

Finishing Well

Lesson #5

Surrendered Saint

February 1, 2023

Greek for saint = hagios: Refers to one's state of being and not to his character. The Bible defines a "saint" as someone whom Christ bought with His own blood on the cross and has separated unto Himself to be His own possession.

God's Purpose: We are set apart by God and separated unto God to be transformed into the likeness of His Son.

Eph. 1:12 That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ.

Alistair Begg: God's plan and purpose is not to answer all our questions or make our life tranquil but in order that we might live to His glory.

- We are to increasingly glorify God as our life is transformed.

Although we are a new creation in Christ Jesus, the outworking of the change is not instantaneous. Sanctification is progressive over time and is never complete in this life. Why?

Warfare between the flesh and the Spirit is fought daily in every believer's soul.

Gal. 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh:

and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

I Pet. 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

Consider: We grieve and mourn over the flagrant sins such as abortion, homosexuality, murder...

Why do we not mourn over our selfishness, critical spirit, impatience, anger, etc.?

Ps. 139:1-3 O LORD, You have searched me and known me.

You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off.

You comprehend my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.

Billy Graham: ALL sin is rebellion against the sovereignty of God.

Chambers: Sin is not weakness, it is a disease. It is red-handed rebellion against God.

The magnitude of that rebellion is expressed by Calvary's cross.

Consider: Respectable sins deceive us into thinking they are not so bad.

Conduct Unbecoming a Saint > Sins I Tolerate in My Life

- A. Ungodliness: Does not equate to wickedness

Living as though God is not involved in my life or circumstances

Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

Note: Paul distinguishes ungodliness from unrighteousness

- Ungodliness is defined by an attitude toward God; live my daily life with little or no thought of God, His will, His glory or my dependence on Him
- Unrighteousness refers to sinful actions in thought, word or deed. [Envy, strife, deceit]

Ungodly people can be good, moral people.

➤ Many believers tend to live daily life with little thought of God.

James 4:13-15 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

Point to Consider: Form of Ungodliness

1. James does NOT condemn people for making plans, plans for a business or to make a profit. He condemns making plans that do not acknowledge my dependence on God to carry them out. How often do I think about my accountability to God?

Col. 1:9-10 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it [your faith in Christ], do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Points to Consider: Form of Ungodliness

a. Colossian believers were ordinary folks; yet Paul expected them to live godly lives.

b. How does Paul's prayer compare with my prayers for myself, family, church?

c. Do my prayers reflect a concern for God's will and glory?

A desire that my life be pleasing to Him?

d. Or are my prayers more of a "please do list?" Please intervene in various health, financial needs of family and friends? These are also right, BUT if that's the main thing we pray about, we are merely treating God like a "divine bellhop!"

e. Are my prayers more human-centered, and not God-centered?

Point To Consider: A person may be moral and upright, busy in Christian service, yet have little or no desire to develop an intimate relationship with God. This is a mark of ungodliness.

Truth: God is the center and focal point of the life of a godly person.

Every circumstance and activity of life is viewed through the lens of God-centeredness.

Being God-centered can only be developed in an ever-growing intimate relationship with God.

You cannot genuinely desire to please God or glorify Him apart from this relationship.

Question: Where am I? Am I living ALL of my life as if God is relevant or irrelevant?

Surveys show that there is little difference between the values and behavior patterns of Christians and non-Christians.

This must reflect that we live much of our daily life with little or no thought of God or how we might please and glorify Him?

Truth to Ponder: It's not that we consciously put God out of our minds.

We just ignore Him on most issues and He is seldom in our thoughts.

Sins of the tongue, such as gossip, sarcasm, unkind words to or about another person cannot thrive in an awareness that God hears every word I speak.

Ps. 139:4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.

Truth: I am not living every moment in the presence of my all-seeing, all-hearing Father.

Dealing With Ungodliness

I Tim. 4:7-8 But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise [train] yourself toward godliness. For bodily exercise profits little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

- This implies commitment, consistency and discipline.

B. Anxiety, Worry & Frustration > Result of Difficulties of an Ordinary Life

Anxiety > Involves Fear

1. Trusting God in all circumstances is taught > 13 times New Testament

2. Opposite of trusting God = anxiety or frustration

Matt. 6:25-34- Christ uses anxious 6 times. Don't be anxious about what we are to eat, drink, or wear or the unknown circumstances of tomorrow.

