

Christ—Our Sanctification and Redemption

***“Of him are ye in
Christ Jesus, who
of God is made
unto us wisdom,
and righteousness,
and sanctification,
and redemption.”
—I Corinthians 1:30***

IN LAST MONTH’S ISSUE of *The Dawn*, we considered the first in a series of lessons on the general subject, “The Mind of Christ.” The above scripture was considered as to its first two parts—wisdom and righteousness—and how Christ Jesus is “made unto us” these things as we seek to develop his mind in our life. This month we will consider the last two features of this scripture—sanctification and redemption—considering how each of these also play an important role in the establishment in us of the mind of Christ.

When we read in the Scriptures of having “the mind of Christ” (I Cor. 2:16), more is included in this than simply thinking like Jesus did, although this is an important part of what is meant by this phrase. According to *Strong’s Greek Dictionary* and

Thayer's Greek Definitions, the word “mind” as used in this verse also includes these deeper meanings: the faculties of understanding, judging, and determining in a sober, calm, and impartial manner; the capacity for spiritual truth; the ability to perceive divine things, and to recognize goodness while hating evil; a particular mode of thinking as related to one's purposes and desires; the will. When viewed in this way, we can begin to appreciate the fact that developing the mind of Christ is a full-time job for those who would be his footstep followers.

Sanctification and redemption [deliverance] rank very high on the list of the benefits made available to us as a result of the sacrifice of our precious Redeemer. In order to fully appropriate these benefits, however, it is necessary that we take them deeply into our mind, our will, and the innermost purposes and desires of our heart, that they may more fully assist us in the transforming of our character into the image of Christ. These benefits must also produce from us, to the extent of our capacity and ability, good works, wholesome words, and righteous deeds. In other words, every aspect of life—our will, thoughts, words, and actions—should reflect as much as possible that mind which was in Christ Jesus. Only thus will he be fully “made unto us” sanctification and redemption.

CHRIST—OUR SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification signifies setting apart to holy service. The Greek word *hagiasmos* used in our text, which declares that Christ is made unto us sanctification, literally means, according to *Strong's*, purity, or purification. We should remember,

however, that the standard of purity to which the apostle refers is not one of human conception—not merely moral uprightness—but a purity of relationship to God, which means a full dedication of ourselves to do his will. The true meaning of sanctification from the divine standpoint is well illustrated by the inscription appearing on the mitre worn by Israel's high priest on his forehead, which read, "Holiness to the LORD." (Exod. 28:36-38) It meant, in the case of the typical priest, that through a properly constituted and carried-out service of consecration or dedication, he had been set apart to serve God in the holy things of the Tabernacle, including the offering of sacrifice.

In the consecration service by which Israel's priests were dedicated to fill the office of the priesthood (see Leviticus 8), a part of the blood from the ram of consecration was placed upon the tip of the right ear, the right thumb, and the great toe of the right foot. Thus was indicated the all-comprehensiveness of their consecration. Antitypically, in the case of those who follow the Master, it means that all of our life's efforts and works are to be dedicated and used in the divine service. As the blood was put upon the thumb of the right hand, so our consecrated sentiments will be, as expressed in the hymn, "Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love." (*Hymns of Dawn*, #277) As the blood was put upon the great toe of the priest's right foot, so we will endeavor to walk in the footsteps of the Master, to walk by faith in the way that the Holy Spirit leads, to walk as Christ walked. (Eph. 5:2) In our hearts and by our words and deeds, we will say to our God these additional words

from the hymn, “Take my feet and let them be swift on errands, Lord for thee.”

Similarly, as the blood was placed upon the right ear of the priest, so our hearing is to be one of faith in action. We are to “hearken unto the voice of the LORD” (Deut. 15:5), in order that we may not only know his will, but also do it. If the dedication of our lives is complete, if our devotion is unmixed and whole-hearted, we will not give ear to other suggestions of any kind, whether from the world, the flesh, or the Adversary, the purpose of which may likely be to turn us aside from the narrow way.

The life of the fully consecrated is one in which moments and days are made to flow in channels which can be used for showing forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. (I Pet. 2:9) Our every thought and power should be used in keeping with the divine will, and brought “into captivity . . . to the obedience of Christ.” (II Cor. 10:5) We will want the will of God enthroned in our heart so completely that our life will be poured out to him and his service, and our whole being consecrated fully and forever to the doing of his will.

In all of this, Christ is our sanctification because the fullness of his devotion to God—a devotion so zealously performed that he was consumed with fervent zeal—is the example which we should follow. The work of sanctification is not a momentary one. While there is a moment in which an individual definitely decides to consecrate himself to do God’s will, the carrying out of that consecration, the living of a life set apart to the holy purpose of God, is the work of a lifetime. Daily we should study the Word

of God by which we are sanctified. Daily we should look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. These daily endeavors are necessary in order that we may more and more set aside the old ways of the flesh, and have the Spirit of Christ filling our hearts, with the will of God the supreme issue in our lives.

