

## Sanctification: Transformed Into The Image of Christ

### Lesson 26

#### I. Introduction

- a. As we established in lesson 24 of this series, the etching of new neural pathways which enable the believer to walk according to the Spirit do not merely occur as a product of **wishful** thinking.
- b. The development of new neural pathways on the surface of brain is the result of overt, dedicated and conscious **attention** to a specific thing.
- c. As in the act of mortification of the deeds of the flesh, our notions of what needs to be mortified as well as those things that we ought to “put on” must be derived from God’s **point of view**.
- d. In other words, we must **value** God’s point of view sufficiently in order to cause the brain to attend to Biblical attitudes and behaviors as we shape our response to the situations of our daily life.
- e. Our task therefore, is to **appropriate** a deep sense of valuing of the spiritual life as the Word of God prescribes it, for this is the only way that we can possibly know what the spiritual life ought to look like.
- f. This vital activity of valuing the spiritual life is in reality seeing things as they **truly are**; it is recognizing that what God says about things is true and every other way of understanding them is false and therefore undesirable. Ps 119:104 *Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way. KJV*
- g. Valuing the spiritual life is a conscious and deliberate choice that has **real** implications for what neural circuitry is activated in the brain. So how do we do it?

#### II. Valuing The Spiritual Life

- a. A thing may be said to be a real value when it **compels** attention, thought, and behavior consistent with the thing being valued.
- b. When one’s behavior is **congruous** with the thing held in value, such behavior will always produce an internal sense of satisfaction, harmony with the self, and a personal sense of integrity as well.
- c. Conversely, to violate what one values will leave one feeling as if one has acted in a wrong way, a false way, acted inconsistently with one’s **true self**.
- d. Valuing produces a mental force circuit within the brain and says to the brain that the object of value is important enough to warrant the expenditure of energy and **effort**.
- e. To value spiritual things is to desire to know them, to esteem them, to cherish them, to count them **worthy** of complete dedication and emulation. True valuing results in authentic living.
- f. The Bible, in fact, commands precisely that: **Matt 22:37-38** *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment .KJV*
- g. Motivated by the love for God that the Spirit has placed in his heart at conversion, the believer is commanded to recognize this worldly system for the **inferior** value that it is and to replace it with that which has true worth. Col 3:1-2 *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. KJV*

#### III. Setting Your Affections on Things Above

- a. The expression, “**set** your affections” means to exercise the mind, with concern and obedience, to intensively interest oneself in the entire spiritual life; its present conduct, its future reward, etc.
- b. By contrast with the spiritual things, we see the things of the earth are comparatively of **no value** while the spiritual things are of inestimable and eternal worth. Consider:
- c. **Matt 6:19-21** *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*
- d. **Luke 12:20-21** *But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. KJV*
- e. **1 Cor 2:9** *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. KJV*
- f. It is toward this degree of valuing which we are commanded to **strive**. Paul tells us that when such valuing is achieved and when it is one’s chief desire to live it out at all times, in all places, with all relationships, one’s experience of life is transformed. Phil 1:21 *For to me to live is Christ,*
- g. Graphic

#### IV. Nine Aspects of Living Christ

- a. To continually **grow** in understanding and appreciation of one’s position in Christ. Rom 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

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- b. To live in **anticipation** of the Kingdom of Heaven as opposed to living of this present world and for this present life. 2 Tim 2:4 *No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*
- c. To live consciously so as to **mortify** the deeds of the flesh. This requires recognizing that one is prone to sin and being ever vigilant for any eruption of temptation to sin. Then, putting such desires to death before they can be actualized. Col 3:5 *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth;*
- d. To **abide** in Christ. By grace and through faith to be raised above the old nature, to learn Christ by studying Him and by being stayed upon Him through our day. John 15:4 *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*
- e. To **walk** in the Spirit. Since our new lives are in the Spirit let us be conscious of the Spirit's leading in every circumstance and to act in accordance with that which the Spirit would do in us. Gal 5:25 *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*
- f. To **put off**. As one would put off filthy garments in the presence of our King, put off the old man with his deeds. Every thought that does not glorify Him, every word and every deed that crucifies Him, these are all to be put far from us. 2 Cor 10:5-6 *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.*
- g. To **put on**. Apprehend the full armor of God with which we equipped for spiritual warfare. Put on the new man of the spirit and put on the love of God. Above all put on Christ who is our righteousness. Eph 4:24 *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*
- h. To **trust**. Whatever circumstance that may arise, whatever direction in which He leads, whatever the path that must be taken, whatever footsteps however uncertain, we must ultimately trust that He has our good in mind. Job 13:15 *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.*
- i. To **Obey**. To do His commands, fully, with the right heart attitude, instantly, without fail and without question for He cares for us. John 14:15 *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

#### V. What does it take to do this?

- a. Such a conscious **commitment** on the part of the believer that would result in this level of valuing of God's point of view does not merely evolve in the life of the believer.
- b. It is a **product** of several different activities that are behavioral as well as attitudinal:
  - 1. Prayer Rom 8:26 *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.*
  - 2. **Study** and meditation of the Word Ps 119:11 *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*
  - 3. **Fasting** and confession Joel 2:12 *Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:*
  - 4. Consistent spiritual **discernment** Heb 5:14 *But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*
  - 5. Conscious subordination of the **will** to Christ John 15:4 *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*
- c. To live in this fashion where your affections are set on things above is to live out the **greatest** commandment which is to love the Lord thy God with all they heart, all thy soul, and all thy mind.

#### VI. Application

- a. Certain things that we allow to crowd and control our lives will inhibit our valuing of the spiritual life. For example:
  - 1. Attachment to the world
  - 2. Deceitfulness of sin
  - 3. Cares and concerns of this life
  - 4. Spiritual ignorance
  - 5. Spiritual laziness
- b. To what extent are you allowing things to interfere with your valuing of the spiritual life?