

'The fruitage of the righteous one
is a tree of life'
Proverbs 11:30



“CULTIVATING CHRIST LIKE CHARACTER!”

*Booklet 11
Of
“Effective Christian Living Series!”*

By

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THE BIG QUESTION

11

"CULTIVATING CHRIST LIKE CHARACTER!"

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1.

*"HOW CAN I PERSONALLY EXPERIENCE
THE DEEPEST LOVE?"*

Paul experienced a love for the Philippian believers, which was greater than mere friendship-type love.

Paul was speaking of the highest kind of love called 'agape'. This love is linked with the will more than with the mere emotions. This love is exercised independent of how the object of the love responds—good or bad. It is the same kind of love which Jesus was speaking of when He said, "Love your enemies; Do good to those who despitefully use you".

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

When Paul speaks to the Philippians and desires that their love may abound more and more, he did not mean to imply that this love (agape) was humanly achieved, humanly exercised, independent of God.

Central to Paul's thought was the idea of God's grace. Paul clearly taught that corrupted human nature within itself is incapable of agape love. Such a love is the gift

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of God, thus Paul's doctrine of 'grace'.

"God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us." (*Romans 5:5*)

Because of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, God's grace is available to mankind. God's love for man is objectively proved through the death of His Son on the cross. God's love is subjectively appropriated by man through the faith of repentance and self-surrender. The God-wrought love in man enables man to love both God and his fellowmen.

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, thou art all compassion, pure unbounded love thou art. I am made by Love and for loving. Thou Giver of all perfect gifts, give me the choicest of all gifts - the Gift of thy blessed Holy Spirit, whose power to shed abroad thy love in my heart is limitless!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Always remember that you cannot earn or achieve what belongs alone to Almighty God, namely the divine-type love! God's

Love is a gift given to receptive (humble) persons, not a human achievement through much discipline and hard efforts. God is the Giver of all perfect gifts, and love is God's great gift to humans! God is always Giver, and you are always Receiver. Today, allow the Holy Spirit to 'fill your cup' to overflowing with His Divine Love!

2.

*"WHAT IS MY STRONGEST MOTIVATION
FOR HUMILITY?"*

Love Conquers Pride! "I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene, and wonder how He could love me, a sinner condemned, unclean. How marvelous! How Wonderful! Is my Savior's love for me!"

This is the song of the sinner who is saved by GRACE! In these words, there is no attitude of boasting. To realize that the Son of God condescended from the Ivory Palaces of Heaven to a sin-cursed earth to die for fallen humanity is to realize that there is no place for boasting and glorying in self!

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

"All I am or ever hope to be, I owe to the Savior" - that is the attitude of the soul set free from the bondage of sin!

To experience God's mercy, is to be "lost in wonder, love, and praise". Said one perceptive soul: "The conquest of Mt. Everest is small compared to the conquest of pride,

greed, selfishness, and hate".

The question comes forcibly to the Christian, "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" The Christian knows he has no cause for boasting, for all he possesses is from the hand of a benevolent God.

John Newton was captured by God's love, and felt compelled to write of God's grace: "Amazing Grace! How Sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!" The loveless one - man - is made lovely by the altogether Lovely Christ.

As William Barclay says, "Love is kept humble by the consciousness that it can never offer it's loved one a gift which is good enough". (Daily Study Bible; Corinthians, pg. 134)

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, deliver me from painful introversion and hurtful introspection. Enable me to be humble in my evaluation of myself, compassionate in my service to others, and bold in my witness for Christ. Through your Spirit-imparted love, help me to be spiritually integrated, physically healthy, and mentally balanced. In Jesus' name." Amen.

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

*Remember that Love enables you to have
humility without humiliation, and to have
self-esteem without pride!*

3.

"CAN I BECOME A HUMBLE PERSON?"

John the Baptist felt himself to be small as he looked at himself in light of the person and work of Christ.

He saw Jesus as eternal and saw himself as finite and transitory. He saw Jesus as the center figure on the stage of human history, and saw himself as a minor, supportive figure on that stage. Jesus is the Master; John feels that he is not even worthy to be considered a disciple of the Master, but feels that his role is that of a mere slave, one who is not worthy even to untie the shoes of the Master!

Jesus is like the Bridegroom, the center of action and attention; John is only the friend of the Bridegroom, one who is in the background, in the shadows, one who fulfills a humble and supportive role in bringing the Bride and the Bridegroom together.

Yes, John feels humbled in the presence of the Savior. However, while he rightly feels

small in the presence of Jesus, he did not feel humiliated and shamed in the presence of Jesus. It is possible to feel small without feeling insignificant and it is possible to feel humility, without feeling humiliation. John felt humility as he looked at himself, but he felt pride as he looked at his Savior, and this sense of pride in the Savior saved John from the feelings of humiliation and shame. Dignity is found, not in claiming to be something we are not, but in accepting the humble, yet important role, which is ours because of our relationship to Jesus!

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

The work-oriented person is the one who bases his faith in human performance.

The grace-oriented person is the one who bases his faith in the all-powerful, all-loving God, hence humility.

In the 'Way of Works', hope is based on what man can do for God. Hence, man's work is the focus of attention, which leads to pride and boasting.

In the 'Way of Faith', hope is based on what God can do for man. Hence, God's power and love is the Focus of attention, which

leads to humility and worship of God.

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"O God, my request shall be mercy, not justice. My motivation for labor shall be love, not fear. My accomplishments shall be God-given, not humanly-achieved.

My boasting shall be in God's perfect glory, not in man's passing glory. My rewards shall be humbly received, not pridefully demanded. I shall take the humble way of faith, not the proud way of mere human achievements. Pride leads to destruction, but humility leads to life - here and hereafter! The way of faith is the way of the open mind, the reverent spirit, the tender heart, the balanced emotions, the surrendered will, and the healthy body - whereas the way of human 'works' is the way of sinful pride and ultimate and total destruction!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Remember that the way of strict justice is the way of harsh judgment; the way of mercy is the way of lavish love. God resists the proud (who only want justice), but God blesses the humble (who only plead for God's mercy)!

