



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

The Sanctification of Tom Plumb

by Tom Plumb

I am Canadian but was saved in 1972 while living in New Zealand after teaching, adventuring and surfing in Australia, Asia, and the Papua. The story below unfolded years later back in Canada.

Earnestly Seeking

Without any church, the Word and the Spirit became my only available sources of edification, so I redoubled my personal habits of spiritual diligence.. It was my long habit to just hit it speaking in secret tongues while at work. Every break was spent in the Word. Every possible spoken word was freighted with His grace. I came into a place where I would gain short periods where I was just walking under an open heaven, just imbued with a strong unearthly blessing, and free of every burden. These times of supernatural radiance gradually increased in length, while the intervening oppressive clouds became shorter but much more difficult.

One day in 1987, I was in the Spirit while driving back from work. The Lord spoke very clearly to me, "Tom. You are now mature enough in Me to be an ideal church leader and esteemed pillar of the community. You may go that way or instead continue on to come closer to Me: but the way will be difficult. **CHOOSE!**" I immediately burst into an intense prayer of total abject re-dedication of my life to the fullness of His purposes. With great zeal I am sure I prayed the sun, moon and stars right there in the car. I carelessly flung every aspect of my existence into His capable hands. I could sense clearly that God had heard the cry of my heart. (This is called a "re-consecration") I kept this locked firmly in my heart. From that time, in no thing did I consciously hold back from Him.

The Final Battle

Things then really heated up, and became more difficult. My long-term stable management job terminated since the company was sold off. Employment became spotty and uncertain. My wife's approval followed suit..

The times of feeling as if I were walking under an open heaven became as long as three weeks at a stretch. The constant glory was beyond compare. But also the regular times of spiritual assault became so vicious it was beyond belief. Strong spirits of lust and every

carnal thing in a magnified form surrounded me in a thick putrid stinking darkness. My spirit was full of a thick, thick suffocating oppression. (probably caused by the fact that before I was saved, I had become deeply involved with Eastern religions in Asia while desperately looking for truth in all the wrong places) I prayed the tremendous oppression back again as if it had never been overcome. I found it so humiliating, so inappropriate. Here I was: a citizen of the light, walking without known fault for years now: full of His assurance, power, revelation; dwelling in His majesty and dignity- near the very pinnacle of Christian spiritual achievement -and being subjected to this!?

I just couldn't accept this stark contrast. It was so completely inconsistent with my reality of innate spiritual dignity. I was totally fed up with this repulsive garbage, (after all I had been repeatedly repenting of everything possible for 18 years at this point) so one dark and difficult day I prayed a desperate prayer. I prayed, "Lord, if you are not able to clean this disgusting garbage away, please, take my life. I have just had it!" (The part that galled the most was the totally arrogant affront to the spiritual dignity the Lord had imparted within from so much consecrating.) This cleared the dark cloud away from this bout, and I went my way; but with deep reservations. I had done all and still there was all this trouble!! What was going on here? Is there actual victory in the Lord or not?

I basically was ready to give up. What was the use? I had done all that could be done spiritually, and yet where was His boasted victory? Was this all there was? I needed more. Much more. And yet there was nothing more I could do but tenderly go on trusting Him regardless of the all evidence that so loudly argued His impotence. Where else could I go except to His feet?

I then went around under a vague sense of being under observation by a stern (uncompromising, firm) Heavenly Court high above. I felt I was being secretly weighed in the balances, but had no idea what to do about it. None.

Entering the Radiant Peace of His Rest

A few days later I was with my family riding my bike swiftly downhill on a paved river valley bike path in Edmonton, with oppressing thoughts coming at me like, "All these years of dedication to the Lord are just not worth it. Where is the victory? You might as well go back to your carefree life of adventuring around the world!" Right then something caught in the front spokes so that I flew through the air with the greatest of ease until I was knocked sort of silly by the sudden stop on the pavement. I felt I should struggle to my feet in order to not worry my family, but instead, I just lay there, and gave up. He was there with me. I allowed myself to just totally relax into and trust the waiting arms of His anointing of love within and allowed myself to merely lay there injured on the asphalt. I just completely let myself go into His love. I just humbly laid down my whole life into His capable Hands. As soon as I consciously made this decision to relax into Him in total trust, and let go of all concern, including my strong concern and striving for my unacceptable spiritual state, *I felt a palpable fiery liquid anointing oil being poured from the throne. It ran down over my whole being. I felt it's oily wetness all over.* This was August, 1988.

His Glorious Tableland

At first, although I knew something momentous had taken place within, I couldn't quite pin it down. It was only as I quietly went through life as usual for a couple of days, that I realized that I just didn't function in the same way as I did before. As I kept living I kept discovering things that just were not there anymore, while discovering other things that just as mysteriously just *were* there. A profound and fundamental restructuring had taken place within rather than an ever-greater endowment of power one always expects in

Pentecostal circles.

