or it will be soiled and foul according to the condition of our nature. The value of the precious blood of Jesus Christ to you and me is that through it that life stream that flows from us may be made holy - that same holy living life-stream that causes the Tree of Life to bloom.

Of all the pictures that the Word of God contains, the one described in the twenty-second chapter of Revelation is the most beautiful:

He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall

be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. 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. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

- Revelation 22:1-21

Beloved, if your life has not been satisfactory, if you have not recognized the holy character that Christ expects from a real Christian, then this call of the Spirit comes to your soul. "The Spirit and the Bride say come." Come up, come into the real life, the high life, the life hid *with Christ in God*.

"I will be within thee a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. John 4:14 paraphrased

This article was selected from "John G. Lake, The Complete Collection of His Life Teachings" by Roberts Liardon.

Albury Publishing, 992 pages

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