



# CELEBRATING HOLINESS



## SERMON OUTLINES

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE-AFRICA REGION  
[www.africanazarene.org](http://www.africanazarene.org)





Africa Region Church of the Nazarene  
Celebrating Holiness  
Sermon Outlines

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## Introduction

“Called unto holiness,” church of our God,  
Purchase of Jesus, redeemed by His blood;  
Called from the world and its idols to flee,  
Called from the bondage of sin to be free.

### *Refrain*

*“Holiness unto the Lord” is our watchword and song.  
“Holiness unto the Lord” as we’re marching along.  
Sing it, shout it, loud and long,  
“Holiness unto the Lord,” now and forever.*

“Called unto holiness,” children of light,  
Walking with Jesus in garments of white;  
Raiment unsullied, nor tarnished with sin;  
God’s Holy Spirit abiding within.

“Called unto holiness,” praise His dear Name!  
This blessed secret to faith now made plain:  
Not our own righteousness, but Christ within,  
Living, and reigning, and saving from sin.

“Called unto holiness,” bride of the Lamb,  
Waiting the Bridegroom’s returning again!  
Lift up your heads, for the day draweth near  
When in His beauty the King shall appear.

**‘Holiness Unto The Lord’** has been a theme song of the Church of the Nazarene over the years. We are a Holiness Church. From the founding stages of the denomination, our calling has been to preach the reality of entire sanctification received through faith in Jesus Christ and to engage in Christlike ministries for the salvation of souls and relief for the needy. It was believed that Christians were set apart and should not reflect the spirit of the world, but the Spirit of Christ.

The influences of the world are strong. Yet God has called us out of the world: “Love not the world neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in Him (1 John 2:15).

We see the Church of the Nazarene today in Africa struggling against the systems of this world, which are against the cross of Jesus Christ. We are calling the church to return to the message of holiness of heart and life. During the weeks following Easter Sunday which lead to Pentecost Sunday, each local pastor and church is asked to participate in an emphasis on holiness: Celebrating Holiness 2012.

The Sermon Outlines provided here have been created specifically for this time of holiness emphasis, Celebrating Holiness 2012, as we call the Church of the Nazarene across the Africa Region to a time of refocus and renewal.

The emphasis for each week corresponds to the Resurrection Power Easter to Pentecost Devotions which were written by Dr Gary Moore.

There are several outlines for you to select from each week. Please review the outlines and select the one you will use for each of the seven Sunday's beginning with 15 April 2012; the Sunday following Easter Sunday.

For example, the suggested Sermon Outlines for Week 1 include the following:

*Week 1*

- Sermon 1: The Two Baptisms - Water and the Spirit or Fire  
*Matthew 3:1-12/Dr Enoch Litswele*
- Sermon 2: Lifting Up Christ  
*John 12:20-32/Dr Enoch Litswele*
- Sermon 3: Making Our Salvation Complete  
*Mark 1:1-8/Rev Chanshi Chanda*
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*Romans 6:1-23/Dr Enoch Litswele*

You may decide to use Sermon 3, Making Our Salvation Complete, as the first sermon in the series. You can use the other sermons at any time during the year after the emphasis ends on Pentecost Sunday, 27 May 2012.

A total of 36 Sermon Outlines are included for your use throughout 2012 as we focus on personal and corporate holiness revival across the Africa Region. This emphasis on Holiness will complement and enhance the current work of the local churches, districts and fields in furthering the creation of a spiritual environment on the Africa Region where God is given freedom to bring ongoing, holiness revival to our churches and spiritual renewal to our leaders and members.

In addition to the Sermon Outlines, you have been provided with seven weeks of devotionals for the entire family, and with a seven-week Bible Study.

These resources are to guide your church in study and reflection leading to personal and corporate Holiness as it relates to the Wesleyan tradition with the desired outcome being a call-to-action leading to an awareness of need, focus on prayer and fasting, personal and corporate confession and repentance, engagement in a covenantal and accountability relationship with God and the Church.

Thank you for taking part in Celebrating Holiness 2012! I am praying for you and your church and for a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit across the great continent of Africa!



**Dr Filimao Chambo**  
Regional Director for Africa

## The Two Baptisms - Water And The Spirit Or Fire

**Scripture:** Matthew 3:1-12

**Text Verse:** Matthew 3:11

### Introduction:

John the Baptist says there are two kinds of baptism:

- Water and
- Holy Spirit or fire baptism

Paul says there is one baptism (Ephesians 4:5)

To Baptize (*Greek-baptizo*) is to dip in or under water

The Greek prepositions “*eis*” and “*en*” means “*with*” and “*into*” (see Matthew 3:11; Acts 19:3, 5, and Galatians 3:27)

### 1. The Water Baptism

- a. It was a cleansing ritual used to remove guilt (Psalm 26:6; Matthew 27:24).
- b. Gentiles were accepted into Judaism after water purification (Qumran).
- c. Israel’s crossing of the Red Sea waters under the cloud was a symbolic baptism into Moses under the Old Testament covenant (1 Corinthians 10:1-3).
- d. John the Baptist introduced this rite to the New Testament Christian faith (Matthew 3:6).
- e. Jesus accepted this practice and was baptized by John and also commanded that his followers be baptized (Matthew 28:18-19).
- f. Water baptism is a sacrament, like Holy Communion.
  - 1) “It is a sign and seal of saving grace. It is a symbol that God has made the sinner clean ... a public testimony that the person has received Christ as his saviour” (*A dictionary of the Bible*, Al Truesdale & George Lyons).
  - 2) It is a means of grace signifying the acceptance of the atonement.
  - 3) It is an outward and visible sign of an inward grace (repentance, forgiveness, conversion, justification, regeneration, adoption, new birth).
- g. The outward sign (water baptism) is valid only if it signifies the existence of an inward spiritual grace.

#### *Illustrations:*

- 1) *A wedding ring is not a marriage, it is a visible sign of a marriage relationship between husband and wife; it is a token of love, faithfulness and lasting commitment.*
  - 2) *A uniform is a symbol representing something.*
  - 3) *A cheque is not money; it is an order for money on a banker.*
- h. The outward water symbolism is reinforced by a baptismal certificate.
  - i. John the Baptist refused to baptize those who did not have this inward grace (Matthew 3:7).
  - j. A sinner can be baptized with water but water will not make him holy.
  - k. An axe is laid at the foot of sinners who are baptized or not baptized.

