

Study for the Month of December 2008

BIBLICAL PERFECTION

Part VII

By Nathaniel M. Fajardo

Sanctification

In this issue we shall focus on the subject of sanctification as the work of Biblical perfection. Jesus said in John 17:17 that it is by the truth that one is sanctified, meaning, made holy, hallowed, and separate from sin. This, in effect, is what He also meant when He declared “And the truth shall make” or set “you free,” free, that is, from the bondage to all sinful habits and indulged inherited propensities and weaknesses. *And since Jesus “is the way, the truth, and the life,”* and that the angel announced that His name would be Jesus, meaning, “for He shall set His people from sin” (Matt. 1:21),

Sanctification comes from the Greek *hagiasmos*, meaning, “holiness,” “consecration,” “sanctification,” and is derived from the word *hagiazō*, “to make holy,” “to consecrate,” “to sanctify,” “to set apart,” and is equivalent to the Hebrew *qadash*, meaning, “to separate from common use.” Such is the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, set aside, sanctified, and hallowed for a precious use—to honor the Creator and His perfect works. Such will be the experience of every repentant sinner as he begins to keep the Sabbath with this deepening understanding and conviction. This is why, in brief, the Sabbath is the seal of God, for one cannot be saved unless he receives the seal of approval of God that he has been sanctified—purified from all that defiles.

As an encouragement to the reader to study for himself the following Scriptures in the context they are used, by reading the verses before and after, and by contrasting and comparing it with other like verses herein provided, I am here summarizing from the King James Version the following words and where they are found:

1. Sanctification is used a total of 5 times, all in the NT, as follows: 1 Cor. 1: 30; 1 Thess. 4: 3, 4; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1: 2.

2. Sanctified is used in the following verses: Gen 2:3; Exo. 19:4; 29:34; Lev. 8, 10, 15, 30; 10:3; 27: 15, 19; Num. 7:1,1; 8:17; 20:13; Deut. 32:51; 1 Sam. 7:1; 16:5; 21:5; 1 Chron. 15:14; 2 Chron. 5:11; 7: 16,20; 29: 15, 17, 19, 34; 30: 3, 8, 15, 17, 24; 31:18; Neh. 3:1,1; 12: 47,47; Job. 1: 5; Isa. 5:16; 13:3; Jer. 1:5; Eze. 20: 41; 28:22, 25; 36:23; 38: 16; 39: 27; 48: 11; (NT): John 17:19; Acts 20:32; Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; 7:14, 14; 1 Tim. 4:5; Heb. 2:11; 10:10, 14, 29; Jude 1.

3. Sanctify is used in the following Scriptures: Exo. 3:2; 19:10, 22, 23; 20:12; 28:41; 29:27, 33, 36, 37, 44; 30: 29; 31:13; 40: 10, 11, 13; Lev. 8: 11, 12; 11: 44; 20:7, 8; 21: 8,8, 15, 23; 22: 9, 16; 27:14, 16, 17, 18, 22, 26; Num. 11:18; 20:12; 27:14; Deut. 5: 12; 15:19; Josh. 3: 5; 7:13; 1 Sam. 16:5; 1 Chron. 15:12; 23:13; 2 Chron. 29:5,5, 17, 34; 30:

17; 35: 6; Neh. 13: 22; Isa. 8:13; 29: 23,23; 66:17; Eze. 20: 12; 36:23; 37:28; 38: 23; 44:19; 46: 20; Joel 1: 14; 2:15, 16; (NT): John 17:17, 19; Eph. 5: 26; 1 Thess. 5: 23; Heb. 13; 12; 1 Pet. 3:15.

What changes in Sanctification?

First, according to the English Dictionary, the word *faculty* means: “**1.** Ability to act or do. **2.** A physical power or function; as, the faculty of hearing. **3.** *Archaic.* That in which one is trained; trade. **4.** Natural aptitude. **5.** Power, authority, or prerogative given or conferred. . . . **9.** Psychology. One of the powers into which psychologists formerly divided the mind (as will, reason, intellect) and through the interaction of which they endeavored to explain all mental phenomena. Synonymous with Gift.”- *Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Fifth Edition, 1942.*

Next, we need clear definitions of the words “carnal,” “flesh,” “inward,” and “mind,” as these will aid greatly in understanding how sanctification and perfection can be achieved, here and now, in this fallen nature and sinful flesh that we will possess till Jesus comes.

Carnal. **1.** Greek *sarkikos*, bodily, temporal, animal, unregenerate, soft, fleshy. **2.** Greek *sarx*, flesh (as stripped from the skin), the body as opposed to the soul (or spirit, breath); human nature with its frailties (physical or moral) – passions, or specifically, a human body,

Flesh. Only one meaning used in the OT; mentioned 144 times total. The word *creas*, (Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 8:13) means “butcher’s meat.” The rest are the word *sarx* (see above).

Mind. **1.** *phroneo* - entertain, to have sentiment, opinion; to interest oneself, set affection; to be the sense. **2.** *nous* - intellect (divine or human) in thought; feeling, will, understanding. **3.** *metalepsis* - participate, concept, partake, receive, taking. **4.** *dianoia* – deep thought, the faculty, mind or disposition, it exercise through imagination, understanding. (From Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Lexicons).

These words now clearly defined, we must understand and be constantly reminded that the work of sanctification begins with and is but a continuation of the work of justification. Contrary to the opinion and expectation of some, in sanctification all *faculties* that a person had had previously are not somehow erased, replaced, or eradicated. Instead, in his conversion experience, if it was genuine, these faculties are intelligently and diligently submitted and constantly subordinated to the revealed express will of God, and earnestly subdued by all the powers given and imparted by the Holy Spirit *by an abiding faith in Christ’s merits alone*. Without the latter, such zealous efforts quickly deteriorate into righteousness or salvation *by works* instead of righteousness and salvation by faith.

