



## Son of My Wisdom



### Practical: Sanctifying Man's Pathos

We've come to the end of this series. The question is this: How is the pathos of man sanctified? How are the experiences and emotions of man to be made like the experiences and emotions of God, or more familiarly, of Jesus Christ? How does man begin to perceive the world as Christ does?

Well, we have been talking about *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos* for an entire year now. What should be clear by now is that the pathos comes out of the logos and the ethos. Our experience and perception (*pathos*) of life issues forth out of our thoughts, words, and deeds (*logos*); which comes forth out of our character and authority (*ethos*). So then, our *ethos* is sanctified by obeying the word of God. Our *logos* is sanctified by letting those convictions of God abide which we have heard from the beginning, so as to walk in them. As the *logos* is being sanctified along with the *ethos*, the *pathos* will follow suit.

You see, the ethos (authority and character) is what determines how everyone and everything around you *responds to you*. However, your logos (particularly your thoughts) will shape how you perceive everything and everyone around you. Your thought-life is fundamental in shaping your perspective of the world around you.

Consider first: a person may be in a place of authority, but because of their mindset, they feel bound. Likewise, a person may be in a place of bondage, but because of their mindset, they feel large and in charge. I'm not placing a moral value on these previous sentences, only stating the fact. So then, the thought life will determine most fundamentally how you perceive the world around you.

Consider secondarily: others respond to your character and authority. Because of the interplay of character and authority, either of two alternatives will most likely be true. Either your character rings more clearly with a person or your authority will stand out. For instance, if you have some authority, but a terrible character, people may know your authority, and nevertheless revolt against your sour character. Conversely, you might have no authority, and be pure in character, and people will honor you as someone who had authority. So then, whichever is strongest will command the greater response. Hopefully they are both agreed, and both godly.

So then your *ethos* will shape others' response to you, and your *logos* will shape your perception of such experiences. Therefore, in the sanctification of both your *ethos* and your *logos*, you will also be sanctifying your *pathos*. -SOMW-

David L. White



## A Journey to Intimacy

### The Spirit of the Lord God is Upon Me (Part 4)

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the LORD has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, *recovering of sight to the blind* and the opening of the prison to them that are bound....<sup>(1)</sup>

It is the clear and genuine *proclamations of the gospel* that recovers the sight of the blind. And it is by those whom the Spirit of the Lord God has anointed to BE the proclamation of good tidings to the meek; and who have been sent to recover the sight of the blind.

The proclamation of the gospel is rather simple and can be distilled into the phrase "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." When Jesus "began His ministry," this was His first message and the result was that *the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up*.<sup>(2)</sup> Their eyes were opened for the first time in 400 dark years.

When Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in the synagogues, and preaching the good tidings to the meek, He healed all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.<sup>(3)</sup>

John the Baptist sent his disciples to Jesus, asking "Are You He that should come, or should we keep looking? Jesus said, "Go tell John that the blind receive their sight ... and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Why? Because the Spirit of the Lord God was upon Him; the Lord Jehovah had anointed Him to preach the gospel to the meek; and had sent Him to ... recover the sight of the blind.<sup>(4)</sup> Therefore this was His testimony to John the Baptist.

Now Jesus says to us, "... as my Father has sent Me, even so send I you."<sup>(5)</sup> Isn't it enough that a disciple should be like his Master, and a servant

# Love and *The Truth*



## Melchisedec in Laodicea - III

We have been discussing the letter to the Laodicean church in the book of the Revelation (3:14-22). We had a very sober opening to this series, which spoke to us of the disparity between the picture of the Church in the book of Acts, and the picture of the Church today. This is indeed a sobering issue if we will take it to heart. In this edition we will begin to open up the letter itself, which is written to Laodicea (us). Let's do that.

We'll start with the summation of the description of Laodicean people (us). Jesus says this. *I know thy works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I wish that you were cold or hot...thou art...lukewarm.* What does this mean? Well the historical context will shed some light on the prophetic meaning.

Historically Laodicea didn't have its own water source. It had to be transported there (by irrigation or carrier) from another place. You see, nearby Heiropolis (adjacent to Denizli) was known for its hot springs. Also, Colossae (10 miles west of Denizli) was known for its cold water. But Laodicea had to have its water brought from (usually) either of these two places. So then, by the time the water had gotten to Laodicea from either Heiropolis or Colossae it was lukewarm.

The general idea is that hot water is great for cleaning, and medicinal use; whereas, cold water is good as a refreshing drink. Lukewarm water, however, was good for neither, and furthermore it was nauseating. Hence, Jesus says he will spew out Laodicea as a congregation of believers. The church as a Laodicean entity is neither cleansing, nor refreshing. She neither purges herself by faith, nor is she refreshed by faith. Let's talk about what that looks like in real life.

### *HOT WATER*

The church that is cleansing herself from her filth is a beautiful sight to behold. She is at odds with the entire world around her, not because she is a troublemaker, but because her purity of life judges the world around her. On the other hand, we have accepted our carnality as if it were the inevitability of



# Boot Camp

## Submission - *The Sanctification of the Soul*



### Destination – Wrap Up (Part 1)

*Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.* <sup>(1)</sup>

The Spirit of God intends, by the human spirit, to mentor and lead the soul into sweet submission and obedience to the Word of God. Thereby we become progressively sanctified into an amazing expression of "Son-ship."

Wow! This has been quite a journey.

We introduced this series in August 2011. This was an intriguing journey down the Via Dolorosa to our personal Golgatha; and thereafter to the garden of resurrection. Here we are at our destination (of sorts).

The destination for this journey was that we would come to a place in our understanding that the submission of our lives and the resulting sanctification of the soul to God is a "journey." It is a marathon, not a sprint. If successfully engaged, we will have put down the dominion of the flesh, as governed by the law of sin and death; and will have taken up the mantle of the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus (which by the way, frees us from the law of sin and death). What a wonderful reality to have manifested in our lives. Don't you agree?!?

I admonish you; PLEASE do not regard these truths as mere pleasurable reading (although I do hope that they were in some small way pleasurable). If what has been shared is genuinely True, it brings with it grave and weighty requirements for compliance. We cannot simply behold our faces in the mirror of God's truth and walk away forgetting what manner of man or woman we are. <sup>(2)</sup> And what manner of man or woman we are *to become*. Instead we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord (as He reveals it to us), are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. <sup>(3)</sup> And He has not left us without a promise. For whosoever looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues

## Living Waters



### The CFO Was A Thief

The Lord dropped something on me, about a week or so ago (late November 2011). I'm still working out the details in my head (and my heart). My eyes are starting to glaze over, because this is stretching my theology. So I want to run this by you. I'm not asking you to agree with me, I'm simply asking you to give it a hearing. Afterwards, you may do with it what you will (smiling).

It seems to me that, at some point, Jesus knew that Judas (Iscariot) was a thief. Ever wonder why our Lord allowed Judas to carry the bag of money? Who makes a CFO out of a thief? Any business consultant "worth his salt" would tell you (in no uncertain terms) to scrutinize the "financial character" of the person who will serve as your organization's Chief Financial Officer (CFO). And this is just earthly wisdom, mind you. Surely heavenly wisdom is far more transcendent than even that advice, is it not? Of course it is. So much so, that the Lord has chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise.<sup>(1)</sup> Okay then let's see what's so confounding about this wisdom.

**Admittedly:** I do not feel "up to the task" of properly conveying this. I am certain that something will be lost in the translation. For that I'll apologize right now. But I promise to do the very best that I can of delivering this message as "free of fingerprints," as possible. One more promise before we proceed; whatever comes of this message, it will be *nothing* compared to what the Lord conveyed to me (think of the difference between a match and a Super Nova). So please bear with me.

Now before we go further, let me address the concern of some of you who say, "If Jesus was truly a man; how could He have KNOWN that Judas was a thief?" When the scriptures do not explicate a truth, we must draw wisdom from the overall context of truth. Example, Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said to Nathanael "behold an Israelite, in whom is no guile!"<sup>(2)</sup> Guile, is deceitfulness of character. Would you agree that if a person can identify the *absence* of guile, that it is highly likely that He can also identify the *presence* of a beguiling character? My thoughts exactly!! The Lord saw Nathanael and recognized the absence of deceit or an

## Nutrition, Health & Wellness



### Relationship between Health and Wellness

*And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. (Genesis 1:29)*

This month, we'll look at the umbilical relationship between general health and wellness. You'll recall from last month's issue the definitions of health and wellness (specifically as they will be used throughout these discourses):

- *Health* regards the physical (or corporal) entity of our being.
- *Wellness* regards the non-corporal components of our being.

