

Grace Bible Church
Tree of Life
A Weekly Review
Week ending 031013 Being a soldier for the Word of God. Part 4.

There have always been warnings throughout human history concerning not to fall away from the ancient landmarks and biblical foundations such as in passages like:

Deu 19:14, Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it.

Job 24:2 Some remove the landmarks; they seize and devour flocks.

Pro 22:28 Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.

Pro 23:10 Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless.

There has always been a danger of what some have not only called break-through, but in some cases new doctrines. The issue is as the apostle Paul said in **2Co 11:3, But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity {of devotion} to Christ.**

Remember that the strategical victory has already been won at the Cross by our Lord and savior while we, the Church, have been left behind to experience and enjoy the tactical victory of our Lord by mean of glorifying Him.

This is why we have passages such as **Eph 2:8, For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.**

This is the strategical victory to be followed by the tactical victory found in:

Eph 2:10, For we are His workmanship [new creatures in Christ], created in Christ Jesus for [the purpose of producing good works], which [good works] God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

This is why our Lord said in **Rev 22:12, "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city."**

There's a passage found in Rev 3:14-22, that teaches us the importance of rebound or repent given to the early church

Rev 3:14-15, And to the angel [the Greek says, the messenger, a reference to the pastor-teacher] of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot.

Cold or *psuchros* is used for the unbelievers in the Laodicean church. Of course I hope that you realize that in every local assembly there is the possibility and even probability that there are unbelievers in the midst.

Hot or *zestos* refers to believers who have lived in the PPOG and who have utilized grace and advanced to maturity. This is important to understand because the Lord Jesus Christ TLJC is not saying this to mature believers, who are hot, or unbelievers who are cold. This passage is *not* addressed to the unbelievers at Laodicea or the believers who have PVTD.

The Lord Jesus Christ says, "I am not speaking to the cold or hot" in this verse. In other words, the solution for the cold unbeliever is to believe in Christ. The solution for the hot believer is the problem solving devices made available through his relationship with God. If they were cold, He could give them the Gospel. If they were hot, they would use the problem-solving devices to solve their problems and He would continue to give them advanced doctrine. But, because they are lukewarm, all He can do is warn them.

Rev 3:16, "So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth."

This is the story of the sin unto death and one of the greatest tragedies that could ever occur to you as a believer. The sin unto death is God putting His official stamp of loser on the life of the believer and a guarantee of shame and embarrassment at the Judgment seat of Christ.

1Jo 2:28, And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

Phi 3:19, whose end is destruction, whose god is {their} appetite, and {whose} glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

2Ti 2:15, Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.

Rev 16:15, "Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame."

We are never commanded to be baptized with the Spirit, 1Co 12:13.

We are never commanded to be indwelt by the Spirit, Rom 8:9.

We are never commanded to be sealed by the Spirit, 2Co 1:22.

However, we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit, Eph 5:18.

We are commanded to walk by means of the Spirit, Gal 5:16.

We are commanded not to grieve the Spirit, Eph 4:30.

We are commanded not to quench the Spirit, 1Th 5:19.

There are at least **Seven Salvation Ministries of the Holy Spirit**. God the Holy Spirit did at least seven things for each Church-age believer at salvation. These

seven things done for the believer by the Spirit at salvation form the basis for unity among believers.

- 1. Efficacious Grace** - This is the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to the believer in Christ, or the work of the Holy Spirit which enables the believer to have an effective faith in Christ as Savior.
- 2. Regeneration** - This is the second ministry of the Holy Spirit at salvation and it is often called being "born again," because that's the way it is described in Joh 3:1-18, in our Lord's discussion with Nicodemus.
- 3. The Baptism of the Spirit** - At the moment we believe in Christ, God the Holy Spirit took each one of us and entered us into union with the person of Jesus Christ.
- 4. The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit** - God the Holy Spirit indwells your body, 1Co 3:16, 6:19-20; 2Co 6:16, "Your body is a temple of the Spirit who is in you."
- 5. The Filling of the Holy Spirit** - Taught in Eph 5:18; Gal 5:16. We are filled with the Spirit at salvation when God the Holy Spirit takes us and enters us into the PPOG.
- 6. The Sealing Ministry of the Holy Spirit** - Found in Eph 1:13-14, 4:30.
- 7. The Sovereign Distribution of Spiritual Gifts to each Believer.**

All three members of the Trinity are actually involved in the distribution of our spiritual gifts. God the Father was involved in the distribution of spiritual gifts as a witness to the strategic victory of Jesus Christ after His ascension. This began in the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union, Heb 2:4.

God the Son was involved in the initial distribution of spiritual gifts to the first generation of the body of Christ or royal family. After the first generation of the royal family, God the Holy Spirit is involved in all subsequent distribution of spiritual gifts, 1Co 12:11.

So, in **Rev 3:16**, "**So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.**"

This is one of the greatest disgraces for a believer. There is no order of the morning star, no uniform of glory, no uniform of honor, no crowns, no official coat of arms and all those wonderful things involved in ruling during the Millennium, Just embarrassment and shrinking in shame at the bema seat judgment.

Now, in verse 17, we note that these people who are in this category may even have certain kinds of prosperity. They may have certain kinds of success and prosperity but their success and prosperity does not bring them happiness.

Rev 3:17, Because you say, "**I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,**" and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

In this passage, they were not able to pass the prosperity test. They still have the prosperity as they are living in the cosmic system. The prosperity is still there! However, the prosperity that they have in the cosmic system is going to be a means of setting them up for divine discipline. They may think that they're going to lose their prosperity or they will have absolutely no capacity to enjoy it. Prosperous people like non-prosperous people are very unhappy and unstable people.

