



Scriptures and Doctrine :: Refining His people

Refining His people - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/8/28 1:04

It could be said that all of the Lord's work regarding His people is to refine them, make them pure, holy, sanctified...

Several of the acts we undergo as we follow commands and receive blessings can easily be seen as a refining process, which is defined as a reduction of impurities or base elements to make a pure and more valuable and useful substance (among other similar definitions).

From water baptism where we so often begin, which itself is a form of refining/reducing or washing away of our past impurities to spirit baptism whereby we are gifted and thereby further refined by the spirit of the Lord. To the drawing of man into the deep things of the Lord by His spirit where we must traverse deserts just as valleys and of course mountain tops in response to His voice. Often we do not understand the big picture of where we are going (like Abraham) but that's why it's called a walk of faith. We hear our shepherd's voice and we follow. His love for us gets to a place in us where nothing else dares to go and it begins its work of cleansing us from the inside out as we follow His commands. Many times in this process of refinement we may lose sight or even hope but He never does. He saw the potential for purity and called us pure though we had not yet become completely so. Which is why sanctification is both present and progressive in that He speaks things that aren't as though they were in hopes of fulfilling the purpose of His coming in us. Sometimes when we lose sight we may feel like we're gonna give up and yet He calls us onward... other times we may get distracted by the cares and concerns of this present world yet He comes to find us, forsaking the 99 to save the 1 when needed.

The process by which the Lord refines His people is one of great pain and hardship with many trials, though it is also at times of great joy and repose with many giftings. These are experienced by both the refiner and those being refined. Just as Jesus experienced many hardships and afflictions to sanctify us, so too will we as we become sanctified as we follow Him. Likewise just as Jesus experienced great joy in pleasing His Father, so too will we as we are led by His spirit. He is not separate from His refining work and uses holy fire and living water to bring us to a place/state worthy of His name, yet He calls us His own from our first moments with Him.

He carefully engineers circumstances in each of our lives to bring about His will, to purify us of all unbelief. Whether through the placing of obstacles and closed doors to bridges and opened doors, He carefully attends to each of us as though we were each His only child, providing exactly what each of us needs. Sometimes so close, so intimate that all we can do is sit at His feet and bask in the radiance of His glory, while other times He hides Himself and all we can do is grope in the dark for Him. But in each case whether it's a fresh revelation or dry season it's exactly what we need to bring us closer to what He wants us to be.

Holiness is (to me) the most beautiful thing on earth. But holiness, just like the refining process, is a messy business. But the results are worth the work and His reward is when He can see His own reflection in His children. Then He knows we are pure and fitted for His table.

But what I find interesting is that while this is true, it is equally true that we will all look different. When we look around and notice these (God given) distinctions we often criticize either ourselves or others thinking we should be more alike. But when we look up and are simply given to the refiner's hands we see the distinctions as assets, as the many facets of our Father's manifold wisdom being manifest and not as mistakes that we must labor in our flesh to overcome. As it is He who is faithful to complete the good work He began in us and it is ours to simply cooperate and not resist.

On both sides from beginning to end this is a process of faith and it is by faith that we please Him.

Sometimes I catch a glimpse of His faith in us and I marvel, how is it that His faith in us as imperfect is greater than our faith in Him being perfect?

At times this shames me and yet other times is the only hope I have to hold on to.

So wherever I am in my walk, above all else (whether I go to hell at the end or not) I want Him to receive His reward in me, as much as He can possibly squeeze out of my life for His purpose....and this isn't to get something from Him at the end, rather it's because He's already given me what I didn't deserve in that He gave His son for me.

Sorry brother Mark,... this wasn't what I intended to write per your request but it's what came out so I'll just trust the Lord can use it to the good~

Re: Refining His people - posted by murrcolr (), on: 2016/8/28 18:00

I was driving my car today and I started to think about the subject of holiness.

My conclusion was that: Men cannot make themselves Holy

No amount of good works, of self-sacrifice or denial, can cleanse the heart, can take out the roots of pride, vanity, temper, impatience, fear and shame of the Cross, lust, hatred, emulation, strife, self-indulgence and the like, and in their stead put unmixed, perfect love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance."

Re: brother Colin - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/8/28 19:03

Yes I can whole heartedly agree with you on that.

Sometimes it seems we confuse morality with holiness... not that holiness wouldn't include morality, it does, but morality doesn't necessarily include holiness. It's when we credit holiness by outward appearance rather than inward purity. Just as one could polish an impure gold and it would look great but all the polishing in the world will never make it more pure. Which is what I think you're saying-
Which is why the Lord refines His people for they cannot do it apart from Him.

My bride, when she awoke this morning, read over this and brought to my attention that it may read different than I intended it to.. and she had several qualifying questions for me. Which itself is another way the Lord purifies us.

There is a great potential here on SI for that refinement to take place for everyone who comes here but we must not forget our place and in the wrong spirit try to exalt ourselves, rather allow the Lord Himself to use us to the pleasure of His good will:)

Having said that, feel free to challenge or critique this post as I will not be offended-

Re: Fletcher, on: 2016/8/28 20:36

Brother one way that God does refine us is through the fires of persecution. Consider the verses below,

...And not only this but we also rejoice in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope...Romans 5:3-4

... Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. But endurance must do its complete work, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.. James 1:2-4

Looking at the two verses above it seems that God will use persecution to refine and perfect our character as unto Jesus

As I'm writing this I'm thinking of the verses in Hebrews

... Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness-- without it no one will see the Lord...Hebrews 12:14

A few weeks ago when I posted that verse I thought the holiness or sanctification was more of a practical walking out a consecrated life in the world. Given more over to morality such as staying away from movies and beer. But now I wonder.