4.

"HOW CAN I LEARN TO FIX MY MIND ON CHRIST?"

The Battle for Thoughts Is Greater Than the Battle of Guns!

For temptation attacks the mind first, then the emotions, and finally the will.

The Scripture exhorts us to guard our minds. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:5)

The Psalmist tells us to meditate upon God's Word day and night. Isaiah 26:3 says, "You (God) will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast because he trusts in You".

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

How can one fix his mind on God, thus enjoying daily renewal and perpetual peace? Following are a few suggestions.

First, be careful what you listen to. Research has shown that what one carefully and repeatedly listens to, becomes the personalized life value of the listener.

Second, if one is to fix his mind on God, he must be careful what he sees. The mind's ideas are largely formed through the eye gate. That which we look at most, will become that which we value most. Be careful what you watch on TV!

Third, if one is to fix his mind on God, he must be careful what he reads.

Fourth, if one is to fix his mind on God, he must guard his conversation. The quality of one's conversation reveals the quality of one is thinking. However, it is also true that the disciplined control of one's conversation (whether one's words are positive or negative), helps shape one's thinking. We create our world by our words!

Someone noted: 'A feeble mind thinks and talks only about people (gossip); a mediocre mind thinks and talks about people, and some about events; a superior mind thinks and talks lovingly about people, interestingly about events, and profoundly about ideas!'

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, help me to have a consecrated mind - one that is being renewed daily through regular meditation on Your Word.

Help me to guard my mind against satanic attacks of temptation by guarding my ear gate and my eye gate!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

I encourage you to 'steadfastly' fix your mind upon Christ and upon His matchless and enduring WORD (Bible), in order that your thoughts and your words will be steadfastly positive!

5.

"IF I HAVE FAITH IN MY LIFE DO I NEED LOVE?"

I Corinthians 13:2b says, "If I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing". Faith without love can be impersonal and unfeeling. There are those who strongly declare faith in God, but who are intolerant and unloving in their judgments of others who differ from them!

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Strong personal convictions are, of course, important, but these convictions should be stated lovingly and kindly.

There are those who are orthodox in beliefs (doctrines) and who often make faith-assertions, but who are cold, calculating, and unresponsive in human relationships.

There are those who claim faith but who essentially are critical and judgmental. A broken-hearted person would not feel welcome to use their shoulder to weep on.

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Love is supreme, and without love—God's love in me - everything else is ultimately worthless. Father, I see that this love is a gift, given to the humble, surrendered, responsive heart. Just now I open my life to you. Fill me with your love. I receive it, as a small child trustingly receives a good gift from a generous father. I gladly surrender the total control of my life to the Holy Spirit. Thank you!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

I believe you are aware that it is impossible to love the loveless, to befriend the lonely, to accept the downtrodden, to reach out to the forsaken, to forgive the gross offender, to rescue the perishing, to comfort the sorrowing - unless you are living a self-forgetful life of true love! But you cannot earn, purchase, and achieve this love 'on your own'! Supernatural love is given as a gift by a Supernatural God—the God whose very nature is LOVE!

6.

"WHAT IS THE SECRET OF SELF-CONTROL IN MY LIFE?"

What is the secret of self-control in one's life? Cultivating the mind of Christ! Learning to think Christ's thoughts! Submitting to Christ's lordship!

Remember, whatever gets your attention, gets you! "Sow a thought, reap an action; sow an action, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny!" It all starts with the way a person thinks!

As a man thinks, so is he! You are the product of your thoughts! What you imagine, you will become! "What you hold in the mind passes automatically into act, if you hold it there long enough. Your secret meditations become you, for good or ill." (Growing Spiritually, pg. 201; Stanley Jones)

A moral landslide is preceded by a mental landslide. What you focus your thoughts upon, you eventually become! "If therefore

you dally with sex thoughts and imaginations, that dallying will become a doing. And that doing will become you." (Ibid, pg. 201)

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

"Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right! Think about things that are pure and lovely and dwell on the fine good things in others. Think about all you can praise God for and be glad about." (*Philippians 4:8*)

Meditate on God's laws day and night! If you do, you will be like a tree that is planted by the rivers of water, which bringeth forth its fruit in its season. Its leaves also shall not wither and die! (See Psalms 1)

Why do people wither and die morally? Because they wither and die mentally! Ignoble thoughts lead to ignoble lives. Lustful thinking leads to lustful living!

"When lust hath conceived it eventually bringeth forth death!" (James 1:15) How is lust conceived? By failing to control the thought life! You cannot help it if birds fly above your head, but you are responsible if you allow birds to make nests in your hair!

You cannot help it if Satan suggests evil thoughts to you, but you are responsible if you entertain evil thoughts, resulting in developing patterns of evil thinking! You are not responsible for having temptations, but you are responsible for yielding to temptations. You may not be responsible for the first look, but you are responsible for the second look! If you can go around temptation, you cannot expect God to take you through temptation. If you put yourself in the very trap of temptation, do not be surprised if you are trapped in sin!

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, I acknowledge that I cannot 'play with fire' and not expect to be burned. I cannot engage lustful thinking and not expect to become lustful in action. Help me to guard my affections, for my affections guide my life. Make me pure in thy purity, and holy in thy holiness. In the Holy Name of Jesus. Amen!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

GLANCE at the events of the world, but GAZE at the blessed face of Christ. Remember, 'what gets your attention gets you!' Focus your attention on the Holy One

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(Christ) and the Holy Word (Bible), in order that you will increasingly become a man of holiness!

7.

*"SHOULD I SERVE GOD BECAUSE OF
HIS UNFAILING GOODNESS?"*

One of the strongest motivations for repentance of sin and for serving the Lord is the goodness of God.