Last month, we looked at some of the scriptural references of what contributed to our nutrition, health and wellness. Scripture? You are probably asking, Can words and principles translate to life and health for our physical being? According to scripture, they can.

*Proverbs 16:24* says "Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones."

*Proverbs 4:20-22* says "[20] ... attend to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. [21] Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart. [22] For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."

This portion of scripture is extremely telling of how integrated we are as a human being. Certainly we are fearfully and wonderfully made. The human spirit, soul and body have a most unique inter-relatedness. The human spirit is superior to the soul; and the soul is superior to the physical body. The *body* is regarded as healthy (or not); the *spirit* and *soul* are regarded as well (or not). The well-being of the human spirit

# Choose: God or Mammon

## It All Started With A Tree And it was finished with a tree

*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.* <sup>(1)</sup>

During my prayer time with the Lord on the morning of December 7, 2011 the Lord shared with me the following. I'll begin with a confession, followed by a series of (seemingly unrelated) events that culminate with an interesting epiphany.

I must confess this was a most unusual journey. I began this journey "standing in front" of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, in the garden; and I ended the journey trying to choose between two masters. Please don't ask me how I got there. But if you will go with me I'll take you the route the Lord took me. What I am sharing with you is a conglomeration of events and revelations that have formed for me a whole new understanding of man's relationship with mammon.

These are the series of (seemingly unrelated) events that bring us here:

### Event #1

About 2-3 months ago, I had the pleasure of hearing a beloved gentleman (Ray Landers), his wife and son, teach on the "spirit of mammon."<sup>(2)</sup> Their visit and teaching sparked a most delightful curiosity within me. I have just finished reading one of his books. And I began to ask the Father for more insight and personal revelation on this phenomenal truth.

I enjoy reading and listening to various revelations of truth from God's word. The Father has taught me to then take those kernels of revelation and bring them to Him for further exposition and personal application.

*Allow me to briefly share with you my visual reticular activator (trigger) for taking newly revealed truth to the Father for approval and personal application. (True story) A friend and I went to a wedding in San Diego late last year. During the wedding reception we sat next to a father whose adorable, young son was sitting on his lap. The son would peak around at us and then shyly turn back and hide his face in his father's chest. When he got up the courage, the son would again look back around at us. This had gone on for a bit. Then my friend pulled out a dollar bill and handed it to the little boy. The son briefly paused in amazement, looking at the dollar bill. He then very sweetly took the dollar bill and turned back around and lifted it up to give it to his father. It gave the impression that the young son, was saying "Daddy, look what I have. Can I keep it? What am I supposed to do with it?" It was an extremely precious moment.*

*As the days and weeks rolled on and I encountered new bits of revelation from God's word (and other studies); the Father would (repeatedly) cause me to recall the transaction between the young son and his father. And He would show me in the place of the young child. Holding up to the Father the newly discovered truths, and saying "Daddy, look what I have. Is it real? Can I keep it? What am I supposed to do with it?"*

So, regarding our relationship with mammon, I asked the Father to translate what I am learning. I ask Him to reveal it to me on a very personal level, because that's where we live, right. We don't live in a theoretical realm or even in a theological realm. We live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God; but we must come to understand it in a way that is pragmatic and applicable. The scriptures teach that wisdom is the principal thing; therefore we are to get wisdom. But at the end of the day, be sure you have an understanding.<sup>(3)</sup> Theory and theology work in the head and heart; but they don't work very well in the "hands and feet." That's why if we "hear" the word of God proclaimed and don't thereafter receive or discern the strategic and/or tactical applications, we are like a man who beholds his face in a mirror and walking away forgets what manner of man he is.<sup>(4)</sup>

### Event #2

A few days ago, the Lord prophesied over a

“buying or procurement” process that will enable us to implement our Lord’s recommendations. He said to us that the procurement process requires the exchange of value: something of value for something of value.

**Repeat:** If we perform the transaction correctly, we relinquish (or give up) something of *comparatively* nominal value to us [at least at the time of the transaction] for something we have placed a *comparatively* greater value upon. You’ll notice that I was especially generous with the use of the term *comparatively*. The reason for this is because there must, of necessity, be a new value appraisal placed on each item of the transaction (the item surrendered, and the item procured in its place).

In the past two editions we longed to receive revelation from the Father, about the items that we are directed to procure (or to buy) from the Faithful and True Witness. We’ll get to that in just a moment. I believe you will find the following excerpt intriguing.

The doctrine of the Kingdom of heaven is SO vast, that our Lord could have used any series of objects to drive home His point to Laodicea. It is an amazingly sweet thing to see just how judiciously He selected each of the items on the shopping list. Likewise, it is blissful to see their import and relevance to the contemporary environment of Laodicea proper (and to us).

**History** - Laodicea was well known in the ancient world for its wealth. "For example, in 62 B.C. Flaccus seized the annual contribution of the Jews of Laodicea for Jerusalem amounting to 20 pounds of gold" (*Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 1986, "Laodicea"). "The extent of its wealth is illustrated by the fact that Laodicea was rebuilt *without the financial help of Rome* after the disastrous earthquake of A.D. 60. Laodicea earned its wealth in the **textile industry in the production of black wool** and in the **banking industry**. Laodicea was also known for its **medical school [school of ophthalmology] which concocted a spice nard for the treatment of the ears and an eye salve**. The major weakness of Laodicea was its lack of a water supply. This need was met by bringing water six miles north from Denizli [*a "suburb" of Hierapolis*] through a system of stone pipes [water conveyed to Laodicea through these pipes

was lukewarm by the time it reached the city]" (*Holman Bible Dictionary*, 1994, "Laodicea").<sup>(2)</sup> It appears that Laodicea sat along a fault line; it was later badly damaged by two other earthquakes in 1710 and 1899.

Back to our Lord’s counsel and the shopping expedition:

Doesn’t that bit of history cast quite a brilliant light on the items that the Lord directed Laodicea to procure? Did our Lord speak straight to the heart of the matter, or what?

- The city of Laodicea was prominent in the banking industry. At that time, very likely their “currency” was either gold or it was backed by gold, so they trafficked in the procurement of gold. The Amen says to them **“You know the value of buying gold. Buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that you may be truly rich.”**
- Laodicea was known in the textile industry for its *black* wool (interesting). So the Faithful and True Witness says **“What you need is *white* wool. Buy that from Me that you may be clothed and the shame of your nakedness may be put away.”**
- Laodicea’s *School of Ophthalmology* produced an eye salve. So the Beginning of the Creation of God says to them, **“You have access to eye salve, use it. *Physician heal thyself.*”**

While some of the things Jesus says to Laodicea may seem peculiar to our 21<sup>st</sup> century ears, it wasn’t foreign to them at all. They knew exactly what He was talking about.

### Our Lord’s Counsel

***I counsel you to buy of Me...*** This is a most magnificent expression of meekness in the Faithful and True Witness. He “counsels” us. I never cease to be amazed at the effulgence of our Lord’s humility. Here our Lord has chosen not to “command *us*” to buy; but to “counsel” us to buy. Now don’t let the smooth taste fool you; this would have been just as appropriate if He had commanded us to make the purchase. As you can respect, He has every right to do so; since we were created *by Him* and *for His pleasure*.<sup>(3)</sup> But here this is not the display of character that He has chosen.

So again we see on our Lord’s shopping list: pure gold, white raiment and eye salve. This of course is *now our* shopping list (at the very least it is *mine*). But what is

this gold that He speaks of? Certainly it is not the element *Au* (the chemical name for gold). Whatever this “substance” is it has been tried in the fire. What is the fire? And how is the gold tried?

So we have three questions on the floor.

- 1) What is this gold?
- 2) What is the fire?
- 3) How is the gold tried?

**Gold ...** The scriptures speak or intimate of at least three things that are tried by fire: our *works*, our *faith* and our *heart/character*.<sup>(3a)</sup> These three are essentially one. And in our next edition, (I believe) we’ll discover the trying of our *faith*. Here, we’ll talk about our *heart/character*. Especially, given that the greatest of these is the character of the heart. This is the *thing* that our Lord seeks to ultimately bring forth in purity. Job said, “He knows the way that I take, and when He has tried me I shall come forth as gold.” The character of the heart is the place from which both our faith and our works emanate. The relationship is that our works are a reflection of our faith (or the lack thereof); our faith is a reflection of the character of our heart. The character of our heart will at length become a reflection of the pattern of the character of our Father’s heart as shown to us in the person of Jesus Christ. A similar analogy in scripture is: now abides faith, hope and charity; but the greatest of these is charity.<sup>(3b)</sup> Charity or love is the fullest expression of our faith, which is the fullest expression of our hope.

