

## TURNING OVER THE 'TITLE DEED' TO CHRIST

By Ron Christian

In his devotional book "In Christ", E. Stanley Jones has this prayer (regarding full surrender): "O Jesus, my Lord, I let Thee bind the strong man within me - my very self. Having that Thou hast my all. Now with the center in Thy hands, we can together mop up the areas of continued resistance. The rest is a victory march. I thank Thee. Amen." (Page 375)

Of course, Jones is not (in this prayer) explicit or detailed in explanation of what possible "areas of continued resistance" are subject to serious and continuing attention, after a believer surrenders the 'Self' into the hands of God (in the experience of what many term "Entire Sanctification", I Thessalonians 5:23).

There has been much discussion and debate among sincere believers regarding the nature of inbred sin (i.e. inward sin in the life of Christians, following conversion) and regarding the Biblical treatment of inward sin (carnal nature). I think (along with many other "holiness" advocates) that it has been a serious mistake to think that inbred sin is like some physical element that can be (at the time of entire sanctification) once and for all permanently eliminated or excised or eradicated. Inward sin is an attitude of resistance against God's perfect will, an attitude of double-mindedness. With full (entire) sanctification - i.e. at the time of total surrender of one's Self to God, through faith - these conflicting (resistant and self-centered) attitudes can be removed from one's thinking and disposition. Deeper harmony and peace and full-souled desire to love God and do His will (to the best of one's finite understanding) can wonderfully be experienced, when one surrenders his entire being to Almighty God! Wrong attitudes can be righted. Wrong affections can be redirected in deep love for God and one's fellow men. Humility can replace pride. Trust can replace worry. Hope can replace despair. Love can replace indifference. Single-mindedness can replace double-mindedness. A single focus on loyalty towards God can replace divided loyalties and conflicts of interests and worldly-mindedness. A loving regard for others and their needs can replace a jealous striving for prestige and position among one's peers. A desire for generosity and giving can replace a strong pull for selfish accumulation of personal wealth and selfish indulgence with the world's goods. A commitment for wholehearted and enthusiastic public worship can replace a thoughtless and routine and ritualistic involvement in mere church services.

Yes, great changes take place when a believer comes to the place of full surrender, and when he believes God for the baptism of the Holy Spirit (entire sanctification). But the believer who receives this wonderful experience, as a result of his yielding himself to Christ to enjoy His Lordship, must nevertheless acknowledge that after he gives Christ the "title deed" of his life, there may be "areas of continued resistance" (E.S.Jones) in his life that will have to be specifically yielded to the control of Jesus the Lord. The yielded "title deed" acknowledges that the believer is no longer the owner of his life, but rather the "tenant" who is totally accountable to Christ the Owner of his life. But Christ (as Owner - based upon the fact of His creation of all persons and based upon the fact of His redemption of all persons on the Cross) has the right to

bring all things under His subjection and control - the believer's time and talents and treasures and desires and recreation and relationships and goals, etc. etc. The Owner - the triune God - has a right to "clean up" (purify and sanctify) every "room" of the believer's life. After the initial "blanket surrender" to Christ, all the "areas of continued resistance" (E.S.Jones) must be yielded and surrendered to the Lord Himself. This aftermath (i.e. the time following the experience of entire sanctification) is a time of continuing cleansing (as the "light of truth" regarding the breadth and depth of a believer's life - following the experience of entire sanctification - is more clearly understood, as a result of the thorough and continuing work of the gracious and revealing and sanctifying Holy Spirit). At the time of a believer's experience of entire sanctification, the believer surrenders to Christ "all he knows and all that he doesn't know" - and there likely is a lot that the believer doesn't know in terms of the implications of "full surrender" in specific areas of his life. When Christ claims "ownership of the title deed" of a believer's life, the believer must agree that Christ (as Lord) has the right to clean up the believer's life - his kitchen, his living room, his bedroom, his recreational room, and even his attic. The initial act of cleansing (sanctification) which the Spirit does at the time of Entire Sanctification is truly wonderful, but this very important experience (while it should never be minimized as to its powerful affects) is the experience that gives the New Owner (Holy Spirit) the authority to investigate, and to renovate, and to thoroughly clean every "room" in the life of the newly surrendered believer - to cleanse the mind from a carnal mind to become a "Christianized mind", to cleanse the emotions that are worry-worn to become emotions that are integrated around the peace and serenity of the Lord of circumstances, to cleanse the sexual instincts from uncontrolled and unreliable passion to sexual drives that are controlled and restrained and deeply fulfilling and that are used in a totally unselfish manner, to cleanse the tendency towards gluttony (over-eating) to a controlled appetite that properly and nutritiously ministers to the health of the body, to cleanse the tendency towards either over-activity or under-activity regarding the exercise of the body and the pursuit of pleasure to instead find proper balance to enjoy legitimate recreation and helpful physical conditioning.