The very same faculties—natural aptitudes, and abilities endowed by God---such as the will, which us the governing in the nature of man, the faculties of hearing, seeing, and speech, etc., under the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit and the person’s complete co-operation, are progressively being sanctified and transformed in each perfect *stage* of upward growth, as in “first the seed, then the ear, then the perfect corn in the ear,” by His enabling grace on a daily basis, one day at a time.

This is where many have erred in their thinking regarding their walk with God. I *was* one of them. They wonder why after having experienced the conviction of the Holy Spirit, received Christ, and studied all the necessary doctrines that led them into being baptized by immersion they still are being tempted with the exact temptations they had before their conversion. They begin to doubt whether their experiences were genuine. They think that their carnal, fleshly *nature* and the organs with their responses would be automatically changed or transformed so that they would no longer feel the sinful powerful urges and habits that they were enslaved to.

As Satan so designed and finds satanic delight in, soon some lapse into the spiritually fatal condition of believing that they cannot, after all, really overcome all their sins, although the Word of God repeatedly says we can and should by God's enabling grace imparted by the Holy Spirit of Christ. As the inspired pen points out: "Man is not endowed with new faculties, but the faculties he has are sanctified."- *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 99. It is like a thief and murderer who once used *his hands* to steal and kill but now uses the very same hands to lift up, help, and encourage the weak, discouraged, and the sick.

What has changed is his heart, his mind. The heart of stone has been changed into a heart of flesh; the carnal mind has become transformed into the spiritual mind, even the mind of Christ. This change takes place gradually yet progressively in thought patterns and habits. A new person is emerging, and growing towards the goal of "the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus."

In fact, the unpleasant, painful, and at times exasperating and even discouraging experience of *resisting* temptation by a humble, conscious, and *determined* effort to appropriate God's grace in Christ's merits is the *very nature* of the work of sanctification. It is that which strengthens the sinew of faith and purifies character—a continuing, perfecting process of a lifetime of the individual. Resistance alone is already the earnest of victory. The apostle James provides us the victory formula, as follows:

"God gives **more grace** [where sin and temptations abound, Rom. 5:20]. Wherefore He says, God resists the proud, but gives grace to the **humble**. **Submit yourselves** therefore to God. **Resist** the devil, and he will flee from you. **Draw near to God**, and He will draw near to you. **Cleanse your hands**, you sinners, **purify your minds** you double-minded. **Be afflicted** [troubled by conviction], **and mourn** [over your sins], **and weep**. Let your [careless, presumptuous] **laughter** be turned into mourning, and your **joy** to heaviness. **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord** [not before men], **and He shall lift you up**." James 4: 6-10.

In an article entitled "Sinful Flesh" which appeared in the *Review & Herald*, April 18, 1899 issue, Alonzo Trevor Jones very aptly addresses this vital issue, zeroing into the seemingly contradicting aspects that have raised questions, and how they may be reconciled with reference to other Scriptures. He wrote (emphasis mine):

"There is a serious and very bothersome mistake, which is made by many persons. That mistake is made in thinking that when they are converted, their old sinful flesh is blotted out.

In other words, they make the mistake of thinking that they are to be delivered from the flesh by having it taken away from the altogether.

Then, when they find that it is not so, when they find that they same old flesh, with its inclinations, its besetments, and its enticements, is still there, they are not prepared for it, and so become discouraged, and are ready to think that they never were converted at all.

And yet, if they would think a little, they ought to be able to see that *that is all a mistake*. Did you not have exactly the same body after you were converted that you had before? Was not that body composed of exactly the same material---the same flesh and bones and blood---after your were converted as that of which it was composed before? To these questions everybody will promptly say Yes. And plainly that is the truth.

And now there are further questions: Was not that flesh also of exactly the same *quality* as before? Was it not still human flesh, natural flesh, as certainly as it was before?—To this also everybody will say Yes.

Then also a still further question: It being the same flesh, and of the same quality, -- it still being human flesh, natural flesh, ---is it not also still just as certainly *sinful flesh* as it was before?

Just here is where creeps in the mistake of these many persons. To this last question they are inclined to think that the answer should be 'No,' when it must be only a decided 'Yes.' And this decided 'Yes' must be maintained so long as we continue in this *natural body*.

And when it is decided and constantly maintained that the flesh of the converted person is still sinful flesh, and only sinful flesh, he is so thoroughly convinced that in his flesh dwells no good thing that he will never allow a shadow of confidence in the flesh. And this being so, his sole dependence is in something other than the flesh, even upon the Holy Spirit of God; his source of strength and hope is altogether exclusive of the flesh, even in Jesus Christ only. And being everlastingly watchful, suspicious, and thoroughly distrustful of the flesh, he never can expect any good thing from that source, and so is prepared by the power of God to beat back and crush down without mercy every impulse or suggestion that may arise from it; and so does not fail, does not become discouraged, but goes on from victory to victory and from strength to strength.

Conversion, then, you see, does not put on new flesh upon the old spirit; but a new Spirit within the old flesh. It does not propose to bring new flesh to the old mind; but a new mind to the old flesh. Deliverance and victory are not gained by having the human nature taken away; but by receiving the divine nature to subdue and have dominion over the human,---not by the taking away of the sinful flesh, but by the sending in of the sinless Spirit to conquer and condemn sin in the flesh.

The Scriptures does not say, Let this flesh be upon you, which was also upon Christ; but it does say, 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.' Phil. 2:5.

The Scriptures does not say, Be ye transformed by the renewing of your *flesh*; but it does say, 'Be ye transformed by the renewing of your *mind*.' Rom. 12:2. We shall be translated by the renewing of our *flesh*; but we must be transformed by the renewing of our *minds*.

