

It is God Which Worketh in You (3)

Divine Priorities

In the last two articles, we learned that God is at work in the lives of His people, accomplishing His purposes, by His mighty power. All that God is doing in molding, shaping and refining us is designed that we might be suited for His service, while we sojourn in this world.

While it is true that God is at work in us, there is also a participation on our part that is required, as those who belong to Christ. In his second letter to Timothy, Paul advises believers to purge themselves from every form of false teaching and that which is dishonouring to God, that they might be *“a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master’s use”* (2nd Tim. 2:21).

The Word of God will have a purifying effect on our lives when we read it daily and submit to its holy teachings. The psalmist wrote, *“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word”* (Ps. 119:9). Paul exhorted, *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* (2nd Tim. 2:15).

Paul reminded the saints in Thessalonica of how the Word of God worked in them to bring them to salvation and to become followers of other believers, *“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus”* (1st Thess. 2:13-14).

Paul recognized that he became a minister of the gospel according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given to him by the working of his power (Eph. 3:7). So it is with all of us who serve the Lord in the capacity which He enables. Service for the Lord is really a gift bestowed upon us by the grace of God, working His mighty power in us.

So, we learn that God is working in us by His mighty power to sanctify and purify us that we might be fitted to serve Him. Peter reminds us that we are called to be holy, since the God we serve is holy (1st Pet. 1:16). The prophet Isaiah wrote, *“be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord”* (Isa. 52:11).

One of the reasons why God chose us, is that we be without holy and without blame before Him in love (Eph. 1:4). We should not only be blameless before God, but Paul reminds us in the book of Philippians, that God is working in us to produce in us a holy testimony before others, *“That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world”* (Phil. 2:15).

While Paul laboured to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus (Col. 1:28), God is also working in us so that, ultimately, we shall be presented before Him in the perfect righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul wrote in the book of Ephesians, *“Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish”* (Eph. 5:25-27).

The apostle Jude wrote, *“unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy”* (Jude v. 24). The full effect of

the redeeming, reconciling work of the blood of Christ, will be seen in a coming day, when we are presented to Him, “*holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight*” (Col. 1:22).

*Work of God in saints perfected,
In whose lives His love we trace;
By His sovereign plan selected,
Heirs according to His grace.*

*God's almighty plan unfolding
Working in us to produce;
Holy Spirit, shaping molding,
Vessels for the Master's use.*

*Objects of the Sovereign's choosing,
His own purpose to fulfill;
Every selfish motive losing
In surrender to His will.*

*Serving Christ without distraction,
While in us, His love displayed;
Every thought and every action,
By His holy scan surveyed.*

*Holy service, now we render,
From the world, thus sanctified;
To His Word, our conscience tender,
Sacred Scriptures for our guide.*

*Day of blessed consummation,
Of all things is drawing near;
Christ's redeemed from every nation
In His likeness shall appear.*

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