

The Servant



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The purpose of this newsletter is to pass along information and ideas to help the Lord's servants as they minister to others. Feel free to use any of it in your ministry

holy, holy, holy

"Neither do I condemn thee, go, and sin no more" Jn. 8:11. Here is the Gospel. I find in this text the Work, the Walk, and the Witness of Salvation. The woman "taken in adultery" is a picture of every sinner cast at the feet of the Savior. The case was open and shut. She never attempted to explain, defend, or deny the accusations. We can only assume by John's description of the embarrassing scene that she must have been steeped in shame and sorrow for her sin.

Three methods of dealing with sin are seen in John chapter eight. Woe to the sinner who falls into the hands of sinners. Sinners can be heartless, callous, and hypocritical. Also, woe to the sinner who pleads their case before the court of Moses. If Moses is allowed to decide our fate, we are all done for. There is a third option. I throw myself at the mercy of his court. My only hope is Jesus.

When a broken-hearted sinner sinks to the earth at his feet there can he find Grace. There alone he can find faith, and hope, and love. *"Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?"* She answered, *"No man, Lord."* Then Jesus responded with words of Grace, *"Neither do I condemn thee, go, and sin no more."* Here is the work of Grace: *"Neither do I condemn thee."* Here is the walk of Grace: *"go."* And last, there is the witness (or the warning) of Grace *"sin no more."* Grace is needed for all three. Holiness involves a pardon, a path, and a power.

I wonder what became of this dear woman who had been touched by such an amazing grace? I cannot imagine that she became some kind of a religious celebrity or ever spoke of her awful lifestyle in public or private again. Paul said, *"it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret"* (Eph. 5:12).

If there is anything uglier than sin itself than it must be sinners dragging other sinners to the gallows of "righteous indignation," or reminding God that "such should be stoned." On the other hand, nothing is more beautiful than God's amazing Grace. Let us not however cheapen God's precious gift by making it anything less than holy. Let every servant of the Living God rediscover what it means to be holy, holy, holy: holy: in the work, in walk, and in witness.

Run Peter Run

After hearing Mary Magdalene's report, John and Peter "ran both together" (Jn 20:4) in the direction of the tomb. John out-ran Peter. John got there first, but he dared not go in alone. When Peter finally arrived he was the first to enter. It was a question of feet not faith. Again Peter here learned "the spirit is willing but the *(continued)*"

Wholly, Wholly, Wholly

The angels in the temple
Cried before the sacred ark
holy, holy, holy
as light held back
the dark

God's servant took a coal
From off God's altar burning
And felt God's fire purge his lips
While he of holiness was learning

He came unworthy and undone
And bowed before the Holy One
And then and there ended by Grace
Renewed he left that holy place

To live for God in whole not part
With dedication of both mind and heart
Teaching us how to serve God solely
This is it: wholly, wholly, wholly

The Holy Spirit (Acts 19:2)

Have you received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? There was a sort of transitional period in faith during the Apostolic age between the facts and the fullness. We have the New Testament and know that *“faith comes by hearing and hearing, by the Word of God.”* We believe that a salvation experience is a work of Grace emanating from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Paul makes it clear that unless we have the Holy Spirit we are none of his. But I cannot help but wonder at so many who claim the creed, but seem to need something else. What is that something? Well, how do I say it: a holy spirit. I have seen all kinds of spirits which seem to emanate from the hearts of “so called” followers that I am reminded of the rebuke of our Savior to James and John *“Ye know not what spirit ye are of,”* when they wanted to call fire down from heaven. I have been tempted to ask some disciples *“have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?”*

I look at my own life and sometimes despair that the gulf seems so wide between the profession and the possession. Many through the ages have noticed the same thing and talked about a “second blessing”, or baptism. Unfortunately, even these who claim to have found the fullness often point to some sort of Heavenly linguistics or speaking in tongues as their only proof, and then they struggle with their temperament and sometimes have religious tantrums when things don't go their way.

The church was born when the Holy Spirit filled the upper room and the saints that gathered there in prayer. There would be no church without the Holy Spirit. There can only be one Pentecost, but sometimes I wonder if some churches like Nicodemus need to be “born

again.” I cannot see the Holy Spirit, but I think I recognize a holy spirit when I meet one. □

(Run Peter Run continued)

flesh is weak.” It was probably fear that kept John from going into the darkened sepulchre and Peter was not exactly the giant of faith he would become after Pentecost. There are some lessons here. As I read this account, I am reminded that real faith has feet, and some have a faith that is faster than others. Our faith must at least be faster than our fears. To some it may appear that our faith is faster than the facts. Eventually, faith and fact must both meet together outside the empty tomb. The fact of “what happened to Jesus” would eventually become the centerpiece of the Christian faith. It was the belief in the resurrection that changed cowering disciples into courageous evangelists.

As with all the great foundational truths of the Christian experience, I believe there is the fact, the faith, and the fullness of a truth. And never more so than with holiness. First, there is the fact, second there is the faith, and third there is the fullness of the truth. Eventually they all arrive at the same place. But like Peter and John, they often run at different speeds.

It is a fact that in Salvation we are found “righteous” or holy in the eyes of God. This is a judicial pronouncement for *in Christ* we are forgiven and therefore “holy.” This truth must, like all truth, be received by faith. It takes a lifetime of running after this fact in faith that will lead us to the fullness. It is not enough to “accept” holiness we must “expect” holiness. It must be more than lip-service it must be life-service. That holiness is imputed is one thing, seeing

it imparted is another.

Peter eventually catches up to John and they both finally go into the tomb. It is our spiritual life's work seeing to it that possession catches up to our professions and people can see we are what we say we are: “Born from Above” and a “New Creature” in Christ. □

A holy spirit

Lord, give me a holy spirit. May my heart be as still as the mirrored lake of Galilee on a breezeless summer's day so that heaven's reflection may be seen in me. Lord, give me a holy spirit that is not heavy, but is as light as grace itself. Lord, give it wings that it may rise, fly, and soar on high, and lift itself above the lion's roar. Lord, give me a holy spirit, not as much as to make me powerful, as to make me pure. Give me a holy spirit that is in this world, but never of it. Give me a spirit that can rise and climb the wind and worship; and with every breath, hover near the heart of God. Lord, give me a holy spirit that is gentle when opposed and good to those who are to me unkind. A spirit that can rejoice in the light day as well as in dungeons dark. Give me a spirit that can sing solo when left alone and forsaken, just as joyfully as when surrounded and encouraged by friends. Lord, may this spirit rest, when that is best, and then, wait when it must for thee. Give me a holy spirit that can enjoy and look on things of this life yet not forget eternity. Lord, Give me a holy spirit. Come in and abide with me.



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