

Separation Truth

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September, 2009

SEPARATION TRUTH IS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE BELIEVER'S NEW LIFE IN CHRIST!

On the opening page of this web site is a picture representing an open Bible with the words superimposed upon it—“*Thy Word Is Truth*” and immediately on the side is the designation of the web site—“*Separation Truth*.” This idea is taken from the Lord’s prayer to the Father on behalf of the believer as recorded in John 17. Christ prayed for the believer in the last moments of His earthly sojourn. He specifically did not pray “*for the world*,” but for those whom God had given Him “*out of the world*” (17:6 & 9). Christ prayed, “***Sanctify them through Thy truth—Thy Word is truth***” (v. 17). Christ is thus praying for the believer’s sanctification by means of the truths that are in the Word of God. This was obviously very important to our Savior Who made this prayer on our behalf. Therefore, no doubt, we will all be held accountable as to our respect and allegiance to Christ’s heartfelt burden on our behalf, and in turn to the guiding truths of the Word of God written for our directions in life. What every believer must remember is that this is Christ’s prayer for each of us personally—for ME!

Of course we need to ask, “What is the believers’ sanctification”? The Greek verb *hagiazō* is translated “**sanctify**.” The lexicons say *hagiazō* simply means “*to set apart*.” In the context of our relationship to God it means “*to set apart to God, or separation*, so as to make holy.” Thayer’s Lexicon says concerning the word, “*to separate* from things profane and dedicate to God, to consecrate.” Concerning this particular passage of John 17:17, W. E. Vine says, “The **separation** of the believer from the world in his behavior—by the Father through the Word.” The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (1939) says, “sanctification—both the Hebrew *godesh* and the Greek *hagiazō* mean essentially **to separate**.” The Greek noun *hagiasmos* is translated “**sanctification**.” The word translated “**saint**” is from the Greek *hagios* and again means one who has been “**set apart**, so as to be made holy.” The Greek word *hagion* has reference to a “*structure set apart to God*”—**a sanctuary**. So it is that Separation Truth has actual reference to the believers’ sanctification in life and conduct through the teachings and directions that come forth from the inspired Word of God. In this Bible study, and on this web site, I will simply be emphasizing “Separation Truth” as the practical application of the doctrine of the believers’ *sanctification*.

In the very first letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to the young Christians at Thessalonica he stated the fundamental principle—“*For this is the will of God, your sanctification* (i.e., separation)...” (I Thess. 4:3). Again, it simply means “*Separation to God. Separation from evil things and ways. God’s will for the believer*” (W.E.Vine). Paul further stated—“*I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy* (Greek, *hagios*—separated) *brethren*” (I Thess. 5:27). Furthermore, the inspired writer of the book of Hebrews says, “Pursue peace with all people, and **holiness** (*hagiasmos*—separation), without which no one will see the Lord.”

*THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE BELIEVER
IS THREEFOLD—*

1. *Separation* from the **Penalty** of sin at the moment of repentance and faith in Christ. This has to do with God's forgiveness and the believers' conversion or regeneration.
2. *Separation* from the **Practice** of sin in the everyday life of the believer. This has to do with the practical walk and conduct of the believer under God's directions.
3. *Separation* from the **Presence** of sin in our ultimate destiny. This has to do with the believers' resurrection and rapture at the coming of Christ for His people.

Separation No.1 is sometimes referred to as the believer's "*Positional sanctification.*" According to the revelation of God's Word, the very moment a person places true faith in the substitutionary death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, he is *sanctified* before God. He is accepted "in Christ" and looked upon by God as "*set apart*" or sanctified from the guilt and penalty of sin. Thus, before king Agrippa the Apostle Paul described his commission from the Lord Jesus Christ to the lost—"to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among all those who are *SANCTIFIED* by faith in Me." Another illustration of this is Paul's statement in I Corinthians 1:30, "But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, Who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and *sanctification* and redemption..." In other words, every believer not only has the *righteousness* of Christ imputed to him, but he also has *sanctification* in Christ, all of which means he has the *redemption* God has so graciously provided. For this reason when Paul wrote the Corinthian epistle he referred to the believers at Corinth in this manner—"To the church of God at Corinth, to those *sanctified* in Christ Jesus, called *saints*..." (I Cor. 1:2).

