

# Earthen Vessels

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The Methodist Church Introduction  
by  
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SEMINARY PRESS  
Wilmore, Kentucky

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Grand Rapids, Michigan

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RETURN TO THE MAIN MENU

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## INTRODUCTION

Is the good life possible in this evil world? Is holy living compatible with our humanness and finiteness? Is there a perfection which is not cancelled out by those mental and physical deficiencies and infirmities which in varying degrees menace our moral existence to the end? What is the Christian answer to these insistent questions? In the following pages that answer is earnestly discussed by Evangelist John R. Church, whose rapidly widening influence as a teacher of "the deep things of God" will be extended by the circulation of this sensible, Scriptural message.

Zealous entire sanctificationists have sometimes implied more than meant; they have made it easy for people to draw extreme inferences. They have been so intent upon telling what sanctifying grace will do that they have forgotten to tell what it will not do. It is the conviction of the author that, for one reason or another, many of God's children have failed to arrive at that sanctified sanity which the New Testament teaches. They do not see that Christian Perfection means neither a perfect body nor a perfect brain, but rather a complete commitment to the will of God and a restful reliance upon the Spirit of God, whose work it is to furnish the moral power of obedience in terms of love.

As the consequence of this failure, two tendencies develop. Some, setting the standard higher than the New Testament sets it, tend toward a life of strain

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and unnaturalness. Others, lowering the standard unnecessarily, tend to excuse both natural infirmities and avoidable delinquencies by the use of such theological devices as "positional righteousness," by which they frankly concede their own unrighteousness but claim Christ's as a covering. It is the purpose of this study to show us the happy medium which the author says is to be discovered when the Word of God is rightly divided.

Thoughtful readers will recognize that the treatment of truth in these pages is not designed to be technical but practical. Such a treatment is in harmony with the simple technique of the Scriptures themselves. For extended discussions of the theology and psychology of Christian experience, let the reader turn elsewhere. Here he will find a man of God, whose fundamental positions are soundly spiritual and spiritually sound, seeking to help us make Christian holiness effective through the very frail medium of our humanity. Nor should we allow any slight disagreement that we might have with some of his phrasing prevent our receiving the essential truth which he is offering to us.

Here is truth that is timely. Let it be studied with conscience and with care. Here, moreover, is an author whose character is blameless and whose radiant ministry is being hailed by a growing multitude who, through him, have been taught "the way of God more perfectly." It is a joy to commend both the truth and its teller.

***PAUL S. REES***

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## SCRIPTURAL LESSON

### *ROMANS 8:8-14*

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.* Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."



## FOREWORD

One of the greatest rewards that has come to me in my ministry has been the wonderful reception the reading public has given to my book, *Earthen Vessels*. I have had testimonies from many, many people, saying they had read this book and been helped by its message. From the reports I have received it has gone around the world, and only eternity will reveal the good it has done. To me this means more than money or fame. I rejoice to know that God has been able to bless and use this message to the good of so many people. I trust that in this new form it may bless many more souls along the way of life.

Since the book has had such wide circulation, and since it has proved to be so popular we have come to feel that many people would like to have it in a more attractive and permanent binding so they could keep it or so they could present it as a gift for loved ones and friends.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever." Amen.

Sincerely His and yours,

*John R. Church*

## Earthen Vessels

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

The truth that is set forth in the statement, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels," is one that ought to be kept in mind at all times. The fact that we have overlooked it has led to a great deal of confusion, and has brought defeat to many persons who should have had victory in their lives. Personally I feel that the failure to see this truth has led to more confusion than almost any other one thing. I firmly believe that if this truth had been kept in mind by the Christian people it would have saved many persons from much misunderstanding and many people would be further along in their Christian lives.

We need to see that the treasure is all right and is very precious, but that we have it in a vessel which is made of clay, and that the vessel is very weak. As one good old lady expressed it to me: "The treasure is precious, but it is in some very queer vessels." It is true that the vessels are weak, and sometimes warped, and some of them are even cracked, but still the treasure is very precious and beautiful. The text tells us that the very fact that the treasure is in an earthen vessel adds to the glory of God. It shows to the world that the glory belongs to God and not unto us.

We ought to keep this truth in our minds as we judge our fellow men. Many people in their judgment

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of others have been too harsh, and have demanded too much of them. They have made no allowance for the weakness of the vessel. In fact many people, in judging the lives of those who profess the blessing of entire sanctification, have expected and even demanded perfect understanding and perfect conduct along all lines. They have made no allowance whatever for the weakness of the human vessel, and have failed to remember that even though a person may be perfect in love, he still has this treasure in an earthen vessel, and that so long as this is true there will be weakness and mistakes.

I remember reading some time ago about Mr. D. L. Moody's going down to a Mission in Chicago one Sunday afternoon. When he walked in, there was a man on the floor testifying to what God had done for him. He had been saved from a life of drunkenness and vile sin. Mr. Moody said that there was a glory and radiance about the man that was heavenly, and that he had never felt the power of God more in a person's testimony. Mr. Moody made up his mind that he wanted to know this man better. He went up and got acquainted, and they decided they would walk back up town together. When they came out of the Mission and started up town the man stopped and bought some fruit at a stand on the street. Mr. Moody was shocked that the man should break the Sabbath by buying something that was unnecessary. He began to feel that the man might not be such a great saint after all. Then the Holy Spirit checked him and reminded him of the fact that this man had just come from a life of

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vile sinfulness, and that he did not have the teaching and the background that Mr. Moody had. The remembrance of this saved him from judging the brother too harshly. If we would only do the same it would make us more charitable toward our fellow man.

I am impressed with the fact that over in the Book of Leviticus, where we find so many great spiritual truths brought out in types and symbols, we have the disease of leprosy used as a type of sin. There are many striking truths brought out in the picture, but there are two truths which are especially striking to me. One is that God did not leave to just anyone the matter of deciding who was a leper and who was not, but to His own *appointed agent* (the High Priest). He did not leave it to the individual affected to say whether he was a leper or not, for that would not have been safe. The person involved would naturally be inclined to be very lenient with himself. Then, too, the disease was of such a nature that one might be deceived. The same is true with us and our judgment of sin. God has not left it to us to say what is sin, and what is not. We would face the same danger as the man afflicted with leprosy. However, God does have an agent who is appointed for this very purpose. He is the Holy Ghost. He is the only one who is allowed to say what is sin and what is not sin.

God did not leave it to the man's neighbor to say whether he was a leper or not, and I thank God that He did not. His neighbor might have been unfair in his judgment of the matter. He might have been so tender-hearted that he would have failed to judge

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leprosy as he should, for fear of hurting his neighbor's feelings. Then on the other hand he might have been too harsh in his judgment, and might have condemned a man and caused him to be shut out of the camp, when he was not really afflicted with leprosy at all. The same thing is true with regard to the judgment of sin. God has not left it to our neighbor to say whether we are sinners or not, and I thank God He has not, for our neighbors might not deal fairly with us. They might be so tender-hearted that they would lull us to sleep in our sins. On the other hand, I am glad that He has not left it to them, for they might be too harsh in their judgments. They might condemn us for a thing in our lives and say it was sin, when really it might just have been some weakness of the flesh. I am glad that the Holy Ghost has been appointed to judge us and say what is sin and what is not. He will deal fairly with us. He will not lull us to sleep when we ought to be convicted for sin. On the other hand, he will not deal too harshly with us and condemn us when we do not need to be condemned. He knows the hidden intents of the heart. Man looks on the outside, but He knows the heart and the motives that are back of the act; and after all these are the things that finally determine the value of the act. I thank God that we have a judge who knows our frame and He remembers that we are dust. He will not condone sin, but He will deal with us according to the *motive of the heart*.

