



“You will know them by their fruits.” Mt. 7:16

Serious Steps of Preparation

The Renunciation of Sin

The Gospel requires the total abandonment of sin before we can be born again. Consequently, there is absolutely no place for the committing of sin in a regenerated believers life.

Similarly, being purified to enter His Rest requires the yielding up of our entire person in full surrender. And being kept in His Rest means complete dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

In both cases, if the qualifying conditions are broken, the state of grace can be lost -and then regained if the conditions are again fulfilled.

But such loss is so dangerous that it should be avoided at all costs. The enemy will work extra hard not to lose you again..... The Lord's precious saving grace should never be trifled with or taken for granted.

The Gospel requires the total abandonment of sin to be a Christian that pleases God, -and certainly *before* His Rest can be obtained. The gospel allows no compromise with and no slippery ways around this principle: there can be no secret flirtation or dalliance with sin that retains salvation for the long term. Godliness and sinfulness cannot for long co-exist with each other since over time one or the other must grow to rule the life. Think about it.

Until the seeker has made up his mind to renounce all sin, public and private, including imprudence and the appearance of evil, how can there be any prospect or possibility of the seeker completing his or her sanctification? Why? Because you have not even consistently fulfilled the conditions inherent in your salvation covenant with the Lord yet!!!

One must walk before he can run. He is not required to walk for long, but he must walk first.

The Manhood of Mankind

This basic total renunciation of sin must be voluntary and joyful on your part since God will not coerce the will, or force the affections, or chain the imagination. He absolutely will not tear idols from our hands and hearts without our agreement, or compel us to separate from bad associates, or stop going to places of ungodly dissipation or worldliness. He will not arbitrarily suspend the laws of habit, by sovereignly arresting the ability to perversely go astray without the effort or consent of the subject. God respects the manhood of mankind. He helps His needy creatures where they are helpless; and yet leaves their responsibility unimpaired. What a man can do for

himself with natural strength or His grace, he is allowed, and even required, to do. Indeed, God makes the destiny of his creatures hinge on voluntary choice and practical obedience. We find an application of this principle in the universal and inflexible Scriptural requirement to give up all sin, and break away from all wrong and wrongdoing, as a preparatory measure and prior condition for **full salvation**. It is true that this completed sanctification is obtained by faith alone; but sin neutralizes faith. Jesus says: “How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?” *₁

Now let us see how these propositions agree with the written word: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.” *₂ To forsake sinful ways and thoughts, according to this text, is considered a term relating to the mercy in the initial covenant of salvation. It is not the condition of salvation in the same sense that faith is; but is an act that puts the lost candidate for salvation into a close enough relationship with God so that His saving mercy and pardon is close at hand.

This same condition for salvation is made more stringent and comprehensive in this verse:

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.” *₃

How sweeping is the prohibition upon sin! Let's review using a different format:

- no companionship with unbelievers
- no fellowship with unrighteousness
- no communion with darkness
- no concord with Belial
- no part with an infidel
- no agreement with idols

A sacred separation from all these manifestations of evil is commanded. This withdrawal extends even to the touch: “Touch not the unclean thing.” No tangible contact or approach to any kind of uncleanness, however slight, can be permitted. It is only upon this principle of total abstinence from sin that God promises to “receive” us into fellowship with Himself. Until this is done, He declines to put himself into the relation of Father to the penitent, or to recognize seekers as dear children, entitled to the peculiar honors and immunities of sons and daughters. Nor is it enough to renounce flagrant and positive transgressions; we must also be circumspect and prudent. All our

peccadilloes and questionable gratifications of appetite and propensity must be given up.

Will this be difficult or painful? Quite possibly. But certainly very worthwhile.

It is worthy of note that the great prayer of the apostle, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly,” etc., is preceded by the emphatic precept:

“Abstain from all appearance of evil.” *4 Indeed, this requirement introduces the prayer, and is made a part of it by the copulative conjunction. Only a comma should separate the two sentences.

The apostle could not fill his lungs with the breath of the wonderful supplication until he had commanded the candidates to separate from their souls and life every thing that imitates sin, or wears the look of evil. This final step of filling the promise of your basic salvation is also the initial step in making yourself eligible to enter His Rest. So shake off your hold upon all sin – abjure (renounce by oath), break away from, and wash your hands of all evil, and all resemblance of evil. Fully turning your back on sin allows you to *turn your face straight towards Him* and obtain His next promised grace -His Rest. Your back and your face are connected!