Notice that Paul did not actually say—"called *to be* saints." The words "to be" are sometimes inserted by translators as if sainthood is some future goal. Actually, however, the truth of the matter is, unless one is a "saint," he cannot be a member of the church of Jesus Christ. Therefore, all believers ARE saints, and so Paul addresses in Rom. 1:7, "To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called *saints.*" Ephesians 1:1, "To the *saints* who are in Ephesus." Philippians 1:1, "To all the *saints* in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi." Colossians 1:2, "To the *saints* and faithful brethren in Christ in Colosse."

This clear and simple Bible truth is quite embarrassing to the Roman Catholic Church, who brags about her being the only institution on earth that has qualified "saints" in it. Of course, Rome's "saints" are humanly manufactured through a long process of intense religious investigation which sometimes takes decades of research and discovery of evidence. In addition, they sometimes have to "demote" some from "sainthood" because of later discoveries. All these human endeavors are entirely artificial and superficial. The Apostle Peter makes it clear that the only pathway to sainthood, as far as God is concerned, is by the work of the Holy Spirit on the believer when he places his faith in the blood of Christ. Peter wrote to the "pilgrims of the dispersion"—"elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in *SANCTIFICATION*

of the SPIRIT, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ” (I Peter 1:2). The Roman Catholic Church is composed for the most part of nothing but “baptized pagans” (according to Pope Paul VI, back in 1977), and a few artificially manufactured “saints,” whereas the true church of our Lord Jesus Christ is composed of nothing but SAINTS.

Of course, this “positional sanctification” came about through means of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the Word of God. Peter would say, “Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the Word of God which lives and abides forever” (I Peter 1:23). And the Apostle Paul said, “For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel” (I Cor.4:15).

Separation No. 2 is sometimes referred to as “*Practical sanctification.*” Contrary to what many people may think, the Bible was not written to instruct the world about God! On the contrary, the whole body of the revelations from God were specifically written to His children in every age, to instruct them on how to walk in this ungodly world. You won’t find one book of the Bible actually addressed to the unbeliever! I don’t doubt that the unbeliever can be instructed by the Bible, but the Bible was actually written to instruct God’s children on how to walk and live in the midst of a polluted earth under Satan’s rule. Consequently, the whole Bible can be described as a document of “Separation Truth.” Notice once again the importance of Christ’s prayer on the behalf of the believer and of its perspective in relationship to the world—

“I have given them (the believers) Your Word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your Word is truth. As You sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world, and for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth” (John 17:14-19).

Some of those who did not believe in Christ falsely accused Him of consorting with tax collectors and sinners, as if He was participating in their sins (Matt. 9:11 & 11:19). However, on the occasions where Christ was in the presence of such, He also maintained His separation by preaching the gospel of repentance and salvation. Therefore, though in their presence, “He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and *separate* from sinners” (Heb. 7:26).

As stated earlier, the very first letter of the Apostle Paul was to instruct the young believer, “This is the will of God, your *sanctification*: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in *sanctification* and honor and not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God” (I Thess. 4:3-5). Indeed, the Apostle Peter stated, “But as He Who called you is *holy*, you also be *holy* in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be *holy* for I am *holy*’” (I Peter 1:15,16).

Of course, “practical sanctification,” as stated in Christ’s prayer is accomplished by obedience to the revelation of instructions in the Word of God. Our practical sanctification is not artificial like “sainthood” in the Roman Catholic Church. God does not leave us up to our own religious inventions and imaginations about separation. We must depend on the revelation from God as to the spirituality of our walk and conduct.

Separation No.3 can be classified as the believers' "*Permanent sanctification*" totally. This means the believer will no longer have his sinful desires nor his corrupt body. All that is corrupt will be permanently removed. Obviously this takes place at the believers' resurrection and glorification, when Christ returns for the believer—"Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be CHANGED, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be CHANGED..." (I Cor. 15:51,52). Thank God, we will have new bodies!

Not only will our bodies be glorified at the resurrection, but we will also go through a further cleansing process at the judgment seat of Christ. This is best expressed by the words of Paul—"...just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might *sanctify and cleanse* her with the washing (lit., laver) of the water *in the Word*, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be *holy and without blemish*" (Eph. 5:25-27). This is a laver bath containing the water that is in the Word of God, which will, in finality, make us presentable to our Savior. Then will be totally fulfilled the truth stated in I John 3:2,3—"Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it has not been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be LIKE HIM, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him *purifies* himself, just as He is *pure*."