But one thing Hebrews is a book set against the backdrop of persecution of believers. For that matter all of the New Testament can be said to be a book set against the backdrop of persecution of believers.

But chapter 12 speaks of God disciplining his people. One of the ways of God will discipline his saints will be through the fires of persecution. So now I'm rethinking the verses in Hebrews 12:14. Could it be that the holiness that the believer is to pursue is a holiness worked out through the fires is of persecution.

This is going to bear some more fleshing out in my time with the Lord.

However this is simply my thoughts regarding your OP which I agree with.

Re: brother Blaine - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/8/28 21:34

Yes dear brother persecution plays a big part,.. one might even say that persecution is the hottest part of the refining process.

2 Tim 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

There are several verses in the OT from the psalms to the major prophets that utilize this type of refining analogy which a quick search will yield much to chew on.

A question I heard today; "what is our salvation for?"

In a practical way I believe it's for us to give what we've been given....

I mean Jesus gave His life in faith out of love and it would seem that's what we're called to do as well. This I believe is where the refining process really heats up,.. when we accept our mission to live as holy people and lay our lives down in love for His namesake.

Re: Fletcher, on: 2016/8/28 23:15

I so agree my brother. The question is will we submit to the refining process. Or will we try to run from it or fight God

Best thing is to be a yielded vessel before the Holy Spirit and let Him do His work as refining us as unto Jesus.

Simply my thoughts dear brother.

Re: Refining His people, on: 2016/8/29 2:43

From start to finish our lives are a masterpiece of God's grace. Only from the perspective of eternity will we ever truly understand how God started, continued and completed our salvation. All of it, all the time is a work of His grace. To think at times though, we are tempted to think we have some part in it...in saving ourselves? We work out our salvation with fear and trembling but it is God who does the saving, while our "work" is to trust Him to do it. It is all HIM, His power, His might, His glory at work in us to accomplish His will in transforming the ashes of our lives into a "thing of beauty". Our part is to believe, surrender, resign to Him - to His refiners fire. Bending our will to His...yielding our all to Him, we live this life now by faith in Christ who loves us and has given His life for us. And many times we do not understand what is going on, what is happening to us and why. We must simply trust Him. Only He knows exactly when, how hot and how long we are to remain in that purifying fire, so that He can mold us and make us into the image of His Son.

Re: To Become Like Him and Have Fellowship in the Body, on: 2016/8/29 6:26

*Christ-like Relationship: The type of friendship that Christ declared to His beloved disciples in the Upper Room Discourse in John 15: 15. Pure and full of Loving Wisdom. To the death of not only life, but time, distance, energy, etc. Christ in me AND Christ in you is perfect fellowship / friendship / love.

"To become another's friend in the true sense?is to take the other into such close, living fellowship, that his life and ours are knit together as one. It is far more than a pleasant companionship in bright, sunny hours. A genuine friendship?is entirely unselfish. It seeks no benefit or good of its own. It does not love?for what it may receive?but for what it may give. Its aim is "not to be served?but to serve" (Mark 10:45).

*C. S. Lewis - like Relationship: ?Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: ?What! You too? I thought I was the only one.?

?In friendship?we think we have chosen our peers. In reality a few years? difference in the dates of our births, a few more miles between certain houses, the choice of one university instead of another?the accident of a topic being raised or not raised at a first meeting?any of these chances might have kept us apart. But, for a Christian, there are, strictly speaking no chances. A secret master of ceremonies has been at work. Christ, who said to the disciples, ?Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you,? can truly say to every group of Christian friends, ?Ye have not chosen one another but I have chosen you for one another.? The friendship is not a reward for our discriminating and good taste in finding one another out. It is the instrument by which God reveals to each of us the beauties of others.?

With C. S. Lewis, you could sit in a caf   and wax theology in love on the beauty of Christ without any regard for the wristwatch. It requires courage to speak of Christ at length. This is my dilemma. The courage is gleaned from a close and intimate relationship and reading of His Word (until it literally oozes from your pores).

*Dietrich Boenhoeffer (spelling error, I'm sure) - like relationship:

The Cost of Discipleship is akin to the Cost of Christian Friendship:

Christian Friendship (Gladly) Costs:

- (1) Personal Convenience
- (2) Time
- (3) Intimacy (without compromising purity)
- (4) Comfort
- (5) Prayer
- (6) LOVE

This is what I lament over on a daily basis in a quest for pure, authentic, active, authentic Christian friendship.

Please no Numbers 22 "Error of Balaam" Christians. They are so heart breaking. Balaam was a legitimate prophet of God who misused his gifts and his relationship with God for personal use. Their spiritual gifts (i. e., true religion) are used to acquire worldly gain.

Re: So That We May (Finally) Find TRUE LOVE, on: 2016/8/29 6:29

Colossians 1: 27

Nihilism is the only alternative to Christian Faith. Nihilism is also the antithetical prime virtue to Nuclear Deterrence...(Ahem...). The unity of the virtues (which far surpass Plato's plagiarism of Saint Paul's brilliant revelation of the One, True, yet Unknown God plastered under the Greek sun of the Areo Pagus on Mars Hill).