The Lord took the same flesh and blood, the same human nature, that we have,---flesh just like our sinful flesh, --- and because of sin, and by the power of the Holy Spirit of God through the *divine mind* that was in Him, 'condemned sin in the flesh.' Rom. 8:3. And therein is our deliverance (Rom. 7:25), therein is our victory. 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.' 'A new heart will I give you, a new Spirit will I put within you.' [Eze. 36: 26; cf. Heb. 8:10-13; 10: 15-20].

Do not be discouraged at the sight of sinfulness in the flesh. *It is only in the light of the Spirit of God, and by the discernment of the mind of Christ, that you can see so much sinfulness in your flesh; and the more sinfulness you see in your flesh, the more of the Spirit of God you certainly have. This is a sure test.* Then when you sinfulness

abundant in you, *thank the Lord* that you have so much of the Spirit of God that you can see so much of the sinfulness; and know of a surety that when sinfulness abounds, grace much more abounds in order that 'as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign in righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.' [Rom. 5: 20, 21, KJV]."

What then is a new heart? a changed heart? What is its sign?

E.G. White, God's servant and messenger says:

"When Jesus speaks of the new heart, He means the mind, the life, the whole being. To have a change of heart is to withdraw the affections from the world, and fasten them upon Christ. To have a new heart is to have a new mind, new purposes, new motives. What is the sign of a new heart? – *A changed life*. There is a daily, hourly dying to selfishness and pride." – *God's Amazing Grace*, pp. 100-1. (See also 2 Cor. 5: 17-21; 3: 2, 3).

"When sin struggles for the mastery in your soul, and burdens the conscience, when unbelief clouds the mind, go to the Savior. His grace is sufficient to subdue sin." – *God's Amazing Grace*, p. 259. (See also 2 Cor. 12:9; 2 Tim. 2: 1, 3, 4; Rom. 5: 20, 21; 6: 14-16; Heb. 4:16; 5: 8, 9; Eph. 2:8, 9).

As discussed in our past issues, justification is our *title* to heaven; sanctification is our *fitness* for heaven. In the former Christ's righteousness is *imputed*, in the latter Christ's righteousness is *imparted*. The first provides the forgiveness of sin and the removal of the guilt associated with it, and places the forgiven sinner on a right relationship with God--so that sanctification, the work of overcoming his sins by God's grace in Christ, may take place. Both are necessary for ultimate salvation and should never be separated when the plan of salvation of the everlasting gospel is being explained.

The New Man in Christ Jesus

We will here quote a whole short chapter that the late Arthur S. Maxwell, prolific SDA author wrote on how and what it means we become a new person, a new creature in Christ Jesus, perfectly sanctified by and through the work of the Holy Spirit on the willing mind and heart, no one excluded. (emphasis mine): (Your Bible and You, "*You may Be A New Person*, chapter 16, pp. 159-166, Review & Herald. He said:

"The power of the Holy Spirit is so great, so limitless, that it can bring about a complete transformation of an individual's life. It can change you into an entirely new person.

As the apostle Paul said, 'If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old is passed away; behold the new has come.' (2 Cor. 5: 17, R. S.V.).

Everything mean, unkind, and critical disappears, being replaced by graciousness, gentleness, and unselfishness. The change is so complete that the person is hardly recognizable by his friends. It is as though he has been 'born again.' (John 3:3).

So absolute is this transformation that it corresponds to a death and resurrection---death of the old nature, with all its sinful tendencies, and life for a new nature, with all its glorious possibilities in Christ.

Drawing an illustration from the Christian ordinance of baptism by immersion, Paul said, 'Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were

baptized into His *death*? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6: 3, 4, R.S. V.).

Baptism by immersion involves a lowering of the body *under* water. Should a person be allowed to remain there, he would die. So by taking part in this ceremony a Christian proclaims his willingness to die to his past life.

When brought up out of the water by the officiating minister he re-enacts, symbolically, the resurrection--- the miracle of living again. Thus he declares his *intention* to ‘walk in the newness of life’ in Christ.

Such a change involves nothing short of a total revolution in all his *thoughts and actions*. It affects his *home* life, *business* life, and *recreational* life. It alters his *eating* habits, *drinking* habits, and *spending* habits.

He has, perchance, been a user of profane [and idle and useless phrases] language. Profanity [and idle words] has become so interwoven with his ordinary speech that he no longer thinks anything of it. *Suddenly, however, as the Spirit floods his heart and he is ‘born again,’ he becomes conscious of the evil words and senses their cheapness and vulgarity. He wonders why he ever soiled his lips with them, and he cuts them out of his vocabulary forever.*

Maybe he has become accustomed to drinking alcohol beverages [or using recreational drugs], or smoking tobacco or other habits that detract from his physical fitness and make him less than his best. *But immediately God comes into His heart with His marvelous re-creating power, all desire for such things fades away.* He resolves never to indulge in them again.

His attitude at home is different. Willingness to serve replaces expectation to be waited on. Thoughtfulness supersedes selfishness. Ill temper dissolves into pleasantness. Quarrelsomeness is submerged by consideration for others. While before he had no time for prayer or Bible study he now establishes a family altar.

He has a new attitude toward worldly pleasures. Dances, races, movies, [games, all forms of gambling, etc.] lose their fascination as deeper and more lasting joys are found in the things of God. He finds holy hymns and the [classical] music of the masters infinitely more sanctifying than the silly songs of the night clubs. Ministry to the poor and needy becomes more enjoyable than the most alluring pastimes.

The commandments of God are seen in a new light. No longer do they seem legalistic and burdensome. He now counts it a privilege to live in harmony with God’s revealed will. With Jesus he desires ‘to magnify the law and make it honorable’ (Isa. 42:21).