The goodness of the Lord is meant to lead people to repentance. The goodness of the Lord should be a strong incentive faithfully to serve God, amidst all the changes and chances of life and in spite of all of life's injustices, inequities, and mysteries. In light of God's shower of blessings upon undeserving mankind, anything less than gratitude and love in man's response constitutes a gross sin!

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Health and wealth and contentment in one's daily work are all gifts from God. "It is very good if a man has received wealth from the Lord, and the good health to enjoy it. To enjoy your work and to accept your lot in life - that is indeed a gift from God. The person who does that will not need to

look back with sorrow on his past, for God gives him joy." (*Ecclesiastes 5:19-20*)

*Domestic happiness is a God-sanctioned and even a God-given gift. "So go ahead, eat, drink, and be merry, for it makes no difference to God! Wear fine clothes - with a dash of cologne! Live happily with the woman you love through the fleeting days of life, for the wife God gives you is your best reward down here for all your earthly toil." (*Ecclesiastes 9:7-9*)*

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"O God, I know that the reason I serve you is simply because you are the self-revealed God of the universe - altogether holy and loving! I do not serve you for what I can 'get out of you' (for the benefits I might derive from you). When ancient Job was suffering the loss of all things (wealth and health, family and status), he stated his loyalty to you when he declared 'Though you slay me, still I will serve You'. In other words, I will serve you even when I do not receive material benefits from you! Help me, throughout life, to love you, simply because You are worthy of my love - not because I want to 'use you' to derive lots of material things or social status, etc. But, while you desire my allegiance to you (irre-

spective of the visible benefits I might receive from you), I increasingly realize that I have been the beneficiary of countless God-given benefits and blessings. Although I deserve none of them, O God, help me to be more grateful to You for these countless gifts. Gifts like food, drink, clothing, material wealth, possessions, love of family, contentment in labor, wisdom, knowledge, and happiness. God, you are a gracious God! You are always on the giving end, and I am always on the receiving end in my life! Fill me with an overflowing sense of gratitude! Amen!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Always remember that your gracious God will grace your life with heaven's best gifts (including wisdom, knowledge, joy) - as you love and worship the God of all GRACE!

8.

*"CAN I EXPERIENCE THE CAPSTONE OF
ALL CHRISTIAN VIRTUES?"*

Agape is the Greek word which describes the highest and noblest kind of love – the kind of love which Jesus demonstrated when He died on the cross. This love is linked more with the will than it is with the emotions. This love is exercised independently of how the object of the love responds. It is the love, which has been described as unconquerable benevolence and invincible goodwill, a commitment of the will to love even those who would be spiteful and hateful. "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" - words of love from the Lover of sinners whose treatment of the Savior was most despicable!

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Love is not an option for the sincere Christian: it is an absolute imperative! Jesus commanded us to love God supremely and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Love is

the very essence of the Christian life and is the capstone of all the Christian graces.

Said John Wesley: "Religion is the most simple thing that can be conceived. It is only humble, gentle, patient love".

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, I am seeing that I am made by Love and for loving. If I don't love, I perish, perhaps only gradually but surely and ultimately! Enable me to love with your kind of love—the love that loves love into the loveless, that cares for the careless, that lifts up the fallen, that soothes the sorrowing, that heals the hurting. In Jesus' loving name. Amen."

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Always remember that what God commands (love for all persons), and what your human nature demands (good will towards everyone), your Mighty God supplies (supernatural power to love everyone)! Of course, you will not like everyone around you, but God will surprise you with His imparted gift: "...and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us". (Romans

5:5)

That will enable you to love the loveless, to care for the dying, to understand the ignorant, to forgive the offenders, to affirm the downtrodden, and so much more! If you consecrate your heart and head to the Holy Spirit, He will work in Your life Supernaturally!

9.

*"HOW CAN I PRACTICE OBEDIENCE
WITHOUT BECOMING
LEGALISTIC?"*

The important question to ask is this: "How can I maintain a close and meaningful walk with God?"

The Spirit-filled life is maintained by obedience and daily surrender to Christ. Daily surrender is the stuff of which obedience is made. Obedience is the stabilizer of the Christian life. Lack of obedience causes shipwreck in the Christian life. The shores of time are strewn with 'King Saul's' who failed to realize that nothing can substitute for obedience—not even sacrifice.

Wrote John, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." (1 John 2:3-4)

Strangely, there are those who believe in Christ, yet nevertheless somehow believe it

is not so important how they themselves live. They feel that Christ's righteousness will somehow cover their unrighteousness, and that what is changed is not their behavior necessarily but merely their relationship with God.

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

On the other hand, obedience to God is not a slavish, legalistic obedience that is performed out of a mere sense of duty. The Pharisees bent over backwards to keep the Law, but the law they kept was not the Law of God. It was the man-made rules, regulations, and traditions which they strained so hard to keep. They neglected the weightier matters of God's Law and became preoccupied with their own petty ideas and opinions.

Jesus said they strained at gnats and swallowed camels'. They focused so much attention upon externals that they forgot that the essence of godliness is internal purity and righteousness. The children of the Pharisees are still with us. Such are hard and critical of others but easy on themselves. The essence of their religion is a tediously worked out system of 'Dos and Don'ts'. Their obedience is to their own notions and convictions, not to flexible and

adaptable principles.

To the Christian that is truly set free from sin and who is living by the dictates of the Spirit, his obedience to God is joyous and delightful. The commandments of God are not grievous to him, but they are his meat and drink.

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"O God, if I truly love you, I will seek to obey you! I want to be a Spirit-filled, love-motivated follower of you. Obedience will then be willing and glad and enthusiastic, not burdensome, hesitant, unpleasant! As one who delights in your statutes and commandments, your will is the way of health and happiness. Your commandments are not grievous to me, but they are my 'meat and my drink' (the substance of my very life)!