This leads me to call your attention to the fact that in the Book of Leviticus, the 13th and 14th chap-

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ters, the truth is brought out in a very striking way, that sometimes there was brought to the High Priest a person who had an eruption which looked very much as if the person was a leper. However, the High Priest was not hasty in his judgment of that person, for it was a serious thing to pronounce him a leper. If there was any doubt at all in the mind of the Priest, he always gave the person involved the benefit of the doubt. He had him shut up for seven days and then he looked again. If he was still not sure, he withheld judgment and had the person shut up for seven more days. In some cases this was repeated until a period of twenty-one days passed before he would pass final judgment on a person. I have often read this passage and thought of what a wonderful thing it would be if all Christian people would manifest the same patience in judging their fellow men about their sins and faults. Just suppose that we would be willing to wait twenty one days before we finally passed judgment upon the conduct of our brother. What a different world this would be! The trouble with us is that we condemn and pass judgment before all the evidence is in, and many people are condemned before they have a hearing. Too bad that this is true, for many lives have been hurt and reputations have been ruined by such hasty judgment. Let us be patient and wait until all the evidence is in; it may not be as bad as we think.

The truth of the matter is that there were cases in the Book of Leviticus where after careful investigation it was found that a person was not really a leper after all. What had at first appeared to be

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leprosy finally proved to be nothing but a skin eruption which could be treated locally, and the person would not have to be shut out of the camp. The same thing is often true with people today. There are many weaknesses of the flesh that may appear at first glance to be sins; but if we will just be patient and withhold judgment, we may find that they are only weaknesses of the flesh. There are even eruptions that are due to the weakness of the same earthen vessel, and they do not need the same harsh treatment that is called for in dealing with willful sins. They need to be treated and dealt with, but not in the same manner as we would deal with sins. If they are allowed to go on they may lead to sins, but they may be treated locally with an application of the balm of Gilead. Oh, if we could only see this beautiful truth? It would save us from much confusion and from many heartaches.

The truth that we have this treasure in an earthen vessel ought to be kept in mind as we judge our own conduct. The fact that many people have overlooked this truth has led them to confusion and even despair. Because of their lack of light at this point, many have gone so far as to cast away their confidence and have given up their trust in Jesus Christ. If this truth is kept in mind, it will save us from many heartaches and will save many people from much trouble. It is a very easy thing to get to looking at the vessel and seeing how weak it is, and if we are not careful we will be tempted to give up and cast away our trust in Jesus Christ. Just remember that the treasure is all right, but that the vessel is very weak. Do not pamper the

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vessel nor ever be too ready to excuse the weakness of it, but at the same time remember that it is an earthen vessel and do not give up in despair. Try to improve and develop the vessel so that it will become a more worthy temple for the Holy Spirit.

The fact that we have this glorious treasure in such weak vessels gives God a chance to get glory to Himself. It ought always to keep us humble and save us from pride when we remember how weak and human we are. Then, too, it offers to us the opportunity to grow and develop in the Christian life. As long as we live in this earthen vessel we will find room for growth and development, and we will find the need of all the means of grace at our disposal. We need to do, as St. Paul said, "I keep under my body."

If you are inclined to become discouraged over the weakness of the vessel, it will be well for you to remember that you are saved by grace through faith, and that not of yourself, but it is the gift of God. We are not only justified by faith, but we also live by faith moment by moment; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Thus we are kept by the power of God *through faith*. Just remember that it is faith in Christ that saves us, and it is also faith that keeps us moment by moment!

"The soul that on Jesus doth lean for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavor  
to shake,  
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."



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The vessel may be weak, but the Holy Ghost within is mighty, and you must learn to trust Him and not the vessel. If at times the weakness of the vessel seems to overwhelm, that is the time to lean hard on God and trust Him more.

I have met a great many people who had received the blessing of entire sanctification, but later on they found that they had the treasure in an earthen vessel. Due to the fact that they had not been brought to see the truth that is stated in the text, they were greatly confused and some of them had even cast away their testimony to sanctification, because of the earthen vessel; whereas if they had been brought to see this truth, they would have been saved from all this confusion. God can give us a perfect heart and take away all sin in a moment of time; but we have this treasure in a vessel of clay, and so long as this is true we will have a battle with the weakness and imperfections of the body. Don't be discouraged, but watch and fight and pray. One of these days He is going to give us a body like unto His own glorious body, and then the battle will be over. Just remember that until that time comes we have this precious gift of God in earthen vessels, and do your best to improve them. Don't give up because they are weak, but pray, work and trust, and God will give you the victory.

### THIS TRUTH WILL SAVE FROM CONFUSION

It is my honest opinion that the failure to recognize this truth has led to more confusion in theology than any other one thing. Much of the confusion and doubt

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about the doctrine of entire sanctification has arisen from the fact that we have failed to make a distinction between *carnality* and *humanity*. I find many people who have never seen that there is a difference between carnality and humanity.

Now what we mean by *carnality* is this: the Bible and all the creeds of Christendom recognize and teach that there are not only sins (the acts we commit), but there is also sin (the root or principle) from which the act springs. The Bible and the creeds teach that in Regeneration or Justification the sins (acts) are forgiven and blotted out, but that even after they are forgiven and we are regenerated, carnality or sin (the root or principle of sin) still *remains*. The new-born Christian has a new nature imparted to him, but he still has an old sinful nature that remains in him. This causes the new convert to be double-minded, and therefore unstable in his life. This is what Paul is talking about in the 7th chapter of Romans when he said, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man (the new spiritual man); but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." This is the same thing that Charles Wesley is referring to when he says: "Take away our *bent* to sinning." It is not his sins, for they have already been taken away, but it is that bent or pull toward sin that the regenerated man finds in him. It is the same thing that the poet is talking about when he says "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love." This sinful or depraved nature is some-

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times spoken of as carnality, the old self life that so many people have so much trouble with, and that so often hinders people in living the kind of life they would like to live.

Now the fact that *this nature still remains after conversion is very clearly taught in the Bible*. It is brought out in such passages as Galatians 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." Not only does the Bible teach this truth, but *the experience of multitudes of people verifies the same thing*. No one goes very far in his Christian life until he finds that he has something in his heart that is not in harmony with his desire to live for God. The fact that it is there cannot be denied. All are agreed that it is there.

However, when we come to the question of what is to be done about this carnal nature we find much disagreement among Christian leaders. There are several theories as to what is to be done about this carnal nature that remains in us after conversion. There are at least four different theories as to what can be done about this sinful nature. (1) The Catholic Church teaches that this nature remains in us after conversion, and that it will always remain so long as we live. They teach that we cannot get rid of it here, but that after death the soul goes to purgatory and there it is refined and purified and made ready for heaven. *There is no teaching in the Bible to sustain this view*, and it is contrary to common sense.

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(2) There are a great many people of different churches that believe and teach that carnality is located in the physical or human body, and that so long as we live in this vessel of clay we will have to contend with carnality. They teach that you cannot be sanctified until you die and get rid of the human body. They teach that in the hour and article of death we are sanctified. I want to say, if they are right about the location of carnality and if it is a physical thing and a part of the human body, then they are right in their teaching about sanctification. If carnality is in the mortal body, then we cannot be sanctified until we get rid of the body. I hope to show later on in this message that they are mistaken as to the *location* of carnality.

(3) There is another group of people who teach that carnality remains after conversion, and that we cannot get rid of it until we die. However, they teach that in this life we may be filled with the Holy Spirit and have complete victory over the old nature. They are usually spoken of as the people who teach *suppression*. They are very clear in their teaching about the Baptism, or Infilling of the Holy Spirit, but they do not believe in *eradication*. Personally, I think they have failed to make a distinction between carnality and humanity; and I believe that if they could be brought to see the difference between the two, they would come to believe in the eradication of carnality, and the suppression of human nature. I hope to bring this out more clearly later on in the message.

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(4) The fourth group that I mention is that group sometimes known as the Holiness Group or the *Eradicationists*. They teach that this nature remains after conversion, but that it may be crucified, or eradicated, by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and that the soul may be sanctified wholly. *They believe and teach that God is able to save from all sin in this life.* They believe that He is not only able to forgive sins (the acts) but that He can cleanse from all sin (the root). *They have many clean-cut passages of Scripture that support this view.*

Personally, I want to say that I hold to the view that carnality is enmity against God, and that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. *I believe that the only remedy for it is crucifixion or eradication.* Carnality is a rebel and must be gotten rid of. *It cannot be improved or cultivated but it must be destroyed.* I also believe that the Bible clearly teaches that we can be cleansed from it by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. It seems to me that if the Bible is clear on any one thing, it is clear in its teaching at this point.