## 2. The Holy Spirit Baptism

- a. The Holy Spirit is not a sacrament, and it is not a means of grace. It is an inward, deeper spiritual grace (Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5).
- b. This baptism is God Himself; He baptizes us into Himself - God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
- c. When a person is baptized with/into the Holy Spirit:
  - 1) He is baptized into Jesus Christ's death - a negative action whereby the old sinful nature dies and is buried with Christ (Romans 6:3-6).
  - 2) He is baptized into Christ's resurrection - a positive action whereby a believer is united with Jesus and lives a new life (Romans 6:3-7).
  - 3) Baptism into Christ is being clothed with Christ (Galatians 3:27).
  - 4) The sinful old self (old man/woman) is put off when we are baptized into the death of Christ and buried with Him (Ephesians 4:22).
  - 5) The righteous new self (new man/woman) is put on when we are baptized into Christ's life in His resurrection (Ephesians 4:24).
- d. When in Christ (through baptism into Him) we are a new creation, the old is gone, the new beautiful order has come (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- e. Through baptism we have our spiritual being in God (Acts 17:28).

## 3. The Holy Spirit Baptism Is Fire Baptism

- a. We are baptized into God, the Fire.
  - 1) The sin consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24; Hebrews 12:29).
  - 2) The heart purifying fire (Acts 15:8-9).
  - 3) The light giving fire (1 John 1:5-9).
  - 4) This fire baptized and purified the bush that Moses saw. All foreign bodies in that bush (snakes, lizards, ants, wasps, etc) except the bush were burned up (Exodus 3:2-3).
  - 5) The purifying holy fire gives us power to be effective witnesses (Acts 1:8).
- b. A Holy Spirit fire baptized person does not need a certificate to verify his baptism, he, himself, is the certificate. The Christ-like life is valid proof that he/she has been baptized with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 5:16; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:1-3).

## 4. The Holy Spirit Baptism Is Baptism into God's Love

- a. It is a baptism into God, who is Love (1 John 4:8).
  - 1) His love lifts repenting sinners from sin where they are sinking to rise no more and baptizes them into Himself.
  - 2) In water baptism a person is dipped into the water and taken out before he/she drowns.
  - 3) Jesus does not dip and take us out of His love; He drowns us and lets us go deeper and deeper all the time in the bottomless ocean of His love (John 15:9-12).
  - 4) This love enables us to keep the greatest commandment - Loving God, ourselves, our neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40) each other (John 15:12-17) and our enemies (Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 12:14-21).



- b. A believer's prayer in song for a continuous deeper going in Jesus:
- 1) In 1900 Charles P Jones prayed:  
*Deeper, deeper in the love of Jesus. Daily let me go;  
 Deeper, deeper blessed Holy Spirit. Take me deeper still.  
 Till my life is wholly lost in Jesus*
  - 2) In 1914 Oswald Smith prayed:  
*Deeper and deeper into the heart Jesus  
 Deeper and deeper into the will of Jesus  
 Deeper and deeper into the joy of Jesus  
 Deeper and deeper into the love of Jesus  
 Deeper and deeper let me go.*
  - 3) A drowning person is in water and water is in him/her.
    - He/she is in Jesus and Jesus is in him/her (John 15:4).
    - He/she is in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is in him/her.
    - He/she is in the ocean of God's love and the ocean of God's love is in him/her (John 15:10).
  - 4) They are many who say "Lord, Lord" to Jesus but are not doing the will of God. These are only good swimmers and divers in the church but are neither baptized into Jesus nor drowning in Jesus; in His love.

### Conclusion:

This message is for all of us today.

1. It is for you, sinners, who have been baptized with the baptism of Satan and are outside the grace of God, sinking and drowning in sin – drugs, immorality, AIDS and HIV, drunkenness, crime and all forms of wickedness. You need to repent and confess your sins to God and receive His forgiveness and be baptized in water (1 John 1:9).
2. It is for you, believers, who have been water baptized but need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire (Acts 19:1-7).
3. It is for you, saints, who have been baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire. Your gleam of dawn should keep shining (Proverbs 4:18). There is room in the love of Jesus for you to always go deeper and deeper in His bottomless love. Thank God you are in Christ. The question is how deep are you in His love? (Ephesians 3:16-19):
  - for Him (Matthew 22:37)
  - for your wife/husband (Ephesians 5:25)
  - for your neighbour (Matthew 22:39)
  - for your enemy (Matthew 5:44)
4. COME TO JESUS.

*By Dr Enoch H Litswele  
 Former Assistant to Regional Director for Africa*

## Lifting Up Christ

**Scripture:** John 12:20-32

### **Introduction:**

The request of the Greeks – they wanted to see Jesus.

These were gentiles, wise men, philosophers who were searching for truth.

They came to the followers of Jesus; Philip and Andrew. These two were good personal soul winners (John 1:41, 45).

When Jesus heard of the request, He gave a very strange response. It was not a direct answer (John 12: 23-33).

The answer was: The Greeks and the whole world will see Him when He is lifted up on the cross (John 12:32).

### **1. His lifting up on the cross was foreshadowed**

- a. In the Old Testament pass-over at the Exodus.
  - The blood of the slain lamb was to be on the sides and tops of the door frames (Exodus 12:7); a sign of a cross.
  - Those who obeyed this command were saved from death (Exodus 12:13).
- b. In the desert when Moses lifted the bronze snake (Numbers 21:4-9), a sign of crucifixion (John 3:14).
  - Those who were bitten by the snakes were saved from death when they obeyed the command and looked up at the bronze snake.
  - Jesus told Nicodemus that “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life” (John 3:14-15).
- c. The prophecy was fulfilled on Mt Calvary two thousand years ago when He was crucified on that rugged cross.
- d. Since Calvary, the teaching of the cross on which Jesus died has been and will continue to be important to the Christian faith.