With the Psalmist, I declare: "I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word." (Psalms 119:16) I wish to meditate day and night upon your Laws, O my God! I want always that my obedience will be the obedience that comes from a glad and willing and grateful heart (from the heart of a 'lover of God')! I want obedience to you, my loving God, to issue forth in deeds of

love among my fellowmen.

I ask you, my merciful God, to keep my mind open and my heart tender—that I might always find it delightful to do thy holy will! When your HOLY Laws are written on the tablet of my 'fleshly heart', my outward actions will always be regulated by the 'SPIRIT OF THE LAW' (Love), instead of by the 'letter of the law' (legalism)! Thank You!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Always remember that Jesus did not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill the Law through the enabling Holy Spirit who motivates you to act and to react in love!

10.

*"HOW CAN I BE AN AGENT FOR PEACE
IN MY WORLD?"*

If we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and if we have the peace of God in our hearts as we stay our mind on Christ, then we will seek peace for God, i.e., we will be peacemakers!

We can be active peacemakers in many ways. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God". (Matthew 5:9) He who is a peacemaker is doing the very work of God, for God is a "God of Peace"!

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Express peaceful greetings. In many of Paul's letters, he expressed his greetings to his friends in these words: "Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ".

To wish someone peace is to wish him every blessing, which God can give, even those choice gifts which sometimes come through troubling circumstances!

To wish someone peace then is not to wish them freedom from all troubles in life, but to wish them God's richest blessings which sometimes come as a result of enduring life's trials.

Use peaceful words. We can be peace-makers by the words we speak. Some words build up and some words tear down human relationships. Be very careful in the selection of your words!

"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." (Proverbs 15:1) "Some people like to make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise soothe and heal." (Proverbs 12:18) "Blessed are those who bring good tidings, who proclaim peace!" (Nahum 1:15)

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, enable me to be an ambassador of peace, your instrument of peaceful relationships between fellow human beings. Let my greetings be peaceful greetings, my words be soothing words, my actions be reconciling actions, my prayers be world-changing prayers!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

True peace (in all dimensions) is a gift from God. God intends for you to be a peace-filled person who, in turn, is God's 'agent' to bring the message of God's love and reconciliation to everyone around you. Upwardly you enjoy peace with God. Inwardly you enjoy the peace OF God. Now, you are prepared to be God's agent—to allow peace to flow from your life for God! God needs you, and the world of turmoil certainly needs you!

11.

"HOW CAN I DO A GOD-LIKE WORK IN MY WORLD?"

If we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and if we have the peace of God in our hearts as we stay (fix) our mind on Christ, then we will seek peace for God, i.e., we will be peacemakers. We can be active peacemakers in many ways.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the 'Sons of God'!" (Matthew 5:9) He who is a peacemaker is doing the very work of God, for God is a God of Peace!

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Involve yourself in peaceful actions. Abraham Lincoln once said: "Die when I may I would like it to be said of me, that I always pulled up a weed and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow". There are people who are always storm centers of trouble and bitterness and strife. "There are other people in whose presence

bitterness cannot live, people who bridge the gulfs, and heal the breaches, and sweeten the bitterness. Such people are doing a godlike work, for it is the great purpose of God to bring peace between man and Himself, and between man and man. The man who divides men is doing the devil's work; the man who unites men is doing God's work." (Daily Study Bible, Matthew, vol. 1, pg. 105; Barclay)

Pray peaceful prayers. One of the most productive activities to bring about peace is prayer. What the world needs are millions of prayer warriors who will cover the earth with a blanket of prayer. Prayer is the mightiest force in the Universe, and the only ultimate way of bringing peace to our troubled world.

"I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life, godly and respectful in every way." (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"O My Father in Heaven, let me sense your glorious presence, as never before in my

life. Thank you for the forgiveness of my sins. I am no longer alienated from you, but the 'dividing wall of hostility' caused by my sin and rebellion has been broken down because of Christ's Sacrifice and because of my repentance and faith! I belong to you completely, and you have given me a peace that endures, that is tough, that is not dependent upon my changing and troublesome circumstances. Heavenly Father, I know that You are always steadfast and faithful, but (because of my weak humanity) I must confess to you that sometimes my faith in you (and in your mysterious ways) wavers and gives way to some doubt and frustration and occasional anger (because evil circumstances, caused by those close to me, seem to be so enduring). Sometimes, I get my 'focus' (tragically) on the 'storms' around me, instead of on you—the all-power Christ who has His own 'timing' in dealing with the injustices all around me. I know that your ways are not my ways, and that you alone are all-wise in your 'ability' to deal with my circumstances that tend to disturb my inner peace. Help me to focus on you and on the needs of people around me—not on my self-pity or on the unjust people in my life! Let your peace abide - regardless!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

There are only two kinds of people in this world, namely, 'trouble-makers' and 'peace-makers'. Those who point people to the 'Prince of Peace', and those who hinder people in their pursuit of God! Those who speak positive words of edification, and those whose words are negative and slanderous and hurtful! May God enable you by the blessed Spirit, to be a 'peace-maker', a 'lover of lost and miserable sinners'! For the sake of Christ! Amen!

12.

*"HOW COSTLY IS IT FOR ME
TO FIND TRUE PEACE?"*

Have you ever wished that everyone could get along with one another?

Why are there racial conflicts and why is there a 'generation gap'? There are conflicts over styles, tastes, and outlooks and philosophies.

Why can't Americans and Russians get along, in spite of the various ideological differences?

Why can't the various classes—rich and poor—accept each other instead of contemptuously and suspiciously looking down on each other?

Why can't people whose temperaments and personalities are so different get along, accepting differences without allowing those differences to become barriers of misunderstanding?

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Ephesians 2:14 says that Christ is our Peace! "For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition,..."

If Christ is the source of peace, it is the blood of the Cross which is the instrument of peace. There is no cheap peace, either between God and man or between man and man.

Sin has destroyed the peaceful relationships between God and man and between man and man.

