

**Sanctification:
Transformed Into The Image of Christ
Lesson 7**

What is a prototype? An original or model after which anything is copied. Under what conditions would one want a prototype? When you do not want variation in the subsequent copies.

I. Christ as the Prototypical Pattern

- a. When Jesus, John and James went into the village of the Samaritans they did not receive Him. The disciples then asked whether they should call down fire from heaven to destroy the village. Jesus rebuked them. Luke 9:54-56 *And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? 55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. 56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village. KJV*
- b. Given the context of the passage one may infer that His rebuke of them had to do with their lack of understanding of the nature of the spiritual life that they had been given and how it should be manifest in such situations.
- c. One of the most difficult to understand realities of Christian experience has always been the concept of Christ as life. Or, put another way: Christ as the prototype of spiritual life of the believer. Col 1:26-27 *Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: KJV*
- d. The creating of Christ's life in the believer is accomplished through the Spirit's action beginning at the point of regeneration. At conversion the believer is created a new spiritual being, the real spiritual self is formed in the image of Christ. 2 Cor 5:17 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. KJV*
- e. The disciples who accompanied Jesus during His earthly ministry did not comprehend this spiritual reality at the time and it is equally misapprehended by modern day Christians as well.
- f. The problem seems to be that things "spiritual", being immaterial, can not be readily apprehended by minds that rely upon sensory data or empirical study in order to define, categorize and codify them.
- g. As a result there is broad speculation and much error in what is taught and understood by believers in the present age as to what it means to be spiritual beings engaged in the process of sanctification.
- h. A further difficulty in comprehension revolves around an understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit and how specifically He accomplishes His role in the process of sanctification.

II. Back to the Beginning

- a. In order to understand man's "spiritual nature" one needs to understand that God's original design of man, being made in God's image, is constituted in dependence upon the Spirit of God. Isa 30:1 *Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: KJV*
- b. Apart from God's Spirit man fails of his true destiny. This is true because our spiritual nature is constituted as dependent upon the indwelling Spirit of God for the performance of our true functions in harmony with the will of God. John 15:5 *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. KJV*
- c. Since the Fall of Adam, man has been spiritually dead; unable to respond to God's will because he is unable to respond to God's Spirit. 1 Cor 2:11-15 *For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. 14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. NIV*
- d. God resolves this inability by causing men to become born-again spiritually and to be regenerated. John 3:5-6 *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. KJV*
- e. The idea that regeneration results in a true knowledge of Christ and a new spiritual ability to respond to the Spirit of God is clearly seen from the epistles. Eph 3:16-20 *That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Col 3:10 *And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: KJV**
- f. God's purpose in regeneration is not merely to give man a true knowledge of Christ; this is but a by-product. His real design is to impart His nature to mankind. James 1:18 *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. KJV*
- g. For it is when His nature is manifest in His creation that He is glorified. Nothing glorifies Him more than to behold His own perfect nature reflected back to Him in the creatures of His creation. Gen 1:31 *And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. KJV*
- h. Unregenerate man can never glorify God. Man who is spiritually dead can never give anything back to God that is worthy of Him. Rom 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; KJV*

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- i. It is in the act of regeneration that the Holy Spirit provides to the **new** spiritual man everything needed to glorify God: the grace gifts for mighty works; the intellectual for guidance into Truth; moral and spiritual discernment for producing holy lives. 2 Peter 1:3-4 *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 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. KJV*
- j. While we as believers may have a superficial understanding of these Biblical facts, for us to live them out is an entirely different matter. What is needed is an experience of them in which we actually **live Christ** in difficult circumstance.
- k. This is the **role** of the Holy Spirit: To cause us to discern the difference between responses of the old nature and those of Christ; to imbue us with the spiritual power to choose Christ in a moment of time and to endure pain and suffering along the way.

III. The Role of the Holy Spirit in Sanctification

- a. There are a great variety of expressions indicating the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying the life of the Christian. At **every point** that life is under the guidance and sustaining energy of the Spirit; we are His workmanship.
 1. For the believer, attending to the way of the Spirit is life **producing** Rom 8:6 *For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. KJV*
 2. The Spirit helps the Christian to pray for the things that are in accordance with the will of **God** Rom 8:26-27 *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. KJV*
 3. The Holy Spirit sustains us when He fills us with a future **hope**. Rom 15:13 *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. KJV*
 4. Thus the presence of the Spirit is **not** evidenced in the unusual, the miraculous, the ecstatic utterance of the believer, or some strange deed of power, but in the workaday qualities of kindness, goodness, love, loyalty, patience, self-restraint Gal 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: KJV*
- b. The Holy Spirit seeks not His own **glory** but the glory of Christ and it is to that end that He works the spirit of Christ into the believer. John 15:26 *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: KJV*
- c. With this **purpose** of the Spirit in mind, we can better understand Paul's passages in which he addresses the concept of Christ as prototype in relationship to the sanctification process of the believer. Christ is the prototype because:
 1. Christ is the **goal** of the Christian life Rom 8:29 *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. KJV*
 2. We are to **grow up** in Him Eph 4:15 *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:KJV*
 3. He is to be **formed** in us Gal 4:19 *My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, KJV*
 4. We are to behold Him and be changed into His **image** 2 Cor 3:18 *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.KJV*
- d. This deepens into Paul's thought of the **mystical** relation that we have with Christ.
 1. The Christian **dies** to sin with Him that he may live with Him a new life. Rom 6:2 *How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? KJV*
 2. Christ manifest is now the believer's **real life**. Gal 2:20 *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. KJV*
 3. The believer **dwells** in Christ, Christ dwells in him. 1 John 4:13 *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. KJV*
 4. The believer has Christ's **thoughts**; His mind. 1 Cor 2:16 *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. KJV*
 5. The believer has the Spirit who has the **qualities** of Christ, our prototypical self. Rom 8:11 *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. KJV*

IV. Application

- a. If you were going to design and build a copy of any prototype what steps would you follow in preparing yourself for that task?
- b. Christ is the Prototype of our holiness. What steps can you take in preparation for making yourself a copy of Him?