### **2. The importance and deep meaning of the cross is not based on that particular wooden structure on which He was lifted**

- a. The physical cross was an emblem of suffering and shame, says George Bennard in his hymn, “The Old Rugged Cross.”
- b. We do not know what happened to those pieces of wood. If we find them it would be good to keep them in our archives or as souvenirs.

### **3. The real cross of Jesus is Jesus Himself**

- a. He is the revelation of God the Saviour to the world.
- b. It is Christ’s work of salvation.
- c. It is the emptying of Himself.
- d. It is a death sentence, not for His own sin, like that of the two robbers who were crucified with Him, but for our sin.
- e. It is Christ, the scapegoat that carried our shame to the wilderness of death on a rugged cross.

- f. It is Christ, the separation from God He endured for three hours while on the cross because of our sin. This separation broke the eternal divine fellowship He had with God from eternity.
- g. It is His death.
- h. It is His walking alone in the valley of death on a cross without God's comfort.
- i. It is His humiliation – the falling down of His life like a kernel of wheat (Isaiah 53; Philippians 2:5-8).
- j. It is His voluntary giving of Himself.
- k. It is the sacrificing of Himself.
- l. It is His suffering servanthood.
- m. It is His redeeming and sanctifying life which is in His blood.

#### 4. **There is another cross on which Christ is lifted. This is the cross of His followers**

- a. You, as His follower, should deny yourself and take up your cross and follow Him.
- b. This cross is you – It is your life. It is God's call upon your life. It is your call through which Jesus is lifted.
- c. When Jesus called us and commanded us to follow Him, we took up our cross (life) and followed Him to our crucifixion where, like a kernel of wheat, we died to our sin and our old self was crucified with Him (Romans 6:1-14).
- d. Jesus carried His cross alone. When helping Him, Simon of Cyrene (Matthew 27:32) was carrying the emblem, not the real cross Jesus was carrying.
  - 1) He was crucified **alone** on His cross.
  - 2) He suffered **alone**.
  - 3) He was left **alone** on the cross when His God forsook Him.
- e. Not so with us.
  - 1) We are crucified with Him (Galatians 2:20).
  - 2) We suffer with Him (Philippians 3:10).
  - 3) We die with Him (Romans 6:3).
  - 4) We are buried with Him. We rise with Him (Romans 6:4).
- f. As we followed Jesus on this great journey of Salvation, our old crucified self does not rise, but a new self, a new person rises united with the Saviour (Romans 6:6).

#### **Conclusion:**

- 1. The new life we now live is not our life, it is Christ living it in and through us (Galatians 2:20).
- 2. A new person in Christ is capable of lifting up Christ.
- 3. When we take up our cross we are sharing His sufferings and do the things mentioned above.
- 4. When the weight of the cross you are carrying becomes so heavy and you get tired and fall on its weight, Jesus is your 'Simon' who will help you (Matthew 11:28- 30, Philippians 4:13).

*By Dr Enoch H Litswele  
Former Assistant to Regional Director for Africa*

## Making Our Salvation Complete

**Scripture:** Mark 1:1-8

### **Introduction:**

Salvation is a question that has raised many concerns among Christians. Some cannot tell for sure whether or not they are saved. If you ask them, they will tell you "I don't know". We are called to be saved while here on earth and make it complete. Scripture testifies to this fact; it is the greatest news ever. Baptism with the Holy Spirit makes our salvation complete.

### **1. Everyone looks for the good news**

- a. The good news of power from above
- b. The Good news of Jesus Christ
  - 1) Forgiveness of sins (First work of grace)
  - 2) Baptism with the Holy Spirit (Second work of grace)

### **2. Baptism in water (John the Baptist/Pastor)**

- a. Receiving forgiveness is good news
- b. Forgiveness or baptism does not transform

### **3. It is an outward sign of inward grace**

- a. The forgiven can still continue sinning
- b. The minister baptizing has no access to the heart of the baptized
- c. Many believers enjoy only being forgiven and seek nothing deeper

### **4. Baptism with the Holy Spirit (Jesus Christ)**

- a. Is needed because of sin in the life of the believer
- b. Is not man's work like in water baptism
- c. Christ Jesus does it
- d. Is a statement in the life of the forgiven person
- e. Is the seal of our salvation
- f. Without it salvation is not complete
- g. Purifies the heart of the believer
- h. Does not come on a silver platter
- i. Temptation will always be there, even greater
- j. Empowers the believer to overcome sin

### **5. Getting Ready to be baptized with the Spirit**

- a. Regretting sin in one's life as a believer
- b. Desiring to be baptized by Jesus
- c. Prayer and fasting as a conduit to baptism
- d. Trusting in the promises of the Bible to be purified
- e. Avoiding bad company

### **Conclusion:**

It is evident from scriptures that the seal of our salvation is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ does. Righteousness is completely restored in this baptism and that is the goal of the Christian faith.

*By Rev Chanshi Chanda  
Africa Middle Field Strategy Coordinator*

## The Purpose Of Christ's Death

**Scripture:** Titus 2:11-15

**Text:** Titus 2:14

### 1. He Willingly Gave Himself

- a. He gave Himself in eternity and He was slain from the creation of the world (Revelation 13:8b).
- b. He gave Himself and voluntarily left His divine glory “when the fullness of time had come ... to be born of a woman” (Galatians 4:4, Philippians 2:5-8).
- c. He gave Himself when He was arrested in the garden of Gethsemane. He could have called a great army of angels to protect Himself but He did not (Matthew 26:47-56).
- d. He had authority to give and to take His life (John 10:14-18).

### 2. He Gave Himself In Order To Redeem Us From Our Sin

- a. To redeem means to restore something or someone to a position that had been lost.
- b. Because of our wickedness we had lost fellowship with God, but Christ's redemption restores us to that fellowship.
- c. Christ's blood, His life was the only one available and adequate and sufficient to redeem us (1 Peter 1:18-21).