A Serious Duty Before God

The serious urgency of this duty to God is created by several facts: First, the utter incompatibility of any measure or kind of sin with holiness. Second, there is a spurious kind of sanctification which seems to cover sin over. The idea is that vice may occur, but it is at once neutralized, or somehow loses its character, by faith or the blood, in connection with a saved nature. This is an egregious error. Sin in the saved is the same as sin in the unsaved. It invalidates your claim of holiness, brings condemnation, and makes forgiveness necessary. Third, there is a lower degree of holiness which is made to flirt with the milder forms of moral crookedness. Certain appetites, vanities, and fashionable follies are allowed, fostered, and extenuated; and yet a completed sanctification is claimed and professed. This is a delusion. It is morally impossible for God to fully sanctify, so long as we toy or tamper with sin in any way. Faith can no more grasp the blessing of a completed sanctification such as taught on this website while under the embargo of cherished sin, than the hand can perform its functions under paralysis.

As it is the first duty of a sinner to repent in order to obtain pardon, so it is the first step of a Christian toward the higher altitudes of grace to “renounce the hidden things of dishonesty.” Not to merely break off from open sin, but so to expose, introspect, and shred the inner man as to discover, expose and eliminate every rotten thread of unseen evil and private practice. God requires absolute “truth in the inward parts.” *5 Such preparation for holiness is apostolic. It was Paul who commended himself for having “renounced the hidden things of dishonesty,” craftiness and deceit. *6 It was he also who

said: "We have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man." *7 These abjurations (*renouncing on oath*) of all sin, and especially those most commonly practiced, were prerequisites for his full sanctification. In like manner all who would ascend above all the clouds to the sunlit plane of entire holiness and Rest must discard and put away all unrighteousness. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." *8

The day of thy great power I feel,
And pant for liberty;
I loathe myself, deny my will,
And give up all for thee.
"I hate my sins, -- no longer mine,
For I renounce them too;
My weakness with thy strength I loin;
Thy strength shall all subdue."

Now make no mistake: the teachings of John Calvin are almost everywhere in the Protestant world these days. He ingeniously created a marvelously integrated system that carefully takes into consideration the role of sin in a believers life. He did this by observing the many temptations and sad moral failures he saw around him in the church. He explained what he saw, and came to an integrated understanding of it. On that understanding he in turn created a system that the believer could use for coping with the world and his often weak faith as he found it. It made room in the gospel for the frequent failure that he saw long ago in those sad days just after the time of Luther.

It is regrettable that Calvin did not come into contact with some of those rare souls who possessed the secret of complete deliverance from all sin. It would have instantly made his system obsolete, but his understanding would not be the compromising system of "sinning religion" that bears his name today. Instead, he would have been a happy and radiant early teacher of a faith that completely conquers sin and sinfulness.



Fully Convinced That it is Attainable

Before we can obtain this promised full redemption that is called His Rest, it is necessary that we be fully convinced that such a blessing lies within our reach. It is against nature for any man to make a vigorous effort to obtain something he does not believe is obtainable. No man ordinarily attempts to walk on the water or fly to the moon. By intuition he knows such feats are impossible. No man will dig deep into the the earth for treasure until he is quite assured that treasure is there. It is a law of our nature to act only on the prospect of success. So no Christian can earnestly strive and supplicate for a clean heart, unless previously persuaded that such purity is within the range of possibility.

It is first necessary to come under the conviction that holiness is for you.

How is this to be done?

First, consider the power by which it is to be accomplished, the unlimited

power of God which reaches you through the unlimited merit of Christ. We admit that to create a clean heart in a sinner is a greater work than to create a world or light up a sun. But we must remember God has imposed upon Himself the task of cleansing us from all sin. And we read, "All things are possible with God." Whatever does not involve sin, nor imply a contradiction, God can do. And, certainly, to save a man from all moral wrong is not committing sin; nor does it contradict any known truth, much less clash with any attribute of God.