SEPARATION TRUTH IS IMPERATIVE IN LIGHT OF THE PRESENT APOSTASY

Today in Christendom there is one doctrine that is rarely ever taught and that is *Separation Truth*. Separation truth is the practical aspect of the doctrine of the believers' *Sanctification*. This has to do with the believers being "set apart" from the profane and ungodly that is in the world to serve God. We can be well assured that as long as Christians cannot be distinguished from the rest of the world in their life and conduct, the Devil is very happy indeed. It will mean that the believer's life and witness to the world will have been effectively nullified. The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His personhood while He walked in this ungodly and corrupt world, was said to be "*holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners*"—Hebrews 7:26. Yet the vast majority of His blood-bought brethren in the world today are acting out their new lives in Christ as "unholy, harmful, defiled and thoroughly mixed together with sinners." Consequently the testimony for Christ today has often been virtually neutralized.

Believing on Christ today often makes little difference as far as the world is concerned. This is because those who profess the name of Christ in the modern generation are taught by the average hired, seminary-trained preacher, even many conservative fundamentalists, that they can dress like the world, be entertained with the world and live like the world. The preachers often proudly announce to the lost that "*God loves you and will take you just as you are*." And furthermore, these preachers, more often than not, mean that "*you can stay that way!*" They vigorously brand any Biblically conscientious person, who would say otherwise, as some of those "old time legalists, who would bring you into bondage." Thus, "separation truth" is the neglected—if not forbidden—area in modern, thoroughly apostate Christendom.

For those Christians who are "God-fearing," who take their Christianity seriously and really want to make a difference in their lives, will search out the *Word of God* to find God's

directives for their walk and conduct in this present evil world. Therefore, many of the articles on this web site will emphasize the various aspects of Separation Truth.

There are few Bible believing Christians who doubt that we are living at the very closing moments of this present Church Age. In the Word of God the believer is warned about the great apostasy that will characterize the last days of this age. Three times in the closing letters of the Apostle Paul, he was inspired to give the warnings—“*Now the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons...*” (I Tim. 4:1-5). “*But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come...*” (II Tim. 3:1-9). “*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth...*” (II Tim. 4:3-5).

In the light of this apostasy the Apostle exhorted the believers who will be living in those days with these words—“*Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows them who are His,’ and ‘Let everyone who names the name of Christ **depart from iniquity.**’ But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, **sanctified** and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work*” (II Tim. 2:19-21).

SEPARATION TRUTH IS A COMMAND

—IT IS NOT OPTIONAL

We looked at the Greek word translated “sanctification” and found that it is vitally related to the idea of “separation.” However, there are several other Greek words translated “separation” in most of our Bibles. One of them is from the Greek word *apharizo*. This Greek word means “to mark off by bounds.” It is a composite word, *apo*—meaning “from” and *horizo*—meaning “to determine as a limit.” The inspired apostle Paul employs this word in his directions to the Corinthian believers and beyond them to all believers everywhere in II Corinthians 6:14-7:1. In verse 17 he quotes the principle from the Hebrew Scriptures, saying “*Come out from among them and **be separate**, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.*” Obedience to this command will in effect be the practical outworking of their own position of “sanctification” in Christ as stated earlier in I Corinthians 1:2—“*To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are **sanctified** in Christ Jesus, called **saints**, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.*”

It is important to quote the whole of this command of II Corinthians 6:14-17:1—“*Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.’ Therefore, ‘Come out from among them and **be separate**, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.’ Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting **holiness** (Greek, *hagiosune*) in the fear of God.*”

Hagiosune is yet another Greek word for “sanctification and/or separation.” In this case W. E. Vine points out that it is used only three times in the Greek Scriptures. He says it “denotes the manifestation of the quality of holiness in personal conduct.” It is used in Romans 1:4 of the absolute holiness of Christ. He was “*declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*” It is used here in II Cor. 7:1 of the believers “*to perfect holiness in the fear of God.*” And finally it is used in I Thess 3:13 where it speaks of the believers’ appearance before Christ at His coming—“*blameless in holiness.*”

In light of the seriousness of the subject, and that God has thus ordered it for the believer, what blasphemous indifference it is for careless Christians in our modern day to walk in their own pathway of worldliness and compromise with any of those things God has warned us against in His Word. It is likewise important to note in the passage above that there are two kinds of “filthiness” the believer needs to be “cleansed from.” The one is “filthiness of the *flesh*,” the other is “filthiness...of the *spirit*.”