However, I want to say this: A great many people have been confused at this point because they have never made any distinction between carnality and humanity. They have just bundled them together and called it carnality, and because of this they are confused in their thinking. Sometimes people ask me whether I teach eradication or suppression, and I tell them that I believe in *both*. Really, I do believe in both, for they are both needed. *I believe in the eradi-*

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*cation of the carnal, or sinful nature, and I believe in suppression of the human nature.* There is quite a difference between these two, but many people have never seen this difference, and this is the thing that has led to confusion. If we will come to recognize the difference between the two, I believe it will settle many of our problems and do away with most of our differences of opinion along this line.

JUST WHAT IS CARNALITY? WHERE IS IT LOCATED?

We have already called attention to the fact that there are a large number of people in almost all denominations who believe and teach that carnality is located in the physical or human body. Therefore they believe and teach that a person cannot be sanctified and delivered from sin until he gets rid of the human body. They believe that so long as we have this human body we will have carnality to contend with. Now I want to say again that if they are right about the location of carnality, they are right about their teaching on sanctification. If carnality is located in the human body, then of course we cannot get rid of it until we are rid of the body.

However, let me say very emphatically that the teaching that the human body is sinful is *not a Christian teaching*. It is a carry-over from heathenism. The Christian religion differs from all other religions on this point. The other religions teach that the physical body is sinful and must be denied and all human de-

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sires crucified. On the other hand, Christianity teaches that the human body is a gift of God, and may be used for His glory. Jesus did many things while He was here in the flesh, but there is one thing He did for which I am profoundly thankful. He rescued humanity from shame and reproach. He lifted humanity out of the gutter and put it back on the level where it belongs. Jesus took a human body and lived in it for over thirty-three years without sin. He showed to the world by His life that the human body may be the dwelling place of the holiness and fullness of God. He showed to the world that the human body was meant for holiness and that, when it is filled with the holiness of God, it is in its natural element. Christ took holiness out of seclusion and out of the monastery and caused it to walk the paths of everyday life. He showed to the world that to be holy was the most natural thing in all the world. Thank God for that fact!

*The New Testament does not teach that the physical body is sinful.* It is true that St. Paul uses the term flesh in speaking of carnality; but I would like to call your attention to the fact that usually when St. Paul uses the term flesh he is not speaking of the natural body, but he is using this term in speaking of our lower sinful nature. Paul uses the term *mortal body*, and this is the term he usually uses when he means the natural body. He plainly says in Romans 8:9, "*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.*" Here he is telling people, *who have a human body*, that they are *not*

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*in the flesh. The fleshly nature has been crucified, but they are still in the physical body.*

The New Testament teaches that our *bodies* may be preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ. The Bible teaches that you may present your *body as a* living sacrifice to God, and that you may present it *holy*. (That means pure or free from all sin.) The New Testament teaches that, as we have once yielded our bodies as instruments unto sin, we may now yield our bodies as instruments unto God for righteousness and holiness. The Bible teaches that your *body* may become the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that your physical body may become the dwelling place of the Shekinah Glory of God. Thank God for such a glorious truth

The New Testament teaches that carnality is located in the heart, and will. Jesus says that it is out of the *heart* that evil proceedeth. Paul uses a very suggestive word in speaking of carnality. In Romans 8:7: "Because the carnal mind (Gr. *phronema*) is *enmity* against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." This word, *phronema*, is a very suggestive one. It really means: knowledge, feeling and will. *This leads us to see that it is rather a condition of the mind, affection and will.*

Now the Bible is very clear in its teaching that the heart, mind, feeling and the will may be purified and made holy. The mind, feeling and will are what determine our life and conduct, and thank God these may be made pure by the grace and power of God.



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Now when you come to see what the New Testament teaches about the location and nature of carnality, it will also help you at another point. I have had people ask me: If carnality is crucified or eradicated, how can it ever come back? I think this can easily be explained if we will keep in mind *just what carnality really is*. The trouble with us is that we think purely in the terms of the physical and material. It is hard for us to rise above the material and think purely in the terms of the spirit. Usually when you begin to talk about the eradication of carnality, most people immediately begin to think of it as a physical or material substance that is located somewhere in the body, and that it is *literally destroyed by fire or literally crucified*. However, this is not the case. *Carnality is not a physical or material substance* that is literally destroyed as you would take a nerve out of a tooth, but *it is rather a condition or state of the mind and heart*. Paul calls it the carnal mind. Charles Wesley speaks of it as our "*bent to sin*."

My conception of carnality is this: *carnality is a warp, twist, bent or perversion of our mind, affection and will*. They have become so warped or bent by our inheritance through Adam and by our own conduct that by nature we are out of harmony with the will of God. Then when we come to the place where we are willing to make a complete surrender of our will to God the Holy Spirit comes and melts and purges our mind, affection and will, until they are brought into harmony with the will of God. His will becomes our will, and our will becomes His will, until all the clash and con-

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flict is gone, and our wills conform to the will of God. *The warp or bent is taken out.* However, you can readily see a thing which has been bent and twisted once may become bent or twisted again. May I also say that if the thing is bent again, after it has been straightened, it usually bends at the same place that it was bent before. That is why we see people who have backslidden going back to the same things they did before they were saved and sanctified.

I trust that I have said enough to show you that carnality is not located in the human body. It is not a physical thing, but it is a condition or attitude of the heart and will. I firmly believe that the Bible teaches that this condition of the heart and will may be purified and cleansed, that this bent or warp of our nature is eradicated and our wills are brought into harmony with the will of God. I also trust that I have said enough to convince you that the Bible does not teach you that the human body is sinful. It may be weak, but it is certainly not sinful, according to the teaching of the New Testament.

Now, after we have recognized the truth of the Bible on the question of the location and nature of carnality, we must also keep in mind the other side of this truth as it is taught in the Bible. I want to say again that the failure to recognize the difference between carnality and humanity has led to great confusion in the minds of many people. We need to see that even though carnality may be gotten rid of, we still have this treasure in earthen vessels. The vessel is

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not sinful, but it is human and weak. *It is subject to mistakes and may lead to sin.*

A great many people have been confused when they found that they did have this treasure in an earthen vessel, and have even come to feel that the manifestations of the weakness of the vessel might be an indication of carnality. Some of our friends who teach that carnality is located in the physical body have mistaken the weaknesses of the earthen vessel for indications of carnality, and have therefore contended that carnality cannot be gotten rid of until we die. What they need to see is that there is a difference between the weaknesses of the human body and the stubbornness of the carnal nature.

On the other hand, a great many people who believe in and profess to be sanctified are often confused because they have been troubled with the weakness of the earthen vessel and have been led to believe that it was a manifestation of carnality. Some have gone so far as to cast away their trust in the blood to sanctify and have given up their testimony, while many other good people have hesitated to claim the blessing of sanctification because they were so keenly conscious of the weak vessel. All of this confusion and misunderstanding could have been avoided if we only had followed the Bible and recognized that there is a difference between the two. We need to see that even though we have carnality removed, we are still human and therefore subject to the weakness and mistakes of humanity.

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In fact, I feel that some holiness preachers have contributed to this confusion by their failure to recognize and make this distinction in their preaching. I fear that sometimes we holiness preachers have set up such a high standard that no mortal man could attain to it while he had this treasure in an earthen vessel. We have made no allowance for the weakness of the earthen vessel; we have not only demanded perfect love of the people, but we have also demanded perfect conduct. I recognize the fact that any preacher can begin to set up such a perfect standard of conduct that the greatest saints in the land would be forced to say that they have not measured up to it, and if they are not well grounded in the faith, may be forced to throw away their confidence and driven to seek sanctification over again. In fact, there have been a few times when it seemed to me that the preacher was deliberately trying to dig people up and get them to cast away their profession of entire sanctification. (I do hope and pray that I am mistaken at this point).