3. Don't be anxious has the force of a moral command. It is God's will: Be not anxious.

4. Anxiety is a sin. It is actually a distrust of God.

If God cares for the birds and lilies, will He not much more take care of our temporal needs?

I Pet. 5:7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. [basis for casting our care]

- When I give way to anxiety, I am, in effect, believing that God does not care for me and that He will not take care of me in the particular circumstance that triggers my anxiety.
- Anxiety is a lack of acceptance of God's providence and sovereignty in our lives.

The causes of my anxiety are under God's control.

Paul told us to "not be anxious," but to pray about the situation.

Pray for relief and deliverance from the anxiety but accept the circumstance.

Ask God to give you a heart that is submissive to His providential will.

Worry = Synonym for Anxiety

1. Usually associated with long-term difficult or painful circumstances for which there appears to be no resolution.

2. The Battle > The situation looms larger in our minds than the promises of God's Word.

Mark 9:24 - "I believe; help my unbelief."

Frustration > Involves being upset or angry at whatever is blocking my plan.

Example: Frustrated with computer

- This frustration has its roots in ungodliness at the moment.
- I am reacting as though God is not involved in my life or circumstances.
- I'm not really thinking about God at all; I'm focused on the cause of my frustration.

Ps. 139:16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned [ordained] for me, When as yet there were none of them.

"God, this circumstance is part of Your plan for my life today. Help me respond in faith and in a God-honoring way to Your providential will. Please give me wisdom to know how to address the situation that tends to cause me frustration."

Notice: I have used Scripture, dependence on the Holy Spirit through prayer to enable me to respond in a godly manner.

I should NEVER accept these sins as just part of my temperament (any more than I would accept adultery as part of my temperament.)

Other Respectable Sins I Tolerate In My Life

C. Discontentment: Usually arises from ongoing and unchanging circumstances that we can do nothing about - Sinful discontentment negatively affects our relationship with God

Examples: Unfulfilling or low-paying job; singleness well into mid-life and beyond; inability to bear children; unhappy marriage; physical disabilities; continual poor health

Consider: 3 days after the Red Sea, the Israelites were complaining against God & Moses.

Why such an attitude change in 3 days?

- They overlooked the FACT that the CLOUD had led them there.
- If God had led them there, would He take care of their every need?

Truth: Every complaint against circumstances, every grumbling about the daily trials of life is directed against the ONE who "works all things after the counsel of His own will." [Eph. 1:11]

Consider: When I fail to recognize my incorrect responses to my circumstances as sin, I am responding no differently from unbelievers who NEVER factor God into their situation.

Note: I am back to ungodliness as the root cause.

Truth: I MUST deal with my discontentment or it will lead to resentment or bitterness toward God or others.

- I can resign myself to my circumstance but still harbor a smoldering discontentment.
- It is not in resignation that I find peace. It is in ACCEPTANCE.

Acceptance: "God, I accept my circumstance from You. I trust that You unerringly know what is best for me and that in Your love, You purpose only that which is best.

Father, I ask You to use my difficult circumstance to glorify You."

- I no longer have a "victim attitude." I have an attitude of STEWARDSHIP.

Spiritual Truth: I must have a firm belief in the sovereignty, wisdom and goodness of God in all the circumstances of my life.

Legitimate Discontentment: We should always be discontent with our spiritual growth.

Truth: God expects all believers to grow, develop, change and be fashioned into Christlikeness.

Heb. 6:1 Believer: Leave spiritual babyhood behind and grow up and mature in the Word.

Question: Do ALL believers mature? NO

It is possible for a Christian to go through life without much change taking place.

He refuses to cooperate and expose himself to the Holy Spirit. [Grieving; Quenching]

Question: Can a believer "fashion himself" by exposing himself to the wrong influences?

Eph. 2:2-3 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

- These forces had a part in shaping you in the past.
- Do not expose yourself to them anymore.

Tozer: Stay out, you devilish influences, in the name of my Savior! Let my soul alone - it belongs to God."

Truth: You must "fashion yourself" by exposing yourself to the Divine Power which shapes you.

Prerequisite to Being Filled With the Spirit

Confession Cleansing Emptying Exposure To Holy Spirit

1st Command: Eph. 4:30 And Do Not Grieve The Holy Spirit Of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Janis Cox: His Holy Spirit, moving and breathing in you, is the most intimate part of your life, making you fit for Himself. Don't take such a gift for granted.