It is through 'the blood of Christ' "But now you belong to Christ Jesus, and though you once were far away from God, now you have been brought very near to him because of what Jesus Christ has done for you with his blood." (Ephesians 2:13), by the 'flesh' of Christ. "For Christ himself is our way of peace. He has made peace between us Jews and you Gentiles by making us all one family, breaking down the wall of contempt that used to separate us." (Ephesians 2:14) that the dividing walls of hostility can be destroyed and that peace can be established! There is no easy peace.

Christ is the author of peace but not even Christ could bring peace without the suffering and the blood of the Cross!

It is 'through the cross', "As parts of the same body, our anger against each other has disappeared, for both of us have been reconciled to God. And so the feud ended at last at the cross." (Ephesians 2:16) that God is able to reconcile man to Himself and to reconcile man to his fellowman.

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"O Father, I am restless until I rest in thee, and yet I cannot rest in you without coming to Your Son, whose blood alone can affect a reconciliation between You and me. The blood of Your Son is able to cleanse me at the deepest level of my sins, and to speak peace to my troubled soul. Hallelujah! Amen!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

In one sense, it cost you nothing to become a Christian, for you cannot earn, purchase, achieve, or deserve your Salvation. Salvation is a gift of God, and therefore it cost you NOTHING! But remember, from God's

viewpoint, Salvation is the most costly thing in the universe—for Salvation cost God the giving up of His Son to die an agonizing, bloody death! There is nothing more costly than the blood of Jesus! And when you accept Jesus as Savior, remember, it will mean that you must give Him your life (totally)! So, Salvation actually costs you a whole lot! Yes, a gift from God, but you must give yourself as a gift (in gratitude) to the Lord of Life!

13.

*"CAN I AS 'A BELIEVER' EVER
LEGITIMATELY BE ANGRY?"*

Jesus never became angry when he was personally insulted or injured. But Jesus became very angry when injuries and injustices were done to others! When self-righteous, hypocritical leaders reacted to Jesus' healing of a man with a shriveled hand on the Sabbath Day:

"Jesus looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man: 'Stretch out your hand'. He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodian's how they might kill Jesus."
(Mark 3:5-6, NIV)

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

The gentle or meek man never exercises excessive anger or excessive anger-lessness! Anger is a basic, God created emotions, which must not be denied, suppressed, or carnally expressed. However,

your anger must be cleansed, controlled, and rechanneled towards God-honoring purposes.

Angry, not because of 'personal injuries' or with sinners, but angry at 'sinful practices'.

***"Be angry, but do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger."** (Ephesians 4:26)*

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, control my spirit in its expression of anger. Give me moral discernment to know those evil actions of sinful men against others, which should incite my anger to defend the defenseless, and those vindictive actions of sinful men against me, which should incite my compassion to return good for evil in Jesus' name. Amen!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Perhaps of all the human emotions, anger is the most potentially dangerous. To be successful and fruitful in life, you must bring your anger under the control of the Holy Spirit. May the Holy Spirit make you calm in the face of unjust evil against you, and make you angry with God's kind of anger in the face of unjust evil against suffering and oppressed ones!

14.

*"SHOULD MY TEMPERATURE BE
RAISED WHEN I OBSERVE MORAL
EVIL?"*

*The goodness of Jesus was the goodness of both moral righteousness and tender compassion. Let us always remember that Jesus' goodness was not only morally strong, as shown by His act of driving out those who were turning the Temple into a bazaar, but that Jesus' goodness was also tender and kind, as shown by His act of healing the blind and the lame who came to the Temple. **"And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them."** (Matthew 21:14)*

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Goodness, as we have noted, is not anemic sentimentality. Goodness is moral sensitivity, a holy anger channeled into moral action and reform.

The fruit of Christian goodness is wrought with moral strength. Christian goodness is

the goodness, which can love the sinner tenderly and, at the same time, hate his sin intensely. While destroying the instruments of sin, the man of moral goodness must not destroy the sinner himself.

Men of goodness are concerned in moral righteousness. Therefore, they never lose their ability to be indignant with holy love. Good men must be able to whip their will into a holy campaign against sin when the occasion demands it!

There are still times when love must be expressed in forms of discipline, as when Jesus drove out the moneychangers with a whip! Those priests who were shamelessly exploiting the poor and humble pilgrims raised the temperature of Jesus' wrath.

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Dearest Heavenly Father: Help me to know how to 'blend' two important virtues, in my life—the virtues of mercy and justice. I tend to become 'unbalanced' in the exercise of these virtues, when I relate to many different persons (usually non-believers). How easy it is for me to be morally good and yet to lack loveliness, attractiveness, and graciousness in the expression of moral righteousness.

It is possible for me to be practically and morally good and yet not to be aesthetically good. To be aesthetically good is to be attractive, winsome, and lovely in my actions of good. On one hand, the goodness of justice and righteousness seeks to destroy personal and institutional evils. On the other hand, the goodness of kindness and mercy attracts the sinner away from his sin to the loveliness of Christ. O Christ, enable me increasingly to experience the 'balanced blend' of holy virtues in my life—both mercy and justice! Then I shall reflect the beautiful character of Christ!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Never allow God's warm love in your heart to become chilled by the rigor and coldness of your 'moral code'. While you rightly uphold strict moral principles of justice and righteousness, always keep yourself tender and responsive to people who are morally broken by their sins. Make it your earnest desire to shed a sympathizing tear for sinners (who are greatly burdened down in their lives), without holding any sympathy in your heart for their sins!

15.

*"WILL I SACRIFICE JUSTICE IF I AM
KIND TO SINNERS?"*

There is a type of Christianity which is critical and harsh and legalistic.

As in Jesus' day, there are still religious people who are adept at manifesting a rough spirit, all in the name of morality and justice. Such people would never offer a shoulder for you to weep on.

Make no mistake about it; there are times when love must be expressed in forms of discipline, as when Jesus drove out the moneychangers with whips!