Now anyone that is at all familiar with the Bible knows that there are *two kinds of perfection* set forth there. One of them is perfect love and may be attained to in a moment of time and enjoyed now. However, the other one is perfection of character and conduct, and it is the goal toward which we are to be constantly striving. St. Paul mentions both of these perfections in the 3rd chapter of Philippians. He says that he has not *yet attained unto one*, but that he is pressing forward and striving after it: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already *perfect*." (Philip-

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pians 3:12). However, in just a few verses he *does lay claim to another kind of perfection*, and seems to imply that there were a number of people who had it! "Let us therefore, *as many as be perfect.*" (Philippians 3:15). The perfection that he enjoyed was perfect love, and we too may receive that in a moment of time. It is possible for God to make the heart perfect in love by an instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, perfection of character and conduct is reached only by a *process* of growth and development, and will not be fully realized until we have our resurrected bodies and see Jesus as He is and are like Him. Now to fail or refuse to see this, and begin to demand faultlessness of character and conduct, and use this as the standard by which we are to judge the experience of perfect love, and at the same time fail to make any allowance for the weakness of humanity and the earthen vessel, will naturally get people confused. Many of them will throw away their faith.

I would not for a single moment try to console people in carnality and condone the manifestations of this evil thing in their lives; but, on the other hand, I am firmly convinced in my own mind that what some people need is not to be dug up and go to the altar seeking to be sanctified again. What they need is help and instruction that will lead them to see the difference between carnality and humanity, and that will cause them to take a fresh grip on Christ and determine that they are going to make more rapid strides in their growth and development in the Christian life. They need to be shown how they may get

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the victory over the weaknesses of the earthen vessel and how they may more quickly attain unto Christlikeness of character and conduct.

### WHAT DO WE MEAN BY HUMANITY?

All through the message I have been talking about *humanity*, and the difference between carnality and humanity. No doubt the question has arisen in your mind: Just what do you mean by *humanity*? And just how are you going to make the distinction between humanity and carnality? Of course these questions are natural and we ought to face them. However, I want to say that they are big questions and it is sometimes hard to make a clear-cut distinction between the two. Sometimes one shades off into the other until you hardly know when you have crossed over from one field to the other. There are times when we, in our finite minds, cannot make the distinction, but we will have to look to the Holy Spirit to guide us and show us the difference. However, we need to keep in mind that *there is a difference*, and that they are not one and the same thing.

According to my way of thinking, the best test to show the difference between the manifestations of the carnal mind and weaknesses of the human body is this: Carnality is willful rebellion and springs out of the fact that we are not willing to submit to the will of God. On the other hand the failure of humanity springs out of *weakness* rather than *willfulness*. The heart is filled with love and the spirit is willing, but the failure is due to the fact that we are human. The

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best way to test our conduct is to ask ourselves if we did that willfully or through weakness. Then, too, we ought not to depend altogether on our own minds to make the distinction, but let the Holy Spirit always be the final judge. That is why we need the fullness of the Spirit, and need to be very sensitive at all times to His leading. If we try to judge in our own wisdom we may be led astray; but if the Holy Spirit is dwelling in us and holding sway over our lives, then He will check us and help us to know the difference.

But in order that we may have something concrete before us to show the difference between carnality and humanity, I might suggest this thought. I have heard some holiness preachers in their messages to people make some such statement as this: "If you have ever been vexed or irritated and manifested a spirit of impatience and spoken harshly to your husband or child, that is an indication of carnality and you do not have the blessing of entire sanctification." Now I want to say that such a statement is not always true and may even be false. I doubt very seriously if you could find many people who have the blessing of sanctification who, at some time or other after they were sanctified, did not get vexed or irritated and for the moment manifest a spirit of impatience. The truth of the matter is that even Jesus seemed to have His patience tried to the breaking point by the blindness of the scribes and Pharises, and certainly the Bible tells us that He was angry with them. There came a time in the life of Paul when he and Barnabas had a warm dispute over whether they should take John Mark with them,

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and they even went so far in their contention that they parted company. They both had the blessing of perfect love, but it was merely a difference of opinion. Paul really proved that he had the blessing by writing later and saying: "Bring John Mark with you, for he is profitable unto me." In other words, he confessed that he was wrong and Barnabas was right. To my mind that is the real proof that you have the right kind of experience, when you are willing to confess and to make things right. It is human to err, but a real mark of greatness is the willingness to confess and make things right. I think if I have ever seen a person who was really sanctified, that person was "Uncle Buddie" Robinson. He was one of the sweetest, most Christlike men I have ever known; and yet I have heard him tell of a ticket agent who tried his patience so that he spoke too hastily and had to go back and apologize for the way he spoke. Now the fact that he spoke that way was no indication that he had carnality in his heart, but it was merely proof of the fact that he was still human.

Now I trust that I will not be misunderstood at this point. *I have not said this with any idea of excusing or condoning such outbreaks of impatience.* I feel that they ought to be avoided and we ought to do all that we can at all times to keep sweet and be patient. I also believe when a lapse occurs *it ought to be confessed and repented of.* However, I have mentioned it for the purpose of showing that there is a difference between carnal anger and those momentary breaks which come from the fact that we are human



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and have this treasure in earthen vessels. We need to recognize the fact that there are some irritations and vexations that arise from the fact that we are human and that we have this treasure in earthen vessels. It is an established fact that our physical condition has a great deal to do with our spiritual condition. It is much easier for a person who is well and feeling well physically to be sweet and agreeable than it is for the same person when he is sick, tired and run down physically and is very nervous. When everything is going well and we are feeling fine physically, it is much easier to be patient and manifest a good spirit than at other times when all is going wrong and our nerves are frayed. The fact that people may be inclined to be irritated and find things vexing them when they are run down and tired out and everything seems to be out of joint, is not necessarily an indication of the fact that they have carnality, but it may be just a sign that they are human and weak. These people should not throw away their confidence but they should pray and trust God more. This is the time to cultivate the virtue of patience. In fact, patience is one of the virtues that we are commanded to *add* to our life. II Peter 1:5-6: "And besides this, giving all diligence, *add* to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge *temperance*; and to temperance *patience*; and to patience *godliness*." Patience is a virtue that should be cultivated and developed as you would cultivate a rare flower in your garden. God does not give it all to you in one lump. This is one of the things in which there is room for growth in grace. "*Tribula-*

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*tion worketh patience.*" If you will watch and pray and try to develop along this line, you will grow stronger as you go along. Do not become discouraged and give up, but press on in the faith.

There is one statement in the 13th chapter of I Corinthians that I have sometimes wished might have been translated differently. It is the statement where Paul says: "Love is not easily *provoked*." Some people seem to overlook the word-easily\*-and have jumped to the conclusion that perfect love is *never* provoked. That is not true. Love is provoked. It would not be love if it were never provoked. The fact that it is love means that there are times when it will be provoked. Christ was provoked with the sin and blindness of the scribes and Pharisees of His day. A mother ought to be provoked with the sin that is wrecking the life of her child. The real child of God needs to be provoked with the sins of this day. If we really love God and humanity, there will be times when our hearts are stirred within us.

Now the word that Paul really used is the Greek word-paroxynetai. It is the root word from which we get the word *paroxysm*. Now we all know what a paroxysm is. It is a fit. A person has a paroxysm of pain, laughter or anger. He has a fit. Now what Paul is really saying is this: If you are made perfect in love you do not *have fits* any more. That old thing which used to boil up in you and boil over and make you have a fit of anger, or a fit of the pouts, or a fit

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\*The word, easily, is not in the Greek text, but is added by the translators to save us from misunderstanding.

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of jealousy, or a fit of stubbornness, or for that matter any other kind of fit- *that thing has been taken out*. You may be vexed and provoked, but you have quit having fits as you once had.