- Grieve is a love word. You cannot grieve one who does not love you.

How do I know what grieves The Holy Spirit? Look at His character:

<u>John 14:17</u>	The Spirit of Truth	anything false, deceitful, hypocritical
<u>II Cor. 4:13</u>	The Spirit of Faith	Doubt, unbelief, distrust, worry, anxiety
<u>Heb. 10:29</u>	The Spirit of Grace	Bitter, ungracious, unthankful, malicious, unforgiving
<u>Rom. 1:4</u>	The Spirit of Holiness	anything unclean, defiling, degrading
<u>Eph. 1:17</u>	The Spirit of Wisdom	ignorance, conceit, arrogance, folly
<u>II Tim. 1:7</u>	The Spirit of Power Love & Discipline	our weaknesses, fruitlessness, disorderliness and lack of control
<u>Rom. 8:2</u>	The Spirit of Life	anything that savors of indifference, lukewarmness, dullness or deadness > grieves Him
<u>I Pet. 3:14</u>	The Spirit of Glory	That which is worldly, earthly or fleshly grieves Him.

Consider: The Holy Spirit stands ready to teach me and to reveal the deep things of the Word.

My ignorance of the Bible, my pride in my own knowledge and ability grieve Him.

2nd Command: I Thess. 5:19 Do Not Quench The Spirit.

We GRIEVE the Spirit when we say YES to Satan when he lures us into sin.

We QUENCH the Spirit when we say NO to God as He woos us into sanctification & service.

The Israelites' Crisis At Kadesh-Barnea

They would not enter the Promised Land due to the report of GIANTS in the land.

1. The day after they refused to enter Kadesh-Barnea, they were to start on their long march through the wilderness. This was God's judgment.

2. They refused to obey. They may have "mourned greatly," and said, "We have sinned," but this was regret and not true repentance.
3. They moved from rebellion to presumption that they can now obey, fight the enemy on their own and take possession of their Promised Land.
4. Since Israel was not right with God, they cannot claim God's help as they sought to conquer the land.
5. They embark to battle without Moses, the ark, the cloud leading them or the silver trumpets blowing. Tried to gain the Promised Land on their own - strength of the flesh.
6. Num. 14:44 They presumed to go up to the mountaintop.
Presumed > to be lifted up; proud, arrogant; swelled up with one's own importance.
7. God's warning: I will not be with you. Man's effort without God's blessing > much harm.
8. The enemy chased them over 100 miles north.
 - There is no substitute for faith in God's promises and obedience to His commandments. Obey God in spite of how I feel, what I see or what I think might happen.

Jerry Bridges: Shall we presume on God's grace by tolerating in ourselves the very sin that nailed Jesus to the cross?

Truth: All of my rebellion, all of my grieving the Holy Spirit, all of my presuming on His grace, all of my attitudes are done openly in the presence of God.

- It's as if I'm acting out ALL my sin before Him as He sits on His royal throne.

As long as I live with a grieved or quenched Spirit, I CANNOT be filled.

- Nehemiah could not pass to Fountain Gate = Too much rubbish

Tozer: "God is not honored by our arrested development. The New Testament teaches we should go on to full maturity. Mediocrity is not the highest life that Jesus offers!"

God will sift out those who only speculate and know about the claims of Christ and the abundant life. He will lead forward to experience the abundant life those who by His grace are willing to submit to the control of the Holy Spirit to be conformed to His image.

The Promised Land, abundant life, is ours when we by faith submit to God and allow Him to lead us in victory.

Principle of Dependent Responsibility

- I am responsible before God to obey His Word.
- I do not have the ability within myself to carry out this responsibility.
- I am totally dependent upon the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

Tozer: To bring the believer wholly into the will of God is the Holy Spirit's hardest task.

Believer's Part in Becoming Spirit-filled > YIELDING

"God cannot work in me and through me until I yield unconditionally to Him."

I Cor. 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price;

therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Christ's claim to the undivided possession and control of my life is an absolutely legitimate claim.

- God needs our body as a channel for a revelation of Himself to the world.

II Cor. 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Consider: My attitude needs to change from: "Must I give myself totally to Him?" to
"Lord, may I give myself totally to You?"