One thing more that we’ll want to consider is that while (temporally) gold is a physical object or element; (transcendently) it is representative of a quality or standard. In the trying of our works, our faith and our heart/character, it is our Lord’s intent to elevate these to a transcendent standard of purity. The objective is to have them come through the fire as a thing of such refinement as to resemble gold in its purest form. Now gold (or the character of the heart) in its purest form is both valuable and it is formidable (in this case awe-inspiring and insurmountable). The purer the gold (character of the heart), the less resistant to adaptation it has become. *Pure* gold (character of the heart) can be “poured out.” And gold (with the right mixture) can be set into almost any caste chosen by the goldsmith (who in this case is our Lord Jesus Christ).

Now when we consider the gold as representing the character of the heart, we see that this particular expression of *gold* is not something that we possess (as such); although it is something that makes us rich. It is something that “possesses us.” It is something that we

*are* (something that we *become*). Are you beginning to see a trend here? There is a clash between two kingdoms. Just as the Spirit lusts against the flesh and the flesh against the Spirit.<sup>(4)</sup> So too, does the Kingdom of Light “lust” against the Kingdom of Darkness, and vice versa. These two kingdoms are diametrically opposed to one another. The things that are valued in the Kingdom of Light are things that we *become* (not things that we *possess*).

Again, this expression of gold that we are talking about is *purity of heart* and *purity of character*. You cannot be rich in the Kingdom without it (be sure of that). The terms *heart* and *character* may often be interchanged in our discourses. However, the one is the *thing itself* (the heart); the other is the *nature of the thing* (the character). You will recall that it is the character of our heart that governs who we are, and what we do. Blessed are the pure in heart (who we are to become); for they shall see God (what we are then able to do).<sup>(5)</sup>

Just so that we’re not mistaken here, the “*gold tried in the fire*” which the Faithful and True Witness offers is not earthly gold. Even earthly gold, though it is tried in the fire, is still perishable.<sup>(6)</sup>

**The fire ...** in this case is the *nature of God*. Our God is a consuming fire.<sup>(7)</sup> I know ... I know ... you thought that this fire was primarily the tests and trials that we experience in this life. By way of transparency, that’s exactly what I thought until just now (literally). As I am typing this the Lord said (in no uncertain terms) “I AM the fire.” I, therefore, stand corrected.

“Tests and trials” (I also like to call these “time and chance.”) are rightly regarded as a certain type of “fire.” These tend to facilitate a certain type of purging or purification process as it regards our works, our faith and our hearts. However, the ultimate fire (with which we have to do) is the Holiness of the Living God. The tests and trials that we experience in this world have certain characteristics; as does the consuming nature of the Living God. Let’s see them, shall we.

#### **Tests and Trials (as fire)**

- 1) They are common to all of mankind.<sup>(7a)</sup> Everyone experiences some variation of testing.
- 2) While they have the ability to facilitate purging and purification within the heart of man, there is no guarantee of them doing so. Each person has the prerogative to respond to their tests and trials

as it suits them. Some “learn” and others “burn.” (no pun intended) The outcomes are not consistent across all of mankind.

### **The Consuming Nature of God (as fire)**

- 1) Dichotomy: The consuming nature of God (is and is not) common to all mankind.
  - a. On the one hand, all mankind must at length reckon with the Holiness of the True and Living God. ... *all must stand before the judgment seat of Christ ... every one of us shall give account of himself to God.* <sup>(8)</sup> Every man’s work thus being tried by fire... <sup>(9)</sup>
  - b. On the other hand, we will not all experience Him the same. ... *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven... taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (“their” experience)... On the other hand, when He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (“our” experience)...* <sup>(10)</sup>
- 2) Irrespective of which camp you are in (at the time of reckoning) one thing is sure, there is a “purging and purification” process (of types) that will occur. All of our disillusionments will have been washed away. We will not be foggy about “Who is the Ultimate Sovereign.” All of our false gods, our idols, our imaginations and every high thing that had heretofore exalted itself against the knowledge of God, will have been wasted and prostrated before the Living God.

Enough said, for now.

**Tried ... So how is the gold tried?** Perhaps we should rephrase the question. In this place, the *gold* is purity of the character of the heart. And the *fire* with which we are presently concerned is the nature of God. Now the question at hand may safely be stated as: “*How is the character of our heart tried (or refined) by the nature of God?*” Now that’s the million-dollar question. Would to God, that we could take hold of the million-dollar answer.

The *nature of God* is far too transcendent for us to apprehend! And the *character of the heart* of man is too elusive for us to comprehend! Aren’t they? Or are they?

The scriptures teach the following;

### **The incomprehensible heart and character of man**

Jeremiah 17:9 seems to hit the bull’s-eye spot on, when he says that the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. He then asks “Who can know it?” While we may not be able to plumb the depths of its depravity and obstinacy, the Lord has certainly discerned its character.

### **The transcendent nature of God**

For it pleased God that in Him [Jesus] should dwell all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. That being the case, Jesus says to Philip, “He that has seen Me, has seen the Father...” <sup>(11)</sup>

So it is the case that the million-dollar answer is nearer than we think, it is even “at hand.”

Say not in your hearts, “who shall ascend into heaven?” that is to say, “who shall make known to us this transcendent Sovereign?” And say not in your hearts, “who shall descend into the deep?” that is to say, “who shall cause us to know the depths of the depravity of our own heart?” <sup>(12)</sup> For I declare unto you Jesus, He who was from the beginning, whom we have heard, whom we have seen with our eyes, whom we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life. <sup>(13)</sup> He shall declare to us both the transcendent nature of God and the depths of the incomprehensible heart and character of man. Hear Him.

By the Words of our Lord shall every heart be tried with fire; we shall be sanctified by its truth. And (if we submit) by it shall every man’s character be refined. <sup>(14)</sup>

**White raiment ...** the white raiment is *righteousness*. It is the righteousness that we procure from Christ that “covers” our nakedness. *And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.* <sup>(15)</sup> We both procure it from Christ and it also represents Christ, who has been made unto us ... righteousness. <sup>(15a)</sup> So we put *Him* on. For our own righteousness is but filthy rags; they are fig leaves, withering at the first sign of heat. This righteousness is not something that we have within ourselves. It is the grace of God; lest any man should boast.

Righteousness is a very versatile term, and by its uses it is sometimes an elusive term. Legally, it is both a positional and a jurisdictional description; it is something that we receive from God. It is a gift. <sup>(16)</sup> Practically, it is the fruit of obedience, and it yields

holiness. It is a way of life, as we yield our members servants of righteousness.

Here is the *Mosaic of Righteousness*. Obedience takes place in the heart; it is a pre-commitment. Righteousness is obedience worked out in the “hands and feet.” Sanctification is the process of continued righteousness, which results in holiness, the end of which is everlasting life.<sup>(17)</sup> And all of this paints a solitary portrait of the Grace of God; which is Christ in us, the hope of glory.

**Eye salve ...** a preparation of various materials or ingredients used as a remedy for tender or weak eyes. This recommendation indicates our need for *revelation*; the ability to see God for Who He is; the ability to see the things of God; and the ability to see everything else in their proper relationship to God, ourselves included. If we think that we are “rich and increased with goods” when in actuality we are “poor towards God,” there is clearly a problem with our vision.

What is the first thing that Laodicea (spelled *w-e*) will see, upon applying the salve? Upon application of the eye salve, we are going to see exactly what the *Faithful and True Witness* sees...that we are *wretched*, and *miserable*, and *poor*, and *blind* and *naked*. I know, I know, that doesn't seem fair, does it? Here we've anointed our eyes with salve, with the intent that our vision should be repaired. Why, then, would our nakedness and poverty be the first things we see? Because we must see who we *ARE*, in order to be able to appreciate who we are to *BECOME*; and in order to discern or judge the difference. Jesus came to save the wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, didn't He?! Well if we think that we're rich and increased with goods, then He could walk right past us and we'd miss Him. Not so, for the woman with the issue of blood.<sup>(18)</sup> She may have had an issue with her blood; but she certainly didn't seem to have a problem with her eyes. Before she got to Jesus, she *could see* who she *WAS*. She *could see* that she was sick. She had been that way so long, how could she not *see* her dilemma? She *could see* that she was incapable of healing herself. She *could see* that nothing that she had done so far, could help her. She very likely also sensed that she didn't deserve to be made whole.<sup>(19)</sup> Nevertheless, she went to see a Man.<sup>(20)</sup> When we can “*see*,” we know that we need Him. If we do not know our need for Him, it is because we are blind and in desperate need of eye salve.

Laodicea was *not* the only ones who had a problem with their eyes. Jesus, in explaining why He spoke in parables, says: *For this people's heart is waxed gross...*

*and their eyes they have closed...*<sup>(21)</sup> Our inability to “see” ought not to be taken lightly; for our blindness may be the result of a lukewarm heart.