### 3. He Gave Himself In Order To Purify Us

- a. His redemption does not only take us out of our wickedness, but it also takes the wickedness out of our hearts.  
*Illustration: The Children of Israel were taken out of Egypt but Egypt needed to be taken out of them (Numbers 11:4-6).*
- b. This purification - sanctification is done by the precious blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:9).
- c. This purification makes us His very own when we become like Him (Christlikeness).
- d. This purification-sanctification-salvation-redemption is the grace of God that teaches us to say NO to ungodliness and to say YES to godliness (Titus 2:11-13).

### 4. He Gave Himself In Order To Make Us Eager to Do Good Works

- a. The good works of our shining light and holy life and ethical living (Matthew 5:16).
- b. The good works of spreading the Good News of salvation.
- c. We get excited and eager like St Paul (Romans 1:15).
- d. We are eager because the love of Christ motivates us (2 Corinthians 5:14).

*By Dr Enoch H Litwele  
Former Assistant to Regional Director for Africa*

## Dying And Living With Christ

**Scripture:** Romans 6:1-23

### 1. We Must Be United With Christ In His Death

- a. He died **for** our sin so that we who were dead **in** our sin should die **to** our sin.
- b. We were dead in our sins (Ephesians 2:1-5).
- c. Christ died on the cross for us.
- d. We become united with Him in His death when we die to our sin (Romans 6:2, 6, 11):
  - A dead person does not live this earthly life; he is absent from it.
  - A dead person has passed away from this life through physical death.

Likewise:

- A Christian does not live the life of sin (Colossians 3: 1-10), he is absent from sin.
- He has passed away from sin through spiritual death and he lives a heavenly life.

### 2. We Must Be United With Him In His Burial

- a. We are buried with Him through baptism (Romans 6: 3-4).
- b. The sacrament of baptism is a sign and seal of the new covenant of grace.
- c. We are buried with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3).

Rock of ages cleft for me,  
 Let me hide myself in Thee;  
 Let the water and the blood,  
 From Thy wounded side which flowed,  
 Be of sin the double cure;  
 Save from wrath and make me pure.

### 3. We Must Be United With Him In His Resurrection

- a. His resurrection was a great victory over sin, death and hell (1 Corinthians 15:54-57)
- b. When we are united with Him in His resurrection our old man (old self) is done away with (Romans 6:4, 6).
- c. When we are raised with Christ, our hearts and minds are set on heavenly things (Colossians 3:2-17).

*By Dr Enoch H Litswele  
 Former Assistant to Regional Director for Africa*

# Ordinary People In Extraordinary Mission

**Scripture:** John 15:4-5

## **Introduction:**

We are sent people, sent into the world “to advance God’s Kingdom by the preservation and propagation of Christian holiness as set forth in the Scriptures” (*Manual 2009-2013*, Church of the Nazarene). We are sent into the world to be agents of the Kingdom and to **incarnate** and **embody** the mission of God into every sphere of life; sent to affect people’s lives, cultures and communities with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## **1. Our effectiveness is dependent on our remaining in Christ**

- a. Jesus said, “Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches if a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:4-5).
- b. We must abide in Him... we must remain in His presence for if we remain in Him He will guide and lead us. He will give us wisdom, strength and grace. He will enable us to do His work.
- c. The key to remaining in Him is to be obedient to His Word: “If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love” (John 15:10).

## **2. Our effectiveness is dependent on our sensitivity to the work of the Holy Spirit**

- a. “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth...” (John 16:13).
- b. Obedience to God’s commandments is vital. When we do this we remain in Him.
- c. We must covenant to faithfully obey and embody God’s Word in all spheres of life. “The Spirit of truth... will guide ... into all truth...” But we must be sensitive to Him at all times.

## **Conclusion:**

Would you covenant today to remain in Him?

*By Dr Filimao Chambo  
Regional Director for Africa*

## Invite From God!

**Scripture:** Genesis 17:1-2

**Introduction:**

God appeared to Abram to reaffirm His promise to Abram and Sarai (Genesis 12; 15). This was not the first time that God appeared to Abram. In the previous chapters God appeared and made a covenant with Abram. God promised Abram and Sarai a son and through them He was going to bless the world. However, as the years went by it seemed like God was not going to fulfill His promise. Abram and Sarai became of age and yet there was no child as promised by God. After years of frustration and disappointment the Lord appears again to Abram to renew the covenant but its fulfillment requires Abram's continued faithfulness in the way of the Lord.

God invites Abram to walk in righteousness. The word blameless has several meanings. It means to be upright in conduct, integrity, truth, perfect, complete, entire, above reproach, pure, moral, innocent of wrongdoing, leading a blameless life, without guilt, exemplary, beyond criticism etc. God is calling His people to be upright in conduct and be a showcase of holy living to the people around us. God's people must lead blameless lives. Jesus said in John 13:34 that our conduct must lead others to know that we are His disciples.

The question is what does this mean to the church today?

### 1. I am God Almighty (El-Shaddai)

- a. God reassures Abram that He is El-Shaddai (God Almighty). This means, He is God who has all the power, God who nourishes, supplies, provides and satisfies. He is God all sufficient. He is God who provides in abundance and He is powerful and faithful to do what He promised and to accomplish His plans and purpose.
- b. God reassures Abram that He is able to give them a son. He is not limited by time and age. All things are possible with God. "For nothing will be impossible with God"/ "For no word from God will ever fail" (Luke 1:37).
- c. God wanted Abram to be aware that he was in the presence of the one and only powerful God, the creator and giver of life. It was important for Abram to recognize who was speaking.

### 2. Invite to Walk: Walk Before God!

God's invitation is for His people (denomination, local church, individuals, etc) to literally walk in front of God without sin. The word walk here can also signify to adhere to God, to die, to be visible, to come walk with and flow with. The emphasis is on God's call to His people to walk with Him, to adhere to Him, to die to self-sin and flow with Him in righteousness. It is an invitation to permanently dwell in His presence with Him dwelling in His people.

Similar to Abram and Sarai the Church today exists in a world that has some cultural and traditional practices that do not honor God. The Church should not adhere to the patterns of this world but must be transformed and renewed by the Spirit of God (Romans 12:1-2) to set an example to the world of a life in God.