I feel that at this point I would like to testify for the glory of God. There was a time even after I had been converted that I had a fearful temper. There would be times when I would boil over and lose my temper and see "red." However, I can truthfully say that since God sanctified me with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit I have never had one of those fits of anger. That old carnal nature is gone. Praise His name!

However, honesty also forces me to confess that there have been times, since I was sanctified, when I have been irritated and vexed by things and have not always been as patient as I should have been. But I want to say that there is quite a difference between now and what used to be. I find now that when I am inclined to be vexed and impatient there is something inside me that checks me and helps me to keep controlled. Those old fits are gone. Thank God that this is true.

In fact, I want to say that I have noticed there is quite a difference in the feeling one has when carnality is in one, and the feeling which arises from the fact that one is human. As I look back now and think of the symptoms that manifested themselves before an outbreak of carnal anger, I remember that when carnality began to boil up, everything seemed to add fuel to the fire until the explosion came. On the other hand I notice now, when things come along that are

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inclined to vex and irritate, there is something inside that seems to whisper and say: "If I were you I would not pay any attention to that. I would pass it by. It is of so little importance that you cannot afford to let it affect you." In other words, there is something now that seems to soothe and try to assuage the hurt, while on the other hand, there used to be something inside that irritated and urged the thing on.

While we are at this point, it might also be well for me to remind you that our physical condition has a great effect on our religious emotions and feelings. In fact, our physical state has a great effect on our faith. There are times when we are run down and exhausted physically and at those times we find it harder to exercise faith. Many of the greatest saints have witnessed to the fact that there were times in their lives when it seemed that they had no faith at all. They tell us that Francis Asbury used to preach with great unction and power, and then go to his room and have spells of melancholy until he would feel that he was lost and there was no hope for him at all. Now this feeling came from the fact that his body was exhausted and his nerves frayed. I think that the same thing must have been true of Elijah when he went off under the juniper tree and had such a spell of the blues. It was the physical reaction that came after his great conflict with evil on Mt. Carmel. His spiritual condition was not changed, for God went out to him and helped him.

If this truth could be kept in mind, it would save us from many mistakes in dealing with people. I have

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had numerous cases with which I have been called upon to deal. The person thought that he was in a terrible plight spiritually, but the truth of the matter was that it was not a spiritual problem at all. What he needed was not a long season of wrestling in prayer, but rather a time of rest and a building up of the body and the nervous system.

Since our physical and nervous condition does have so much to do with our feelings and faith, then we ought to see how foolish and dangerous it is to make our feelings the barometer of our spiritual state. If you expect to live by your feelings you will find yourself in a constant state of doubt and uncertainty and you will always live an up-and-down life. You will find that your feelings fluctuate and go up and down like a window shade, but thank God that does not have to be true of your spiritual state and standing in Jesus Christ. The *fact* that you are in Jesus Christ is a fact that was established by a *deliberate choice of your will*, and that fact can only be changed in one way, and that is by a *choice of your will*.

I do not believe in eternal security as some people teach it. I do believe and *know* that the Bible teaches it is possible for *a person to take himself out of the hands of Christ and be eternally lost*. Judas took himself out of the hands of Christ, for Christ says so. ("I have kept all that *thou gavest me, but the son of perdition.*") On the other hand, I do believe in this kind of security-if a soul by a deliberate choice of the will puts himself into the hands of Christ and trusts in Him for salvation and pleads the merits of

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His blood to cover his sins, all the powers of hell cannot take that person out of the hands of Christ so *long as he trusts* and wills to be kept. That person may make blunders and mistakes; he may be very weak and feel very unworthy; but if *that soul holds on to Jesus Christ by faith and looks to Him to keep him, that soul is safe and secure.* Of course he can give up his faith and throw away his trust in Christ and lose all claim to the merits of the blood. But the point I am trying to make is this: We are not only saved by faith but *we live by faith.* We are "kept by the power of God *through faith.*" "This is the victory that overcometh the world, *even our faith.*"

May I give you a great truth in a little verse which I had given to me several years ago? It reads like this

Three men were walking on a wall,  
FEELING, FAITH and FACT.  
Feeling got an awful fall,  
And Faith was taken back.  
Faith was so close to feeling,  
He fell too,  
BUT FACT REMAINED and pulled Faith up,  
And that brought Feeling too.

I feel just as good when I don't feel good, as I do when I do feel good, for I don't run on feeling after all. If it is a *fact* that you have been saved by faith in Christ, and if you are trusting to the blood to save you, rather than your good works or your feelings, then *that fact is the thing* you should rest upon. Then,

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too, it is a fact that you have been sanctified by faith in the blood of Christ, and the Holy Spirit has borne witness to that fact, then your soul ought to be able to rest in that fact, and let feelings take care of themselves. The fact is the thing that counts in the sight of God. God told the people of Israel, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." Now the fact that they were under the blood was the one thing that God was concerned about. When the Death Angel passed through the land that night, he looked for only one thing, and that was the blood. When he saw that, it was enough. He did not stop to ask about their feelings, for their feelings did not enter into the transaction at all. That same thing is true with us today. If we are under the blood and claiming the merits of the blood, that is the thing that counts. Oh, if only I could get people to see this great truth! Dear reader, I hope that you will see it and rest in peace with this glorious truth for your foundation.

My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness,  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.  
On Christ the solid Rock I stand  
All other ground is sinking sand.

## THERE ARE MANY HUMAN TRAITS AND

### DESIRES WHICH ARE NOT SINFUL

As a further contribution to this question of what we mean by humanity, I would like to remind you that there are certain human traits and desires which *are not sinful*. They may lead to sin if they are *overindulged* or if they are indulged under the wrong conditions, but they are natural desires and were given to us by the Lord. Without them we would not be normal human beings. *They are not destroyed in sanctification*, but are brought into their proper place in our lives.

The desire for food is a *natural desire*. It is not sinful but is as natural as breathing. You can eat to the glory of God just as much as you can sing or pray to the glory of God. However, we may overindulge the appetite and eat too much, and it may become gluttony. We may sin by eating too much. This is one of the natural appetites that we must keep under.

*The sex desire is not a sinful desire*. It is a *natural* desire and is given to us by the Lord. It is God's way of propagating the race. It plays a great part in human love and contributes to the mating instinct that forms the home, which is a divine institution. Paul tells us that one of the signs of the last days is that people will be *without natural affection*. God blessed the first pair in the Garden and told them to be *fruitful* and multiply and replenish the earth. We are also



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told that Enoch *walked with God* and *begot sons* and daughters. His walking with God did not hinder his begetting sons and daughters, and his begetting sons and daughters did not hinder his walk with God. They could be in perfect harmony one with the other. However, we do need to remember that the sex desire may and often does lead to sin, and we need to keep careful check upon it. It may lead to the ugliest sort of sin. However, I want to say again that it is not a sinful desire within itself. It is as natural as the desire for food. If people could see this, it would save them from much confusion.

I also want to say that there are certain temperaments and characteristics of the personality which are natural and they are not destroyed in sanctification. They are as much a part of us as the color of our hair or the shape of our heads. We need to see that when God sanctifies the soul, *He does not destroy the personality*. He sanctifies it and uses it to His glory. He does not want to make us all according to the same pattern. He can use a man with a fiery, impetuous nature like Saint Peter, and He can also use a man with a quiet nature like Barnabas. He can use a man with a nature like Uncle Buddie and also a man with the nature of Dr. Morrison. He can use a John Paul and a Seth Rees. I think it would be well for us to see this truth and keep it in mind. Too many times we have seemed to think that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit will make fiery evangelists of all who receive it. That is not the teaching of the Bible. He wants some to be teachers. He wants some to be pastors, and

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some evangelists, but He wants them all to be filled with the Holy Spirit and sanctified wholly.