True love in any dimension, whether, Eros, Agape, Soror, Fraternal, Maternal, Matrimonial, etc. is an impossible delusion without Christ abiding at the very nucleus of it. You can be head over heels in love with your beloved, but it is a tragic and worthless delusion in the absence of Christ's abiding presence and influence.

All scripture is absolutely indispensable. I absolutely love the Old Testament as much as the New Testament. Currently, I am immersed in II Kings 19. Whoa, so few "Good Kings" whom "did what was right in the sight of the Lord" (I Kings 15:

11).

Re: So That Our Flesh May Become Word (By Abiding in His Word), on: 2016/8/29 6:33

Reading Charles H. Spurgeon's sermons ("The Prince of Preachers", indeed). This saint predates me by centuries, yet, I download his sermons and suckle them like spiritual milk. Spurgeon is my nocturnal "pillow talk". His sermons take residence in your personal space and for the next 8 to 13 pages of Biblical exposition, you've got a companion that preaches into your mind and heart. And, moreover, Spurgeon's words stick around months after consumption. They change you. I cannot wait to meet him!

I love his "Morning and Evening" Devotions, yet nothing compares to his "Metropolitan Tabernacle" sermons.

* Reading and Reviewing ancient and modern Philosophy, (esp. metaphysics, epistemology and ethics). Philosophy is the biggest and most inadequate "rip off" of God's Wisdom found in His Word and revealed via His Spirit.

I learned this as a philosophy major during my undergrad degree...Nihilism is the only alternative to Christian Faith and God's Wisdom. And that is what those crazy ancient and modern philosophers were most afraid of...because they lacked both faith and wisdom.. Poor suckers!

The unity of the virtues was pretty impressive, yet ridiculously unoriginal (Paul's epistles far surpass Plato's Divine "Logos" malarkey.) Not to mention that Plato's philosophy was merely plagiarism of Saint Paul's brilliant revelation of the One, True, yet, Unknown God plastered under the Greek sun of the Areo Pagus on Mars Hill). True love in any dimension, whether, Eros, Agape, Soror, Fraternal, Maternal, Matrimonial, etc. is an impossible delusion without Christ abiding at the very nucleus of it. You can be head over heels in love with your beloved, but it is a tragic and worthless delusion in the absence of Christ's abiding presence and influence.

*Reading the Bible (though it often scares me).

What's so neat about I and II Kings is that (even as a woman). I want to be a King before I am qualified to be someone's Queen (or anything for that matter...)

Why? Because what I have learned (or rather, the Spirit revealed in my CURRENT intimate study of I and II Kings) the following:

The book of 1 / 2 Kings holds the secret of success in reigning over the kingdom of your life. It is the secret of learning to be submissive to the authority and dominion of God in your own life. In other words, man can never exercise dominion over his life unless he first subjects himself to the dominion of God. If you yield to God's dominion, you are given reign over the areas in your own life.

I want to do this very thing. I desire it more than anything. And I am perpetually frustrated because I have not yet placed God's Dominion on the throne of my own "free" will.

I have learned by painful means (and am still struggling with this, right now as I type) that, if you refuse the dominion of God in your own life, you cannot under any circumstances or by any means fulfill your desire to be in authority over your life. It is impossible!

This is what I and II Kings is teaching me. That is why all through this book you will find that the spotlight is on the throne. It is the king that is the important one -- for as the king goes, so goes the nation. In your life your will is king. What your will allows to enter in to control your life, determines how the kingdom of your life goes.

Yet, I am sooooo looking forward to diving into the I and II Chronicles, as it is God's version of this regal history. I love how God makes several references and assurances all throughout I and II Kings that the gaps will be filled in the "Chronicles". I am looking forward to it.

Re: Persecution, on: 2016/8/29 6:44

It is more close to home with families at war with each other, right in the homes in they share residence.

Persecution inflicted from a loved or relative / family is soooooooooo painful and confusing because persecution is supposed to come from your enemies, not your family.

Here's a testimonial example:

My lifelong abusive mother recently moved in with after my dad passed away.

Yes, she is living with me because I am helping to take care of her. She has end stage kidney disease, but she moved in with me way before she got this diagnosis. She moved in when her husband (my dad) passed away from cancer. She couldn't cope nor adjust (I. e. seeking comfort in Christ) with widowhood.

She has ALWAYS been an abusive mother all my life - from childhood to currently -

Her version of "motherhood" is to alternate the torturous infliction of physical, mental, emotional, psychological, and verbal abuse on ME for some reason.

I loathe being born from her....hence I ran readily to Christ to be born again and cleansed of this woman's satanic DNA.

I live daily under the curse of unrequited love via my relationship with my mother. She is a monster and I do everything I can to love her but with staunch avoidance. Every encounter results in pain.

She scowls in response to a simple and pleasant "Good Morning"!!!

Her very presence is a daily source of persecution .

To live with, care for, an express Christ-like love to a woman who spits it all back in your face (oh and this woman "just happens" to be your mother) - is my current source of persecution and tribulation.