### 3. Invite to Righteousness: Walk before God and be Blameless!

The invite to righteousness is an invitation to adhere to godliness (see Romans 12:1-2). God's people are called to be faithful in His presence (Psalm 89:15). It is important to remain in His presence because it is through Him and in Him that one is empowered to live in righteousness. Those who walk in the counsel of the wicked fail to lead a righteous life because they are saturated with wickedness, hence the righteous are



warned to not adhere to the counsel of the wicked (Psalm 1:1). It can be concluded that those who walk in righteousness:

- a) Do not walk or heed the counsel (advise) of the wicked. Do not imitate detestable ways of society (see Psalm 1:1; Romans 12:1).
- b) Shun evil and do what is right in obedience to God and his Word. "You must be blameless before the Lord your God." Deuteronomy 18:13.
- c) Delight and meditate in the Truth (God's Word) day and night (Psalm 1:2). God's Word is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes (Romans 1:16). "Then you will know the truth (The Gospel) and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). (See also Romans 6:22).
- d) Are totally dependent on God and desire to know and follow His will in all areas of their lives. Total devotion to God! "The Lord is far from the wicked but he hears the prayers of the righteous" (Proverbs 15:29).

### **Conclusion:**

The Lord calls His followers to practice holiness. He calls His church to walk before Him faithfully and be blameless in all areas of life. "Blessed are they whose ways are blameless who walk according to the law of the Lord" (Psalm 119:1). Blessed is he "whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart" (Psalm 15:1-2).

God invites us to walk in righteousness, integrity and to be above reproach. He is all-powerful and able to give us a new life. If we come to Him by faith to be purified He is faithful and able to do it.

*By Dr Filimao Chambo  
Regional Director for Africa*

## The True Vine And The True Branches

**Scripture:** John 15:5-8

### **Introduction:**

God wants His people to bear fruit because He desires a harvest. *Bearing Fruit* has to do With God's purpose for us.

Israel is pictured as a degenerate vine consumed with fire (Ezekiel 19:12), when she should have been the 'choicest vine' bringing forth grapes.

It is against this backdrop that Jesus used the words, "I am the true vine" (John 15:1).

### **1. Union with Christ is Sure to Produce Fruit (John 15:5)**

- a. "I am the Vine" – the mainstream of life
- b. "Abide in me" – the condition for communion, fellowship, devotion and growth.
- c. "Without Me" – qualification, a living union with Christ is absolutely necessary; without it there is nothing.

### **2. Withering and Destruction Results in Separation from Him (John 15:6)**

- a. The person who does not abide i.e., the one who by willful attitude severs himself from the true vine, is cast out.
- b. "Withering" – it is not a future consequence, as at the last judgment, but an inevitable consequence of the separation.
- c. "Cast into the fire to be burned" – In this universe, which is governed by its morals and natural law, something terrible happens when a man separates himself from Christ (see John 13:30; Matthew 27:5).

### **3. Union with Christ is the Condition for Satisfied Desires (John 15:7)**

- a. "If you abide in me and my words abide in you..." – It is impossible to pray correctly apart from knowing and believing the teachings of Christ.
- b. "Ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you" – our will in conformity to His whole being. Always seeking His desires to be like Him, sensitive to His work and walking in His way. "Your will be done" (Matthew 6:10; Matthew 26:39). Desire for His kingdom.

### **Conclusion**

God is looking for fruit. He has a reason for expecting fruit from His people. If we are engaged and involved in God's mission then we will bear fruit. Christians whose lives remain in Christ, empowered with the richness of the Holy Spirit, will bear fruit.

*By Rev Collin Elliott  
Africa South Field Strategy Coordinator*

## The Holy Flow

**Scripture:** John 7: 37-39

### **Introduction:**

Jesus not only wants to quench our spiritual thirst but He also wants to fill us with His Spirit so that we will become a source of supply for thirsty men and women around us.

#### **1. The Kind of water that Flows from Us –Rivers**

Not stagnant, dead, polluted, such as the pleasurable waters of the world which,

- a. Only torment
- b. Do not quench the thirsting of the soul
- c. Poison and kill
- d. Do not give or sustain life

#### **2. The Measure of Water that Flows from Us**

- a. An abundant supply for everyone
- b. An abundant supply at all times – in all seasons, never freezes over, never dries up and drought cannot deplete it.

#### **3. The Source of this Supply – The Holy Spirit in the Believers Heart**

- a. This is the fullness of the Spirit that God promised (Joel 2:28-29).
- b. The Prophet Isaiah envisioned (Isaiah 55:1-13).
- c. The Fullness is available to all believers who have come to Jesus (Ephesians 3:14-21).

### **Conclusion**

Spirit filled Christians are overflowing and out flowing with God's Spirit. They know and are busy in the Mission of God and are 'making Christlike disciples in the nations.'

By Rev Collin Elliott  
Africa South Field Strategy Coordinator

## Debtors To The Gospel

**Scripture:** Romans 1:8-17

### Introduction

Paul grew up with a strong desire and zeal for the Jewish culture and its religion. Writing to the Philippians he says:

“If anyone else thinks he has reason to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church, as for legalistic righteousness, faultless” (Philippians 3:4-6).

It was this desire that motivated him to gain the highest Jewish education under the best Jewish scholars such as Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). After graduating from college, his desire made him a great defender of the Jewish culture and religion. “Breathing out murderous threats against the disciples” (Acts 9:1) he persecuted the church. On his way to Damascus, motivated by his murderous desire, the Lord appeared to him and changed his life and removed that murderous desire.

He was given a new desire and zeal – a desire to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was a desire of the love of Christ which was compelling him to serve the Lord and the Gentiles who were hated by the Jews. (II Cor. 5:14) He writes in Philippians 3:7-9:

“But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith”.

Charles Wesley expressed well what Paul felt when he saw Jesus in that heavenly vision:

“When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died  
My richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride”

It was a desire not only to go to Rome but to all the world and proclaim the Gospel. The strong desire and longing made him feel obligated, eager and unashamed. This was a vision he received from heaven which he could not deny (Acts 26:19).