The Sabbath, instead of being a nuisance, is welcomed with joy as an opportunity of communion with the Lord. The holy hours ‘from sunset to sunset’ (Lev. 23:32; Mark 1:32) are no longer used for business or pleasure seeking, but rather for worship, rest, and prayer. As they recur from week to week, they seem to him like islands of peace amid the rushing torrent of life, where spiritual resources are replenished.

Money takes on a new significance. Instead of using it merely for satisfaction of personal needs, vanities, and ambitions, he regards it as a sacred trust. The ‘new man’ reborn by the power of God, considers himself a steward rather than an owner, administering his affairs ‘as unto the Lord.’ He proves the truth of the ancient proverb: ‘There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth’ (Prov. 11:24, and learns by experience that ‘Christ loveth a cheerful giver’ (2 Cor. 9:7).

Is such a transformation possible?

It must be, or God would not have promised it. You may be sure that he can make you into a new person if you want Him to do so.

Actually it isn't as difficult as it may seem. Jesus revealed the secret in one of His prayers.

'Neither pray I for these alone,' He said concerning the disciples who were with Him at the time, 'but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us. . . . I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be *made perfect* in one' (John 17: 20-23, K. J. V.).

Perfection can be attained only by unity with God, or, in other words, by complete surrender to the will of God. When your life is thus given to Him He will dwell within you by His Holy Spirit and live His life in you."

Paul understood it thus, for he prayed this prayer for the Ephesians:

"I bow my knees before the Father,' he said, 'that according to the riches of His glory He may grant you to be strengthened with might *through His Spirit in the inner man*, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be *filled with all the fullness of God*' (Eph. 3: 14-19, R.S.V.).

'*Filled with all the fullness of God*' implies that there is no room left for self or sin. The new life, the better, nobler life, is an inevitable result.

If this seems hard to understand, think of this: In every forest there are usually a few trees that retain some of their leaves throughout the winter. Storms may rage, gales may blow, torrents of rain may fall, but still the leaves remain. You may take a stick and beat the branches with all your might, but you will not be able to dislodge them. But let a few weeks pass. Let spring come. Some fine morning you will discover that the tree is bare. In a single night every leaf has fallen to the ground!

Why? The sap has risen. That's all. Life is flowing through the tree once more. Rushing up like a torrent from the roots, it is surging into the farthestmost twigs with a power that makes all things new, causing a million lovely leaves to appear and cover the naked branches with verdant beauty.

Thus it is with a God-filled life. Without the aid of the Holy Spirit you could wrestle with sin for a lifetime without success." (end of quote).

While I heartily agree and fully endorse these truth-filled statements by Arthur Maxwell, I wish to clarify the following lines:

"Suddenly, however, as the Spirit floods his heart, and he is 'born again,' he becomes conscious of the evil words and senses their cheapness and vulgarity. He wonders why he ever soiled his lips with them, and he cuts them out of his vocabulary forever."

"But immediately God comes to his heart with His marvelous creative power, all desire for such things fade away."

These statement probably can be attributed to those who have never been enslaved their whole life to the pernicious, addicting substances of nicotine, alcohol, and drugs, or with some, gambling, and sexual perversions. But having been once a *chain-smoker* for over 20 years before my conversion, I can testify that all desire for this terrible, health-destroying, life-shortening enslavement did fade away—but only gradually and with a great struggle. I was convicted but the urges were so strong I tried and failed several times, but by God's grace and striving with that grace to overcome, I eventually prevailed. This is what Christ meant when He said, "Strive," not slide or glide "to enter the strait and narrow way." Strive comes from the Greek *agonizo* which means "agonize, persevere."

The decision to “forever cut off” whatever sinful practices may have enslaved you by the powerful conviction of the Holy Spirit may be your desire, and that is only because of the amazing grace of God working in your soul. But lest anyone become self-complacent and self-confident, and stumble and fall again, the tempter will work even greater to make take you back to where he had you for years! That is why all believers are constantly warned to “watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation!” _____. The truth is the converted Christian will often feel the promptings to commit his past sins—but he does not depend on feelings but on God’ word, and therefore, will strive against it till he has gained the perfect victory—which is verily the process and work of sanctification.

Sanctification of the Spirit and the Law is a Bible doctrine

“True sanctification is a Bible doctrine. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Thessalonian church declares: ‘This is the will of God, even your sanctification.’ And he prays; ‘The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.’ 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:23. The Savior prayed for His disciples: ‘Sanctify them through the truth: Thy word is truth.’ John 17:17. And Paul teaches that believers are to be ‘sanctified by the Holy Ghost.’ Rom. 15:16.

What is the work of the Holy Spirit? Jesus told His disciples: ‘When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.’ John 16:13. And the psalmist says: ‘Thy law is the truth.’ *By the Word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law.* And since the law of God is ‘holy, just and good,’ a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is perfect example of such a character. He says: ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments.’ ‘I do always those things that please Him.’ John 15: 10; 8:29. The followers of Christ are to become like Him—*by the grace of God* to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. *This is Bible sanctification.*”

This work can be accomplished only through faith in Christ, by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God. Paul admonishes *believers*: ‘Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do His good pleasure.’ Phil. 2: 12, 13, K.J.V. *The Christian will feel the prompting to sin, but he will maintain a constant warfare against it.* Here is where Christ’s help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength, and faith exclaims: ‘Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ 1 Cor. 15:57. . . . ----
– GC 469-70.

Sanctification: Or, Living in Holiness

The following is a *simulated* Q & A with Elder Daniel T. Bourdeau and myself on his article published by the Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, Battle Creek Michigan, 1864. (All questions and emphasis mine):

NOTE: Daniel T. Bourdeau (1835-1905) was an evangelist and missionary, and brother of A.C. Bourdeau. At 11 years of age he joined the Baptist church and at 16, with his brother, attended a Baptist French-language institution at Grand Ligne, Lower Canada. Ordained to the SDA ministry in 1858, he, with his brother spent many years in evangelism in New England and Canada. As far as is known, the 2 brothers were the first of French descent to have accepted the SDA faith.