Let us heed our Lord's counsel and buy of Him gold tried in the fire; and white raiment and anoint our eyes with eye salve; that we may see. And that we may be zealous, repent, be converted, so that He will heal us. <cc>

*Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG*

**Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.**

- (1) Revelation 3:14-19
- (2) Collected 12/15/11 from <http://www.ugc.org/bible-faq/who-are-laodiceans>
- (3) Revelation 4:11
- (3a) 1 Corinthians 3:12-14; 1 Peter 1:7; Zechariah 13:9; Isaiah 13:12; Job 23:10
- (3b) 1 Corinthians 13:13
- (4) Galatians 5:17
- (5) Matthew 5:8
- (6) 1 Peter 1:7
- (7) Hebrews 12:29
- (7a) Ecclesiastes 9:11
- (8) Romans 14:10-12
- (9) 1 Corinthians 3:13
- (10) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10
- (10a) Proverbs 27:19
- (11) John 14:8
- (12) Romans 10:6-7, *jew style*
- (13) 1 John 1:1
- (14) John 17:17; Malachi 3:1-3
- (15) Revelation 19:8
- (15a) 1 Corinthians 1:30
- (16) Romans 5:17
- (17) Romans 6:16-22
- (18) Matthew 9:20+
- (19) Mark 5:33+
- (20) John 4:29
- (21) Matthew 13:15

**Don't Miss It!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

It will cost us more to *miss* the will of God for our lives, than it will to *find* it.

– Gerhard Du Toit

wants this part of our journey to play out. One of the challenges we may be facing is that God may not have fully disclosed to us the details of His plan. Without this information, we are facing the “Unknown.”

Have you ever been in an “unknown” place? This is a place or point in our lives when we truly cannot see what lies ahead. In many cases, we can’t even see what is directly in front of us or around us. It’s a place of uncertainty. How does it feel when you are in this place? Scary, uncomfortable, frightening, confusing, and many other descriptive words come to my mind.

Let’s do a quick exercise. Take a moment (yes, right while you are reading this article) and think about what it is in your life that you are uncertain about. What are some of your concerns? Do you have any anxiety associated with these issues? It may be a good idea to write this information out on paper.

With your issue(s) in mind, think about what it would take to help you feel more comfortable about the situation. What could be said or done to reduce your stress level, calm your fears, or quiet the voices that are speaking negative things to you?

Often when we face situations that seem to be negative, they involve unanswered questions or concerns about if we (or someone we care about) may be harmed. This, again, is because we are facing something that is “unknown.”

Many of us have heard the term “fear of the unknown.” It is a natural response to have some fear or apprehension about what we unfamiliar with. The question we want to deal with is how a fear of the unknown impacts us as believers.

Is it beneficial to us, our family, or the kingdom of God to be afraid of the unknown? Now, someone may be thinking that while fear is natural, it certainly is not beneficial for believers. Surely, we are to always trust fully in God. If anyone is thinking along these lines, I’m on board with you. However, we also want to give audience to those of who in reality are struggling with issues that they don’t have answers to, or that may potentially have a negative impact on them.

To ground us for this discourse, let’s get a working definition of a couple of terms. To do this, we will utilize our friend Webster.

### Definitions

**Fear 1:** Anxiety cause by real or possible danger,

apprehension, or concern

**Fear 2:** Reverence, awe, deep appreciation and respect, love

It’s interesting to notice that fear is defined as “two sides of the same coin.” On the one side, fear can cause us to draw back or move away from something or someone (anxiety or apprehension, thoughts of pain or danger). On the other side, fear can cause us to move toward something or someone (reverence, deep appreciation & respect, or love). How could this be true?

May I submit to you that fear can either be a source of life or a source of death. It depends on which side of the coin we are on. On the positive side of the coin, we have the fear of God. This is what Psalms 19:9 talks about when it says, “The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever.”

When we hear about the “Fear of the Lord” it is referencing a deep respect for God and devotion to Him. It includes a basic understanding of how truly awesome God is. This kind of fear causes praise and worship to usher forth even when we are going through test and trials.

When we have a right respect for God it causes us to take on the posture of faithful obedience to His word. And it’s not because we are afraid of Him. Instead, it’s because we have a fairly clear picture of His Personhood. We receive the reality of His perfect and eternal love for us. And we understand His protection.

David told us in Psalms 91 that when we have a deep respect and awe for God, such that we stay in His presence, He builds a hedge around us that cannot be penetrated by the enemy. We discover that Satan has to get God’s permission to even come close to us. And, when Satan is granted restricted access to us, there are always benefits to us (i.e., our faith has an opportunity to grow, we can fellowship with Christ in His sufferings, we can see God do mighty works in and through us, etc.).

The fear of the Lord is such a powerful and positive force. Our faith grows from our reverential fear of God. We begin to understand that nothing can harm us. With that, our sight clears up and we can see our circumstances much more clearly.

Ecclesiastes 12: 13 says, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments. For this is the whole duty of man.” This wholesome fear of the Lord encompasses love and faith. And it works itself out in obedience to God and complete confidence in Him.

What about the other side of the “fear” coin? If we do not have a healthy fear of the Lord that transforms our thinking, then we will fear any and everyone else besides God. When we don’t fear God, it causes our vision and understanding to become blurred. We magnify things that are really not that important. We act like people have more power over our situations than they really do.

We stress out over the unknown because we lack information or because we sense we may be negatively impacted in some way. Absent a healthy fear of the Lord, we develop an unhealthy fear of idols. Anything and anyone we exalt becomes an idol.

So, what does all of this conversation have to do with effectively handling our fear of the unknown? I’m glad you asked.

When we begin to have feelings of anxiety, high levels of concern, or noticeable apprehension about situations, let this be a sign to us. Usually we are dealing with something that is unknown. Some detail is not clear to us. Or, from what we do know we (for some reason) believe the situation may impact us in a negative way. We may not *know* this, but we *believe* it.

When this happens, we need to redirect our fear of the situation to a positive posture of fear for our Lord. We want to remind ourselves that although we may not have all of the answers, we actually have “The Answer” that dwells within us.

So, let me give you some answers to any unknown issues you are facing.

**Psalms 25:14** - The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant (what He has in store for us).

**Psalms 91:10** - There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come near thy dwelling (God is protecting us at ALL times).

**Isaiah 65:24** - And it shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear (He has already made a way; we just have to

trust and worship Him).

**Psalms 23:1, 4** - The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want (lack anything). Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil (because I fear God), for Thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

These are just some of the “answers” to the unknown situations we are facing. As we mature in our Christian walk, we learn that it really doesn’t matter what the question is. We have the “Answer.” It doesn’t matter that we don’t have all of the details. We have the “Answer.” And, it doesn’t matter if it looks like something may have a negative impact on us. Why? We have the answer, God’s protection that cannot be penetrated by anyone.

As we begin our journey in 2012 I encourage each of us to “Fear the Lord.” If we do this, we will not succumb to the enemy’s attempts to cause us to fear anyone or anything else – including the “Unknown.”

Be blessed! [LL]

Joyce White, LMSW

## WORDS OF WISDOM

- Prayer (to Christ) was the unfolding and the discovering of the Will of His Father. And so it must be to us.
- God is more concerned with the “worker” than the “work.”
- You can only impart to people what you possess.
- Ministry is the consequences of walking with God in intimacy.
- Prayer is initiated by God.
- God is looking for people, through whose lives He can flow unhindered.

Gerhard Du Toit  
(Quoting Anonymous African Prayer Warriors)

as his Lord?<sup>(6)</sup> So the Lord says to us, “you are my *disciples* if you do whatsoever I say.” You wanted to know what your “gift” was. You wanted to know what God was calling you to do. Now you know. Not quite what you had in mind was it? Let us be about our Father’s business, shall we.

At the end of the day, it is the clear and genuine proclamations of the gospel that will heal the broken hearted; and proclaim liberty to the captives; and recover the sight of the blind, specifically the meek among them. <sup>-JTI-</sup>

*Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG*

**Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.**

- (1) Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18
- (2) Matthew 4:16-17
- (3) Matthew 4:23
- (4) Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18
- (5) John 20:21
- (6) Matthew 10:25

## PERSONALIZATION

The great object of our “walk” should be to make what is true in our *positional* standing before God (at the moment of conversion) true in our daily personal *experience* and personal *life*. ...

All of our effort will result in nothing if we don’t experience a change of character ... We *talk* about faith, we *sing* about faith; but we desperately need to “take a step” of faith.