Second, consider the fact that the atonement provides for personal holiness. Inspire your drooping spirits by the recollection that this was the chief purpose of Christ's mission: "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." *9 He was set forth from the beginning by types and prophecies as the Lamb of God, who should take away "the sin of the world." *10 Repeat to yourself often those texts which reveal the primary design of Christ's sacrifice; such as: "He was wounded for our transgression, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." *11 "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" *12 "Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." *13

If it was the original intention of the sacrificial work of Christ to heal us by His stripes, to purge our conscience from dead works, to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify us unto Himself, then we must concede the attainability of this grace, or take the position that Christ is a failure! Surely, no one will assert that; and, therefore, we are held to the belief that, by the atonement, salvation from all sin has been placed within our grasp.

So, stimulate your faith by the truth that God has firmly promised full redemption:

- "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a **heart of flesh**. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them." *14
- "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days," "saith the Lord, I will put my law into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." *15
- "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." *16
- "Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." *17

• “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” *18 “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” *19

No one can doubt, after deliberately reading this class of promises, that God has committed Himself by covenant to save men (on certain conditions) from all sin. To command and promise holiness, and yet withhold the blessing when the conditions are met, would be to cruelly tantalize the seeker.

The only thing necessary now is to obtain the conviction that He can reach down to do the promised work of grace at any moment after you have qualified yourself. To perfect this belief, appeal again to the word of God and read, “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world” *20 Read again, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” *21 But it is one thing to read those texts and assent to them as parts of the word of God, and quite another thing to cordially embrace them. We must saturate ourselves with this Truth until it takes effect.

A belief that does not carry conviction to your judgment and inspire perfect confidence is no belief at all. True faith expels doubt and misgiving. It believes every thing God says. When a man explicitly accepts a declaration of Holy Writ, *it takes possession of him* and burns into his mind a conviction of its truth.

When such a burning conviction rules the mind and heart of a seeker, he is at least on the borderline of his full redemption.



SPIRITUAL HUNGER IS NECESSARY

Our Lord says, “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” *22 Here feeding is conditioned on appetite. Only those who hunger and thirst shall be filled.

It logically follows that those who do not hunger and thirst shall not be filled.

This view taken by the Saviour is equally true in nature and grace. A man who does not relish food is unlikely to receive it. He will probably grow lean and die in the midst of plenty. The same may be affirmed of the Christian. No appetite means no fatness, and soon no life. He may read and sing about holiness, and hear it preached, and even ask for it to be given in the words of his prayer, and yet if there be no soul hunger for it, not a single step can be taken toward its realization. If the mind is filled with teaching which it

loathes, it will be unlikely that it will be remembered or digested properly. It may be good teaching, but the absence of a corresponding appetite will make it unlikely that the system will properly take in the spiritual nutrition.

So, the mind may be crammed full of the most exalted truth, and the soul may be practiced in every kind of devout recitals of worship, and still if there be no craving for spirituality the richest truth and sublimest service will probably be nothing more to the worshiper than “sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.” Unless he “hunger and thirst after righteousness” he will come and go unfilled. Though the protracted meeting, or the forty days of Lent be expanded to forty years, still the man that has no keen relish for sanctifying truth and experiential grace, will come to the end of each round of ceremonies and each decade of formal godliness as empty, lean, and starved as when he began. God offers salvation to us, but does not force it down our throats. He feeds the appetite of spiritual hunger even to fullness and satisfaction; but the man who does not want this better level of His grace meets the offer of it with revulsion and morbid distaste, He leaves with a self-imposed emptiness and poverty.

Here a question may arise. The reader may say, “I find myself lacking this indispensable hunger, and consequently, according to the argument, holiness is not attainable to me in my present condition.” The fact is true, but this does not release you from responsibility. For you can command hunger and thirst. Appetite itself is created by healthy conditions, whether physical or spiritual. Expose a man to malaria, or surround him with an unwholesome atmosphere, or deprive him of proper exercise, and he will become sickly and lose his appetite.

So with a Christian. Let his reading, conversation, habits of life, and associations be irreligious, and he will find himself lacking an appetite for spiritual things. On the other hand, let a man give serious thought about his spiritual state. Let him read the Scriptures, and give himself to prayer; let him read those books and papers which tend to the knowledge and love of God; let him attend such meetings, and associate with such persons, as will be helpful to his religious life. Let any man pursue this course, and he will find deep hunger and thirst for God generated in his soul.