Re: Katina , on: 2016/8/29 8:04

Greetings sister and welcome to the forum. I see by your posts that you have recently joined. I hope and pray that you will be edified by the saints here as well as by the rich treasure of sermons. Be aware that sometimes it can get wild and wooly on the board here. But I believe there are good people here who will lift you up in prayer particular regarding your mother. I also see you are very well educated in the liberal arts. I feel like compared to you I am an intellectual pygmy with my bachelor's in history.

But I'm responding to you as a brother in Christ. I too am listening once again to the whole Bible being in the Old Testament as you. At present I am in 1st Samuel. And I'm truly astounded at the mercy of God even in the Old Testament of coming to the aid of a rebellious Nation like Israel. As I listened to judges the Israelites would rebelled before God. God would give them over to their enemies. Then the Israelites would cry out to God for deliverance and he would deliver the m period only 2 has a pattern repeat again. But then God is merciful.

As such, under grace, he will certainly be merciful to us who cry out to him even in the rebellion of our hearts.

Sister I can't begin to imagine what it must be like to live under the same roof with your mother. I will certainly be in prayer for you. However realize that we have, brothers and sisters that are imprisoned as you are in a sense, by those who are given over to Satan. But these precious saints continue to pray for their enemies that they come to know Christ.

Yet these brothers and sisters in persecuted nations except that where they are at is in the will of God. Many of them except there imprisonment as God's will to reach others for Christ. Both their fellow prisoners and their persecutors.

My sister, your mother living with you, must be in the will of God. For God may be trying to reach her through your testimony in Jesus. For it is not His will that any perish. But that all come to repentance. My sister, even your mother.

Katiba I'm not trying to say this in a superficial way. I can't begin to imagine the day-to-day satanic affliction you are coming under from your mother. But remember that Jesus who is in you is greater than the demon who is in your mother. My

sister draw close to Jesus. Continue to lift your mother up in prayer. And remember you have the authority of Jesus to bring His presence into your house.

Katina will lift you up in prayer. I hope my words have brought some little encouragement to you. And may you be encouraged by others on this forum. One thing you might do is post a prayer request and people will pray for you in this forum.

My sister stay close to Jesus and be blessed this day.

Your brother in Christ.

Re: Refining His people - posted by Lysa (), on: 2016/8/29 9:21

Quote:

-----Malachi 3.2

But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap.

He is returning for a spotless Bride, the Word says in Rev 19:7, "Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready..."

If the Lord refines you, you are holy!

God bless,
Lisa

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/8/29 9:43

Hi all,

Refining...practical holiness...what started me thinking was a part of the verse Lisa quoted (see CAPS for emphasis)

Quote: "He is returning for a spotless Bride, the Word says in Rev 19:7, "Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has MADE HERSELF READY..."

There is God's part...and there is our part. Let us take responsibility for our part by submitting to God.

2 Corinthians 6 verse 7:1 - With these promises ringing in our ears, dear friends, let us keep clear of anything that smirches body or soul. Let us prove reverence for God by consecrating ourselves to him completely.

Blessings,

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/8/29 10:06

Yes sister Lisa that's it!

And brother William I totally agree!

(For me) the bride makes herself ready by being a faithful steward of what has been entrusted to her. She used her salvation to advance the kingdom in the sphere of influence where the Lord had led/planted her.

She is spotless because the Lord refined her but she still had to "put on" the wedding dress and make herself ready;)

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2016/8/29 21:13

The Bride makes herself ready because Jesus has already sanctified Her by the washing of the water with the Word and taken Her to His Fathers House for the marriage supper. That is the only way Jesus may present Her to Himself and Our Father, that she is without spot or wrinkle. I have nothing to do with anything pertaining to me being part of being His wife or bride or His Body the Church. I only labour, striving according to His working in me. He is the only reason I am a Bride, Wife and Body of Christ His Church, His Church being the Father has given me to Him. I am presented to Our Father by the Son who has made me presentable to Him.

Who made the Wedding Dress that she has put on? Who will attend Her in putting it on?

Colossians 1:27-29 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles ; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Hang on everybody.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/8/29 21:31

Amen Brother Phillip!

Even the "making herself ready" is by His grace and is an act of faith.
And yes dear brother, apart from Him we can do nothing!

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2016/8/29 21:53

Yes Fletcher, We have already put on the Wedding garment, and are already seated in the heavenlies with Him. That is by Faith, Faith, Faith.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: , on: 2016/8/29 22:33

We have been clothed in white "wedding" garments when we are born again and yet by faith we must keep our garments clean. This is the yielding that I mentioned in my previous post. Paul calls it "good works" and the "obedience of faith".

John says it like this..."Dear friends, we are already God's children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is. And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure." (1 John 3)

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/8/29 23:15

That's good brother Mark!

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2016/8/29 23:28

Psalms 86:1-7 A Prayer of David. Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy. Preserve my soul; for I am holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee. Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily. Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications. In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

I am holy only because He that is in me is Holy. Only the garments that Christ brings me will be clean. I still live on this earth and I am not of this earth, so my garments are not of this earth and can only be kept pure and Holy and white by the heavenly that is in me, which Jesus Christ will bring with Him for me when He comes.

Even David knew this as I call upon God He is plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Him. I want to be holy, I want to do righteousness, in all that my heart cries for this is my prayer, but I know it is only by His working in me mightily that I by faith attain this perfection which is in Him and Him alone. I will be what He intends me to be and that will overpower all that is in me that is not holy. Hence I am holy because He is Holy.