Most everyone knows what “filthiness of the flesh” is—immorality, worldliness, drunkenness, selfish ambitions, etc. However, very few have ever thought about the “filthiness of the spirit.” The passage that we have quoted above, II Corinthians 6:14-7:1, is primarily talking about the believers’ separation from false religious systems. The major exhortation is premised upon the fact that the believer is a part of “the Temple of God.” Seeing this as being a fundamental truth we must ask, what part should the believer have with the religions of human invention, i.e., religions of “Belial,” “idols,” or of the “unbeliever.” This is the “filthiness of the spirit.” The only difference between the false, pagan, religious systems of Paul’s day and those of today is, shocking though it may seem, the idolatrous temples of today bear Christendom’s name brands. Christ is still building only one Church today—the Church which is Christ’s body. Every other so-called Christian organization, no matter how it is named and programmed, is nothing but a part of modern Mystery Babylon.

SEPARATION TRUTH CAN BE COUNTERFEITED

Some of those in great opposition to Jesus Christ, during His earthly sojourn, were those who professed zealous “separation” to the God of Israel. I am talking about the sect of the Pharisees. The very word “*Pharisee*” was taken from the Hebrew, and it meant “*to separate.*”

The Pharisees originated while Israel was under the rule of the Grecian Empire. Israel was literally smothered with the worldly cultural influence poured upon them by the hedonistic Greek ideologies. Properly so, many devout Jews stood true to the separation truths taught in the Law of Moses. They were often persecuted without mercy because of this. Under these conditions the party of the Pharisees began to emerge and they had a great deal of respect by the Jewish people. Historically, their desire was to keep the Jewish nation orthodox.

However, in the process of time their zeal became infected with pride and hypocrisy. “The Pharisees came to seek for distinction and praise by the observance of external rites and outward forms of piety...They prided themselves in their fancied good works” (Thayer). They became “the strictly legal party among the Jews...their attitude became merely external, formal, and mechanical” (W. E. Vine). Caught up in such zeal, they began to consider their oral traditions as having equal authority with the very Law of Moses. Therefore, they added many traditions that were showy with outward forms of piety, but with little or no authority from the

Law of God. Their separation was empty of spiritual value and Christ severely exposed it in no uncertain terms.

Consequently “separation” became for the Pharisees very hypocritical and superficial. It was very much like the showiness of the Roman Catholic clerical system by its priests and nuns on the one hand, or the artificial demonstration of simplistic piety by the modern Amish who are stagnated into the 18th century, on the other hand. Of course, I may have much more respect for the Amish, who hate rich ornamented buildings and statues, yet their self-righteousness is basically just another version of the same hypocrisy as Rome’s. One can easily remember the severe rebukes delivered by the Lord Jesus Christ against this hypocritical form of separation. Just read the whole 23rd chapter of Matthew as an example.

Though *Separation Truth* is taught throughout the Bible, the following is a brief outline of the many facets of God’s revelation concerning it.

THE DOCTRINE OF SEPARATION BEGINS IN THE VERY FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS

The “truth” about the Christian’s “separation” unto Jesus Christ the Lord actually begins with the physical creation as described in the inspired record of Genesis chapter one. Herein we read of the breathtaking events in the first week of the physical creation of God. In six successive days God formed and made the physical heavens and earth as suitable for mans’ habitation. The seventh day God ceased from His work. When one looks carefully, he will see that the first three of those days can be characterized by the word “*division*” or “*separation.*” Furthermore, the second three days are characterized by God filling the sphere of separation created in the first three days. Most Christians do not realize that the *separation* God ordains in their lives is pictured and patterned after the *separation* God ordained initially in the physical creation—***and this fact should illustrate how vitally important the subject is***—God is still “creating” today and God is still ordaining “separation” today. Separation Truth is a vital part of *Creation Truth*.

In II Corinthians 5:17 we are told “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a NEW CREATION; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new.*” Here we discover that God is still in the “creation” business. In fact, the apostle Paul had already stated (II Cor. 4:6) that this “New Creation” process had begun just exactly like the original physical creation process began—“*For it is God Who commanded light to shine out of darkness, Who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*” This revelation takes us back in our minds to the creation week.

“THE SPIRIT OF GOD MOVED UPON”—

We also need to remember that this week of renewing the earth begins with the activity of the Holy Spirit of God—“*...and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters*” (Gen. 1:2, literal translation). The earth was said to be “without form and void”—literally “*waste and empty.*” In addition, the whole globe was submerged in “*water*” and smothered by total “*darkness.*” It was over this bleak and abysmally darkened chaos that the Spirit of God, like a bird, was literally “*fluttering*” (see Deut. 32:11; Isa. 31:5 & Gen. 1:2). The Psalmist of old reflected upon this scene by his words, “*You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and you*

renew the face of the earth” (Ps. 104:30). So it was with the Spirit’s activity, God spoke and said “*let there be light*” (Gen. 1:3) and the six days suddenly began. The activity of these days was accomplished by the power of the Spirit of God.