Then, too, we need to remember that each of us has inherited certain temperaments and that there are some things which are part of our physical nature. They are not carnality, but they are part of our humanity. They are not destroyed in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, but they are sanctified. There is as much difference in the temperaments of people as there is in horses. Some horses are slow and easy going by breeding, while others are spirited and high strung by breeding. They can both be broken and used in a great way, but their natures will never be changed. The same thing is true of people. Some people are by nature slow, placid and calm. they were born that way; they do not deserve any credit for being that way. It is just as much a part of them as the color of their eyes. Now their temptation may not be with temper and nervousness. Carnality may bother them at some other point, but they need to be sanctified just the same.

On the other hand there are some people who are by nature high-strung and of a nervous temperament. Now when they get the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, all of that temperament is not taken away. If it were, they would be useless. It is a part of their make-up. They will have to guard at this point and cultivate the grace of patience and learn to be patient with other people who are slower than they are. It is at points like this that we have room for growth and develop-

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ment. Here is where we see the difference between purity and maturity.

I would also like to remind you that while there is a carnal pride which is very ugly and must be destroyed, on the other hand there is such a thing as natural pride or self-esteem and it may be sanctified and used to the glory of God. Most all of us have a certain amount of natural self-esteem that is left after we are sanctified, and it is not sinful. It may lead to sin, but it is a natural thing within itself and may be a very precious gift. God does not place any premium upon indifference and carelessness. He does not get any glory out of slovenliness. He wants us to be at our best for Him.

There is also a certain amount of human ambition that remains after a person is sanctified. It is not that old, ugly, carnal ambition that makes us push and shove to get into the limelight, but it is that natural ambition that is to our life much like the spirit in a horse. Without it we would be worthless. God gets no pleasure or glory out of an indifferent spirit that is content to sit down and do nothing. He wants us to have something in us that will make us want to get up and be at our best *for His glory*. This natural ambition may lead to sin and needs to be guarded, but it may be sanctified and used to the glory of God.

Now all of these natural appetites, temperaments, and human traits may be sanctified, and so brought into harmony by the Holy Spirit that they form one beautiful whole, that makes a well-rounded symmetrical character that is a blessing to the world and

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pleasing to God. However, we may overindulge one or the other of them until it will lead to sin and wreck our lives.

I have been told that the best that medical science has been able to discover about cancer is this: They say that cancer is formed by a cell or group of cells in some part of the body turning rebel and refusing to work with the rest of the cells of the body, but rather demanding that all the other cells work for it, and this forms a malignant growth that we call cancer. I am no authority on medical science and cannot vouch for the truthfulness of this statement. However, I do know that there are certain human traits and characteristics which are natural and, when they all work together for the good of the whole human personality, they make a beautiful life. On the other hand, I know that sometimes one or the other of these may get out of balance and be overdeveloped until it forms a malignant growth upon the body of the personality and becomes a very ugly thing.

I have seen some people, who had been sanctified overeat and become gluttons. I have seen some overindulge their temperament until they were very objectionable to have around. I have seen some of them overfeed their natural pride and it became an ugly thing. I have seen some of them overindulge their natural ambition until it became self-seeking and sometimes very touchy to any slight or rebuff. I have seen some overindulge their firmness until they became hard and gruff. I have seen some go too far in emotionalism until it led into wild excesses. I have seen

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some become over-sweet until they became sickening. I have seen some get lopsided on tolerance until they stood with everything and everybody and yet they did not stand for anything definite.

This leads us to see that to have a well balanced Christian character we need to be Spirit-baptized, Spirit-filled and Spirit-led at all times.

### A SANCTIFIED PERSON IS TEMPTED THROUGH THE HUMAN BODY

Since we are dealing with the question of humanity, I feel that it would be profitable for us to consider the question of temptation as it is related to the human body. I find that a great many people are confused about the matter of temptation. In the first place, I fear that there are many people who get the idea, when we begin to talk about entire sanctification, that if a person is sanctified he will never be tempted any more and that all of his battles will be over. When we talk about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and tell people what it will do for them, I fear that some of them get the idea that if they could only have this experience, all their temptations would be gone and they would have nothing to do but sail along through life and live above all the strife of this world. Now I would like to say that if you have any such idea as that, then I will have to disabuse your mind of any such misconception. You will have battles to fight after you are sanctified and there will be many fierce temptations to face. However, the Holy Spirit will

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keep you and make you more than conqueror, if you will trust Him and let Him have His way in your life. Sometimes the charge is made against us holiness preachers that we teach if a person is sanctified he cannot sin and that all temptation is gone. We do not teach any such thing. *We do teach that if a person is a Christian he has quit the sin business and that it is possible to be delivered from all sin.* We have the right to teach that, for *the Bible teaches it.* We do not teach that a person ever gets to the place where he is not tempted, but we do teach that a person can get to the place where he can be victorious over temptation, and that he should be. We have the right to teach that, for the Bible teaches just the very same thing.

On the other hand, there are many people who are confused in their minds about temptation because they have never made any distinction in their thinking between temptation and *yielding* to temptation. There are some people who think, because they are tempted to sin, that they are sinners. That is not true. Jesus was tempted, but He did not sin. The temptation was suggested to Him but He refused to yield and dismissed it from His mind. Many times Satan will suggest an evil desire to our minds, and then stand off and taunt us with the thought that if we were pure in heart we would not have any such thoughts or desires. However, that is not true. The only way that Satan can tempt us is by making the suggestion to our minds. The way we treat that suggestion is the thing that will determine whether it will be sin or not. If we dismiss it, then we have not sinned, but we have

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gained the victory and have grown stronger by it. On the other hand, if we receive the thought and harbor it and begin to roll it as a sweet morsel under our tongue, then we are in danger. I think that if people would see this distinction they would quit talking about sinning every day in *thought*. They have never made any distinction in their thinking between *thoughts about evil and evil thoughts*. Satan may suggest a thought about evil to your mind and he does many times. However, that thought does not become evil until you take it into your *heart* and make it part of your *desire and purpose*. He suggests many thoughts about evil to my mind, but I thank God I have something in me that makes me cast them out and refuse to give them room in my heart and life.

We also need to see that temptation is necessary for the development of the kind of character that God wants. God wants us to love and serve Him, not through compulsion, but through choice, and that implies we must have the chance to choose between the evil and the good. As we reject the evil and choose the good we develop Christian character and show to the world and to God that we prefer the good and despise the evil. In fact, every time we are faced with temptation we not only build up a reserve against sin, but we also declare our choice of the good and show by that choice that we are like our Master.

I believe many people who have received the blessing of sanctification have been confused about temptation with respect to at least two points. In the first place, many of them thought that when they received

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the Baptism of the Holy Spirit they would be done with all the battles and temptations. Then later on when they found that they still had human desires and Satan came to them through the human appetites, they became confused and began to doubt that they were really sanctified. They need to see that even though carnality is taken out of the heart and the *inward strife* is gone, they still have their treasure in earthen vessels, and they need to see that the body must be kept under and the desires of the body must be guarded.

In the second place, many sanctified people have gone down right at this point: They thought when carnality was destroyed they were done with temptation. They felt that all of the battle was over and the victory won. Because of this they became overconfident and grew *careless* about the *natural desires* of the human body, and many of them have gone down with an awful crash through the human desires. I think this might explain why we have so many fatalities in the ranks at the point of sex desire. Some people have become careless at this point and have learned to their sorrow that we still have this treasure in earthen vessels and that the vessel is very weak. My dear reader, will you let me say to you: Do be careful at this point and shun the very appearance of evil. Remember that even though you are filled with the Holy Spirit, you have this treasure in an earthen vessel and always guard the vessel.

Now I want to say again that the natural human desires are not sinful within themselves. They are



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natural and God-given and we will have them so long as we have the body. It is not sinful to desire food, and under proper conditions you may gratify that desire to the glory of God. However, you will have to watch that desire and not let it run riot, for if you do it may lead to sin. You may overindulge it and I have seen some preachers who almost dug their grave with a knife and fork. They overate and destroyed the keenness of their minds and wrecked their health because they did not add temperance to their faith.