However, more times than not, it is not whips, but words of tenderness and forgiveness which Jesus used to draw people to the heart of God.

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

We must never lose our ability to be indignant with holy love, and we must be able to whip our will into a holy campaign against sin when the occasion demands it. Too

many times we find it easier to identify with the critical, self-righteous crowd who wanted to stone the condemned adulterous woman, than we do to identify with the kind-hearted Christ who spoke words of love and forgiveness to the guilty woman. The crowds' stones would have broken her body, but Jesus' love broke her heart. "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more."

Those were the kind words. Here is the sweetness of Jesus' temper which put the woman at ease and which shrank back from causing her needless pain. The pain of her shame and guilt was enough to drive her to repentance. No need for the infliction of the cruel pain of 'self-righteous' judgment. Jesus' kindness healed the woman! The kindness of Jesus' followers will also heal the broken-hearted today!

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, never allow me to mistake harshness for justice, or sentimentality for kindness. Help me to be kind to sinners without compromising truth and instructive to the complacent without sacrificing kindness."

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Jesus was both just and merciful in His responses to individuals. To the complacent ones, Jesus was direct and just in His Words, and He warned them to repent of their Sins (often times the sin of self-righteousness in the lives of hypocritical religious leaders). To the oppressed, broken-hearted, and sin-burdened, Jesus spoke words of mercy and forgiveness and deliverance. Jesus disturbed the 'comfortable', and He comforted the 'disturbed' - and He humbled everyone! You must seek to be kind without being morally soft, and you must be disciplined without being morally rigid!

16.

*"AM I CALLED TO BE COMPASSIONATE
TOWARDS ALL PERSONS?"*

There are still those professed followers of Jesus - followers in name rather than in spirit - who are more concerned about the letter of the law than about the spirit of the law, more concerned about justice than about mercy, more adept in inflicting pain than in applying the salve of healing.

As God is kind, so must Christians be kind. "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"O Loving God, why do I find it too easy to be critical of other people who are different than I am - persons of a different race or different culture, or different religion, or different personality and background? I confess that I have sometimes failed to be a 'clear channel' for your divine love! I have sometimes loved others 'conditionally', rather than 'unconditionally'. Teach me how to love the loveless and those who ob-

viously are 'ugly' in their appearance, 'ugly' in their behavior and language, 'ugly' in their selfish attitudes. Those who are 'unkind' in their treatment of people in general, and 'unkind' (cruel) in their specific treatment of me!

Those who slander me 'behind my back', who plot to 'bring me down', who find it acceptable to lie about my character! Lord, I find it rather difficult to 'turn the cheek' and to 'return good for evil' to these very unkind persons. Nevertheless, I know, Jesus, that you forgave your persecutors (who nailed You to a cruel cross), and even today you send the sunshine and rain upon the wicked person, as well as upon the godly person! You are 'good' to everyone, regardless of the kind of response that people give to You. By your grace, I will forgive my persecutors, I will pray for them, and (when possible) I will do kind deeds for them. For Jesus' Sake Alone!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

'Whatever a man sows, that he will some-day reap'. You are not seeking a reward, but God will, nevertheless, someday heap 'kindnesses on you, if you make it a practice to be kind to everyone around you!

*Always take the 'high road' of kindness,
even with unkind persons.*

17.

*"ARE MY ACTS OF MERCY SIGNIFICANT
IN A HARSH WORLD?"*

Jesus loved the sinner and was called 'a friend of publicans and sinners'. He accepted them unconditionally and His kindness won their hearts to God.

More people are won to God through acts of kindness than by words of criticism. To criticize a man is to drive a man into self-justification and thus away from repentance and away from God.

We hinder, not help, a man by becoming his judge. By becoming his judge, we stand in the place of God, who alone is Judge.

The transgressor acknowledges wrongdoing in the quietness of personal contemplation or in the presence of a non-critical friend.

Healing of the troubled or sinful person takes place, not in the atmosphere of criticism or self-righteousness, but in the atmosphere of mutual caring and sharing.

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

The kind person seeks to put others at ease, and always avoids inflicting needless pain upon others. This does not mean that wrong in others is denied or that sin is condoned. However, the kind Christian is quick to see faults and sins in his own self first, before pointing out sins in others.

When the Christian is willing, according to James 5:16: "Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working." to engage in self-incrimination, open sharing, and humble confession, then the wrongdoer will be motivated to do the same.

Confession is contagious. The humble, kind, and open person will win the sinner for Christ! Never be harsh, or bitter, or critical, or condemning. Have mercy. Be sweet in your spirit, never compromising with sin but also never treating the sinner roughly or discourteously. Provide a shoulder upon which hurting people may weep!

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, help me to cultivate every fruit of the Spirit in a balanced way. The goodness

of kindness tempers justice with mercy and does not allow the goodness of righteousness, which seeks to destroy sinful practices, to destroy sinful men in the process. Cultivate both the fruit of tender kindness and the fruit of tough righteousness in my life in Jesus' name. Amen."

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Recognize where your strong sense of 'moral oughtness' originates. It originates, of course, in the 'Divine Mind' (God)! Therefore, what is morally right for you is also morally right for everyone else. Of course, there are 'grays' in this world (areas of personal preference), and in these areas, that are not covered by the 'Moral Law', you must allow others the expressions of their own legitimate freedom!

18.

*"IS IT LEGITIMATE FOR ME SOMETIMES
TO EXPRESS MORAL
INDIGNATION?"*

The person that is cultivating the fruit of Christian Goodness in his life is the person who has strength of moral character, and sensitivity to right and wrong.

He has a strong sense of justice and righteousness. He is aware of the moral issues, and he seeks good and right solutions in the moral arena of individual and corporate relationships.

He seeks to apply Christian truth to the difficult problems in society. He has a toughness of moral fiber in his character.

He is not easily swayed by society's majority opinions. His awakened conscience seeks for the right, not merely for the popular, solutions to moral problems.