My spirit has ever since just been filled with a profound holy hush. The muddy and restless waters of my spirit were replaced by a smooth and crystal clear reflecting millpond within. So cool and refreshing. There has never again been the background mental and emotional chatter of fear, doubt or worry that used to be constantly there.

Instead, the background of my mind is clean and new: totally silent and free from all interference. I feel like I am playing my life out in an oh so very holy hush upon a perfectly reflecting expanse of darkly translucent glass: His very whisper is always easy to hear, "Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal." Rev. 4:6 This is not like earthly glass that smudges and scratches. It remains stainless and flawless in every way.

From that day forward, the "black cloud" has never returned. Not once. Nor has there ever been any hint of spiritual opposition within. However, I no longer had any idea how to pray. I failed when I tried to do some of my customary repentance prayer. I found this confusing. I didn't know what to do since that was my main prayer type. It was a key pillar of my system of belief and practice. But there just was no conviction remaining there to repent with. There was nothing left to repent for. Consequently, I had no idea how to progress from there in Him. I felt unemployed spiritually! All the spiritual work was now done, so what was I supposed to do now??? Before, I had been quite a worrier, but now I could no longer worry even if I tried. I could only trust with this new unshakable rock solid faith since my spirit was full of His unshakable palpable assurance.

The goading stick of condemnation was gone, and I had eaten the carrot of reward! All this donkey now knew to do was to quietly walk this glorious tableland under the clear skies of His anointing that was now crystal clear, constant and effortlessly complete. I didn't even have to work at worship since I *was* worship.

There was no longer any continuity between my spirit and the self-serving spirit of this world; therefore it is very natural to reach out with His mercy when appropriate. After all these years I still feel that being myself is an unearned holy privilege each day, but I have gradually learned to function, grow and comprehend in a completely new way that fits this new reality.

I have changed citizenship: before, I was a citizen of earth struggling spiritually to relate to a sometimes-distant heaven. Now I am a citizen of heaven, finding the observed ways of earth (and unsanctified church) to be somewhat alien, and certainly twisted! I do not say this in a theoretical scriptural sense, but an actual experiential sense that has become hard-wired within. I call this a "conversion" in the full meaning of the word, in that my original conversion experience has now been gloriously completed. My Baptism in the Spirit is no longer an occasional dunk but a new aquatic life in Him.

At last that mysterious "real life" has been fully found. After all these years of effort and searching the globe, it has been found!! I did not struggle over the price of His Rest, because I felt that my only treasure was what He had given me so far anyway. My struggle was with ignorance and effort. I had never heard any hint of teaching in this area at all. This total cleanliness was denied and preached against everywhere, since we were constantly exhorted to expect regular trial and backslidings. We "sinners-saved-by-grace" were expected to fall from time to time, and then just get up, repent and walk on without considering the possibility that here was a deeper problem that was causing the trials and backslidings! There was never any hint of a possibility of complete freedom from this sordid falling in all the endless teaching of "victory" I had heard over all these years!!!! And I had listened diligently. I treated church like a University classroom, and took careful notes.

No, I had no need of "deliverance" from anything. I had even attended a church that

specialized in that for a little while.

Ignorance

My sanctification could have gone much more quickly and smoothly if only I had known what I was engaged in! I did not hesitate to lay my life into His hands without reserve when He asked if I would. I had already willingly done this in different ways in the past. Here is what Thomas Cook says about complete consecration in his “New Testament Holiness”:

“When the will gladly makes this unconditional surrender it will not be long before the Christ-life will take the place of the old self-life, and the believer will be able to reckon himself “Dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Christ Jesus our Lord.” An interval may elapse between full surrender and complete blessedness. The fullness as well as the intermediateness depends upon the faith of the soul in the Divine promise, but when the self-life dies the chief hindrance to faith is removed. Possibly the temptation will come that perhaps there is something not given up *of which we are not conscious*. You do not know all your heart, hence you cannot know that you have fully surrendered. But when the will is yielded, it includes all we know and all we do not know. If nothing less than living up to full life will suffice, nothing more is required. When we are not conscious of withholding anything from God, and are perfectly willing to receive the light and follow it, we may count the matter of consecration as settled.”

So the consecration was not the hard part for me. But anything beyond that was completely unknown. At the time I would have given all my worldly possessions to receive the following paragraph from Thomas Cook:

“There is this difference between consecration and entire sanctification – the one is what we do ourselves by Divine aid, the other is what God does in us. Consecration is our voluntary act in which we give our all to God, while entire sanctification is a work wrought in us by the Holy Ghost. There may be entire consecration without entire sanctification, but there cannot be the latter without the former. The act of consecration *must be followed by definite prayer for a clean heart*, and then the act of faith by which we receive what we ask for. In answer to our prayer and response to our faith God will put forth His power, and we shall be changed in a moment from indwelling sin to indwelling holiness. We are saved by grace. Just as over the blessing of justification, God has written over entire sanctification “to him that worketh not.” Works have no more to do with the sanctifying of the soul than they have to do with the justifying of the soul. Faith is the condition in the one as well as in the other.”