So it is, as unregenerate persons our sin-darkened hearts and chaotic lives were moved upon by the Holy Spirit of God, bringing to us the message of God’s compassion and mercy, in order to persuade us to repent and believe the gospel (II Thess. 2:13; Eph. 1:13 & Heb. 10:29). Thankfully, when we first trusted in Christ for soul salvation there was a transformation. At that point in time we were instantly made “new creations in Christ.” And then the beautiful process of our “separation” began. As Paul stated in II Corinthians 5:17,18 “...old things were passed away; behold, all things have become new—and all things were of God.” “God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, Who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge...” In the Genesis creation account there quickly followed a—

THREE-FOLD SEPARATION

As I said before, the first three days of God’s creative work of renewal can actually be characterized by the word “separation.” On each of the days God “divides” specific elements.

On the first day God not only created light, but He also “Divided the light from the darkness (verse 4).” So it is, in that great “separation” passage of II Corinthians 6:14-7:1, Paul says in a preliminary manner on the subject of separation truth, “*And what communion has light with darkness?*” What was true in the physical creation, that light cannot cooperate with darkness, is most certainly true in the spiritual creation. The spiritual realities that we see and learn in Christ are a light that removes the darkness of Satanic influence. This is first of all the light of spiritual realities chasing away the darkness of man-made religious superstition from our souls. There is only a God-ordained “division” (or separation) between light and darkness, either physical as in the physical creation, or spiritual as in the spiritual new creation. Thus the very first lesson in the Bible for a newly born Christian is to recognize the separation between spiritual light and truth and spiritual darkness and error. This is fundamental and is repeated for us many times in the Scriptures. This is one of the foremost types in the Bible.

“*God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth*” (I John 1:5,6). This truth is emphasized by many Scriptural references. It would serve well to read all of them. See John 1:5; 3:19; 12:46; Acts 26:18; Col. 1:13; Eph. 5:11-13; 6:12; Rom. 13:12; I Cor. 4:5; I Thess. 5:5-8; Luke 22:53; I Pet. 2:9 & I John 2:8-11. One who walks “in the light” is walking in *separation*. When a person is regenerated, his whole outlook on life changes. Traditional prejudices and hatreds are replaced by “the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts” (Rom. 5:5). The believer’s whole outlook on life changes as it is illuminated by the truths in the Word of God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps the most shocking illumination is the exposure of what true Christianity really is. The major conflict in the life of Christ was between Himself and the religious leadership of that day. Nevertheless, when a sin-darkened mind has been illuminated by the truths from the Word of God, the light of those truths will illuminate a totally new pathway in life.

It is clear from all these Scriptures above, that a Christian must be cognizant of the necessity of being separated from spiritual darkness in life and religion. Unless that separation is put into practice, a believer cannot walk in full and complete *fellowship* with Almighty God,

Who saved him from the guilt and penalty of his sins. The whole battle between Christianity and the Devil is the battle between light and darkness. Spiritual darkness is first of all religious subterfuge and invention; no matter how pious and pretentious is its appearance, it is nevertheless labeled by God as “DARKNESS” to be avoided. It is incompatible with the true light of God’s revelation.

On the Second day God *divided* the “waters below” from the “waters above” (Gen. 1:6-8). God established an expanse or atmospheric “heaven” between the oceanic waters covering the earth and the water vapor that would form a cloudy canopy around the earth. It will become obvious why this separation is God-ordained in the works of the last three days. First of all, the oceanic waters will be the sphere for all the fish and various forms of sea life that God will make. The water vapor above will be a primary source for the nourishment and growth of the fruit-bearing vegetation that God will plant on the earth. In addition, the atmospheric heaven will also provide the breathing space for all the various life forms that God will later place on the surface of the earth. Thus, this separation was essential for providing two separate spheres for the physical existence of the different forms of life on the new regenerated earth.

Like the light and the darkness of the first day, wherein the spirit of God later attaches spiritual significance of good and evil, so it is that the two watery elements are also spoken of in a figurative sense in later Scriptures. These become very significant. The clouds above and the water below are sometimes spoken of as two separate companies. On the one hand, God’s presence is repeatedly described as being characterized by a cloud or with the “clouds of heaven.” See for instance—Exo. 16:10; 19:9,6; 24:16-18; 34:5; 40:38; Num. 11:25; Job 26:9; 22:14; Psalm 18:10-12; 78:14; 104:3; Isa. 19:1 & Nah. 1:3. In addition the heavenly hosts are sometimes depicted as clouds or being in the clouds—Dan. 7:10 & 13; Matt. 17:5; 24:30 & 26:64. Joyously, the saints themselves are said to be “caught up in clouds”—I Thess. 4:17. And in another place the saints of old are described as “A great cloud of witnesses”—Hebrews 12:1. Therefore the cloudy canopy over the earth is figuratively spoken of as representative of God’s presence, the company of angelic hosts and of the saints themselves.