### 1. He Was Obligated To Preach the Gospel - He Was a Debtor

- a. This is a bookkeeping language – a debtor is one who has received a benefit from someone. We are all debtors because we have received God’s love.
- b. Our creditor is God and not the Greeks nor non Gentiles, etc.
- c. Our service to God is a service to all His people – wise and unwise. (The parable of the sheep and goats Matthew 25:34-46).
- d. The debt is a great pressure of love (II Corinthians 5:14)
- e. Your graduation from college life pressure is or should be a commencement of the pressure of love.
- f. God’s love and the whole plan of Salvation is a free gift of love. He is not expecting us to pay Him back – we cannot pay. His love has created a desire in our hearts to say THANK YOU to Him by our service of love.

### 2. He Was Eager To Preach the Gospel – He Was Ready:

- a. To preach the gospel.
- b. To try paying the great debt of love.  
Ngingayisa ‘ntoni kuye efanele ukumbonga

Anginakho okwanele, ngiyamnik' uqobo lwami (Zulu)

What can I bring to him to express my thanks,

I don't have enough; I give my life to him.

- c. Now that you have finished your course of study you should be ready to continue fighting the good fight, running the course set before you and keeping the faith (2 Timothy 4:7-8).
- d. To be ready you should not only graduate from this college but also graduate for the college of Jesus.
  - After training his disciples, Jesus told his students to wait until they were clothed (robed or gowned) with power from on high (Luke 24:49).
  - On the day of Pentecost they were clothed and capped with the Holy Spirit, who filled them (Acts 2:2).
- e. The people you are going to serve do not know your credentials but your teachers do, and your grades and credits are on file in your deans' office.
- f. The people you are going to serve do not know if you are ready but as soon as you leave this college they will know if you are or are not ready.
- g. They will know when they see you perform well and let your light shine before them or when you fail to let your light shine.
- h. Your course of study has covered the four Cs
  - 1) Content
  - 2) Competency
  - 3) Character
  - 4) Context
- i. When you leave this college the people will assess you and give you a grade – they will pass you or fail you when they see how you perform. Your eagerness or lack of it will determine your grade (Matthew 5:16).
- j. Are you ready to sing: "Ready to go ..."?

### 3. He Was Not Ashamed of the Gospel

- a. He was not ashamed because God had taken away his shame.
- b. Positively, he was proud, happy and excited about what God could and would do through him in the power of the Gospel.
- c. He was happy because God was going to bring salvation to those who believe in Him.
- d. The power of the gospel works in and through us.
- e. The power Paul is talking about is the power that works within us.
  - "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen (Ephesians 3:20).

### Conclusion:

This desire, longing, zeal, love will keep you going and will make you a great witness and soul winner. Without it you will get discouraged, fail, and quit.

This zeal will help you endure affliction and at the end of your ministry you will be able to say: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7).

*By Dr Enoch H Litswele*

*Presented at NTC Graduation Service*

## A Holiness Lifestyle – Our Calling

**Scripture:** Isaiah 35:8

### Introduction:

A famous car dealer called Nissan had a Motto that said, 'Life is a journey, enjoy the ride'. Every journey embarked on has a destiny in mind.

Each one of us is on a journey in this life. We also have to have an end in mind.

Isaiah talks about the path the redeemed of the Lord travel as a highway called the Way of Holiness. The Wesley Commentary says the 'way' and 'highway' are not to be taken for two different ways, but for one and the same way. The highway is raised ground, and on the Way of Holiness, the people walking are righteous; the weak, and blind, and lame whom God will lead and save. The way will be so plain and straight that even the most foolish travelers cannot easily mistake it.

### 1. Holiness is an act of God

- a. It is not our own works, our own good works, but an act of God
- b. Leviticus 20:8 says, "Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the LORD, who makes you holy".

### 2. Holiness is not optional

- a. It is a command
- b. Leviticus 20:26 reads, "You are to be holy to me because I, the LORD, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own".

### 3. Holiness Attracts

- a. Just as a light it attracts insects, so does holiness in the life of a believer; it attracts others to the Kingdom of God
- b. John 12:32 says, "And I, when I am lifted up<sup>[a]</sup> from the earth, will draw all people to myself".

### c. Holiness is a ticket to God

- a. Without holiness in this life, no one will see God (Hebrews 12: 14)
- b. Holiness is *required* for fellowship with God
- c. David asked in Psalm 15, "LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain?" He was asking, "Lord, who may live in fellowship with you?" And the answer that he gives in the next four verses can be summarized with: "He who leads a holy life."

*Illustration:* There is a story about a pastor who was building a wooden trellis to support a climbing vine. As he pounded away, he saw that a little boy was watching him. The youngster didn't say a word, so the pastor kept on working, thinking the lad would just leave. But he didn't. Finally the pastor asked, "Well, son, are you trying to pick up some pointers on gardening?" "No," he replied, "I'm just waiting to hear what a preacher says when he hits his thumb with a hammer."

### Conclusion:

There is a narrow and a wide gate according to Matthew 7: 13-14. What is your destiny in this journey of life you have embarked on?

*By Rev Kenneth Phiri  
Africa Regional NYI President*

## Holiness And Ethical Living

**Scripture:** Isaiah 6:1-7

### **Introduction:**

In this passage we see holiness transforming Isaiah's morals from evil to good.

### **1. The Holiness of God**

- a. Holiness is the quality of God which makes Him completely different from His creation. He is the holy Other.
- b. God's holiness is the summation of what He is. He and He alone is holy. "There is no one holy like the Lord" (1 Samuel 2:2).
- c. He is the Creator, everything is His creation and no created being or thing is His equal.
- d. His holiness does not simply mean moral perfection. He is not holy just because He is morally perfect.
- e. He is holy because He alone is God and He is God because He alone is Holy.
- f. He does not have holiness - He Himself is Holiness - Holiness is not a separate entity or a thing outside of Himself.
- g. Where there is no God there is no Holiness and where there is no Holiness there is no God.
- h. The different meanings and interpretations of the term "holiness":

English - Holiness	= Wholeness/Set apartness/Purity/Glory
Zulu - Ubungwele	= fullness and purity
Tsonga Vukwetsimi	= Shining
Nhluwuleko	= Separation
Pedi - Bokgetwa	= Separation
Tswana - Moya o Boitshepo	= The trustworthy Spirit
Sotho - Bohalaleli	= Shining
Afrikaans - Heilig	= Pure/Perfect/Impeachable

### **2. Christian Holiness**

- a. Christian holiness is possible only through God's revelation - Isaiah saw the King (Isaiah 6:5).
- b. Christian holiness is the sanctification (purification and separation) of believers by the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ.
- c. This "sanctification/shining/trustworthiness" begins at conversion when we are separated from our **sins** and separated to **God** (John 1:12).
- d. This "sanctification/shining/trustworthiness" continues to grow after we are converted, as we faithfully walk in the light, until we come to a second crisis when we are separated from our **sin**, which is "self-centeredness/old man/sinful nature/inbred sin" and separated to **God centredness**.