1 John 3:3-9 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 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.

If I am still here in the flesh and cannot sin why am I not in heaven already? That of me that is born of God cannot sin because the Seed of Christ in me cannot sin. This flesh can and will, does not have to but in me will of which I hate and ask who will deliver me from this body of death, Praise God Jesus Christ.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: , on: 2016/8/29 23:39

"And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure."

These are those believers who have an eager expectation to become more and more like Jesus in every way. It is an inner groaning to be conformed to His image. An unsatisfied thirst for "more of God", not outwardly but inward transformation. Paul described this groaning in Romans 8:23.

"And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)"

Re: , on: 2016/8/29 23:56

What does John mean when he says that we "purify ourselves"? If we know that it is God who makes us pure through faith in the blood of Jesus then how can we be the ones to "purify ourselves"?

It sounds like a contradiction doesn't it?

But it is not, it is just another way of stating that we walk in obedience, ever sensitive to the Lord and His leading. Seeking to yield to Him in every area of our lives as He guides us.

This is not a hard thing, but rather easy and light. If it becomes hard then something is wrong. But as we draw near to the Lord and yoke ourselves with Him, our will entwines with His. We can choose to surrender and learn from Him or fight Him. But as we yield and submit, He teaches us all things and leads us in the path of righteousness.

We yield to Him, by faith - purifying ourselves as He is pure.

Re: , on: 2016/8/30 0:19

Sanctification is the process of allowing the holy character of God to be manifested in the behavior of regenerated men.

We can choose to not allow the character of God to be manifested in us.

2Ti 2:20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

2Ti 2:21 IF A MAN THEREFORE PURGE HIMSELF FROM THESE, he shall be a vessel unto honour, SANCTIFIED, a

and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

2Ti 2:22 FLEE ALSO YOUTHFUL LUSTS: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

We must allow the Spirit of Christ to fill and control our behavior then the divine character of holiness will be manifested in our behavior. This is how God wants us to function and how God wants to function in us, manifesting His character in our behavior. It is not automatic.

Paul explained to the Thessalonian Christians that "this is the will of God, your sanctification" (I Thess. 4:3). God has called us for the purpose of sanctification (I Thess. 4:7). "God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth" (II Thess. 2:13). Sanctification is not optional.

Can holiness be perfected? Holiness is the character of God so the character of God cannot be perfected as it is already perfect. But the manifestation of God's character in us can be progressively more evidenced in our behavior and that is called, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Cor 7:1). Though the Holy One dwells in us, we are still called to "be holy as He is holy" (1 Pet 1:16), otherwise, why did Peter say that?

Christians are to pursue/follow holiness (Heb 12:14) because "God has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness", (1 Th 4:7).

2 Pet 3:11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?

We are to "follow holiness" (Heb 12:14), and admonished to "yield our members servants to righteousness unto holiness" (Rom 6:19) and not to "uncleanness".

The choice is still ours as we pursue the Lord and seek to walk in agreement with Him allowing His character to be manifested in us.

More of Christ, less of us.

John 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/8/30 2:22

J,

Very well put.

I'm sure we wish it were automatic sometimes :) but then we would be robots and would not be willingly laying down our lives for the lover of our souls.

We were bought with a price...not with gold or silver but with the precious blood of Christ...we are no longer our own...we live no longer for ourselves but for the One Who died for us, yes, and was raised from the dead for us...

His love for us and ours in response for Him is the motivation, the spring for all good works.

Blessings,

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2016/8/30 7:15

I'll use a little of Charles Spurgeon;

"My ship is coming home," says the child. So is mine: Jesus is coming, and that means all things to me. But what can His grace be that will be received at His coming? Justification? No, we have that already by His resurrection. Sanctification? No; we have that already, by being made partakers of His life. What is the grace that is to be revealed at His coming? Just look at the chapter, 1 Peter 1 especially 13 and you will read in the fifth verse, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

"1. Perfect salvation is one part of the grace which is to be brought in the last time when Christ comes. When He comes there will be perfection for our souls and salvation for our bodies.

2. The second grace that Christ will bring with Him when He comes is the perfect vindication of our faith: "that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Today they sneer at our faith, but they will not do so when Jesus comes; today we ourselves tremble before the ark of the Lord, but we shall not do so when He comes. Then shall all men say that believers were wise, prudent, philosophical, (right minded). Those who believe in Jesus may be called fools to day, but men will think otherwise when they see them shine forth as the sun in the Father's kingdom. (C. H. Spurgeon.)"

Christian morality: "The great privileges of Grace we now enjoy are here urged upon us as a reason why we should live like a new creature, (literally a new building, a new creation) a new race of people in Christ.

I am being sanctified and it is He who has already accomplished it by me being a partaker of His life, "Christ in you the hope of glory", who has been Made unto me, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption."

Are you pure and holy Mark? Praise God. I am sorry I am not yet, but I press on toward the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus that I might attain perfection as He is perfect. For now I just have to walk in Faith that I am because of His life that is in me. "The life I now live in the flesh I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved and gave Himself for me".