On the other hand, the waters below are often used to depict the restless sea of earth’s humanity. “The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt”—Isa. 57:20. The four great world empires as different beasts are said to arise out of the sea of humanity—Daniel 7:2-7. In addition, Christ spoke of the turbulences that will come upon mankind during the “great tribulation,” just prior to His second coming. He thus spoke of the terrible unrest among mankind in terms of “the sea and the waves roaring”—Luke 21: 25. In one of Christ’s parables He spoke of the “drag net” that was cast “into the sea” and “gathered of every kind.” After being drug to the shore, the “good” are separated and collected in vessels, whereas the “bad” are segregated out and destroyed—Matthew 13:47-50. Therefore, we can see from the Scriptures, that in a figurative sense, the oceans and seas represent troubled, restless humanity.

Now it is true that for the time being we are in this wicked world, yet God has placed it into our hearts that we are not really a vital part of it. We are temporarily only strangers and pilgrims on this earth who are witnesses to the world of God’s grace and mercy in Christ. Not only is there going to be an ultimate separation between the saved and the lost into two different eternal spheres, but also the spiritual significance of the separation that took place on the second day of the “Creation Week” speaks to us of a present “separation” that should exist between the

saved and the lost. The fellowship and association of believers together to strengthen one another is one of the paramount truths of the church of Jesus Christ. When one is saved, “born again” into the family of God, he will instinctively enjoy fellowship with God and with God’s people. The old comrades of his lost estate will no longer have the attraction that they once had. The believer will no longer have the appetite for the ungodliness that he once enjoyed. Consequently, his old friends will seem to slough off as he walks in his new life in Christ. He will search out and associate with fellow Christians who enjoy the things of God. This is illustrated by the new converts on the Day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2. They “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers...now all who believed were together...” (Acts 2:42 & 44). The exhortation of Hebrews 10:25 is paramount, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

On the third day God divided the land from the waters and the dry land appeared. In addition God caused the land to spring forth with all manner of fruit bearing vegetation. The third day’s work will therefore speak to us of separation so as to bring forth fruit unto God.

The darkened waters that had submerged the earth speak of judgment and death. The second verse of Genesis chapter one described the earth as being in a condition of “waste and emptiness” (literal translation). Whenever those two Hebrew words, *tohu wa bohu*, are used together, it meant judgmental destruction (see Isa. 34:11 & Jer. 4:23). Thus, some careful teachers of the Scriptures have pointed out in the past that the first scene after the initial creation of the universe (Gen. 1:1) is a scene of destruction and judgment. In addition to the earth being “waste” and “emptied,” it is submerged under waters and the whole was plunged into intense darkness. Many have referred to this as the original “chaos” out of which God brings “order” and “form.” Remember also that the Spirit of God, by later revelations at which we have already looked (see the first day), likened this to the condition of a soul-darkened sinner under Satanic influence emerging into light and regeneration.

And now on the third day, the segregating of the waters into the oceans, the rising and appearance of the continental land mass, and the placing of a great variety of vegetation upon the land mass speaks of the believer’s new life and fruitfulness unto God. As to the resurrection and separation of our new life to a place of fruitfulness in Christ, the principle is expressed in the words of the apostle Paul in Romans 6:1-23. We will just select a few excerpts of that beautiful passage which describes the believers’ identification with Christ in His DEATH, and then also RESURRECTION to a position of FRUITFULNESS in our lives before God.

“For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection...knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him...but the life that He lives He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God... For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regards to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your FRUIT to holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

The Apostle Peter spoke of the believer's past life in these words—"For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you" (I Peter 4:3,4). Then in his second letter Peter adds that beautiful description of the fruitfulness that should exist in the life of a Christian—

"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor UNFRUITFUL in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:2-8).

THE SECOND THREE DAYS COMPLEMENT THE FIRST THREE DAYS

Amazing as it may seem, when one carefully reads the first chapter of Genesis he will note that, on the first three "days" of activity, God absolutely does not actually create any physical substance whatsoever. In the first verse of Genesis one, God created the whole universe, that is, the whole heavens and earth. Of course this involves the physical substance of the universe. But then upon the activity of the Holy Spirit over a darkened chaos (verse 2), God speaks three successive "days" (24 hour time periods) into existence (verses 3-13). During these three days there is not any physical substance created. Instead, God is carefully, progressively and systematically preparing environments as we have seen above.