*Illustration – training a dog changes it into a new dog: (Galatians 2:20)*

- e. After the second crises of entire sanctification, our "sanctification/shining/trustworthiness" continues to grow from glory to glory and from grace to grace every day as He leads us.

- f. Entire Sanctification does not make us God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit, but it makes us to be like Jesus Christ – **Christlikeness**.
- g. As this glorious growth continues to take place, we joyfully sing this chorus:
  - Every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before.*
  - Every day with Jesus, I love Him more and more.*
  - Jesus saves and keeps me, and He's the one I'm waiting for.*
  - Every day with Jesus, is sweeter than the day before.*
- h. This is the 'Holy One of Israel' Isaiah saw in that great vision which transformed his lifestyle (Isaiah 6).

### 3. Holiness And Ethical Living Is For The Sanctified Because

- a. They know, through the Holy Scriptures, the good they should do and the bad they should not do (Micah 6:8).
- b. Their code of conduct is not only written in the Bible, it is also put in their minds and written on their hearts (Jeremiah 31:31-34).
  - Illustration of a person whose lifestyle changed after they became a Christian*
- c. Their consciences have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ and made very sensitive to both good and evil.
- d. Isaiah's moral and ethical life was not pleasing, even though he was in the ministry, until his conscience was quickened and purified (Isaiah 6:5-6).
  - "A good conscience is one which is enlightened by the Spirit of truth, and ... makes its decisions according to the standards of God's holy Word" (H Orton Wiley).
- e. His sanctification took place as he prayed at the altar crying:
  - "Woe to me, I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."
- f. With a live coal of the Holy Spirit, God touched Isaiah's life and atoned for his sin.
- g. The live coal changed him into a live believer glowing red-hot in the fire of holiness like steel in the heat of the fire.

### Conclusion:

Do you hear this heavenly choir of Seraphs singing?

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty;  
the whole earth is full of His glory."

As they sing, is the Lord revealing some spiritual need in your life? If He does, I would encourage you to come to the altar of prayer as Isaiah did. The Saviour is waiting to meet your need.

*By Dr Enoch H Litswele  
At NTC Holiness Convention  
19 May 1999*



## We Should Be Holy Because It Is Written

**Scripture:** 1 Peter 1:13-2:3

### Introduction:

In order to make something binding, official or authentic, we put it in writing.

### 1. The Command To Be Holy Has Been Written By God

- a. It is a command to be:
  - Perfect as God is perfect.
  - Pure in heart.
  - Separated from sin and separated to God.
  - Christlike.
- b. This command is binding, official and authentic.
- c. Holiness is the quality of God which belongs to Him only and makes Him different from His creation.
- d. Holiness is eternally written in Him; He is the Holy One of Israel.
- e. It is written in His creation (Genesis 1:31, Psalm 19:1-2) "How Great Thou Art!"
- f. It is written in the Holy Bible (Leviticus 11:44, 19:2, 20:7).
- g. All scripture is commanding us to be holy (2 Timothy 3:15).
- h. All Christian books and literature are written to tell us to be holy.

### 2. All The Above Written Information Is Good And Helpful But Not Good Enough

- a. Head knowledge about the Holy God does not change a person.
- b. The good message we get from God's holy creation does not change us.
- c. The written Law of Moses did not change the Israelites; it was simply a school master that led them to Christ (Galatians 3:24).
- d. The good books and Christian literature will make us well versed, learned, and knowledgeable, but cannot transform us.

### 3. A New Covenant (New Writing) Was Promised By God

- a. It is found in Jeremiah 31:33-34.
- b. Holiness should not be on our lips and minds only but in our hearts (Matthew 5:8).
- c. The world needs to see a holy transformation in our lives and not hear how much holiness we know.
- d. Holiness transforms the old filthy book of our lives, which is described in Galatians 5:19-20, so that it reads as described in Galatians 5:22-23.
- e. The blood of Jesus is the super eraser that removes away the stain of sin (1 Peter 1:18-19).
- f. The song writer is right:

*"What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus  
What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus*

*Oh precious is the flow that makes me white as snow  
No other fount I know, nothing but the blood of Jesus."*

- g. It is said that Jesus has never written a book, but it true that He has written millions of holy living books.
- h. The light of holiness must shine so well that people may see and read our good deeds (Matthew 5:16).
- i. Holy men and women are the best living books (2 Corinthians 3:1-3).
- j. The Bible is the best seller, but a Christlike believer is the super seller.

**Conclusion:**

Christian holiness is God's image in us.

- It is our positive Identification Document.
- It is our divine Coat of Arms.
- It is the passport of the citizens of heaven.
- It is the boarding pass that gives us access to the presence of our Holy God (Hebrews 12:14).

