

# The Sanctification of the New Man in Christ

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*“Neither yield ye your members as instruments [weapons] of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments [weapons] of righteousness to God.” Rom. 6:13*

It was with pleasure that we accepted the invitation to write a short series of essays on the general subject of what might be called: **spiritual sensitiveness**, or **sensitivity**.

The matter to which we shall address ourselves is to the fine spiritual taste of every Christian, man, woman or child, to wit, every reborn, justified and sanctified child of God as he must fight the battle of faith against sin and Satan.

No, we are not speaking here of and to some worldly and unbelieving moralists, who too have an ethic, a sense of right and wrong, the good and the bad. On the contrary we are speaking of Christian people, young and old, who have been baptized into Christ and into all His benefits merited on the Cross and sealed unto us in His resurrection. Yes, we are speaking of and to those who have received from the Lord the earnest of the Spirit of Christ.

Such is our point of departure in these essays.

We make it a point to state this at the very beginning.

We must clearly understand that we are Christians. The Bible never admonishes us to become Christians, to make such a zealous effort. Only a good tree brings forth good fruit, and an evil tree brings forth evil fruit. By the fruit ye shall know the tree, says Jesus. (Matt. 7: 16-20; 12:33; Luke 6:43, 44). It must be manifested in our good works that these works are the fruit of the Spirit of Christ in us, the fruits of our efficacious calling and election.

Permit us to state it clearly that we are not called Christians because we perform good works. On the contrary we do good works of gratitude, which are acceptable to God, because we are Christians, the people, who have the anointing of the Holy One. Good works which are well-pleasing to God are only those which proceed from a true faith, and are done according to the commandments of God, and which are to the glory of God's grace. No, we are not Christians simply because we read our Bible, attend church twice on Sunday, go to catechism, and are enrolled in a Christian School. We must do all these works because we are Christians, who are partakers of Christ by faith and share in Christ's anointing of the Spirit.

That is the starting-point of all admonitions in the Bible to the members of the church, you and me. Just think that the Bible tells us that the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon us. (I Peter 4:14) It is the Spirit of Pentecost, the baptism with the Holy Spirit, so that we are not reprobate, but we are those in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells. We are temples of the Holy Spirit both in body and in soul. Also, our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. (I Cor. 6:12-20). Yes, the church is the habitation of God in the Spirit. (Eph. 2: 19-22). And we are one of the many members of the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13 ff).

In this church as Christians we are office-bearers. It is the office of all believers: prophets, priests and kings! Perhaps we might properly designate these as: head, heart and hand. This is not at all like the “4H Club” designation only now a kind of “3H Club”. No, we are office-bearers in Christ, Who is the Chief Prophet, the only High Priest and the Eternal King.

We should bear in mind that in this office we should be diligently and holily occupied as the angels are in heaven, whoever behold our Father's face!

Our precious Heidelberg Catechism in explaining the name "Christ" speaks of the threefold office of Christ. Corresponding to this office of Christ, and resting upon it, is what the Catechism designates as our office in Christ as Christians.

Let us take particular notice of this for just a moment.

First of all, our being a prophet in Christ's anointing makes us confessors of our personal, living relationship to Christ, the chief Prophet. As chief prophet, Christ reveals to us the secret counsel of God concerning our redemption. Now this word of the Gospel is within us by faith. We confess that Christ went into the depths of hell for us, and that He now sits as our prophet at the right hand of God. When we confess the truth in Jesus and our living relationship to Christ as branches in the true Vine, then we prophecy, we confess Christ before men. And we must do this in pure doctrine as well as in a godly walk which is based upon this doctrine and which is according to it. This is a solemn and awful and yet glorious reality. Here Jesus teach: He that confesses with the mouth and believes with the heart, that God raised Jesus from the dead shall be saved (Rom 10:9). Did not Jesus, while on earth say, "Everyone therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." (Matt 10: 32, 33).

Yes, it is either – or: false, Christ-denying prophet, or true prophet who confesses Christ before me with a good confession.

Secondly, we are also priests in Christ, the great and only High Priest. He has given his body and soul on the accursed tree for us on the Altar of God. We could quote legions of texts to sustain this. We merely draw attention to Isaiah 53:5 "... he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed." (I Peter 2:24-25). Now we too are Christians in this high Priest: we are partakers of his sufferings, and so we in thankfulness in the Holy Spirit by faith present ourselves a living sacrifice of praise to God. Thus we are in the world, yet not of the world, who are all false priests, in the temple of idols with all its filth and debauchery and spiritual as well as physical fornication.

However, we are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, called out of darkness into God's marvelous light to declare God's praises as Prophet-priests.

Finally, we are also kings. Christ has so had dominion of sin and death in His death and crucifixion and in His resurrection power, that He is Lord of lords and King of kings. In sharing in His anointing, we too are kings. We thus fight against Satan and all sin with a free and good conscience in this life, and thus afterwards to reign with Christ over all things. Such is the teaching of the Heidelberg Catechism. We read in Rom. 5:17, "for if, by the trespass of one, death reigned through one, much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through one, even Jesus Christ."

As Christians we are not interested merely to cleanse the outside of the cup, but we pray, wash me, make me pure "within", cleanse oh cleanse me from my sin, do we not. When we take serious note of this, it means that we desire to be prophet-priests-kings of God, and thus stand antithetically over against the three-fold enemy, Satan, the world and our own flesh which do not cease to assault us, fight against us, a new man in Christ. So we stand with the antithesis within

us. There is the battle-line in the Christian. He has a battle which is wholly different from the battle of the moralist; it is not a matter of improvement on the old, but it is transformation of the mind. All things have become new for us; also the battle is a different battle. It is a battle of the renewed, inward man against sin!

It is the battle of the spiritual man, who has the mind of Christ, as prophet, priest and king!

In this battle our weapons are the "members" of our body. Our eyes, ears, hands, feet, tongue, yea, all of our physical body. And these "members" must not be placed in the service of our sinful flesh. They must not be weapons to fight the devil's cause, but they must be weapons to fight the good fight of faith over against the cause of the devil.

We must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling!

We shall do so in the same measure that we are deeply conscious that it is God Who is energizing in us to will and to do in this life and death struggle. We must bear in mind the words of Scripture: "and the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it." I Thess 5:23, 24.

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