He will soon exclaim, “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth Out for the living God.” *23 “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” *24

Causes For Lack of Hunger

The lack of soul-hunger for the deep things of God explains and accounts for the slow adoption of this divine experience even in the rare places where the doctrine is fully accepted. We have no appetite for the bread which a correct

theology has placed upon our table. This lack of appetite is chiefly traceable to two causes:

First. The debilitating atmospheres of worldliness in which the Church has immersed herself. She has made herself sick, and become filled with her unwholesome diet. Her appetite is perverted.

Second. The great lack of explicit preaching and testimony on the subject. Perhaps the most alarming feature of the modern pulpit is the absence of the Gospel in Gospel preaching.

A thousand sermons are preached every Sabbath, which scarcely relate to the substance of Christianity; whole hours and days are consumed in elaborate discussions on themes remotely connected with religion, but not having in them scarcely a trace of spiritual food. It is a travesty of Gospel preaching – an utter neglect or a burlesque and sacrilege of Divine things.

But while such ministrations tend directly to quench the ardors of devotion, and multiply dead Churches, yet they do not excuse any man who does not thirst for righteousness. *Each individual is responsible for his own lack of Divine aspiration.* It is not in the power of any man, or class of adverse circumstances, to still the yearning of the heart for holiness. A seeker may burn with furnace heat in the midst of human icebergs. He may sit under a barren pulpit and mingle with the coldest worshipers, and yet, rejecting the chaff and wax, feed on the finest wheat and honey from the Rock.

While others are cold and indifferent, and even repelling holiness, he may still be in a frame of mind to say:

“Restless, resigned, for this I wait,
For this my vehement soul stands still.”



APPETITE FOR HOLINESS CULTIVATED

To qualify for His Rest, one must ask with whole-hearted faith, without reserve of any kind. This requires His supernatural help, and so is usually preceded by a time when has come into an unnatural fever of devotion to Him. For this reason, fastings from many activities which otherwise appear harmless are recommended.

Some persons excuse their neglect of holiness on the ground that they feel no interest in the subject. They have no distinct belief in the doctrine, and no appetite for the enjoyment of the experience. For this reason they seem to imagine *that no obligation rests upon them to be concerned about the matter.*

Their conduct implies that a conviction for purity is exceptional and arbitrarily produced. They are ready to admit that where such conviction exists it is appropriate to seek entire sanctification; but where it is missing, the question may be dismissed with impunity. Now, this is a terrible mistake,

for the appetite for holiness may be cultivated just as a desire for food can be created. In this respect we are largely what we make ourselves to be. Our Lord says:

“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness.”

This benediction implies that to hunger and thirst is a rewardable act, and, if rewardable, it must be voluntary. If voluntary, it may be concluded that, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, it is completely within our power to revive and nourish aspirations for holiness.

On the other hand, we may, *in defiance of the work of the Holy Spirit*, repress and extinguish all desire for that state. And, in most cases, I believe a lack of interest in full salvation is traceable to a non-use or misuse of our volition in regard to the precious theme. If this be so, the absence of an appetite for holiness *is sin, for it is a self-induced evil*. The believer has neglected to cultivate his tastes in the right direction, and perhaps has impaired them by injurious diet.

I do not think it possible for a man to love holiness who loves novels, or craves to read our secular newspapers. (Yes, sin and tragedy are facts of life, but why would you bathe yourself in these lurid accounts of them? This is the opposite of a hunger for holiness...) Nor is it possible for a man to find zest in sanctified and sanctifying literature who frequents the theater and other common habits of worldly men. The same may be said of those who participate in popular amusements or mingle in the hilarities of fashionable society.

Such frivolities and vices create revulsion towards holiness. And wherever Christians make worldly customs and tainted literature their element, soulhunger for purity is sure to die out. A candle cannot bum in the foul air that settles in old wells and cisterns. No more can a flame of holy love exist in an atmosphere of non-Christian habits -even if they are not grossly wicked. But one may say, “If I abstain from all such damaging practices, will I find myself groaning after full redemption?” Certainly not; for negative obedience is only a half compliance with the law of God. *Positive work* is needed to meet the commandment.