In the first three days God is FORMING environments and in the second three days God will be FILLING these environments. We can also express this in another manner. The first three days are characterized by the word SEPARATION, because in each case God divides or separates two distinct spheres. The second three days are characterized by the word PREPARATION, because God is filling each of these spheres in preparation for earth's inhabitants. Once the areas of separation have been established, God proceeds to fill, in an orderly fashion, each of those spheres.

On the fourth day God will fill the earth's day and the night with luminaries, the sun, moon and stars, which will function to rule the day and guide the night. On the fifth day God will fill the air with birds and God will fill the seas with fish. On the sixth day God will fill the land with animals and finally create mankind who is designed to rule over all. So, in all of this there is a perfectly planned sequence. Nothing is haphazard or just thrown together accidentally. Not only is there a divine system to God's physical creation but there is also a divine system to God's spiritual creation as well. Let us briefly observe each of these second three days.

On the fourth day God orders or arranges the sun, moon and stars in relationship to the earth. It has been noted by Hebrew linguists that the word which is used only by God and means

to “create” (*bara*), is not used in this arrangement on this day. This word was already used in verse one in relationship to the heavenly spheres; therefore it is not repeated here. The sun, moon and stars had already been brought into existence in verse one (“In the beginning God created the heavens...”). Rather the word we translate “to make” (*asah*) is used—“God made the sun, moon and stars.” This Hebrew word most often simply means “to arrange or set in order.” God thus forms or arranges (makes) already existing materials or spheres previously created. By this we would understand that the chaos which involved this earth, described in verse two, also involved the heavenly spheres as well. Therefore, on the fourth day God sets in order and arranges (made) the sun, moon and stars to properly function in relationship to the earth.

The function of the sun, moon and stars in relationship to the earth is spelled out. They “*divide* the day from the night,” are for “*signs and seasons*, and for days and years” and “*lights*” in the heavens. In addition they are said to “*rule*” the day and the night (verse 16). Thus the operation of the day and night time periods made on the first day are now governed and directed by the function of the sun, moon and stars made on the fourth day. This function will serve to guide and direct the overall operations of the miracle of life on this physical earth.

We have seen that the spiritual significance of the light and darkness made on the first day found its parallel in man’s consciousness of right and wrong, good and evil, the will of Satan versus the will of God and “children of light” versus “children of darkness.” Now on the fourth day, typically, God actually sets guidelines that direct man’s consciousness so that it is not haphazard. Man’s conscience must be in tune with the guiding instruments that God has specially designed. Conscience would be worthless unless it is calibrated to respond to the standards God has ordained. The typical or symbolic use of the sun, moon and stars is also well spelled out in the Scriptures. In addition, the spiritual significance is in perfect accord with, and parallel to, the physical function of these spheres in the sky.

We first see the spiritual or figurative significance of the sun and moon in the dream of Joseph as recorded in Genesis 37:8-11. Joseph dreamed that the sun and moon and the eleven stars would bow down before him. Jacob immediately interpreted the dream as having reference to Joseph’s own *father* as the sun, his *mother* as the moon and his brothers as the stars. The dream was not difficult to interpret. It was unthinkable in Jacob’s mind that the two supreme guiding influences, the sun (father) and the moon (mother), would bow down before one of lesser importance over whom they rule. Indeed, the father and mother are the first and immediate influences that God has set in our lives to guide and direct us from childhood.

This theme plays an important part in the book of Proverbs. “My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother...” (Prov. 1:8). The father and mother are first and immediate in the echelon of those who bring to us the guiding truths of the Word of God. Woe be to those who would scorn this guidance—Prov. 20:20 & 30:17.

Indeed, the Word of God itself is represented by the sun, the moon and the stars. That great Psalm which expounds to us the central theme of the Law of the Lord—“the Law of the Lord is perfect” (Psalm 19)—begins with the introductory message from the heavenly spheres that speaks to all mankind on the face of the whole earth, “Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard” (verse 3). As one goes on to read this Psalm he is held in awe as to the perfection, beauty and grandeur of its messages. And make sure of one thing—in obedience to them “there is great reward” (verse 11). Looking through a great telescope into the unfathomable depths of the starry

heavens is like looking, by the Spirit of God, into the unfathomable mysteries of the Word of God. In both we see the startling arrangements and magnificent glory of spectacular truths.