– Dr. Alan Redpath (*Sermon: Chosen to be Holy*)

men still living in this world. We have catered to all the desires of the flesh, even the religious desires. We have succumbed to carnal ways to manipulate the soul. We have used smooth music to control the feel of “the spirit” in our services. We have explained a gospel that says “forsake all and follow me,” as if it said “follow your hearts desires, just do it in Jesus name.” We have not been cleansed from sin. We don’t even believe in the measure of perfection which Jesus commanded. We have not been cleansed from the way of the flesh. We have become a very religious, yet carnal people. We are not a church age that is being purge by the washing of water by the word. In short, we are not like hot water.

### COLD WATER

The *refreshing church* is fulfilled. She is so full of Christ, so full of intimate relationship with God that she desires nothing else. She has a robust prayer life, not as a religious exercise, but as an essential and vibrant part of her life. Out of true intimacy with God in Christ she also has a very healthy life of intercession. She is self-sacrificially giving. She prefers others before herself. She has rivers of living water flowing out of her people, refreshing one another, and all those who are coming in from the world, thirsty.

### LUKEWARM WATER

Yet what we see today is a church that is overindulgent, and nevertheless completely unfulfilled. We are not fulfilled in our Christian lives. We are ever looking for amusements, entertainment, something to make us feel good and satiated. The world has no idea that Christ is our ALL, because we are forever seeking to have or possess so much else. I am surprised at how often I hear Christians say “I’m bored,” or “I was so bored.”

So then, we are not fulfilled and satiated in our relationship with God (cold), nor are we cleansed and purged from all filthiness (hot). We neither refresh one another, nor are we turning one another from sin and carnality. This is what Jesus means when he says that we are neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm. This is nauseating to Him; and if we won’t hearken unto his counsel, he will spew (or vomit) us out.

Remember, as many as He loves, He rebukes and chasten. Let’s be zealous therefore and repent. <sup>-LATT-</sup>

*David L. White*

therein (not being a forgetful hearer) but a doer of the work, this person shall be blessed in their deed. “What work?” you ask; the works of Him that has called you and will send you. <sup>(4)</sup> For as long as we are in the world, we are the light of the world.

Truth, at its core is transformational. If we are not continually transformed by the Truth (*genuine, Godly Truth*) that we encounter, we accumulate a bill that must be paid on the day of reckoning. There is a day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ (*Who is Himself genuine, Godly Truth*). <sup>(5)</sup>

What were some of the truths that the Lord shared with us along this journey of submission and sanctification of the soul? Ooops!!! There’s that word *sanctification* again; get used to it. It’s not going anywhere. And what a phenomenal description of this life-long journey of a Christ-one, it is. To “sanctify” essentially means to “set oneself apart; or to be separated for God’s use.” Speaking of “separating,” Proverbs 18:1 says “Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeks and intermeddles with all wisdom.” It’s noble to talk about “belonging only to God,” but we often fail to undertake the journey that gets us there. Time-out for all of the wishful thinking, because the days are growing evil; and your adversary the devil has “dropped a dime” on you; there is a contract on your head (and mine). Soon you will find that the enemy is “pulling out all the stops.” He wants to take us down, and he will spare no expense to accomplish his mission. And the only security we have is to be found *in Him*, not having our own brand of “21<sup>st</sup> century” righteousness; but the eternal righteousness of God by Christ Jesus. And that righteousness sanctifies to holiness.

We somehow have been “smoked” into thinking that we can have the “destination,” without the entering in upon the “journey.” Very really, there is no *resurrection*, where there is no *cross*; because the former necessitates the later. If something has not died, it cannot be resurrected. The Lord was very clear to us, when He said that “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die (*the cross*), it abides alone. But if it dies, it brings forth much fruit (*resurrection*).” This is the story of *our* lives. If *we* do not die to sin and self, there will be no resurrection to life and liberty. We may “talk” about it but it will not become a reality to us. We can only live one life, at a time. We are supposed to be living a resurrected life.

This particular journey is more specifically a “stroll along the Via Dolorosa” (the road that leads to Calvary).

It looks something like this: Jesus said that if any man would come after Him ...

He must *deny himself*  
 He must *take up his cross*, and  
 He must *follow Jesus*

**Denying Self**

*Our life as it is (reflections of the self-life)*

- We *walk* like the world: our comportment in this world is altogether indistinguishable from that of our unregenerate brothers and sisters. Although we love them (if we are regenerate) we are not to be like them. <sup>(6)</sup>
- We *talk* like the world: we seek to be “politically correct” often at the expense of being truthful.
- We *make our life’s decisions* just like the world: we seek the counsel of this temporal mode of *analyzing* and *psycho-analyzing*. We find ourselves choosing *what* “they” choose and for the same reasons and rewards.
- Our *goals and ambitions* are of this world: we seek the same ‘fame and fortune’ that they seek and often in the same ways that they seek them. We value the same things that they value. Our delight is not in the law of the Lord. <sup>(7)</sup>

*Our life as it ought to be (denying the self-life)*

If I may be so audacious as to prophesy over you (us): “all of our Christian life shall be lived from a place of *truth*. We begin with what *IS* presently the case.” We will not make a quantum leap into confessing “what shall be.” Denying the self-life begins with acknowledging that (though we are believers) we still find ourselves under the government of the flesh or the self-life. <sup>(8)</sup> The next step then is to *repent*; better said, the next step is to *turn around; to cease and desist; to drop the smoking gun and back away with our hands up*. Sometimes it is the case that we don’t mind repenting; our problem is we don’t want to put down our weapons. We want to abuse the grace of God by “repenting” and continuing in the way of offense.

What then are we saying about the efficacy of the Blood of the Lamb? What, then, of the purpose of that Blood on the Mercy Seat? Is our Lord’s blood so impotent as to be simply useful at “labeling” us Christians; but not useful in actually conforming us into His image? We make a public spectacle of a Cross and a Christ that cannot save us from the

'power' of sin in our lives. Is being freed from the 'penalty' of sin *as good as it gets*? God forbid!!! If the blood of goats and bulls cleansed Israel to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge our consciences from dead works to serve the living God?<sup>(9)</sup>

### Taking Up the Cross

The concept of "taking up the cross" is the case that we recognize that everyone who is committed to live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. As Christ-ones: if we would reign, we must endure hardness as a good soldier.<sup>(10)</sup>

One thing is certain; there will be no "taking up of any crosses" where there has not first (and foremost) been a denying of the self-life. There will be no "marching down the Via Dolorosa," where there has not yet been Gethsemane's "nevertheless."<sup>(11)</sup> It was true for our Lord; it is true for us. For the crosses of our life are not taken up in the public trials of Gabbatha "the judgment hall." The cross is chosen in the secret place of the garden of Gethsemane. Although a few of the disciples did go with our Lord to the garden, none of them could go with him to the place of "nevertheless." And this is a place that you and I must also attend alone.

### Following Christ

It may be the case that the traditional understanding of the term "follow me" would be that our Lord is asking us to "walk with (or walk behind; or walk like) Him" in our journey through this world. While there is some veracity to that understanding of the term, I challenge you that perhaps He means something more.

When the Lord likens us to branches of the True Vine, He is not saying that we are to simply be "like" Him. We were created to be a perpetual extension of Him, throughout the spectrum of time, and for the ages to come. The scriptures teach that if the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, dwell in us shall He not also quicken *us*?<sup>(12)</sup> A son is not an imitator of the father; he is a perpetuation of the combined DNA of his parents. It is not intended that we should be imitators of our Lord. As revealed to one of my sons in the gospel, "the Holy Spirit is given that we might be *perpetuators* of our Lord in the earth."

Fortunately (or unfortunately) depending on how you look at it, many of us will never be required to be publicly nailed to a cross. Whew!!! But the dying to the flesh that we must undergo will nevertheless be excruciating. This is the walk of the Via Dolorosa, with

all its pomp and circumstance. The bringing of the soul under the submission and leadership of the Spirit of God will make great demands upon us, literally daily (and at times, hourly). It is the hope of the enemy of our souls to daily "trip us up." Nevertheless, when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. It is this standard of the Living God that daily sustains us; but only to the degree that we are willing to mortify the deeds of the flesh and take up our crosses, etc. It is my prayer that we have prepared our minds and hearts for this journey.

And so it is that the sanctification of the soul is progressively realized as we submit ourselves to the Lord God. This we speak to those whose Lord is the Only True and Living God. By a continued practice of seeking to know the Word of God *and* the God of the Word, (in the words of Paul) we "keep our bodies (*and souls*) under subjection; lest at any time we may find ourselves outlaws before the Holy One."<sup>(13)</sup>

Once more, off we go, down the Via Dolorosa. It is certain now, that "die" we must; therefore "die" we shall. For in three days we get up. -BC-

*Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG*

### Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

- <sup>(1)</sup> Matthew 16:24
- <sup>(2)</sup> James 1:22-25
- <sup>(3)</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:18
- <sup>(4)</sup> John 9:4-5
- <sup>(5)</sup> Romans 2:16
- <sup>(6)</sup> John 17:16; Ephesians 2:2-3
- <sup>(7)</sup> Psalm 1:1
- <sup>(8)</sup> Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:9
- <sup>(9)</sup> Hebrews 9:14
- <sup>(10)</sup> 2 Timothy 2:3, 11-12; 3:12
- <sup>(11)</sup> Matthew 26:39
- <sup>(12)</sup> Romans 8:11
- <sup>(13)</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:27

## Who's In Charge?

What an emancipation! What a redemption!