Do something or die, is a universal condition of responsible beings. Now, what can we do to create an appetite for holiness? First. Think on the subject. The apostle exhorts thus: “Wherefore, holy brethren, . . . consider the apostle and high-priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” *25 Consider in this connection His office as your personal Saviour.

Again the apostle says: “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” *26 Here the whole emphasis is placed upon the word think. Thought is like fire – it burns itself

in.

Fixed attention on any good idea is like the process of crystallization, where you can see matter harden, and take on forms of beauty. To think seriously and prayerfully on the question of holiness is to transmute the principle into the texture of our inner man. In most cases a man's aspirations are the product of his meditations. I do not think that more than one out of ten of our ministers or members would remain apathetic on the subject of holiness, if they would but give themselves up to conscientious inquiry about their duty for ten minutes each day. The prevalent lukewarmness would soon disappear and be followed by ardent desire.

Second. Appetite for holiness *is cultivated by reading*. There is now a rich heritage of literature on the theme, contributed by different Churches in the past. We are persuaded that no one can read a fair proportion of these works with honesty, and not be profoundly impressed with the great truth, and convicted for the experience. Like a man whom we met in Scotland, whose prejudices gradually melted away under a series of simple expositions of the privilege, until, under an apparently involuntary impulse, he rose and said, "I believe the doctrine, and now I want the experience."

Third. Appetite for holiness is cultivated by attending meetings organized to advocate the cause, and spread the experience of entire sanctification. It is inconsistent to argue against meetings held especially for this purpose. For missions, education, and all other objects of great importance we hold special conventions, where only the one interest is allowed to be introduced. So why decry a meeting for the most important object of all? What interest can compare with that of advancing a perfect Divine life in the Churches? More have been sanctified by this concentration of thought and effort than by any other way. The songs and testimonies and, above all, the hallowing influence of these meetings have traveled round the world and penetrated heathen homes.

A well-conducted service of this sort cannot fail to give birth to cravings for purity that will extend far beyond the number who, by open confession, attain the gift of full salvation. It will elevate the tone of Divine worship, sharpen the relish for spiritual things, and give a new and sweeter zest to all the means of grace.

Fourth. There should be direct and specific prayer to awaken concern and longing for holiness in the heart. However cold and indifferent you are, let earnest supplication be made. By the force of will and under the conviction of duty continue the pleading. Pursue the course we have indicated, dear reader, and you will soon say:

"My anxious soul cries out, oppressed,
Impatient to be freed;
Nor can I, Lord, nor will I rest

Till I am saved indeed.”

End Notes

1 John 5:44

2 Isa. 4:7

3 2 Cor. 6:14- 17

4 1 Thess. 5:22

5 Psa. 51:6

6 2 Cor. 4:2

7 2 Cor. 7:2

8 Eph. 5:11

9 Heb. 13:12

10 John 1:29

11 Isa. 53:5

12 Heb. 9:13,14

13 Titus 2:14.

14 Ezek. 36:25-27

15 Jer. 31:33;

Heb. 10:16, 17

16 Isa. 1:18

Matt. 52:12

18 1 John 1:9

19 2 Peter 1:4

20 1 John 4:17

21 2 Cor. 6:2)

22 Matt. 5:6

23 Psa. 84:1, 2

24 Psa 42:1, 2

By Earnest Seeker, but based upon a portion of Chapter 8 of "The Possibilities of Grace" by Asbury Lowery

A Note Upon The Will

For all that is made of the value of the will in the above article, we still must recognize that the will is made from strength that is merely human. This will does not become fully solid until it is supplemented by God's help obtained through much prayer -for His help. Many years ago I worked for some time in construction. One of the things I did was to work on a concrete crew. We built forms and filled them with good quality concrete and strong reinforcing steel to hold it together. The strength of the resulting walls and foundations was not made from the strength of our crew. It did indeed take our strength to place the forms and prepare them to hold the concrete, and then move the concrete to the forms and pour it in. It also took strength to vibrate the concrete so that no holes were left in it. It also took strength to smooth the resulting surface of the concrete so that it would be ready for its final purpose. But the real strength came from none of these. It came from an unseen source. As you know, hidden within the liquid concrete itself, a chemical reaction was taking place between the Portland cement powder and the water that turned the whole loose mixture of cement powder, water and special gravel into a hard and durable synthetic stone. Apparently, it continues to get harder and harder for many years after it is poured.