So since I did not know that there was such a thing as a clean heart, how I could pray for it? I presumed that my heart was clean because I was forgiven. I did not understand that forgiveness did not remove the basic sin problem in my heart, just the guilt from my past acts of sin. I could only pray for His promised victory so that I could walk again in freedom. Just how very complete scriptural freedom could be, I had no way of knowing. My notion of it definitely fell far short of the stainless life and palpable peace that I have enjoyed since that cherished afternoon of destiny in 1988.

Temptation

I have made it sound like temptation has been virtually absent since I was sanctified. Well, that is not the case. Although the nature of the temptation changed to become toothless it was still there in the initial months and years during the period I was adapting to this new state of being. But that is so many years ago now. Since 1988, it has been as if the enemy has gone missing.

However, reading other testimonials, I find some people experience far more temptation than I did. Perhaps that is explained by the fact that I became highly skilled in dealing with temptation and the wiles of the enemy, since I had so much trouble from my past deep involvement in eastern religion of the "spiritual" kind. So, if there was any

temptation, I would recognize it instantly as "more of the same" and swat it like a mosquito, without a thought.

Others have to constantly guard themselves to remain on the narrow path. While that may be true, for myself it has been instinct. Anything that is at enmity with my peace in Him, I just plain avoid. It means that my life is rather more narrow than most people, but that is where He abides, so that is where I want to be -I accept nothing else.

"And they (the Levite priests) shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean." Eze 44:23

But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Heb 5:14

So, how did I "exercise my senses" for this discerning? I loved the Lord. I mean I really LOVED Him. I made it my purpose to have His Spirit active within my heart all my waking hours. I learned to live a life on two levels at the same time. While I was fulfilling my earthly duties, I would be consciously before the Lord in prayer or worship. This was really hard to do, but I was determined because I didn't know any better. Churches teach very little about how to please God, and I had to stay close to Him or lose my salvation since I had so much trouble following me from my past.

So I spent a great deal of time in His presence. By the time I got married (1979), I was steadier, but I continued this unusual monk-like practice. I spent so much of myself in His presence, so that when something alien intruded, I could smell it instantly.

Why Did I not Enter Before?

In retrospect I can see that I took the long and hard way to this blessing. I made every time-wasting mistake possible since I had never received the slightest hint of teaching towards an expectation of Rest in Him. My expectation was instead of an endless lifelong striving against sin and sinfulness. This endless battle was called "walking in victory". (ie: an active faith in His weakness and inability to make a final end to my innate sinfulness) I hungered for His Presence continually within, but there was no way offered or imagined to ever end the struggle. Within my "sanctification crisis" I gave up that fractured faith. He replaced it with His wholly effective faith:

In the very moment that I had finally fulfilled His conditions of completed consecration and completed faith He was there to do His part regardless of my ignorance and confusion. Apparently, He had just been patiently waiting for me to do my part, so that He could finally do His part: "If we will just do the trusting, He will do the saving."

"At that time the disciples came to Jesus saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child to Him and set him in the midst of them, and said, "Assuredly I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18: 1-3

(Please notice that the above was not spoken to the unsaved, but to His chosen loyal disciples, so this logically refers to a second and total conversion of a completed sanctification which supernaturally endows the soul with a lowly heart of child-like pure innocence in a moment of time.) (Yes, the newly saved have a time called the "first love" which is *similar* -but it is fragile and far less complete. The inevitable dark spots remaining in the heart have not been seen yet.

Note: This sanctification certainly does not signify that you are especially smart or mature. It does not mean you will make every decision wisely. It does not mean that your heart works exactly as His heart does. You are still a human living on this natural world with all the limitations that apply to that condition. Stuff happens. (Lu 13:4 "Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem?")"

Further Levels

Some of the heritage authors seem to extol His Rest as the ultimate state of grace. This view leaves out some details. First, not all those who are in His Rest are made equal. Some are gifted more than others.

And then there are certain rare and fortunate souls who have known God in vision since they were children, and were not disobedient to their heavenly visions. These might go straight through into His Rest without actively dabbling in the pollution of this world.

Regretfully, I am not one of those privileged souls. Although I don't believe in filling my testimonial with trash, my memory bank has a large but neglected room filled with memories of foolish acts.

I am also not one of those who make the best use of His Rest at present since my age and unstable health interfere.

I believe His Rest is merely a basic grace that one needs to be a New Testament believer, in the radiantly victorious scriptural sense. Anything less means that your heart is dangerously disabled since it is covertly debased and missing some basic parts -as well as hindered since it has parts that the Lord and perhaps others too find repulsive. His Rest is your basic starting point for being a "real Christian".

There are higher states that are alluded to in Scripture, but you cannot get to those without being in His Rest. Now you need to get beyond this arduous step, and then settled into it.

Yours in His Service;

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<http://www.enterhisrest.org/>