Jesus, praying on behalf of his followers, asked that they be “sanctified” by the truth. (John 17:17) It is important to realize that error will not sanctify. Neither will ignorance sanctify. This is an important reason why our study of God’s Word should be sincere, and in the spirit of humility. In this way only will we glean from its pages what God expects of us, rather than to be searching the Word for justification of our own ideas. The Prophet Micah expresses this sentiment, when, enumerating the requirements of the divine will, he lists among them, “walk humbly with thy God.” (Mic. 6:8) We are not walking humbly with our God if we resist the plain instructions of his Word with respect to any of the details of our consecrated life.

EMOTION NOT SANCTIFICATION

Confusion exists in the minds of many professed followers of Christ with respect to the life of sanctification. They erroneously couple it with religious emotion, mistakenly expecting an outward manifestation of some spectacular nature, or some inward feeling of ecstasy as an evidence of their acceptance with the Lord. The peace and joy of the Lord which fill the hearts of truly consecrated believers will be manifested to a large extent in keeping with their own natural dispositions. Some are by nature more

emotional than others, and it is understandable that when such are introduced to the joys of faith and the blessings of a life that is lived for God, their emotions may be greatly stirred.

On the other hand, the same joys of faith in the hearts of those consecrated ones who by nature are more practical and less demonstrative, can be just as deep and satisfactory. In other words, religious emotions, to whatever extent they may appear, are to be viewed, not as a guide in the Christian way, but merely as the result of being made free from condemnation and of having the assurance of acceptableness with God.

We should remember, too, that the sanctified life goes far beyond a mere turning toward goodness and righteousness, and a turning away from evil and unrighteousness. It is also more than an endeavor to be morally upright and pure. It includes these, upon the basis of one's best efforts to be righteous, but there is the further privilege of devoting that life to the service of God. Sanctification, then, goes far beyond the mere giving up of bad habits, the mere forgetting of a few worldly pleasures. It is indeed a giving up of these things, but at the same time it is a living for God, his purposes, and his plan.

One who is fully devoted to the doing of God's will, and who is laying down his life in the divine service, will have little, if any, time to indulge in worldly pleasures, even those that appear wholesome by nature. He will not find it necessary to determine whether such things are sinful or impure. His life being devoted to the service of God, he will have little or no time for things of the world.

One who, from the bottom of his heart, can truly say to the Lord, quoting again the words of the hymn, "Take myself, I wish to be ever, only, all for thee," will not be seeking worldly entertainment, because there will be too many things to do for the Lord, the truth, and the brethren.

CHRIST—OUR DELIVERANCE

Christ is also made unto us redemption, says the apostle. The word redemption is here used in the sense of deliverance, or salvation. This is the outcome of the redemptive work—the result of a ransom, or a corresponding price, having been given. It is the same Greek word translated "deliverance" in Hebrews 11:35. The thought is that of the child of God's full victory through Christ, and of the ultimate attainment of a position of glory with him in his kingdom.

If this ultimate and full deliverance of the foot-step followers of Christ is to be realized, however, there must also be the intermediate and incidental deliverances of the faithful all along the narrow way. Christ is made unto us deliverance, both in our daily experiences of trial and testing, as well as in the final deliverance from this "vile body," in the glories of the first resurrection.—Phil. 3:21

The redemption provided by Christ will eventually result in the deliverance of all mankind from sin and death, but in the divine program the redemption and deliverance of his followers of this present age comes first. This redemption, or deliverance, which is in Christ Jesus, both as it applies to our present experiences and, also, to our ultimate deliverance into the kingdom, is always identified with

his sacrifice, made on our behalf. In connection with that sacrifice, our Lord was severely tested and tried, and the apostle explains that by reason of this, "He is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:17,18) That is, he is able to deliver them from temptations which otherwise might overpower them.

Because Christ is dealing with us as a faithful and sympathetic High Priest, we have the promise that God "will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (I Cor. 10:13) True, our Heavenly Father may permit us to stumble temporarily, but even such an experience will be overruled for our good, if we continue to put our trust in him and maintain our assurance of the fact that he will help us, assist us, deliver us, in every time of need.

We are permitted to stumble at times, perhaps, in order that valuable lessons may be learned respecting our weaknesses. Sometimes we may forget our need of divine help. We may think that we are able to stand in our own strength. It is then that we need to take heed lest we fall. The Lord in his wisdom permits us to stumble, therefore, in order that we may be reminded of our need of him, our need to lean upon his strength, that we may find in him our staff of support to keep us from actually falling.

If, through all of our daily experiences in the narrow way, we learn to put our trust more fully in him who is our redemption and deliverance now, who has provided a covering for our sins, and who has promised us help to overcome our temptations,

we will finally experience that great and ultimate deliverance into the kingdom. This grand hope is especially meaningful today, because the signs around us in the world indicate that the faithful followers of Christ will soon all be delivered and united with him in glory. If we are faithful as individuals we can take comfort in the Master's blessed assurance, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh."—Luke 21:28