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/8/30 8:00

2 Corinthians 6 verse 16 to 7 verse 1 (CAPS for Emphasis): "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. {6:17} Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean and I will receive you, {6:18} And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. {7:1} HAVING THEREFORE THESE PROMISES, DEARLY BELOVED, LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Re: Phillip, on: 2016/8/30 8:41

"Are you pure and holy Mark? Praise God. I am sorry I am not yet,..."

Praise God? Huh? Your assumption is that my answer would be yes??? Lol. Sorry brother, but we are all in the same boat together. I am not more holy than thou no matter what you think about me :-)

Re: , on: 2016/8/30 11:59

We should not let our defeats keep us from pressing on and we should also not let our weaknesses define our theology or redefine the Word. Of course, it should go without saying that we do not compare ourselves with other men. Christ is our standard. The Word will never change and thank God it won't. It is a faithful mirror for us all to look into. And we need this mirror.

Too often, I see where men have redefined the Word of God to fit better with their condition and lack of victory. They diminish the emphasis on holy living and the outworking of God's holy and righteous character in us creating new theologies

It cannot be restated, enough:

1Pet 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

1Pet 1:16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

Being holy is being set apart by God and then standing in that separateness that God has placed you. Holy living and separation cannot be external unless it is first internal (circumcision of the heart).

2Cor 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and BE YE SEPARATE, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

Heb_7:26 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, SEPARATE FROM SINNERS, and made higher than the heavens;

We see this theme of separateness throughout the Word.

Num 16:26 And he spake unto the congregation, saying, DEPART, I pray you, FROM THE TENTS OF THESE WICKED MEN, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

Num 16:21 SEPARATE YOURSELVES FROM AMONGST THIS CONGREGATION, that I may consume them in a moment.

Zec 2:7 DELIVER THYSELF, O ZION, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.

Isa 52:11 DEPART YE, DEPART YE, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD.

Jer 51:6 FLEE OUT OF THE MIDST OF BABYLON, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD'S vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence.

2Cor 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/8/30 13:16

Amen.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2016/8/30 19:28

We can share the same boat Mark, praise God by Jesus Christ who built the boat for both of us. You misunderstood, since pureness and holiness is in Jesus Christ, that is my assumption, again; Praise God. As I said, I am not there yet in the flesh, but looking to the forward calling and upward calling of God I press on believing by Faith in Christ we are pure and holy. My assumption is because we are both in Christ, brothers and sisters of each other and our Brother and Savior and God, Jesus Christ whose Father is God. "Our Father"

Sorry I did not articulate my words better, as you can see it was very late. "The life I now live in the flesh I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved and gave Himself for me". US, you and me, in the same boat.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: , on: 2016/8/30 19:51

Amen dear brother, none of us are "there" yet. Not even Paul had "arrived" so that should give us all some comfort. He states that he had not yet obtained perfection, but pressed on to make it his own.

What a contrast to the itching-ear-teachers who tell us "we are already perfect". I will stick with Paul.

But knowing that we are not yet perfect is not enough. We too must PRESS ON TOWARDS perfection.

This is the only life worth living. If I do not live this life in the flesh then what is the point in sticking around on planet earth

? Far better to pack it up and go on home to glory!

Re: - posted by Lysa (), on: 2016/8/30 21:27

Quote:

-----bro Mark wrote:

What does John mean when he says that we "purify ourselves"? If we know that it is God who makes us pure through faith in the blood of Jesus then how can we be the ones to "purify ourselves"?

It sounds like a contradiction doesn't it?

But it is not, it is just another way of stating that we walk in obedience, ever sensitive to the Lord and His leading. Seeking to yield to Him in every area of our lives as He guides us.

here is my example of walking in obedience... I left this church that I loved because the pastor lied to me, not once but three times. Six months after leaving (or a year), I'm still whining about it to the Lord! and He spoke into my spirit, it was not an audible voice but it dropped into my spirit and He said, "I don't know what you are so upset about because you lie to your mother all the time." Of course, I had to ask, "How do I lie to my mother?"

He proceeded to show me that when I didn't want to upset her (according to me) about what time I would pick up my sons, I would lie and say 15 minutes knowing I was 30 to 45 minutes away, all because I didn't want to hear her lecture me in her sighing. :) :) :

I told little white lies like that but the Lord speaking this to me was a turning point for me... to have faith and speak the truth in love come what may. And you know what? It was all in my head, she handled it like the woman she always was and I learned to be a better woman for it. :)

THE BRIDE HATH MADE HERSELF READY... The Lord provided the opportunity for me to make myself ready. I could have ignored it and thinking back over my past, I'm sure there were many, many other instances I failed to make myself ready but on this one He held true with me and I followed Him! All praise be to God!

God bless,
Lisa

Re: sister Lisa - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/8/31 0:06

Amen Sister!!

It really is that simple!

Faithful obedience is always the "light and easy to bear" thing to do but it does take faith because until we act in faith (obedience) it sure looks like trouble and that causes us to fear doing the "right" thing especially when it's a small thing.

But, he is who is faithful in small things can be trusted with great things- and this is precisely why I understand the "bride making herself ready" as our stewardship of what God has already accomplished on our behalf thru Lord Jesus and how we yield and present ourselves to Him. It's definitely (for me) a choice!

Either we humble ourselves and by faith become partakers of His victory or we vainly seek our own victory apart from Him, (tho we may still use His name to do it).

So glad you shared this personal testimony as its a very good illustration of the "mechanics" of holiness.