Truth: The Holy Spirit works to bring me to refuse the further reign of self and to choose the sovereignty of Christ over my life by yielding to Him as Lord and Master.

"I cannot pray Thy Kingdom come until I am willing to pray "my kingdom go."

Holy Spirit's ministry to me

- The Holy Spirit works in me to bring conviction of sin in my life. The more completely He fills me the more perfect will be the revelation and recognition of sin.

John Newton: I remember 2 things: I am a great sinner. Christ is a great Savior.

<u>Apostle Paul:</u> Saved 18 Yrs.	I Cor. 15:9	I am the least of the apostles.
Saved 24 Yrs.	Eph. 3:8	Less than the least of all the saints
Saved 29 Yrs.	I Tim. 1:15	Christ Jesus came to save sinners, Of Whom I Am Chief

Consider: He realized more and more his need of sanctification.

Truth: The more like Christ I become and the fruit of the Spirit is being produced in me, the more I should grieve about the "respectable sins" in my life.

Burnt Offering of the old covenant describes the dying of the flesh in the New Covenant.

- Animals were cut in pieces which were then burned.
- The animal's inward part and the feet were washed with pure water in the offering.

Spiritual Application: In like manner, we die in the flesh piece by piece. The offering of the inward parts and feet washed with pure water conveys a vivid picture of our walk.

Inward part, our heart, must be washed with pure water, the water of the Word.

When our heart is cleaned, and we do the will of God, our walk is pure, and acceptable to Him.

Pure Feet pictures walking in the will of God by the power of the Holy Spirit who does the work of purifying our heart by putting our flesh to death.

Rom. 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service*.

Tozer: "Most of us are as filled with the Holy Spirit as we want to be."

- God has set a FEAST before me, but He will not compel me to eat.
- God has opened the door into the abundant life, but He will not force me to enter.
I must commit to contend with the rubbish & unconfessed sin that blocks the entrance.
- God has placed in His bank a deposit that makes me a spiritual millionaire, but He does not write the checks.
- The responsibility for fullness or the lack of fullness is in my hands.
- God is hindered by only 1 thing > the room that I give Him to fill.

- God does not require golden or silver vessels, but He does demand clean, empty ones.

The story of Gideon illustrates how God is seeking His qualities in us.

Gideon, with an army of 32,000 soldiers, was facing the enemy.

- God said too many. Afraid of the dark? Turn back. 22,000 of the men turned back.
- God said too many. Some of the remaining 10,000 are not prepared for the battle.
They will never be a good soldier.
- God was putting emphasis on quality -on those who would cooperate in the performance of the will of God. Gideon took them to the river and tested them as God ordered.
- After the test, there were 300 soldiers.

Truth: God is seeking those who are willing that their life should be fashioned according to His will and grace. He sifts out those who cannot see God's purpose and design for the blessing of the abundant life.

Consider: The Journey of Jesus to Glory and Immortal Triumph

Luke 22:44 Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Remember Pilate's hall where they put on Him the purple robe and smote Him.

Remember His experience with His closest disciples as they all forsook Him and fled.

Remember The journey up the hill to Calvary.

Remember How they nailed Him to a cross - Why have You forsaken me?

Remember The darkness and the surrender of His spirit in death.

Truth This was the PATH that Jesus took to everlasting glory and immortal triumph.

As He is, so are we in this world!

Ps. 37:4 Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Heart's Desire: I want to be totally given up to Your purpose for me. (Pencil)

I desire for the Holy Spirit to cut away from me everything that is not like Jesus.

I want to be an instrument for Your glory. I want to be empowered for Your service.

I am committed to obedience for sanctification by the Holy Spirit.

The desire of my heart is for absolute surrender to God's will and purpose for me.

Neh. 4:10 Nehemiah said, "There is much rubbish- not able to build the walls."

Neh. 3:14 The Dung Gate was repaired by Malchiah son of Recab, ruler of the district of Beth Hakkerem. He rebuilt it and put its doors and bolts and bars in place.

- Notice only one name of a worker is mentioned.

This gate represents the sold out, consecrated, surrendered spirit-filled life.

The hinges on this gate must be well oiled [Holy Spirit] because of the frequent use.

Tozer: Few will enter into the sold out, surrendered life that awaits the child of God who will utilize the Dung Gate. Few will ever come to the point of sacrifice that is required in order to step into the realm of "I surrender all."