He is morally upright, intellectually alert, and decisive in moral decision-making.

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

The Spirit-controlled person, like Jesus, is to have a high regard for justice and right. Moral sensitivity in an age of moral relativism, where moral distinctive is blurred, there is a need for a declaration of moral absolutes.

*In an age of easy toleration, there is need for strong convictions and a rejection of the false. In an age where so many are doing that which is right in their own eyes, there is need for the prophetic voice which declares: **"Thus saith the Lord!"***

When men turn all the 'blacks' and 'whites' into pale 'grays', there is need for clear thinking and a renewed emphasis upon the morally good and the morally bad.

The believer must never deny the legitimate existence of some moral relatives, personal convictions, individual preferences, and cultural tastes, but neither must the believer deny the fact of moral absolutes and universal principles, which apply to all persons, in all societies, in all ages. Adultery is just as wrong today as it was when the Ten Commandments were first given.

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, help me to cultivate every fruit of

the Spirit in a balanced way. The goodness of kindness tempers justice with mercy and does not allow the goodness of righteousness, which seeks to destroy sinful practices, to destroy sinful men in the process. Cultivate both the fruit of tender kindness and the fruit of tough righteousness in my life. In Jesus' name. Amen."

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Recognize where your strong sense of 'moral oughtness' originates. It originates, of course, in the 'Divine Mind' (God)! Therefore, what is morally right for you is also morally right for everyone else. Of course, there are 'grays' in this world (areas of personal preference), and in these areas, that are not covered by the 'Moral Law', you must allow others the expressions of their own legitimate freedom!

19.

*"HOW LONG SHOULD I BE PATIENT
WITH UNBELIEVING PERSONS?"*

PATTERNED AFTER THE PATIENCE OF GOD, the Spirit-controlled person keeps on hoping, believing, and working with people regardless of the odds and the obstacles, and the oppositions.

Patience means persistence in loving people, regardless of human obstinacy and regardless of despairing circumstances.

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Growth in love is growth in patience. To love truly means to wait persistently. Be patient with sinners until they respond to God's call of repentance. Patience with believers until the slow growing fruit of the Spirit is evident in their lives. Patience with the Church until God's sanctifying power removes the spots, the strains, and the wrinkles in its corporate life. Patience with God's patience with an unbelieving world, which seems bent on self-destruction.

The Christian must cultivate the fruit of patience in his life if he is to work effectively with people. The believer need not lose hope or faith in people, for he knows that God is constantly working to perfect His good work of grace in people's lives.

Because all believers are merely 'Christians in the making', progressively changing to become more like Christ, the man of God can be patient with those with whom he lives and works. 'Be Patient, God Is Not Finished with Me Yet' is a good motto for all believers to personalize.

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Dear Lord, help me to believe in people, looking beyond what they are to what they can become in Christ! As you have suffered long with me, help me to be longsuffering with others. Help me to breathe faith into the faithless and love into the loveless." Amen!

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Because God has never given up on you, you must never give up on anyone else! God wants all to be saved, so keep praying and keep having faith - and keep loving the lost even when they appear to remain 'indifferent'. While you are praying and wait-

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ing, God is working! "In due season you shall reap if you don't faint."

20.

*"WHAT SHOULD BE THE MOTIVATION
FOR MY ACTS OF GOODNESS?"*

*Why do people attempt to live good lives,
lives characterized by good deeds?*

*There are many motivations to do well.
There are those who are 'good' simply be-
cause their friends are good, or because
they are afraid of the consequences of
wrongdoing. Others have a higher motive;
they are 'good' because of duty.*

*Duty may be a noble motivation, but it is
not the highest motivation for doing good.*

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

*There is a higher motive than duty. It is
the motivation of love. There are those
who are good (in terms of moral righteous-
ness and in terms of personal winsome-
ness) because they are controlled by God's
love.*

*The goodness of these persons is distinc-
tive and attractive because, just as fruit
grows by abiding on the vine, so the good-
ness of these persons is the effortless*

product of abiding in the Holy Spirit.

The Psalmist said, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God." (Psalms 40:8) The believer, whose goodness is Spirit-induced, is "impelled by love, glad to serve, happy to do His will". He is "on the path (of righteousness) because he loves it. He comes along at a swinging gait. There is a spring in his step. He barely notices the paths that lead aside. His whole bearing suggests a joyous adventure and not a perilous pilgrimage." (Thoughts by William Sangster)

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Heavenly Father, fill me with so much love for you that I will become unselfconscious in my concerns for others, and uncalculating in my work for you. Let my labors be the labors of love, not the labors of duty."

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Always remember that the goodness of the love-filled, Spirit-controlled believer is the goodness of delight, not the goodness of mere duty, or the goodness motivated by fears or convention or custom!

21.

"CAN I BE A CHANNEL OF HOLY LOVE?"

*God's Supernatural Love Is "Shed abroad"
In The Hearts of Christ-Followers.*

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

*This 'Special Love' touches the outer world
of needy persons through the channel of
the dedicated hearts and hands and heads
of God's people!*

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

*"O God, Thou art the Source of all love. The
world of needy people is the Object of your
great love. Make me the Channel of your
love. Let your love flow from You to them
through me! Thank You! Amen!"*

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

*God will give you as much as you are will-
ing to give away, and no more. May you
today have the inexpressible joy of offering
yourself to God to be a "Special channel of*

“The BIG Question!” - “Effective Christian Living” Series

*divine-like love, to touch the lives of many
needy persons”!*

22.

*"CAN I EXPERIENCE ENDURING PEACE
AMIDST MY FREQUENT
TROUBLES?"*

MANY TIMES GOD IS CALLED THE "GOD OF ALL PEACE". PEACE IS A GIFT OF GOD, THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

Said Jesus to His disciples, shortly before the crucifixion: "I have told you all this so that you will have peace of heart and mind. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows, but cheer up, for I have overcome the world". (John 16:33, Living Bible)

There is a song which speaks of 'a deep settled peace in my soul'. Regardless of the troubled surface waters, the waters that are deep remain calm and powerful. The current may flow fast, but it flows undisturbed and peacefully.