And what is it to be redeemed, if we be not liberated from the lesser, the lower, and the lustful?

God help us if Christian victory can make us no "better than our bodies' inclinations."

L. E. Maxwell  
Born Crucified

inward-focused posture. Not at all impossible that the Lord saw Judas and perceived in him, just the opposite.

The wisdom behind what provoked our Lord to make a CFO out of a thief will resonate throughout your life and mine (for the duration of our days on this earth). The reason for this is because it is the same wisdom that will make CFO's of us who are inwardly thieves. So let us *hear what the Spirit is saying to the church*, shall we.

Jesus teaches us that He does what He sees the Father do. Since life is not a *Minority Report*,<sup>(2a)</sup> it is not the habit of Jehovah, to sentence a person simply based on what is *in their heart*; or what they may have the potential to do. If that's the case, we could all have come out of the womb and made a B-line straight for the "bottomless pit."<sup>(3)</sup> And I probably would have led the way. No ... no, the courts of the Judge of all the Earth<sup>(4)</sup> require a greater preponderance of evidence of what is in our heart (than just His omniscience). He judges the tree by its fruit; although He already knows of what type a tree is before it bears fruit (or not). He usually allows it the "customary 2-5 years" for the fruit tree to mature. Two to five years is what it takes for a "tree" to begin to bear fruit, a human being takes a bit longer (smiling). When the Lord was talking with Abram about the inheritance of his posterity four generations later, He said, "I will give you Canaan, but hang in there, because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full."<sup>(5)</sup>

The point is that the Lord knows that although we live in a microwave society, we are not ourselves microwaves. Therefore, He is patient and longsuffering with us, all of us. Patience notwithstanding, the Lord is nevertheless looking for fruit and He deserves it. *What type* of fruit we bear (our choice); *that* we bear fruit (predetermined). The scripture says that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things. Likewise, an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil things.<sup>(6)</sup> Or that a good tree does not bring forth corrupt fruit; neither does a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit.<sup>(7)</sup> You'll notice that there is no third option here (i.e., the option to forego bearing fruit at all, is not available).

Confirmed, the will of man is under his personal jurisdiction and control. However, the circumstances in which men find themselves are under the Sovereign authority of the Holy One. *That* Judas' heart was self-serving was fully under Judas' control. *That* he found himself the CFO to our Lord Jesus Christ was purely of God's Sovereign jurisdiction.

**Quick Sidebar:** It may be the case that Judas Iscariot was not initially a thief "by trade." Don't know. But what is more familiar to me is that it is our Lord's intention that He discovers our heart to us (right, wrong or indifferent). It seems clear that Judas was a man of questionable integrity and character. But given that so little else is disclosed about him in the cannon of the Gospels, everything that we know about him, we find from his roles as either "CFO" or "Turn-coat."

Regarding the point made in the **Sidebar** (above). It is our Lord's intention that He discovers our heart, to us. We *see* this when we look at Israel's deliverance from Egypt. And we hear it very clearly when Moses said to the children of Israel, "remember all the way which the LORD your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, to [make known] what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments, or not."<sup>(8)</sup> I also submit to you that this is not just a story about Israel; it is your story and mine. It is the story of our lives. Our walk through this valley of the shadow of death is for the sole purpose of humbling us, proving us and discovering to us what is in our heart.

#### THE STING

In one very real sense, "our life has the characteristics of a *Sting Operation*" absent the element of deception. In human government, when law enforcement authorities work to catch a criminal, they set up an artificial situation, transaction or environment in an effort to gather information and to catch a criminal "red-handed." In the Kingdom, there are very many similarities in the process (again without the element of deception). Life is a series of parallel, serial and multi-reality events and situations. All of them (in one sense) drive to discover what is in the heart of man. Why? Because, at length, that is the basis upon which we will be recompensed (judged).

**Example:** Ferris (a new Christian) is working for a very difficult boss. His boss is often grievously overbearing and demanding. In his "former life," Ferris would simply have slacked off on the quality and quantity of work, as a means of "showing" his boss that he won't be treated with such disrespect. But now that Ferris is "under new management" the aforementioned "behavioral retribution" is no longer an option for him. What's a man to do?!?

How does he respond?

Just here is the *Sting Operation*: Ferris doesn't know this; but the enemy is setting him up for a fall (by provoking his boss to mishandle Ferris). The enemy has a dossier (rap sheet) on Ferris; he remembers Ferris' prior track record. A few words misspoken by Ferris' boss (or anyone else, for that matter) and the flares had been popped. The Lord knows that if Ferris would simply *trust in the Lord with all of his heart, and lean not to his own understanding*, Ferris will come out with minimal scars. And the Lord will come out with maximum glory. Usually there is a devil on the one shoulder and an angel on the other. Ferris wouldn't be so fortunate, the enemy is whispering in both of Ferris' ears by this time. And the Lord hadn't opened His mouth on the subject. And everybody's waiting. (tick...tock...tick...tock...)

That evening as Ferris closes out his day in the presence of the Lord, he prays thus:

*Father, I need your help!!! I have two gifts for my boss and neither of them is wrapped in the Blood of the Lamb. I am so tempted to give less than 100% at work. Or if homicide was a misdemeanor, I would.... (No, I'm sorry that's not right). Certainly my boss knows that what he is doing is wrong. What do I do here, Lord? The other side of two weeks ago, we would not be having this conversation. I would have simply resolved the matter, my way. But I know now, that my ways are not Your ways. And that the old way of "handling things" is not representative of my covenant relationship with You. It still hurts though, how do I handle that? Just then, Ferris hears the Lord say, "I was wounded for your transgressions; be wounded for your boss' transgressions. And I'll take care of the rest." As his heart almost stops; and tears begin to stream down his face; Ferris submits to the Lord's direction (tears and all). He finishes his prayer and goes to bed (with a knot in the pit of his stomach; but a heart that is fully committed to trusting the Lord). For the next four months, his boss' behavior does not improve. No, (that would be the Hollywood version of the story) it gets worse. But Ferris nightly repeats to the Lord, His promise and again humbles his heart in obedience. When*

*the Lord is pleased that Ferris now understands how this life of faith works, He revokes the enemy's bench warrants. In month five, seemingly out of nowhere, Ferris is offered a promotion by the very same boss. Additionally, his boss's behavior has completely changed (a difference of night and day). Another 30 days or so, Ferris asks his boss what happened that caused a change in his disposition. His boss said, "It was your meekness and humility ... it overwhelmed me. It became very clear to me that I was out of line. I apologize."*

God already knows what's in our hearts, He told us in Jeremiah 17:9. We're the ones who don't know what's in our hearts. Or we choose not to believe (all evidence to the contrary) what we know to be true. And since life was intended to be a covenant between God and man, it is imperative that both parties of the covenant understand the terms and conditions of their respective roles in the covenant relationship. So we begin to see the wisdom of God in discovering to us what is in our hearts. The last thing anyone wants is to be "married" to someone for over 40 years; only to find that their love for you was never really genuine. Bless God that (if we are willing) He will see to it that that doesn't happen in our relationship with Him. He will spare no expense to discover our hearts to us, so that we can repent and be healed.

It is my position, that there are two things that will discover our hearts to us, almost more than anything else, and that is our use of *time* and our use of *money*. Whether we have a little or a lot, what we do with *time* and *money*, will tell volumes about who we really are. You want to know if a person will make a good friend. Spend some time with them, or loan them some money. You'll find out very quickly where they are.

Now, you may be saying that "How a person responds to their knowledge of Jesus Christ (or the Word of God) is a *better* indicator of who they really are." And to that I'll say two things: 1) I respect your position. 2) That sounds "noble." But then I would have to ask you a question: "How can you tell (or measure) what is a person's response to their knowledge of Jesus Christ or the Word of God? (*long pause*) I submit to you that it will probably be discovered by how they spend their *time* and their *money*."