Again, let it be emphasized that the carnal nature (inbred sin) is NOT ERADICATED, if by this word one thinks that the inner nature of sin was some kind of physical organ and it was physically removed when one was entirely sanctified. If the questionable term "Eradication" is used to describe the removal of inward sin (at the time of entire sanctification), then let it be understood what is meant! I think it means that the Spirit cleanses (initially and progressively following Entire Sanctification) the heart and the mind and the spirit of unChristlike traits and characteristics and attitudes. Depending on the awareness of the believer, the faith of the believer, and the sovereign choice of the Holy Spirit, yielded believers receive varying degrees of deliverance and cleansing at the time of "entire sanctification". The Lord (new Owner) receives the "title deed" from every consecrated (surrendered) believer at the time of his "Second Work of Grace" (Entire Sanctification), but the Spirit decides and He knows what are "the areas of continued resistance" - various resistances that the newly sanctified believer is probably not fully aware of. The "blanket surrender" has been sincerely made, and the "title deed" has been sincerely delivered in humility and repentance and faith to the new Owner (the Holy Spirit), but all the "individual rooms" may not yet be fully cleansed (i.e. specifically looked at and dealt with and purified). This process of careful cleansing of each "room" in the life of the believer may take the Spirit time to accomplish and this careful examination and cleansing (and rearrangement

of “furniture” or even disposal of furniture and equipment - like unbecoming music and questionable pictures, etc.) may be rather “painful” for the newly consecrated believer - but the believer, at the time of his full surrender to the Lordship of Christ, agreed to allow Christ full ownership of his life and full cleansing from everything that would cause Christ sorrow and cause the world to look with disrespect at the believer (who professes so much).

All of life in the journey of the earnest believer demands keeping himself consecrated to the Lord of All. Just as a married couple must maintain their marriage covenant for an entire lifetime through mutual surrender, faith, obedience, trust, humility, confession of errors and failures (or even sins), and regular renewal of sacrificial love, so a consecrated Christ-follower must “trust and obey, for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey”. Jesus said, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.”

Entire Sanctification is a consecrated life of love - supreme love for God and sincere and caring love for others. The unmistakable evidence that a believer is truly sanctified (as taught in I Thessalonians 5:23) is the possession and the expression of God-like, holy love (I Corinthians 13; Galatians 5:22-23). “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another.” (Jesus) Said the pagans (in the early centuries) regarding the Christians:”Behold, how they love one another!”

“There is no greater love than this, that a man (Jesus) laid down His life for His friends!” (And also for His enemies!). Throughout the believer’s entire life, it would be wise and helpful if he would daily pray: “Lord, shed abroad your love in my heart, through the power of your Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). May your divine-type love enable me to ‘think your thoughts after you’, to ‘feel your compassion for hurting people with you’, to ‘choose to always be a small but significant part of your master plan to help you fulfill the ‘Great Commission’ - to make disciples of all people since you have a deep and undying love for every human being.’ Help me to daily consecrate myself to you and to appropriate the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, that I might be a ‘fit vessel for the Master’s use’ - a truly sanctified believer who brings pleasure to my blessed Lord whom I serve with gratitude, humility, and joy. In the name of my great Savior and Sanctifier. Amen.”