NF: What does the Bible teach regarding sanctification and what does it consist of? Can you cite Scripture proof?

DB: “In the Holy Scriptures, sanctification sometimes consists in setting apart or consecrating to a sacred or religious use. In this sense the seventh day, the first-born, Mount Sinai, the priests, the sanctuary and its utensils, the temple in Jerusalem, and the prophets were sanctified. Gen. 2: 3; Exo. 13:2; 19:2, 3; 18-30; 2 Chron. 29: 7; Jer. 1:5. In this sense even *Christ* was sanctified, when He was set apart to the work of man’s redemption. John 10:36; 17:19. Sanctification consists, moreover, in cleansing from sin, in making pure and holy that which is impure and unholy. In this sense *Christians* are sanctified, and in the *progress* of their sanctification, there is a setting apart to a holy purpose—a self consecration to the glory of God.”

NF: Why is sanctification necessary? Isn’t justification, or being forgiven enough?

DB: “The depravity of our race is the doctrinal fact upon which rests the necessity of our being sanctified. ‘All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.’ Rom. 3:23. All are *naturally* inclined to love the ways of sin and to do evil. The power of sin has so affected the human family, that they may, in their natural state, be called the servants of sin. But sanctification purifies and alienates us from the dominion of sin; destroys the corrupt propensities of our fallen natures; rectifies our affections and inclinations, and brings our entire being into subjection to the will of God, so that we may be properly called the servants of righteousness.”

NF: Is this work easy? What is the part appointed us?

DB. “This is indeed a great work, and the Scriptures plainly teach that God sanctifies His people. Exo. 31:13; Eze. 20:12; John 17:17; Heb. 2: 11. God graciously provides and urges the means of sanctification, and helps His people to use them. It is impossible for men to devise means whereby he can sanctify himself, or to attain holiness by his own strength. Man must accept the means which God has devised, and the gracious assistance which He affords. The plan of God is such that we must co-operate with Him in this work. This is seen in the following texts: ‘Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God. And ye shall keep My statutes, and do them: for I am the Lord which sanctify you.’ Lev. 20: 7, 8. ‘Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye double-minded.’ ‘Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.’ ‘Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. James 4:8; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 John 3:3; 1 Thess. 5: 23.”

NF: How much of our effort is involved, and how much can it for our sanctification? Does it really matter? Will not all men be eventually be sanctified?

DB. “From this view of the subject, it is evident that we cannot become sanctified, or become holy, *without making special efforts* to overcome sin. If men can be sanctified *irrespective* of the course they pursue, we might conclude that sanctification depends *wholly* on the will of God; and as God is no respecter of persons, we might also conclude that if He sanctifies one He will sanctify all, and that all mankind will be saved.

“It is also evident that those greatly err who think that sanctification rests solely on the power of men, and that they can of themselves turn from sin to holiness. To say the least, they do not realize the depth of their degradation and misery, and have not felt the force of this humbling truth, that they are carnal, sold under sin.”

NF: By what means or channel is one sanctified?

DB: “Sanctification is effected through the truth. Says Christ, ‘Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth. . . . And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they may also be sanctified through the truth.’ ‘Now ye are clean through the word that I have spoken unto you.’ John 17:17, 19; 15:3. And Peter says, ‘Seeing you have purified your hearts in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently.’ 1 Pet. 1: 22.

Genuine sanctification follows the channel of Bible truth. It is not grounded of flights of feeling, but on the immutable truths of God’s Word. It is the truths received through the *mind*, and practically carried out in the *life*. When the truth is thus received and carried out, there is a *radical work*, a change indeed; and those who receive and obey the truth are not destitute of good feeling. They have an inward satisfaction for well-doing, and enjoy the approbation and blessing of the Lord to encourage and strengthen them in their great and glorious work.”

NF: Isn’t it enough that we have the Holy Spirit? How do we know if any teaching is really of the Holy Spirit?

DB: “Some would try to evade the truth with the idea that they have the Spirit, and consequently the sanctification of the Spirit. But what is the leading office of the Spirit that sanctifies? It is to guide into all truth. Said Christ, ‘When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth.’ John 17:13. The Spirit and the truth agree. *The Spirit is the great agent that God employs in sanctifying men.* Hence Bible sanctification is called the sanctification of the Spirit. 1 Pet. 1:2. The Spirit helps our infirmities. It helps us to understand, receive and practice the truth. Therefore that spirit which is *not* in harmony with God’s word is not the sanctifying Spirit of truth, and the sanctification which is based on the leadings and teachings of such a spirit is a *false one*.”

Q: Many in mainstream Christianity claim instant sanctification—that the moment you accept Christ as your personal Savior that same moment you are already sanctified by His righteousness. What does the Bible say?

DB: “Sanctification is a progressive work. Says Paul, ‘Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.’ 2 Cor. 7:1. The same sentiment is expressed in the following texts: ‘Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ let us go on to perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and faith toward God.’ Heb. 6:6. ‘Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I am also apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.’ Phil. 3: 12-14.

‘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; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus and Savior Jesus Christ. *But he that lacketh these things, is blind* and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that was purged from his old sins.’ 2 Pet. 1: 5-9.”

NF: Who is the Apostle Paul addressing here? Can you elucidate a little more on the applications of the passages we just read?