I must say again that the sex desire is not a sinful desire. It is a natural desire and is as much a part of the normal person as the desire for food. The fact that you have it is no sin, and the fact that it may make itself felt is not necessarily an indication of evil in your nature. It is just an indication that you are a normal human being. However, we need to see that it may easily lead to the worst sort of sin and may wreck our lives. Guard it and keep it under control. Avoid those thoughts which will wrongly excite that desire and by all means shun all of those contacts which might lead to sin at this point.

Now I might go on and enumerate a long list of these natural desires of the body, and point out that they are not sinful within themselves, but at the same time they might lead to sin. However, I do not think it is necessary for me to multiply instances along this line. I think I have said enough to prove that there are certain natural desires that remain after carnality is removed, and I think I have said enough to prove

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that they are not sinful within themselves. However, always remember that they may lead to sin.

There is just one other thing that I want to say, and then I am through with this point. I would like to remind you that the natural desires of the human body usually *begin in the subconscious mind*. We have them before we become conscious of them. We often get hungry before we become conscious of it. The desire for food is there, and finally that desire becomes so strong that it gains the attention of the conscious mind. Now when this natural desire gets the attention of the conscious mind, you face the question as to whether you may gratify that desire without doing violence to the spiritual man. If you can, then it is all right to go ahead and satisfy that desire. There is no sin in doing it. However, there may be times when you cannot satisfy that desire without hurt to your soul. If that is true, you will have to say "No" to that desire and deny yourself. That same thing is true of the sex desire and all other human desires. We must remember that the soul is the important thing, and that nothing must come in to hurt our soul and destroy our contact with God. Just remember that the body is the shell or house for the soul, and the house must not claim first place in your life. Jesus said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone." In other words, the body is not the major thing in your life. We can afford to deny the body if only the soul may be strong and grow.

It is at this point that the real Christian differs from the man of the world. The world is greatly con-

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cerned about the body and natural desires of the earthen vessels. The body is the thing of major concern with the man of the world. However, a Christian has learned that the soul is the thing of greatest value and the soul occupies the center of the Christian life. He has learned to seek *first* the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, for he knows that these other *things will* be added unto him.

LET THIS MIND BE IN YOU, WHICH WAS ALSO IN  
CHRIST JESUS

All through this message we have had a great deal to say about the human body. We have tried to point out to you that it is an essential part of the total personality. We have also tried to point out to you that the natural appetites of the body are not sinful, but that they are weak and may lead to sin. We have tried to point out to you that this same weak body may be sanctified and may be made the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, and that it may become the instrument of the Holy Spirit for works of righteousness unto holiness.

Now as we draw near the close of this message we would like to leave this glorious truth with you. *The body is the instrument of the mind and will.* It is not the master, but rather the *servant* of the mind and will. That is why it is such an absurd thing for people to contend that you can be pure and right in mind and heart and still live in all kinds of sin in the body. To teach that is to teach something that is contrary

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to common sense and the teaching of the Bible. It is a fact that is established by experience, psychology and the Bible that *the body does not act independently of the mind and will*. Your body is not going to steal, fight or commit adultery unless it first gains consent of the will and receives the *command* from the brain. The mind and will determine what you do and what you do not do. The mind is the master of your life and the body is subject to the mind.

Now when we use the word *mind* we are not thinking of the intellect alone. In *our* thought the *intellect* or thinking faculty is *but a fraction* of what we mean when we speak of the *mind*. What we mean by the mind is this: It is the *ego* or personality that is back of the brain. It is that part of us that loves, hates, aspires, trusts and commands the brain and rules the destiny of the life. *It is that something in which is found the seat of the will and affection*. It is spoken of as the soul or spirit. It is the real spiritual man that inhabits the mortal body. It is the real you. It is this thing that really determines what you are and what you shall be. This is what we mean by the mind.

Now the Bible teaches that we may be in either one of three states of mind, spiritually speaking. In the first place, the Bible teaches that it is possible for a person to be *carnally minded*. The Bible tells us that to be carnally minded is death. It also tells us that the carnal mind is enmity against God, that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. *The unconverted man is carnally minded*. That is the reason why it is *absolutely necessary* for the natural

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man to be born again. Without this birth he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Jesus shows us the logic of this truth when He says: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, *Ye must be born again.*" It seems that any one could see the logic of this point. However, it also seems that many people have never yet seen this truth.

In the second place, the Bible teaches that it is possible for a person to be *double minded*, and James tells us that the double minded man is unstable in all his ways. You never know just what he will do.

Now it might be worth our while to stop and ask the question: Just who is the double minded person? What is his status in the sight of God? This question can be answered by stating first who the double minded man is not. He is certainly not the sinner, for the sinner is carnally minded. On the other hand, he is certainly not the Spirit-filled person, for the latter has the mind of Christ. Now to my way of thinking the double minded person can be placed in but one class, and that is the class of people who have been converted and have received a new nature from Christ, but who still have the old carnal mind remaining in them. They are double minded. They have a new spiritual nature, but they also have an old carnal mind, and these are contrary one to the other. These persons are double minded and therefore very unstable in all their ways. They are sometimes on and sometimes off. Sometimes they are up and sometimes they are down. You never know just where to find them. They cannot

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be depended upon at all times. You never know whether they will stand or not.

I believe that we have score of double minded people in all of our churches. I find them wherever I go. Every pastor knows just what I am speaking of. The double minded people of our congregations are the biggest problem that the church has to confront. If we could handle the double minded people and get them settled and established, the church could and would go forward in a great way.

Now I want to say very emphatically that these people are not hypocrites. We do them a great injustice to so classify them. Many of them are honest and sincere. They want to do right and live for Christ. Many of them are heartily ashamed of their failures and repent of them with deep remorse. They are not satisfied with their experience and would like to find something better. They do not need to be abused, but they do need to be helped. They need to be shown that there is a more satisfying experience in Christ, and they need to be led into such fellowship with Christ that they will get out of their present state.

This leads me to say, in the third place, the Bible teaches that it is possible for a person to have *the* mind of Christ. That is what St. Paul is appealing for in the text. He is urging us on into an experience that will cure us of our double mindedness, and that will get us out of the state where we are unstable in all our ways.

Now I want to call your attention to the fact that St. Paul says: "Let this mind be in you." It is some-

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thing that must come into us. He does not say that we are to strive to live like Jesus, or that we are to take Jesus as our pattern. No doubt if some of our modern religious leaders were writing this epistle they would say, "Strive to live like Jesus and take Him as your ideal." They would also say: "You must be sure to practice the presence of Christ." However, Paul does not make any such appeal, for he realizes that before a person can live a Christ-centered life, Christ must be put at the center of his life. He also realizes that before we can practice the presence of Christ, the presence of Christ must be in us. St. Paul pushes on beyond the *fruits* and goes back to the roots and tells us it is here at the heart or center of our being that we must begin. He realized that there must be the inward dynamic before we can have the outward manifestation of power. I think it would be well for us to see the same thing. St. Paul tells us that the mystery (or rather the secret) of godliness is *Christ in you*. This secret, of Christ in you, is a mystery to the world. They cannot understand it. They can talk about the historic Christ and the human Christ, but it seems they know nothing about the Indwelling Christ.

Really this is not surprising; for the word mystery really means a secret revealed to the initiated. You have to be initiated, or born into the family of God, before you can have this secret revealed to you. Jesus said: "The *world* cannot receive the Holy Ghost, for it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

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Now what St. Paul is talking about, when he begs us to let this mind be in us which was in Christ Jesus, is this: he is urging us to let the Holy Spirit come in and take full charge and possession of our life. If you would have the mind of Christ, then ask for the Holy Spirit to come in and baptize and fill your heart and life. That is the way to have the mind of Christ.

In conclusion may I call your attention to just one little word in this appeal? It is the word L-E-T. Paul does not say struggle, strive, wrestle, agonize or beg God for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, but he says *Let*. Too many people have the idea that they have to do all these things which I have mentioned in order to get God willing to give them the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. That is not true. God is more willing to give you the Holy Spirit than you are to give bread to your hungry child. If you were half as anxious to be filled with the Holy Spirit as He is to fill you, it would be an accomplished fact. He is willing and ready. Are you?