On the fifth day God fills the two separate spheres He ordained on the second day—the waters beneath and the atmospheric heaven above. Both spheres now swarm with unique forms of life. The ocean now swarms with fish and sea creatures. Likewise, the sky above is filled with the flying fowl of every variety and kind. These are the same fish and fowl that man knows today. No doubt their original beauty and perfection were even more astonishing than what we see after the millenniums of the curse have left its scars on God’s original beauty.

The amazing thing about these two life forms is that they both characteristically defy the laws of gravity. The fish by their very unique characteristics possess an amazing buoyancy which allows them free access to the very depths or the heights of the watery deep. They pass through the dark curtains of the deep with smooth, seemingly effortless speed and grace. There is nothing man has ever tried to imitate as complicated and difficult as the engineering that goes into a submarine. And yet the modern submarine is but a clumsy imitation of those efficient creatures of the sea.

On the other hand, the birds of the air soar with unbelievable perfection through the currents of the air and sky. They seemingly mock the law of gravity with their uncanny ability to wing their way through every ballet performance imaginable in the sky. What person is there who has never stood in admiration of these heavenly gliders and acrobats? Even the Wright brothers, who lay on the hillside to watch carefully their amazing performances, realized man could never equal their perfection of control over the physics and efficiency of flight. The smooth contours in the elegant design of the birds has been carefully acknowledged by our crafty flight engineers in even our most advanced airplanes.

It is interesting that the two forms of animal life that Almighty God first creates on this newly regenerated earth both amazingly depict “victory.” From the darkness of the chaos of the second verse of Genesis one, God raises up the double image of victorious life. This is undoubtedly like the truth emanating out from the depths of the darkness of death when our blessed Savior arose from death to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation” (II Corinthians 5:17). Christ was victorious over death and that victory is thankfully transferred to every blood-bought believer.

Amazing as it may seem, the two emblems of Christianity, according to Church history, became the fish and the dove. The fish, in all probability, became an emblem because the first disciples of Christ were fishermen. Peter and his brethren just so happened to be of that employment in life (Matt. 4:18-22). And so today we often see the fish emblem to indicate a Christian or Christianity. And then, since the Holy Spirit of God took the “form of a dove” (John 1:32) when He came down upon Jesus Christ to inaugurate and empower a new ministry, the dove, likewise, came to be used, even in early Christianity, as emblematic of this new Divine institution composed of Christ’s followers. Today we often see it used by different churches and theologies as emblematic of Spirit inspired forms and functions of Christianity. Herein the inspired words of the apostle Paul should ring out in our remembrance, because it ties everything together—“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:2). The most significant testimony of Christianity is that real, Biblical Christianity spells “Victory.” Thank God, the One who engineered the original creation has likewise engineered in every believer the buoyancy to overcome the laws of sin’s gravity.

On the sixth day God brings to a grand finale the week of renewal. Not only is the animal kingdom on earth all made and perfected, but over them all man is brought into existence with the supreme significance of having “dominion” (Gen. 1:26 & 28) over every living thing on the earth. Man is said to be created and made in the very image and likeness of God.

Consequently, it is not difficult to see the spiritual significance of the sixth day’s work. God has ordained that the “new creation in Christ” be so equipped as to “Reign in Life” (Romans 5:17). The spiritual truths exemplified by the work of God on the previous day spelled out “victory.” Because of victory the believer can be “more than a conqueror” (Rom. 8:33-39). Indeed, the apostle Paul tells us that “all things are yours” in Christ (I Cor. 3:21).

Because the believer places his faith totally in Christ, it is as it were that we are created “into the image of the One Who created [us]” (Col. 3:9, 10), and again, the believer “has been created in the likeness of God” (Eph. 4:24). In addition, every believer is “God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). In summary it is stated “Grace is now reigning through righteousness” (Rom. 5:21). What an amazing and spectacular sequence of blessings and provisions. Not only is the believer created in the very image of God, but he is also created to “reign in life.”

Please keep in mind, that in the overall design of God, the work of these last three days is clearly built upon the “separation” exemplified in the work of the first three days. And so it is also true that Divine guidance through the Word (day 4), victory in life (day 5), and the reigning dominion through grace, are all brought to us by virtue of the principles of separation. Only when the believer sees and walks in the principles of separation can there be the fullest blessings from God, and the fulfilling of the purpose of God for us in living out the “New Creation.”

God willing, I will continue this theme in subsequent articles.

Jack W. Langford