Let's look at Israel again. When they left Egypt, what were they directed to borrow from their neighbors? It was silver, gold and raiment (clothes). We know what the clothes were for. But what was the silver and gold? It was a form of wealth. <sup>(9)</sup> Wealth, in that day, was measured by the amount of: cattle, land, silver, gold and sometimes the number of servants that one possessed. <sup>(10)</sup> We saw what they did with the gold in Exodus 32:3-4. Aaron threw their gold into the fire and out walked a golden calf. We later saw what they did with their 40 years in the wilderness. Quite telling, don't you think?

Fast-forward from the wilderness to the first century A.D. And back to our original question. Ever wonder why our Lord allowed Judas to carry the bag of money? The Father knew that Judas was going to betray the Lord, before he "hired him" to be a disciple. But that didn't stop God from appointing Judas as CFO. But you or I would probably have been very confused by Judas' betrayal, had we not along the way seen the unveiling of his heart. And what did the Lord use to disclose Judas' disposition of heart? A "checkbook" (*money*) and a three-year contract (*time*) to be on the team.

**Sidebar:** Here is another brilliant twinkle of the wisdom of God, in the assignment of Judas as CFO. When the disciples were called, most of them young men; some educated, others not so much so. At that time, I am sure that they didn't know how to control the subtlety of the *spirit of mammon*. The Lord protected their naivety and their vulnerability to the *spirit of mammon*, by giving the CFO role to Judas. So not only was this assignment telling for Judas, it was a means of protecting the other disciples from the deception of the *spirit of mammon*. "Why protect the other 11 disciples and pigeon-hole Judas?" you ask. Perhaps the posture of the heart determines our external disposition. Is it possible that the other 11 disciples were essentially naïve; whereas Judas' posture was of another origin? Example: As heinous as were the massacres of Saul of Tarsus; he said (regarding his persecution of the church) that he was ignorant through unbelief. And so, God was merciful to him. <sup>(10a)</sup> (There will be more forthcoming, throughout the year.)

Now while I believe that our Lord protected the other 11 disciples from the spirit of mammon. He did not protect them in the areas where their hearts needed to be discovered. They too were put in just the situations or sets of circumstances that would best discover to them

(and to us) what was in them?

- Judas as CFO and Traitor <sup>(11)</sup>
- Peter as Water sport; when Rebuking the Master; in Judgment Hall Inquisitions <sup>(12)</sup>
- Nathanael: Initial Interview <sup>(13)</sup>
- James and John (Sons of Zebedee) Political Campaign <sup>(14)</sup>
- Philip requesting an audience with the King <sup>(15)</sup>
- Etc.

To some of you this may seem much like an entrapment; but to others of us it is nothing less than the unadulterated excellence of the Living God.

Judas' heart was locked and loaded on self-gratification. And the natural outworking of it was displayed in what he did with the bag. The Lord teaches us to guard our heart with all diligence. <sup>(16)</sup> So if we are of a particular disposition of heart, the circumstances that we are assigned in life will facilitate a reasonably full expression or outworking of what's in our heart. The scripture says *out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks*. <sup>(17)</sup> Likewise out of the abundance of the heart, the hands and feet speak.

So what's in your heart? No, no don't tell me. I've got enough to deal with reining in my own heart. But look around you, at the various situations in which you find yourself. Now look at what your responses to these situations are telling you, about y-o-u. We're not looking at anyone else's contribution, just yours. Are our postures of heart in alignment with the mandates of scripture? How about alignment with the character of Christ? How about our use of time and money? Could someone mistake us for Jesus? No?!? Judas, perhaps? (*Sorry that was not in good taste. May I ask to have that last statement stricken from the records?*)

What needs to be done to bridge the gap, between where we are and where we should be? Once discovered, let's do that. The CFO was a thief, but you don't have to be. <sup>\*LW\*</sup>

*Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG*

**Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.**

<sup>(1)</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:27

<sup>(2)</sup> John 1:47-18

<sup>(2a)</sup> Minority Report (2002), a movie starring Tom Cruise as Chief John Anderton-In Washington, D.C.,

in the year 2054, murder has been eliminated. The future is seen and the guilty punished before the crime has ever been committed.

<sup>(3)</sup> Isaiah 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9

<sup>(4)</sup> Genesis 18:25; Psalm 94:2

<sup>(5)</sup> Genesis 15:13-16

<sup>(6)</sup> Matthew 12:35

<sup>(7)</sup> Luke 6:43-44

<sup>(8)</sup> Deuteronomy 8:2

<sup>(9)</sup> Exodus 3:22

<sup>(10)</sup> Deuteronomy 8:13, 17-18

<sup>(10a)</sup> 1 Timothy 1:12-13

<sup>(11)</sup> John 12:4-6; Luke 22:47-48

<sup>(12)</sup> Matthew 14:28-31; 16:22-23; 26:69-75

<sup>(13)</sup> John 1:45-50

<sup>(14)</sup> Matthew 20:20-23

<sup>(15)</sup> John 14:8

<sup>(16)</sup> Proverbs 4:23

<sup>(17)</sup> Luke 6:45

## Finding It Hard to Pray?

...Mr. Murray assured this minister ... if his relationship to the living Savior was what it ought to be, it would certainly *make possible a successful life of prayer*.

But we cannot live in the flesh and pray in the Spirit.

Prayerlessness is symptomatic of a life lived in the flesh, a lack of life in the Spirit.

-- Andrew Murray (*A Letter*)

## Psalm 19: 7-11

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul

The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple

The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart

The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes

The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever

The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether

More to be desired are they than gold, yes, than much fine gold

Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb

Moreover by them is thy servant warned

And in keeping of them there is great reward...

Nutrition, Health and Wellness

continued from page 4

affects the soul; and the wellbeing of the soul affects the health of the body. This reality gives rise to John's admonition to Gaius, "*Beloved, I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers.*"<sup>(1)</sup>

Outside of the Kingdom: health/wellness and wisdom are often seen as unrelated. If it doesn't come with a membership to the nearest gym, a pair of tennis shoes and some spandex; it doesn't qualify as health-promoting. Not so, in the Kingdom; all of these are integrated in such a way that wisdom (*being the principal thing*)<sup>(2)</sup> bears the fruits of health and overall wellness.

While it is true that the blood is the life of the flesh, so too is a sound heart the life of the flesh.<sup>(3)</sup>

As the Lord continues to renew our minds regarding our nutrition, health and wellness ... please keep in mind that these all come under the veil of a chaste and God-fearing way of life.<sup>=NHW=</sup>

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**Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.**

<sup>(1)</sup> 3 John 1:2

<sup>(2)</sup> Proverbs 4:7

<sup>(3)</sup> Deuteronomy 12:23; Proverb 14:30

family of believers, of which I was a part. The Lord said to us that “In 2012 He was going to break the curse of the recession over the people of God. And that He was going to do it by teaching us to give.” The Lord went on to say that “He is going to give us a new relationship with money. And thereby openly rebuke the spirit of mammon over our lives.” He said that we would give to the building of the Kingdom and He would take up the responsibility of meeting our needs by supernatural means.”

### Event #3

As if those two events weren't enough. This morning during my private time with the Father, He took me back to the Garden of Eden. There I was standing in front of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He asked me “what happened here?” In the words of my big brother Ezekiel, “Thou knowest, Lord.”

**Warning:** Please (I beg of you) put your seatbelts on, this is going to be wild ride. In what amounted to a fraction of a second, the Lord began to unload the following on me. I had to grab a pencil and notebook. I could not write quickly enough, OMG!!!

The Lord said (during the series of transactions at the tree of knowledge of good and evil), this is what happened “the *emotions* (which include the appetites, passions, ambitions, etc.) were exalted. And the *intellect* was subjugated or subordinated.” (Gulp)

You're probably saying, “Okay what does that have to do with mammon?” Meanwhile, I'm scrambling to get to Genesis 3, to reread the events.

*Genesis 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (appetite), and that it was pleasant to the eyes (passion), and a tree to be desired to make one wise (ambition), she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat (thereby subordinating the commandment of God, which was spoken to his intellect).*

The *emotions* are (pardon the expression) dumb; it is by the *intellect (mind)* that we will be able to know God's design for the use of mammon, etc. The ungoverned emotions are led about by every wind

of doctrine. This is one reason that the scriptures teach that we are to keep our hearts with all diligence. Unfortunately you'll find, by and large, that our decisions about the use of money are predominately influenced by our emotions (including ambition, passion, gut-feel, desire, etc.). When financial decisions are made, the intellect may often be brought in as an accountant; but somehow they seem at length to have originated in the emotions. If we go through our day, for many of us (not all) we'll likely find that very few of our buying or purchasing decisions are influenced by Godly principles and the conviction of the Spirit. Even if you take a few minutes to “count up the cost” to see if you can afford it; that is subsequent to the decision to purchase, which was heavily influenced by “want” which, of course, is an emotional response.

