

These Perilous Times
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Heresy, What Does it Look Like?

Part III

“The Mirror Test”

Frequent *self-assessment* of our “Christian walk,” is very crucial for God’s “remnant people.” The yardstick of measurement to be used in doing so, is Christ’s life, via the Bible.¹

As we look into the mirror of our Christian profession, what do we see? Are we mirroring Christ as our only standard of righteousness, or do we compare our lives to the standards of other Christian denominations and institutions?

Just a brief reminder, “heresy” is a falling away from, {apostasy}, and/or an attack on Bible-based doctrines, {teachings} established by a church.

Is it possible that some of us could be practicing, and promoting heresy, while at the same time not be aware of it?

¹ John 5:39

“These people draw nigh unto me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Matthew 15:8, 9

Counsel from God’s inspired messenger

“... After the descent of the Holy Spirit the disciples went forth to proclaim a risen Savior, their one desire the salvation of souls. They rejoiced in the sweetness with the communion with saints.

They were tender, thoughtful, self-denying. Willing to make any sacrifice for the ‘truth’s sake.’ In their daily association with one another they revealed the love that Christ had commanded them to reveal.

By unselfish words and deeds they strove to kindle this love in other hearts. The believers were ever to cherish the love that filled the hearts of the apostles after the descent of the Holy Spirit. They were to go forward in willing obedience to the new commandment. “As I have loved you that ye also have love for one another,”² {emphasis provided}.

² John 13:34

The way Jesus demonstrated, {s} **His love** for us is far beyond human comprehension. In our finite way of reckoning however, we can say-When He gave **His life** for us, we were/are **“justified”** by His blood, {imputed righteousness, what *He did for us* at the cross-**“cleansed us from past transgressions,” acquitted us from sin-a free, unmerited gift,** just as if we had never sinned}.^{3 4}

There is also another very important term in the Bible we should familiarize ourselves with called **“sanctification,”** closely related to justification but somewhat different, {imparted righteousness *which is done in us through the guiding power of the Holy Spirit-a renewal of our thinking*}.⁵

Christian Growth, is continually overcoming present character flaws-sin, {not works oriented, but Holy Spirit guided} **which if not overcome will grieve the presence of the Holy Spirit.**⁶

So, to make it plain, in **Justification** a man receives Jesus Christ, in **Sanctification** he learns to walk in harmony with His will.⁷ If our Christian walk stops with

³ I John 1:7-9

⁴ SDA Bible Commentary, Vol. 8, pp. 635-636

⁵ Rom. 12:1,2; Psalms 51:9-12

⁶ Eph. 4:21-29, 30***

⁷ Col. 2: 6&7.

justification only so does our “Christian growth,” {overcoming sin}. Without the **sanctifying** power of God’s Spirit; we may be modeling to others that we are just fine in our own self-righteousness, a type of ‘back-sliding’ that can lead to heresy, {the “once saved always saved” doctrine taught by “many theologians”} and not be aware of it.

“Daniel was a servant of the Most High. His long life was filled up with noble deeds of service for his Master. His purity and unwavering character of fidelity are equaled only by his humility of heart and his contrition before God. We repeat. The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of true sanctification...” ⁸ {emphasis provided}.

“...Happy feelings or the absence of joy is no evidence that a person is or is not sanctified. There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification. True sanctification is a ‘daily work, continuing as long as life shall last.’ {Emphasis provided}

Those who are battling with daily temptations, overcoming their own sinful tendencies, and seeking for holiness of heart and life, make no boastful claim of

⁸ Testimonies, Vol. 6, p.433.

holiness. They are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. *Sin appears to them exceedingly sinful...* {emphasis provide}.⁹

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“No Longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaningless of our former way of life. *In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character,* communing with Him daily, in prayer, in *feeding on His Word,* meditating on it and on His providence, *singing His praises, gathering together for worship,* and *participating in the mission of the church.*

As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation His constant presence with us *through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience...*¹⁰ {emphasis provided}.

⁹ The Sanctified Life, p. 10.

¹⁰ Growing in Christ, “Seventh-day Adventist Believe, Boise ID, Pacific Press Pub., Assn., 1988, 149-162.