It is often true that people have to pass through a terrible season of struggle before they get this wonderful experience, but their struggle is not with God; it rather is with themselves. I had a long, hard struggle, but it was not with the Lord. It was "Brother John" with whom I had the trouble. God was willing all the time. He is willing to fill you, and I beg of you just now to say that *last* "Yes." Just let go and let God, and the work will be done.



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May I suggest that you make this your prayer

"Spirit of the Living God, fall NOW on me;  
Spirit of the living God, fall now on me;  
BREAK me, MELT me, MOULD me, FILL me;  
Spirit of the living God, fall now on ME."

If you will say that and mean every word of it, He will fall on you. "*The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*" (Acts 2:39). *This blessing is received by faith, and faith is*

**F**orsaking

**A**ll

**I**

**T**ake

**H**im

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### TWO MOOT POINTS DEALT WITH

#### THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In connection with this little message on "This Treasure in Earthen Vessels," I feel that there are two other truths that I would like to deal with as briefly as possible.

As I have tried to preach the truth of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Holiness, I find a great many people who are honest and really anxious to be all that God can make them, and yet are confused in their minds with reference to two great truths.

One point that a great many people are confused about is the term "Baptism of the Holy Spirit." I really think that most of the confusion can be cleared up at this point if we will have clearly fixed in our minds just what the word "baptize" really means. To my mind it is very unfortunate that we should have had so much wrangling and disputing over the mode of baptism that we have lost sight of the real meaning of the word. We have wrangled and disputed over the mode of baptism until we have lost sight of what is supposed to be accomplished when a person is baptized. Now I believe that a careful study of the use of the word in the New Testament will reveal to us that, when the word was used in the time of Jesus, it conveyed the idea of cleansing or purification regardless of how it might be done. It was not so much a question in the minds of those people as to *how* it was done, but rather a question of *what* was done

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when they were baptized. When they were baptized, they were cleansed. In the case of water baptism they were ceremonially cleansed or purified, and in the case of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit they were spiritually cleansed or purified.

I believe that you can take out the word "baptize" anywhere in the New Testament and use the word cleanse or purify and you will not change the meaning of the sentence one iota. As an illustration take Acts 1:5: "John truly baptized (cleansed or purified) you with water; but you shall be baptized (cleansed or purified) with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." It might be of interest to you to run through your New Testament and try this wherever you find the word.

Now if we keep this in mind, it will save us from confusion at two points. In the first place, when you seek the Baptism of the Holy Spirit you are not seeking for more of the Spirit; He is a person, and if you are a Christian you have *Him*. Neither are you seeking for something to come to you from a distance that you have never known before. The Holy Spirit is and has been with you ever since you became a Christian. He is here in the world, and *He* dwelleth with you and shall be in you. However, when you ask for and seek the Baptism of the Holy Spirit you are asking Him to do something for you that He has not done before. You ask Him to cleanse or purify (baptize) your heart and life. The experience of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a matter of something new coming to you that you have never known before,

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but it is a matter of the Holy Spirit's doing something for you that He has not done before. In regeneration He gave you a nature that you had never had before and could not get any other way but by the work of the Holy Spirit. In the Baptism of the Holy Spirit you are asking to be freed from a nature that you have always had and could not get rid of in any other way but by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. In one case you get a new nature and in the other you get rid of an old nature.

Now the truth that is suggested by this word, cleanse or purify, is one that we need to keep in mind at all times. If we overlook it or try to discount it, we will miss a very vital truth. I find a great many people who like to talk about the fullness of the Spirit and have a great deal to say about receiving power, but they rebel at this idea of spiritual cleansing. However, we need to see that Jesus talked about cleansing before He mentioned power. He said, "Ye shall be *baptized* (cleansed or purified)," before He said, "Ye shall receive power." Peter saw the importance of this truth, and so when he reported the baptism of Cornelius and his household he reports that God purified their hearts by faith. We also need to see that power without purity would be the most dangerous thing in the world. For God to give His people the power of the Holy Spirit without first giving them the purity of heart needed to use this power would be a menace to all of us. Indeed, one of the greatest dangers of this present day is the fact that we have learned how to use the physical power of God, and men do

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not have the purity of heart and life to use it aright. If we don't have a revival of religion there is a danger of man's using this power to wreck civilization.

We also need to see that the very idea of the fullness of the Holy Spirit must carry with it the idea of purity. Heaven is pure and holy because it is filled with the presence and glory of God. When an individual is filled with the presence and glory of God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, he must be holy, for he is filled with the Holy Ghost. The presence of the Holy Spirit produces a state of holiness in the individual. There can be no holiness apart from the presence of the Holy Spirit. His presence implies a condition of holiness, and His presence is the only thing that can produce a state of holiness.

### WHAT IS SIN?

The other point that I find so many people confused about is this: What is sin? There are a great many good, sincere people who will contend to the very last that a person has to live in sin so long as he is in the body. Now I find that most of the confusion at this point arises from the fact that such people have no clear cut conception as to just what sin really is. Before we can agree on the question as to whether a person has to sin, we will have to have clearly fixed in our mind just what we mean by sin.

Now the question before us is, What is sin? There are two definitions of sin that I believe will be acceptable to us in this discussion. The first is, "Sin is missing

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the mark." The other is that definition given in the Westminster confession: "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." In other words, it is missing the mark, of failing to measure up to the will of God for our life. Now the next question that we must face is this: What is the mark that we are supposed to hit? *What is God's law or will for us?* This question must be clearly answered before anyone can say whether it is possible to do it. If we do not know what the mark is, how can we know whether we have hit it or not? If we do not know what God's law or will is, how can we know whether we have measured up to it or not? So the big question that we have to face is, What is the mark? What is God's will or law for us? Does He demand perfect service? If He does, He is unjust and unreasonable in His demands. He demands more of us than we do of our children. I do not demand that my children render perfect service to me. I realize that they are subject to mistakes and sometimes failures due to the fact that they are finite. Does God demand perfect understanding and freedom from all mistakes? If He does, there He is unfair in His demands. If He demands this, then He demands more of me than I do of my child. I recognize that my child may not always understand, and that to the fact that he is finite he may not always render perfect service. Now, the question is, Does God demand these things of His children? Of course the answer comes back, "No"; God is a loving Father and He does not make *impossible* demands of His children.

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Fortunately we have this vexing question settled for us by our Lord Jesus Christ. He tells us what the mark is, He tells us what God's law and will is concerning us. In Mark 12:28-31 we find a scribe coming to Jesus, asking this very question that we are facing. His quotation was, "Which is the first commandment of all?" In other words, which is the most important commandment? What is the very least that I can do to measure up to the will of God in my life? This is really what he is asking. Jesus answered him by saying, "Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. THERE IS NONE OTHER COMMANDMENT GREATER THAN THESE." Here we have our Lord saying that the thing that God demands is *perfect love*. He does not demand *perfect service*, but perfect love. He also says that there is no other commandment that is *greater* than the demand for perfect love. In other words, this is the supreme thing and if this demand is met the other things will take care of themselves. Here our Lord tells us what the mark is that we are supposed to hit. If we do hit this mark, then God will be *satisfied*. Here He is telling us what the law or will of God is for us. It is Perfect Love, and not perfect service. If we measure up to this, we have hit the mark and measured up to God's law and will for us. If we fall short of this, we have failed, no matter what else we may do. I thank God from the depths of my heart and mind, and for

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me it forever settles the question, What is sin? John says that sin is the transgression of the law. It is lawlessness or rebellion. I John 3:4.

This kind of a standard is worthy of a holy God. It is high enough to demand the best that is in me, and bring me a full and perfect surrender of my heart and life to Him. It is as low as the standard could be placed by a holy God. On the other hand, it is not so high but that I by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Ghost, can attain unto it. If He had placed it any higher, it would have been unjust, but I thank God that He placed it at just the right level. If you measure up to this mark, your life will be well pleasing to God. You may make mistakes and blunders, but your Father will recognize that they are due to the head and not to the heart, and He will not condemn.