So we used this stone-making power hidden within the concrete to create foundations, parkades several stories high, underground parking, apartment building walls many stories high and floors on top of the walls, but the point of this example is to show that until this chemical reaction takes place, the considerable human strength involved was in vain. Our forms had to endure a great deal of stress from the considerable weight of the concrete until this mysterious power took hold. But for this power to work it took enough

heat -and in a cold Canadian winter that cannot be taken for granted. A special chemical was added to the concrete, and we built shelters out of tarpaulins to enclose a big propane heater to keep it warm for long enough. Liquid concrete that is allowed to freeze just turns back into powder after it thaws. No way did we allow this to happen.

All the forms we built at such effort and cost were given rest only after the concrete hardened enough that it could stand on its own. This took longer for floors than it did for walls. The forms for walls were removed in the morning unless the weather was cold.

The floors needed support for several days until they were quite dry.

Such is the power of the will. All this human strength is in vain until His supernatural strength comes to work along side of our strength.



Our Will and His Grace

So, the saving work of the Lord comes in two parts. First, He claims us out of the world, brings us into a relationship with Him and pardons us for all of the sinful acts that we had previously done in the body. Ideally, then we would be informed that if we enjoyed this pardon, we ought to go on to finish His redemptive work and ask for purity as well.

But regrettably, among those who claim to call upon the name of the Lord, a majority have failed to grasp the opportunity presented by the work of the cross in their lives. They have failed to move on to actually love the Lord and His lawful ways. It seems they actually prefer the fallen world and its fallen ways!

Pornography is a case in point: "At 12 billion a year, the revenues of the porn industry in the U.S. Are bigger than the NFL, NBA and Major League Baseball combined.

Worldwide porn sales are reported to be 57 billion. To put this in perspective, Microsoft, who sells the operating system used on most of the computers in the world (in addition to other software) reported sales of 36.8 billion in 2004. [-Family Safe Media] *

According to the Justice Department, in 1998 there were 28,000 X-rated Web sites generating 925 million dollars in revenue. Within just three years this number increased to 280,000 X-rated Web sites. * 60% of all website visits are sexual in nature [-MSNBC Survey 2000] * (So what is it now, after these years?)

In December of 2000, the National Coalition to Protect Children and Families surveyed five Christian Campuses to see how the next generation of believers was doing with sexual purity: 48% of males admitted to current porn use 68% of males said they intentionally viewed a sexually explicit site at the school *

In a survey of over 500 Christian men at a men's retreat, over 90% admitted that they were *feeling disconnected from God* because lust, porn, or fantasy had gained a foothold in their lives. As reported in an article on Pastors.com by Kenny Luck. 51% of Pastors say Internet pornography is a possible temptation. 37% say it is a current struggle. 4 in 10 pastors have visited a porn website. ~Christianity Today, Leadership survey, Dec 2001 Of those polled at a Promise Keepers event, 50% said they had checked out pornographic material within *the past week*. Here is a good article by George Barna to read:

Morality Continues to Decay [http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?](http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=BarnaUpdate&BarnaUpdateID=152)

[Page=BarnaUpdate&BarnaUpdateID=152](http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=BarnaUpdate&BarnaUpdateID=152)

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." - 2 Timothy 3:1,4 "Now

the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idoltary, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I told you in times past, that they which do such things *shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*" - Gal 5:18-21 ~

All these things are unlawful and so Jesus speaks strongly about them:

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, '*I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!*'

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Matthew 7:13-29 NKJV

His Rest is only found on the narrow way, for that way wends its way ever higher until at last its goal is found.

Those presently caught in the above lawlessness need to turn their back upon it as they call upon the Name of the Lord, and then they shall be saved from it. Then they can turn their face fully to Him who is their help.

In my counseling of those who come into His Rest, some were in this bondage, and before long they entered into His Rest. So, apparently, it does not *have to* take long when desperation and properly directed faith work together.

Earnest Seeker



<http://www.enterhisrest.org/>