DB: “In this passage the apostle addresses those who have obtained like precious faith (v. 1,) and urges a progressive advancement in holiness toward completeness in the Christian character. In conversion a blow is struck at the corrupt propensities of fallen human nature, and a great change takes place. *But the work of sanctification is not then complete. The young convert stands on the platform of faith.* He has seen sin in its true light, had repented of his sins, and has been cleansed from the same by faith in the merits of the efficacy of the blood of Christ, and now rejoices in his Savior. But he must advance in holiness by adding to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and the rest of the Christian graces.”

NF: So is sanctification an instantaneous experience as claimed by many?

DB: From what we just read “it appears that sanctification is not the work of a moment. It is to be regretted that some, believing that sanctification to be an instantaneous work, will fall back on some past feeling or excitement, and will even affirm that they have been months and years in a state of perfect love without committing a single sin, and scoff at the idea that they can be in a better condition, in a holier state. The spirit of such is different from that of many pious and devoted men and women in the past, who often wept over the *remains* of inbred sin, and in whose lives we trace progress in sanctification.”

NF: What does this teaching of instantaneous sanctification result in?

DB: “The position that sanctification is an instantaneous work, has a tendency to *discourage* the conscientious and desponding, and to induce many to believe they are rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing [Laodiceanism], and is a great hindrance in the way of true sanctification. Says the apostle [Peter], ‘He that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off.’ “

NF: Can the work of sanctification be illustrated by operations of nature as Jesus often did in teaching truth?

DB. “Sanctification may well be represented by the growth of plants. It commences with the seed, the grain, and grows up into a lofty tree. It is receiving with meekness the ingrafted word, and growing thereby, or growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, or growing up into Christ our living head, or being changed from glory to glory into the image of Christ. As the child of God contemplates the truth, he gradually beholds the glory of the Lord, and falls in love with His lovely character and conforms to it, and thus far grows up into Christ and becomes assimilated into His likeness. Light shines on another excellence, and then another, and he overcomes and overcomes, growing stronger and stronger, becoming more and more holy in imitating the perfect Pattern, and thus he is changed from glory to glory into the image of Christ.”

NF: By what other truths in the Bible is this view emphasized or strengthened? How do you reconcile this with the various designations of the Christians as “holy,” “sanctified,” “perfect”—as though they already are?

DB: First, “This view is further strengthened by those texts in which God’s people are exhorted and encouraged *to be perfect, to overcome, to mortify the deeds of the flesh, etc.*, also by those passages where prayers and desires are offered for the sanctification and perfection of the saints. The fact that Christians in the Scriptures are designated as holy, sanctified, perfect, and saints, does not militate against our position. Christians are sanctified or perfect *as far as they understand and practice the truth; and even those who are called holy, sanctified, and perfect and saints, are exhorted to cleanse themselves, to perfect holiness, to be perfect, to go on to perfection, etc.* Compare 1 Cor. 1: 2; 2 Cor. 1: 1; 7:1; 13: 11; Phil. 3:12-16; Heb. 3: 1; 6:1.”

NF: What relation does sanctification have with increase of the light of truth?

DB: “It is manifest that light increases on the truth as the work of sanctification progresses, and that sanctification involves the necessity of advancing in the knowledge of truth. For this reason we should cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice for understanding; seek her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures. Prov. 2: 3, 4. And ‘all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.’ 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.

“Says the wise man, ‘The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.’ Prov. 4: 18. And what is it that thus causes the path of the just to shine unless it is the Word of God? David says, ‘Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and light unto my path.’ Ps. 119:105. Again Peter says, ‘We have a more sure word of prophecy (or the of prophets which is very firm, *French translation*); whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Day-star arise in your hearts.’ 1 Pet. 1:19.

NF: Does sanctification have anything to do with end-time prophecies? If it is does, how, and in what specific ways?

DB: “The word of God was given to be a light unto the just, to show them their duty and *whereabouts* in this dark world. The idea that this word is a *revelation* of God to man which should be studied, is proof that God designed that it should be understood. Strong and numerous have been the efforts of the powers of darkness to extinguish the light of heavenly birth; but it shines today. And is it not reasonable to expect that light will increase on the word of God, and that the prophecies will be better understood as those prophecies relating to the last days are fast fulfilling, and as the end toward which they point approaches? Said the angel while speaking to the prophet Daniel concerning the last days, or the time of the end [by the year 1798], ‘Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.’ Dan. 12:4. And in the same connection we read, ‘Many shall be purified, and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.’ V. 10.

NF: By what other facts do we compare prophecy with so that we are sure we are indeed living in the last days of earth?

DB: “It would not be necessary to enter into a lengthy argument to convince the candid that we are living in the last days. By comparing the sure word of prophecy with history and the signs of the times, we see clearly that we are occupying the last link in those great chains of prophecy which were to reach to the end; that the leading signs

which were to be the precursors of Christ's second coming, and which were to bring us to the last generation, have been fulfilled, and that the present signs of the times show conclusively that the great drama of the world's history is about to wind up, and that the Lord is near, even at the doors. (See works on the prophecy of Daniel and on the Signs of the Times, published at the Review & Herald office, Battle Creek, Mich.)."

NF: Is sanctification part of what is called "present truth"?

DB: "It is clear that we have reached the time when a flood of light is shining from God's word on the path of the just, and that light relates to that great event which is immediately impending—the coming of the Lord, and to a preparation to meet it. This we denominate as present truth, because it applies to the present time, and is adapted to the wants of the present generation; and it is through this truth that the last church will be sanctified."

NF: Many Christians today ask: if godly men and women in the past ages were sanctified without having heard, understood, or kept the truths on the three angels' messages, why can't they do the same?

DB: "But some do not see the necessity of receiving the truths applicable to the present time in order to be sanctified. They think they can be sanctified by living as other good Christians have lived. Have they not been sanctified by living up the light that they had in *their* day? And if we are favored with more light than they were, if God has *other* duties, can we be sanctified by merely living as they lived? Does God cause light to shine on His word in vain? Can men understandingly treat any portion of God's word with indifference and impunity without incurring guilt? Can men avoid performing known duties and yet be free from sin? Said Christ, 'If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak [excuse, *NKJV*] for their sin.' John 15:22."