Prosperity doesn't change anything. It may change a few overt manifestations in life, It may change the lifestyle slightly because there is more utilization of monetary things etc...but prosperity and money cannot change the soul.

Rev 3:17, Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,"

The moment that you say;
I am successful,
I am rich,
I am wealthy, you know that you have problems!

Once you get into the "I" syndrome there is the exclusion of the PPOG. You're never going to have a truly successful and meaningful relationship with any human being when you have an attitude like this.

So here we have not some person who is out on the streets or down in a gutter somewhere. This is a person who is wealthy, successful and prosperous. This is the prosperity test.

Rev 3:17, Because you say, I am rich,

Rich or *plousios* can mean many things; It can mean success, promotion, fame, approbation, social prosperity, sexual prosperity, business prosperity. There's nothing wrong with prosperity but, all too frequently, there is something wrong with those who have prosperity.

Prosperity was designed to be a blessing but prosperity can never be a blessing for any believer minus capacity. So, in this passage we are talking about cosmic believers who will be embarrassed and shrink in shame at the Judgment Seat of Christ. They are wealthy, successful, prosperous and rich, while they are still in the cosmic system.

Rev 3:17, "Because you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,'"

I have need of nothing. I don't need doctrine! I don't need a church! I don't need a pastor! I don't need the PPOG. And this is all the result of involvement in the cosmic system.

Rev 3:17, “Because you say, ‘I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,’ and you do not know that you are wretched...”

That’s no capacity for prosperity, no happiness from prosperity, and poor, no power or strength in prosperity, and blind, no perception of truth, and naked, no uniform of honor in time and therefore no uniform of glory in eternity.

Remember the principle that grace precedes judgment and therefore the Lord offers them some advice on how to recover.

Rev 3:18, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see.

Obviously the first step to recovery is to name and site your sins and then to begin to sort out your priorities and decide what is best for you in life. You need to decide what should have first place on your scale of values. The problems that believers face often come from wrong priorities as well as from the problem of ignorance.

Rev 3:19, “Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent.”

The word love is the pres-act-ind of the verb *phileo*, rather strange when you would expect *agapao* which is generally used for impersonal love.

The manifestation of his love for us now comes out in the next verb, the pres-act-ind of the verb *elegcho* which means to convince, to convict, to bring to light or to reality. So the word reprove is a good translation.

The present tense is a customary present which indicates that which occurs when a believer becomes involved in the cosmic system and ends up in carnality or becomes fleshly. Such a believer receives warning discipline. However, make sure again that you have in your notes the purpose of discipline which is to motivate you to rebound and recover, not to pay for your mistakes.

The active voice, God produces the action of the verb through the provision of warning discipline.

By involvement in the cosmic system you make a lot of bad decisions as a cosmic believer. These decisions are contrary to the will of God and to the plan of God for your life. These bad decisions are the source of your suffering and misery. Suffering and misery are generally because you have made bad decisions not because you are under divine discipline. In other words, we are under the law of volitional responsibility. We bring about our own suffering and our own self induced misery.

Most believers who think that they are being punished or disciplined by God do not realize that they are being punished by their own bad decisions.

Isa 3:9, For they have brought evil upon themselves.

How do they do that?

Rev 3:19, As many as I love, I rebuke (i.e., warning discipline) **and chasten** (intensive discipline); **be zealous therefore** (the command to be motivated), **and repent.**

There are three different categories of divine discipline;

1. Warning discipline
2. Intensive discipline
3. Dying discipline

Warning discipline is found in such passages as **Rev 3:20, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.”**

That knock at the door is warning discipline. As a general rule, warning discipline is in itself less severe than the believer's self-induced misery. However, the combination of warning discipline and self-induced misery adds up to a significant shock. Because he has not yet degenerated into the later stages of negative volition, this believer is still sensitive to the truth.

He can still profit from this degree of discipline so that God does not have to proceed to the next stage of punitive suffering. He can still hear the knocking on the door as it were. God can catch his attention with relatively mild suffering. However, if the believer ignores or rejects divine warnings, he eventually requires intensive discipline.

By habitual negative volition he has dulled his sensitivity to truth; warning discipline is no longer sufficient. God still has a marvelous plan for blessing this cosmic believer, but God's plan can be executed only in the power of the filling of the Spirit.

The Christian way of Life is a supernatural way of life. As such it requires a supernatural dynamics for its execution (Phi 2:12-13). The filling of the Holy Spirit is the second of the ten problem-solving devices found in the Word of God, and solves the problem of our inability as a frail man to serve God, by empowering the believer for the fulfillment of the Christian way of life.

The filling of the Spirit may be defined as the Holy Spirit's control of the believer's soul. The Spirit's control of the believer's soul is the essence of Christian spirituality. The filling of the Spirit, as an experiential reality in life, must be distinguished from other ministries of the Holy Spirit, such as the baptism of the Spirit (1Co 12:13), regeneration (Tit 3:5-6), the indwelling of the Spirit (Joh 14:16-17), and the seal of the Spirit (Eph 1:13).

The filling of the Spirit also solves the problems with the believer's lifestyle -(e.g., legalism), as attempting to execute the spiritual life or Christian service in the energy of the flesh. The filling of the Holy Spirit involves access to the power of God for the Christian life.

The filling of the Spirit is essential for spiritual combat, and for the prevention of satanic influence of the soul (Eph 6:10-12).

The life of God in the soul is the only thing that can produce that kind of living, you see. If that weren't true then unregenerated people could live like that. A Christian must do it in the power of the Holy Spirit.