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Peace is a gift of God which is maintained by centering one's attention on Christ and on the needs of others. "Thou dost keep

him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusts in thee." (Isaiah 25:3, RSV)

To keep peace in our hearts, we must learn daily to cultivate the presence of Christ in our lives.

In addition, we must give ourselves in service to others, for the more we are preoccupied with meeting the needs of others, the less occupied we will be with our own problems.

As William Sangster says, "Give yourself in service to others; every needy soul is an opportunity; seize every self-pitying thought in its early stages and direct it in pity to somebody else. Then the miracle will happen. Peace will come to you". (Daily Readings, pg. 231)

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Peace, 'in spite of' when it cannot be 'because of' circumstances! That is the kind of peace I want in my heart, Dear Father. Help me to stay my mind on You in order that you may keep me in perfect peace!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Because true peace is a 'gift' from God, you

cannot 'make' the peace of God rule in your heart, but you can 'let' the peace of God rule in your heart. Your sincere and whole-hearted surrender to your loving Father shall result in your gift of serenity from your Father! It is a "peace that passeth understanding" - peace that is not fragile, but enduring regardless of life's changing circumstances!

23.

*"SHOULD I BECOME INVOLVED WITH
SOCIETY'S PROBLEMS?"*

SAID THE APOSTLE PAUL: "Do not yield your members to sin as weapons of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from the death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness." (Romans 6:13)

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Said John Wesley: "Do all the good you can, to all the people you can, in all the places you can, in all the ways you can." Wesley believed that faith was practical, expressing itself in social involvements.

Said Wesley: "The Gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness." "Faith working by love is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection." "Christianity is essentially a social religion and to turn it into a solitary one is to destroy it."

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Loving Father, forgive me for retreating from society's problems. I am part of Society; therefore, Society's problems are my problems. Help me to be part of the solution. Deliver me from the trap of corporate irresponsibility, which says 'Everyone's responsibility is no one's responsibility!' Make me, O God, responsible to Society because I am responsible to you! Help me to realize that good actions on the part of enough good people can help change the course of history! I want to be one of many persons who are 'change-agents' in our world! Through Jesus' powerful and transforming Name! Amen!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Along with me, I hope you will always remember the following famous words: "I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do." (Edward Hale)

24.

*"CAN I EXPERIENCE INWARD PURITY
AND OUTWARD POWER?"*

THE SPIRIT'S BAPTISM IS THE BAPTISM OF LOVE. This baptism of love gives inner purity, as symbolized by fire. John the Baptist predicted the Spirit's Baptism: "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire". (Matthew 3:11)

On the Day of Pentecost, tongues of fire appeared to those who were Spirit-baptized, inwardly cleansing them from all sin. "They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them". (Acts 2:3)

This Baptism of Love gives outward power to witness, as symbolized by the mighty rushing wind on the Day of Pentecost. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:4).

There is one sign that will always follow the Spirit's Baptism of love - outward ex-

pressions of love in witnessing. Jesus foretold this just before he ascended: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8, RSV)

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

The Holy Spirit is not only the Spirit who justifies the sinner, but the Spirit is also the one who sanctifies the believer. It was sanctification that the carnal, gift-oriented Corinthians needed, and the Life of Sanctification is best described in I Corinthians 13. Christ-like (practical) LOVE!

Arthur D. Zahniser clearly distinguishes between justification and sanctification. "Justification is pardon; Sanctification is purity. Justification saves from sinning; Sanctification saves from sin".

"Justification is citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven; Sanctification makes us soldiers of the Cross. Justification creates a desire to service; sanctification fits and equips for proficient service."

"By Justification, the love of God is shed

abroad in the heart; Sanctification, the love of God is perfected in the soul."

"Justification saves from the wrath of God; Sanctification brings into full harmony with the nature of God. Justification takes the believer out of the world; Sanctification takes the world out of the believer."

"Justification admits us into the family of God on earth; Sanctification fits us for the society of God in heaven."

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, you are a God of grace and of gifts. The greatest of all your gifts to the world is the blessed Holy Spirit, whose ministry includes conviction of sin, conversion of the sinner, and cleansing and empowerment of the believer. Cleanse me from all carnal attitudes, perfect my motives, and activate my gifts—all for the purpose of glorifying Christ, edifying the Church, and witnessing to the world! In Jesus' precious name. Amen!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

By this shall all men know that you are a true follower of the Living God, and by this

shall you personally have evidence that you are truly a Spirit-filled Person—because you love Christ Supremely, because you love others Sincerely, because you love yourself Subordinately.

"Love divine, all loves excelling; joy of heaven to earth come down; fix in us thy humble dwelling; all thy faithful mercies crown." Without love, you are like a 'sounding gong' - loud, but useless to God and others!

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2.	<i>THE CROSS OF JESUS!</i>
3.	<i>THE CHRIST OF EASTER!</i>
4.	<i>PRE PARING FOR DEATH'S</i>
5.	<i>CHR ISTIAN WITNESS TO OTHERS!</i>
6.	<i>LIFE IN THE CHURCH!</i>
7.	<i>GOD FOR ALL HOLIDAYS!</i>
8.	<i>HE SPIRIT FILLED LIFE!</i>
9.	<i>PER SONAL SIGNIFICANCE!</i>
10.	<i>OUR ETERNAL HOME - HEAVEN!</i>

11. *CUL
TIVATING CHRIST LIKE CHARAC-
TER!*
12. *CON
FRONTING LIFE'S COMPLEXITIES!*
13. *LIV-
ING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE!*
14. *CON
QUERING THE ENEMIES WITHIN!*
15. *OD'S PLAN OF SALVATION!*
16. *THE
CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS!*
17. *COPING WITH LIFE'S HARDSHIPS!*