NF: Do such living-in-the-past Christians have a parallel in Christ's time as well—so that He had to address this problem then, as now?

DB: "When John the Baptist was preaching the first advent and preparing a people to meet the Lord, he said to the Jews, 'Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.' Matt. 3:9. From this it appears that the Jews *fell back* on the good father Abraham to *excuse* themselves for not receiving the testimony of John. They overlooked the fact that Abraham rejoiced to see the day of Christ [John 8:56], and that he would have gladly received John's testimony if he had lived in his day. They did not realize that they could not be Abraham's children indeed, without possessing the spirit with which he [Abraham] was imbued."

"Now is not this the condition of those who refer to good Christians in the past to justify themselves for not receiving those truths that apply to the present time? But if the Jews live at the close of the former dispensation could not be sanctified without receiving John's preaching, can the last church be sanctified without receiving those truths relating to Christ's second coming [?]. It will require a special preparation to meet the Lord when He comes. It will be necessary for the church to look for Christ; for it is to them that look for Him that He will appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:28). 'And it shall be said in that day, Lo this is our God; we have waited for Him

and He will save us.' Isa. 15:9. Now we cannot look for Christ without watching the signs of the times, and believing the advent near."

NF: Did not the earliest Christians live under the same urgency to prepare for the second advent, as our generation does?

DB: "The primitive church could not consistently look for Christ in their day. The caution to them was, not to be troubled by spirit, by word or by letter, as that day of Christ was at hand. 2 Thess. 1: 1-4. But when the leading signs of Christ's coming commenced to be fulfilled, then the church could look up, knowing that the redemption drew nigh. Luke 21: 25-28. And now it is an important duty of the people of God to watch the remaining signs of the coming of the Lord. V. 26; Matt. 24: 42; 1 Thess. 5:6. Those who watch in the Bible sense of the term, and have a living faith in the advent near will not be in darkness that the day of Christ should overtake them as a thief in the night. *They will know their whereabouts and their duty.*"

NF: Remembering Peter's self-confidence that led to his denial of Christ, will ever the truly meek and righteous of the earth in these last days have any degree of self-confidence in their standing before the Lord?

DB: "When the great day of the Lord is near and hasteth greatly, even the meek of the earth are commanded to seek meekness and righteousness that they may be hid in the day of the Lord's fierce anger. Zeph. 1:14, etc., 2:3. Their past attainments of holiness will not suffice them. *They must seek to be meeker and more righteous, more Christ-like, more holy.*"

NF: What church has been given the work and message of proclaiming the second advent of Christ?

DB: "The coming of the Lord is a highly practical subject, and as it is especially connected with the sanction of the last church, we may expect that it may be heralded for the benefit of the last generation. This has been done in this generation under the proclamation of the first two messages of Rev. 14 (see verses 6-8), and it is now being done under the proclamation of the third message of the same chapter (vs. 9-13), which we understand to be the last message of mercy, and through which a people will be prepared to meet the Lord in His coming. . . ."

NF: Why and how is the third angel's message the last message mercy?

DB: "We say that the third message is the last message of mercy, because it is followed by the appearing of one like unto the Son of man on the white cloud to gather the harvest of the earth. Vs. 14, 15. Again, the unmixed wrath of God, which is the same as the seven last plagues, (compare Rev. 14:9, 10; 15:1; 16:1,2) follows, upon all those who do not heed it, hence there can be no later message by which men can be saved. It is evident from the language of this message that it will develop a holy people, a people of whom it can be said, 'Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' [Rev. 14:12]. The same class are brought to view in Rev. 12:17, as the remnant (or last end) of the woman's (or church's) seed, which keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

NF: What is the main burden of this message?

DB: “The burden of this message is the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. These are kept in opposition to the worship of the beast (papacy). By the commandments of God, we understand is meant, those commandments which God proclaimed in person, and wrote with His own finger on stone. These are emphatically God’s commandments. When the commandments of God are spoken of in distinction from the faith of Jesus, they must refer to the Ten Commandments exclusively. The faith of Jesus is something that is kept or obeyed in connection with the commandments of God. It cannot simply mean the confidence of Jesus, neither can it really mean the confidence that we should have in Jesus. It must denote the form of doctrine taught by Jesus, which embraces the means of salvation from sin and its curse, and all the healing and restoring ordinances, precepts, and doctrines of Christ as recorded in the New Testament. This faith can be kept and obeyed. See Acts 6:7; Rom. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:7; Jude 3; Rev. 2:13.

NF: Are the three angels’ messages alone sufficient to sanctify a people? What is the sanctifying or perfecting aspect of these messages?

DB: “It needs but a moment’s reflection to see that this message is very comprehensive, and that it is sufficient to sanctify a people in the strictest sense of the word. Here we have the moral law of Ten Commandments, which is based on the nature of God and in the nature of man, and bears those divine characteristics which constitute a perfect and holy character. This law embodies all the principles of right, prescribes the way of holiness, and condemns every sin. Anciently God told His people that if they kept this law, they should be a holy people. Exo. 19:5; Deut. 4: 12, 13. This would be but a natural consequence. In keeping this law, they would bear its holy perfections. This law is from its very nature immutable. To change this law would be to change the nature and character of God which is impossible. Now the law remaining the same, those who keep it must be perfect and holy.”

NF: But if it is true that of ourselves we can never keep the Ten Commandments, how can we ever be sanctified and made holy?