Re: , on: 2016/8/31 4:12

Quote:

----- Mark wrote: Amen dear brother, none of us are "there" yet. Not even Paul had "arrived" so that should give us all some comfort. He states that he had not yet obtained perfection, but pressed on to make it his own.

What a contrast to the itching-ear-teachers who tell us "we are already perfect". I will stick with Paul.

But knowing that we are not yet perfect is not enough. We too must PRESS ON TOWARDS perfection.

This is the only life worth living. If I do not live this life in the flesh then what is the point in sticking around on planet earth? Far better to pack it up and go on home to glory!

Mark is referring to an oft misinterpreted text from Philipians 3:

"Verse 12. Not as though I had already attained

For I have not yet received the prize; I am not glorified, for I have not finished my course; and I have a conflict still to maintain, and the issue will prove whether I should be crowned. From the beginning of the 11th to the end of the 17th verse there is one continued allusion to the contests at the Olympic Games; exercises with which, and their laws, the Philippians were well acquainted. Philipians 3:11-17

either were already perfect

nor am I yet perfect; I am not yet crowned, in consequence of having suffered martyrdom. I am quite satisfied that the apostle here alludes to the Olympic Games, and the word is the proof; for is spoken of those who have completed their race, reached the goal, and are honoured with the prize. Thus it is used by Philo, Allegorical. Lib. iii. Page 101, edit. Mangey: "When is it, O soul, that thou shalt appear to have the victory? Is it not when thou shalt be perfected, (have completed thy course by death,) and be honoured with prizes and crowns?"

That signified martyrdom, we learn most expressly from Clemens Alexandra., Stomata, and lib. iii. Page 480, where he has these remarkable words: - "We call martyrdom or perfection, not because man receives it as the end, completion of life; but because it is the consummation of the work of charity."

Basil the Great, Hom. In Psalms 116:13: "I will receive the cup of salvation; that is, thirsting and earnestly desiring to come, by martyrdom, to the consummation."

So OEcumenius, on Acts 28: "All the years of Paul, from his calling to his martyrdom, were thirty and five."

And in Balsamon, Can. I. Ancyran., page 764: is, "To be crowned with the crown of martyrdom."

Eusebius, Hist. Eccles, lib. Vii. Cap. 13, uses the word to express to suffer martyrdom. I have been the more particular here, because some critics have denied that the word has any such signification. See Suicer, Rosenmuller, Macknight,

St. Paul, therefore, is not speaking here of any deficiency in his own grace, or spiritual state; he does not mean by not being yet perfect, that he had a body of sin and death cleaving to him, and was still polluted with indwelling sin, as some have most falsely and dangerously imagined; he speaks of his not having terminated his course by martyrdom, which he knew would sooner or later be the case. This he considered as the perfection, of his whole career, and was led to view every thing as imperfect or unfinished till this had taken place.

But I follow after

but I pursue; several are gone before me in this glorious way, and have obtained the crown of martyrdom; I am hurrying after them.

That I may apprehend

That I may receive those blessings to which I am called by Christ Jesus. There is still an allusion here to the stadium, and exercises there: the apostle considers Christ as the brabeus, or judge in the games, who proclaimed the victor, and distributed the prizes; and he represents himself as being introduced by this very brabeus, or judge, into the contest; and this brabeus brought him in with the design to crown him, if he contended faithfully. To complete this faithful contention is what he has in view; that he may apprehend, or lay hold on that for which he had been apprehended, or taken by the hand by Christ who had converted, strengthened, and endowed him with apostolic powers, that he might fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

Verse 13. I count not myself to have apprehended

whatever gifts, graces, or honours I may have received from Jesus Christ, I consider every thing as incomplete till I have finished my course, got this crown, and have my body raised and fashioned after his glorious body.

This one thing I do

This is the concern, as it is the sole business, of my life.

Forgetting those things which are behind

My conduct is not regulated nor influenced by that of others; I consider my calling, my Master, my work, and my end. If others think they have time to loiter or trifle, I have none: time is flying; eternity is at hand; and my all is at stake.

Reaching forth

The Greek word points out the strong exertions made in the race; every muscle and nerve is exerted, and he puts forth every particle of his strength in running. He was running for life, and running for his life.

Verse 14. I press toward the mark

I pursue along the line; this is a reference to the white line that marked the ground in the stadium, from the starting place to the goal, on which the runners were obliged to keep their eye fixed; for they who transgressed or went beyond this line did not run lawfully, and were not crowned, even though they got first to the goal. See the concluding observations on "1Co 9:27".

What is called mark or scope, here, is called the line, i.e. the marked line, Philippians 3:16. When it was said to Diogenes, the cynic, "Thou art now an old man, rest from thy labours;" to this he answered: "If I have run long in the race, will it become me to slacken my pace when come near the end; should I not rather stretch forward?" Diog. Laert., lib. Vi. Cap. 2 . sec. 6.

For the prize of the high calling of God

The reward which God from above calls me, by Christ Jesus, to receive. The apostle still keeps in view his crown of martyrdom and his glorious resurrection.

Verse 15. As many as be perfect

As many as are thoroughly instructed in Divine things, who have cast off all dependence on the law and on every other system for salvation, and who discern God calling them from above by Christ Jesus; be thus minded; be intensely in earnest for eternal life, nor ever halt till the race is finished.