Now, I'm *not* trying to be super-spiritual here, but many of us are upside down financially and can't seem to understand how we got there. I believe that in 2012, the Lord is going to deliver many of us from this situation; if we hear Him and obey. So to guard against returning here again; wisdom would seem to indicate that we must properly identify both where we are and how we got here.

**Funny thing:** On December 7, 2011, the Lord gave me this article. On December 9, 2011, while listening to Stephen Covey's audio book on *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (Powerful Lessons in Personal Change)*, I heard the following piece: Quote: “... people ... are driven by feelings. Hollywood has scripted us to believe that we are not responsible; that we are a product of our feelings. But the Hollywood script does not describe the reality. **If our feelings control our actions, it is because we have abdicated our responsibility and empowered them [the feelings] to do so....**”

While we may be free to choose regarding our financial decisions, we are not however, always

able to control the outcomes. But if our choices agree with the principles of the Kingdom, there are laws that favorably govern those outcomes. One such law: Give and it shall be given to you.<sup>(6)</sup> Oh, I forgot, we hate that scripture. It seems that that the only thing we like about giving is *being of the receiving end of the transaction*. Unfortunately, this is not the mantra of the Kingdom. The Kingdom of Heaven was founded on the principle of "giving." For God so loved the world that He gave.... One powerful principle of Godly giving is that it rebukes the spirit of mammon in our lives. Trust me you want the spirit of mammon rebuked in your life. A few of the accomplices to the spirit of mammon is the spirit of debt and the devourer.

In the beginning, man was neither holy nor unholy, he was simply human (a living soul). Regarding the two trees in the midst of the garden, man had three options to choose from:

- 1) To eat of the tree of Life;
  - 2) To eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil;
- or
- 3) Not to eat from either of these two trees.

The only WRONG choice, of the three options, was to eat of the tree of the knowledge and good/evil. Here we have the first class in "self-discovery."

The Lord created and scripted us such that the intellect (mind) is supposed to govern the will; the emotions are to follow, as a matter of course. The transaction at the tree flipped the script, so that the emotions were enthroned (the affections, appetites, etc.) Of the three faculties of the soul (mind, will and emotions) it is the mind that has access to the intuition and conscience (in the human spirit) for guidance. The emotions do not have this access. So we can see why the spirit of mammon, would appeal to the emotions as a means of leading mankind into bondage and subsequent ruin. We also see why the scriptures encourage us to "*study* (an intellectual activity) to show ourselves approved unto God ... so that we may rightly divide the Word of Truth."<sup>(7)</sup> And we see why the scripture directs us "to be transformed by the renewing of our *minds* (not our emotions)."<sup>(8)</sup> The will and the emotions will follow and become subject to a renewed mind.

There is a sense in which the following is the case: When we consult a renewed mind, we get direction from the "laws of God." When we consult the emotions, we get direction from the "law of the flesh." In the Kingdom, the emotions are **never** consulted for guidance or leadership, ever. They were created to be servants, not masters. When they lead (under any circumstance) we find that the blind is leading the blind. Destination: upside-down in a ditch.

Summarily, throughout the year, we will continue to move forward in understanding two things:

- 1) What is our current relationship with the mammon of this world, and
- 2) How a Christian may have a proper relationship with mammon (make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness)

Along the way, two of the most significant things we will find are that ...

- 1) The mind needs to be renewed, by the Word of God
- 2) The mind needs to return to a place of leadership

Until next time, take note of how you are currently making financial decisions. (Not just the large decisions; all of them.)

God speed! CGM

*Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG*

**Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.**

- (1) Matthew 6:24
- (2) Ray and BillieSue Landers learn more at <http://raylanders.com/>
- (3) Proverbs 4:7
- (4) James 1:23-24
- (5) Revelation 2:7a, 11a, 17a, etc.
- (6) Luke 6:38
- (7) 2 Timothy 2:15
- (8) Romans 12:2

# IF

By Rudyard Kipling

*(When I was a child, my father shared this poem with me. I'd like to share it with you.)*

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream -- and not make dreams your master;  
If you can think -- and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster  
And treat those two imposters just the same;

If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breathe a word about your loss;

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with kings -- nor lose the common touch,  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,  
If all men count with you, but none too much;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run --  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
And -- which is more -- you'll be a Man, my son!

Collected on 12/5/11 from

<http://www.poetryloverspage.com/poets/kipling/if.html>

## Are You Sure?

There is a healthy contemplation that drives us to check our commitment to our various relationships with others. While I have your attention may I ask another question? Do you ever wonder if you're really saved? I don't mean to intrude ... okay maybe I do intend to intrude. Do you contemplate your loyalty and commitment to your relationship "with Christ" very specifically? Respectfully, we are not talking here about your relationship with a religious institution. We're asking about a very up-close and personal relationship with the Person of Jesus Christ.

The scriptures encourage us to periodically check our "fruit." We are admonished to work out your own soul's salvation with fear and trembling. <sup>(1)</sup>

I can just imagine Jesus standing before the fig tree, asking "Hey guys, what type of tree is this?"

His disciples replied (almost snickering), "My Lord, it's a fig tree." And Jesus asks again, "How can you tell, that this is a fig tree?" His disciples reply again (almost bursting at the seams), "Teacher, we can tell by the leaves."

Jesus once again, "Okay, let Me ask you guys one more question ... what is the purpose of a fig tree, if it won't bear figs." They all fell silent.

Jesus cursed the fig tree saying, "Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit, My Father will remove. It will not be allowed to continue to make demands of (or trouble) the ground." <sup>(2)</sup> He looked at the disciples and walked away en route to Bethany. <sup>(3)</sup>

So I ask again, how do we know that we have a personal covenant with God?

**May I make a few suggestions on ways to discover the truth? <sup>(4)</sup>**

- 1. How does your covenant with Jesus Christ affect your concept of God and your attitude towards Him?**
- 2. How does your relationship with God affect your attitude towards Jesus Christ (Him as a Person and His Lordship over your life)?**
- 3. How does your covenant with God affect your attitude towards the Holy Scriptures?**
- 4. How does your relationship with Christ affect your attitude towards your "self-life" or your "flesh"?**
- 5. How does your covenant with Christ affect your relationship with and attitude towards your fellow Christians?**
- 6. How does your relationship with Jesus affect your relationship with and attitude towards the world?**
- 7. Last, but in no way least, how does your covenant with Jesus affect your attitude towards sin?**

Perhaps we should take the next couple of weeks or months and grapple with this? Try to answer each question thoroughly in light of the scripture's mandates on each of these respective relationships. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. <sup>(5)</sup>

**Be Sure!**

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

(1) Philippians 2:12

(2) John 15:1-2; Luke 13:7

(3) Matthew 21:17-19

(4) Gleanings and adaptations from A.W. Tozer's Man: The Dwelling Place of God, p.62-68

(5) Hebrews 13:20-21

~ SUMMARY ~

**The Chief Cornerstone**



Laodicea's *School of Ophthalmology* produced an eye salve. So the Beginning of the Creation of God says to them, "You have access to eye salve, use it. *Physician heal thyself.*"

**Son of My Wisdom**



So then your ethos will shape others' response to you, and your logos will shape your perception of such experiences. Therefore, in the sanctification of both, you will also be sanctifying your *pathos*.

**Boot Camp**



The destination for this journey was that we would come to a place in our understanding that the submission of our lives and the resulting sanctification of the soul to God is a journey. It is a marathon, not a sprint.

**Love and the Truth**



The *church that is cleansing* herself from her filth is a beautiful sight to behold. She is at odds with the entire world around her, not because she is a troublemaker, but because her purity of life judges the world around her.



**Choose: God or Mammon**



It seems to me that, at some point, Jesus knew that Judas (Iscaiot) was a thief. Ever wonder why our Lord allowed Judas to carry the bag of money? Who makes a CFO out of a thief?

~ SUMMARY ~

**The Leadership Corner**

These are just some of the "answers" to the unknown situations we are facing. As we mature in our Christian walk, we learn that it really doesn't matter what the question is. We have the "Answer." It doesn't matter that we don't have all of the details. We have the "Answer."

**Journey to Intimacy**



And it is by those whom the Spirit of the Lord God has anointed to BE the proclamation of good tidings to the meek; and who have been sent to recover the sight of the blind.

**Living Waters**



Unfortunately you'll find, by and large, that our decisions about the use of money are predominately influenced by our emotions (including ambition, passion, gut-feel, desire, etc.). When financial decisions are made, the intellect may often be brought in as an accountant; but somehow they seem at length to have originated in the emotions.

**Nutrition, Health & Wellness**



The human spirit is superior to the soul; and the soul is superior to the physical body. The *body* is regarded as healthy (or not); the *spirit* and *soul* are regarded as well (or not).

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