DB: “But we cannot by our own strength keep the holy law of God; neither can we cleanse ourselves from our transgressions of God’s law. Therefore God in mercy provides the faith of Jesus, which presents to our view the fountain opened for uncleanness, and all those helps and means of grace that cluster around the death of the blessed and adorable Son of God, and by which the humble penitent can obtain strength to bring all the powers of his being in subjection to the law of God.”

NF: Wasn’t the work of the godly Reformers sufficient?

DB: “The result of this message in developing a people who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, proves that previously, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus had not all been kept. The ‘little horn,’ spoken of by Daniel, and symbolizing Papacy, had trodden the truth to the ground and practiced and prospered during its dark reign. Dan. 7: 25; 8:12. A great amount of truth pertaining to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus had been restored under the glorious reformation and by God’s people since the reformation. Yet there remained other important truths to be fully brought to light under the last merciful message to man. Among these is found the truth of the Sabbath. Under this message all the commandments are kept; hence the fourth commandment is kept; and this

commandment enjoins the observance of the 'Sabbath-day,' or 'Sabbath of the Lord,' which is day on which God rested in the beginning, and which He blessed and sanctified because that in it He had rested from all His work.' Exo. 20: 9-11; Gen. 2; 103.

NF: It appears to many that the third angel's message is merely confined to the warning about receiving the "mark of the beast and the terrible punishment that will be inflicted upon all who receive it. Is this true?

DB: "The third message is not a contracted platform as some have supposed. It is as broad as the commandments of God and the teachings of Christ and His apostles. In it *centers* all the sanctifying truths of God's word. We will now further develop this subject by examining the following text from Paul: 'And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God your whole *spirit*, and *soul* and *body* be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' 1 Thess. 5: 23. The language of this text shows that it applies to the *last church*, those who would reach 'unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Read also the first part of this chapter and the latter part of the previous chapter. From this text we see that Paul desired that *the church* should be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body, should be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord."

NF: How do these words of Paul apply to the last church?

DB: "This confirms what we have said to show that sanctification is a progressive work, and that a special preparation will be required for the last church. A partial sanctification is not sufficient for the church living under the blazing light of the last message of mercy. They must be 'wholly' sanctified. They must receive and live out the whole truth. Again, those parts which should be preserved blameless are the very parts that must first be sanctified. Hence when Paul desired the sanctification of the church, he desired that their *whole* spirit and soul and body should be sanctified."

NF: Aren't the soul and spirit referring to one and the same thing here? If they are not, as some expositors aver, how can you distinguish one from the other and not endorse the popular doctrine that the soul is an immortal entity of every person?

DB: "The spirit and soul are here spoken of as two distinct parts. The word *spirit*, in the text is from [*pneuma*] which may be here rendered, mind (mental disposition, *Strong's Greek Lexicon*). It is here put for the *mind*. See Robinson's Greek Lexicon to the New Testament. See also 1 Cor. 3: 3, 4; 6:20; 7:34; 2 Cor. 7:1; Col. 2: 5, etc. The term *soul* is variously used in the Scriptures. But we understand that in this text it denotes the *life*. The Greek word [*psuche*], from which it was translated, is rendered *life* forty times in the New Testament, such being the primary signification of the word; and it would be proper to so render it in this text. All agreed as to the meaning of the word *body*. We understand that the *mind*, the *life* and the *body* constitute the *whole man*, and when a person is sanctified in the Bible sense, these parts are set apart to the glory of God, and employed in the service of the Creator. Let us now notice the sanctification of each of these parts separately, commencing with the mind."

The Sanctification of the Mind

NF: Apostle Paul says, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” Phil. 2:5. Please explain how this takes place and what is involved in the sanctification of the mind?

DB: “Sanctification begins with the mind. The carnal mind is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. It dwells and feasts upon carnal thoughts, and is not subject to the law of God. But God looks upon the heart or mind, and understands the thoughts of man afar off. He says, ‘My son, give me thine heart.’ ‘How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?’ ‘Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.’ Prov. 23: 26; Jer. 4:14; Isa. 55: 7,8. Sanctification *cleanses* the mind from sinful thoughts. It *changes* the current of the thoughts. It *transfers* the mind from carnal to spiritual things, from sin to holiness. The mind is the spring of action, the fountain from whence all the words and actions flow. If the fountain is pure the stream that flows from it will also be pure. And if the mind is sanctified, if the thoughts are holy, the work and the actions, the whole life will be holy. But the mind has faculties and operations which should be sanctified, and some of which we will here examine. And first let us notice ATTENTION.”

NF: What is attention to the mind?

DB: “Attention is that faculty of the mind by which we look at ideas. It is, as it were, the eye of the mind. By it we look at the truth. But how often it happens that the attention is *diverted* from important truths by trifling subjects, or by thoughts thrown in by the enemy or by professed friends. No one will fail to see the necessity of setting apart this faculty to see the truth. But as we try to do this, we must ask the Father of lights to open and anoint our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of His law. But to attention we must add, REFLECTION.”

NF: How does reflection work into the picture?

DB: “Attention sees the object; but reflection comes back upon it to examine it with care, so as to preserve distinct ideas about it. Reflection is the faculty of the mind by which it comes back on ideas which had attracted the attention, to acquire and exact knowledge of the same. It is of the utmost importance that this faculty be sanctified. Those who reflect on the truths they have heard or read will be more apt to retain them. They will also be more apt to take heed to the things which they have heard. But those who do not take pains to come back on what they have heard and seen, are liable to let the truth to slip out of their minds, and generally fail to come up to their duty. It is not sufficient to listen to and look at the truth from Sabbath to Sabbath. *We should reflect upon it through the week.* Oh how many trials we might save ourselves from by being more reflective!”

The reader is urged to follow these excellent counsels to reflect on all the truths we have been studying together in the past months!

Note: This simulated interview with Daniel T. Bourdeau, one of our SDA pioneers will continue next month on the same topic of sanctification.