The word perfect, is taken here in the same sense in which it is taken 1 Corinthians 14:20:- Be not CHILDREN in understanding-but in understanding be ye MEN, be ye perfect-thoroughly instructed, deeply experienced. 1 Corinthians 2:6:- We speak wisdom among the perfect, among those who are fully instructed, adults in Christian knowledge. Ephesians 4:13:- Till we all come-unto a perfect man, 957; to the state of adults in Christianity. Hebrews 5:14:- But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, the perfect-those who are thoroughly instructed and experienced in Divine things. Let us therefore, says the apostle, as many as be perfect-as have entered fully into the spirit and design of the Gospel, be thus minded, viz. Forget the things which are behind, and stretch forward along the mark for the prize.

If in any thing ye be otherwise minded

If ye have not yet entered into the full spirit and design of this Gospel, if any of you have yet remaining any doubts relative to Jewish ordinances, or their expediency in Christianity, God shall reveal even this unto you; for while you are sincere and upright, God will take care that ye shall have full instruction in these Divine things.

Verse 16. Whereto we have already attained

Let us not lose that part of the race which we have already run, let us walk by the same rule-let us keep the white line continually in view, let us mind the same thing, always considering the glorious prize which is held out by God through Christ Jesus to animate and encourage us." Anon probably Robert Barclay from Apology.

If we had lived in Fox's time, Wesley's time, Finney's time, Edwards time, or the time of the Welsh and Hebridean revivals you would have met people like this but you may not have recognised them. Even Jesus was not recognised for His holiness, because it is not what people expect. It is not someone who does not make mistakes for one thing (do not mistake this for sin however). We never reach a stage of knowing everything and we learn of God's ways as long as we live. But after sanctification it is a life in His will totally and a freedom to obey Him easily and be in His perfect will. And it is possible to fall and be restored to this state. But someone in this state can be known because they display the fruit of the Spirit and will have a deep understanding of the ways of holiness.

This last 50 or 60 years however, the teaching has been lost mainly and new meanings for perfection have come in and this is why we do not see sanctified people. We are in a time of great darkness and the enemy is enjoying misleading people with signs and wonders which are not from God.

We do not have to depend on our interpretation of the New Testament alone to see this teaching for it is throughout the Old in type and symbol. The story of the children of Israel for example when they came out of Egypt (Satan's kingdom) and were led by Moses into the desert where they wandered aimlessly around even though they could have completed their journey in a much shorter time. But the wandering led them to see their own hearts and what was in them and they knew failure and despair. But gradually they came to the Promised Land (entire sanctification) where God's promises are fulfilled. Most of them did not enter in however and fell by the wayside through lack of faith. Those who entered in came in through faith and once they were in they found new and terrible enemies which they had to defeat in order to claim the whole land. This does not speak of heaven as we will not have enemies there and it does not speak of salvation (as the term is understood) because the promises of God are not realised until this state. Besides the scriptures speaks that it is God's people who come out of Egypt. There are other pictures of the sanctified life for example Ezekiel's vision of the cherubim is the new creature that we become in this state.

Re: , on: 2016/8/31 7:43

"This last 50 or 60 years however, the teaching has been lost mainly and new meanings for perfection have come in and this is why we do not see sanctified people. We are in a time of great darkness and the enemy is enjoying misleading people with signs and wonders which are not from God."

Amen Brenda good word!

Re: , on: 2016/8/31 7:56

When Paul says that he is not yet perfect, in simple terms this means that he recognizes God's destiny for him (the upward call of Christ Jesus) is to be conformed to the image of Christ. (Rom 8:29)

It is God's destiny for all of us, our purpose, our calling!

Re: , on: 2016/8/31 8:39

Amen, Mark.

There are two images we can be conformed to. We must resist one and embrace the other. One is an upward call and the other is a downward call.

Jesus is Lord!! Blessings to all on this very victorious day!

Re: Created to be holy - posted by StirtUp (), on: 2016/9/1 5:49

It is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy' -1 Peter 1:16
We must continually remind ourselves of the purpose of life. We are not destined to happiness, nor to health, but to holiness. Today we have far too many desires and interests, and our lives are being consumed and wasted by them. Many of them may be right, noble, and good, and may later be fulfilled, but in the meantime God must cause their importance to us to decrease. The only thing that truly matters is whether a person will accept the God who will make him holy. At all costs, a person must have the right relationship with God. Do I believe I need to be holy? Do I believe that God can come into me and make me holy? If through your preaching you convince me that I am unholy, I then resent your preaching. The preaching of the gospel awakens an intense resentment because it is designed to reveal my unholiness, but it also awakens an intense yearning and desire within me. God has only one intended destiny for mankind- holiness. His only goal is to produce saints. God is not some eternal blessing-machine for people to use, and He did not come to save us out of pity- He came to save us because He created us to be holy. Atonement through the Cross of Christ means that God can put me back into perfect oneness with Himself through the death of Jesus Christ, without a trace of anything coming between us any longer. Never tolerate, because of sympathy for yourself or for others, any practice that is not in keeping with a holy God. Holiness means absolute purity of your walk before God, the words coming from your mouth, and every thought in your mind- placing every detail of your life under the scrutiny of God Himself. Holiness is not simply what God gives me, but what God has given me that is being exhibited in my life. Oswald Chambers