The song writer was longing for this identification document when he wrote:

*"O to be like Thee, O to be like Thee  
Blessed redeemer, pure as Thou art  
Come in Thy sweetness, come in Thy fullness  
Stamp Thine own image deep on my heart."*

*By Dr Enoch H Litswele  
Former Assistant to Regional Director for Africa*

## The Shining Of God's Face Upon Us

**Scripture:** Psalm 67, Numbers 6:22-27, Revelation 1:16

- 1. The shining of His face is like the shining of the sun upon all creation; good and bad.**
- 2. This is a prayer of the good people:**
  - May God look upon us with his favour and approval.
  - May He smile upon us.
- 3. The shining of His face is a priestly benediction upon the righteous** (Numbers 6:24-26).
  - a. A blessing (joy and happiness).
  - b. A keeping power (Jude 24).
  - c. Sufficient grace needed for every moment of life (2 Corinthians 12:9).
- 4. The shining of His face upon a sinner brings conviction as the light bulb of conscience is turned on exposing his sin** (John 3:19-21; Romans 2:14-16).
- 5. After Adam and Eve sinned, the shining face of God convicted them** (Genesis 3:8-10; John 3:19-21).
  - a. Moses was convicted at the burning bush when God's face revealed his sinful life (Exodus 3:6).
  - b. Isaiah was convicted when he saw God's face in the Temple (Isaiah 6:5).
  - c. David was convicted of his sin when God's face shone on him through Nathan the Prophet (Psalm 51).
  - d. Paul was convicted when he saw the light from heaven (Acts 9:3-5).
- 6. The wickedness of a sinner hides the face of God just like criminals hide their faces in court** (Isaiah 59:2).
- 7. When Jesus died on the cross, our sin hid God's face from Him (Matthew 27:46). This was the only time in eternity that God left Jesus.**
- 8. God's face starts to shine upon a repentant sinner** (2 Chronicles 7:14-15).
  - a. When a sinner repents the face of heaven shines with joy of approval (Luke 15:7).
  - b. When a person is discharged from jail he does not hide his face.
- 9. The shining of God's face is perfected in a fully committed and sanctified life. A fully sanctified life is like:**
  - a. A clean and clear mirror which reflects all the light; the light of the sun.
  - b. The moon that reflects the light of the sun on the dark earth. The moon has no light; it takes light from the sun and reflects it on us. We must be full moons – not 1/4, 1/2, or 3/4 moons.
- 10. We receive holiness light from Jesus' face as He shines upon us.**
  - a. The light from His face sees the inside of the heart like an X-ray (Psalm 139:23-24).
  - b. Isaiah's heart was searched by God's light when he came to pray in the Temple (Isaiah 6:1-7).
  - c. Jesus says when we are offering our gift at the altar and the light from His face shows us something, we should stop praying and go and fix the wrong (Matthew 5:23-24).

- d. His light cleanses us and keeps us holy as we walk in fellowship with Him (Genesis 17:1, 1 John 1:7).
- e. As His light shines upon us we reflect it to the dark sinful world.

**11. The shining of God's face upon us makes people see God in us (Matthew 5:16).**

- a. God's face shone upon Moses (Exodus 34:29-34).
- b. God's face shone upon Stephen (Acts 6:15, 7:54-56).
- c. May His face shine upon us today.
- d. May His face shine upon the 511 000 plus Nazarenes on our Africa Region.

**12. As God's face shines upon us, may we, like stars in the sky, reflect the light of His face in the spiritual darkness of our Region.**

*By Dr Enoch H Litswele  
Former Assistant to Regional Director for Africa*

## The Pure In Heart

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:8

*"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).*

### Introduction:

The debate over morality in our culture underscores the importance of behavior. To be moral, one must act in a moral manner. This is clear. But, morality, it seems to me, is more than simply behavior, and this is something that may be missed by our culture if we are not careful.

While we may be able to impact the behavior of individuals in our society by certain restrictions of law, we will never be able to change the essence of a person's morality in that way. Limiting what a person can do outwardly does not change who that person is inwardly. Behavior flows from the inward nature of an individual. You might say that it is a matter of the heart.

So, when Jesus said, "**Blessed are the pure in heart**", He was emphasizing that what we really need is to be right on the inside.

### 1. The Call To Heart-Purity

- a. In the Beatitudes, Jesus is dealing with principles which impact every area of our lives. This simple sentence, "**Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God**" becomes a powerful road map that will lead us to the promised fulfillment of a personal encounter with God. It is a call to heart-purity. Jesus is saying that the condition of our heart before God is of primary importance. Indeed, it seems that our priority as believers is to maintain a right heart attitude towards God.
  - 1) We might be able to fool people by pretending to be something we are not. We might appear to be walking with God when we are not. But God is not fooled. In 1 Samuel 16:7 we read, "**But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.'**" It is clear that God looks past outward behavior and outward appearance to the real issue - the condition of our hearts. We read in Proverbs 21:2, "**All a man's ways seem right to him, but the LORD weighs the heart**".
- b. What did Jesus mean when He spoke of the **pure in heart**? What does **pure** really mean? Does it mean perfect? Does it mean sinless?
  - 1) The **heart** in Scripture refers to the mind, will and emotions. It refers to the control center of the will. The writer of Proverbs counseled, "**Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life**" (Proverbs 4:23). In Matthew 15:19, Jesus said, "**For out of the heart come evil thoughts - murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.**" The heart encompasses both mind and will. The heart determines behavior.
  - 2) When Jesus speaks of **the pure in heart** He is talking about a heart that is of pure motive. Our hearts should be characterized by single-mindedness and undivided devotion.
    - a) Jesus said, "**No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other**" (Matthew 6:24).
    - b) James, in his book reminds us that "**friendship with the world is hostility towards God**" and then gives us the solution: "**cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded**" (James 4:4; 8).
- c. When we examine ourselves in this light, what do we find? Often, we find that we fall far short from the standard. Our motives are seldom unmixed. Many times they are selfish and self-centered. Instead of single-minded devotion to God and a passionate desire to please Him, often we are concerned only with what will benefit us.
- d. The call of Christ is clear. We are to be unmixed in our devotion to Him. How about you? Is your heart completely devoted to God alone?

## 2. The Process Of Heart-Purity

- a. How can we make our hearts **pure**? If we find that our motives are mixed, how can we return to a single-minded devotion to God?
  - 1) In order to become **pure in heart**, we must see our need and respond to that need. We must walk through the progression we have seen in the first four Beatitudes. As those who are "**poor in spirit**" we see our sinfulness. As those who "**mourn**" we repent in godly sorrow for our sin. Our hearts are broken before God. Thus, we become "**gentle**" and tender before God. Humility marks those who are thus dealt with by God. We then come to the place where we "**hunger and thirst for righteousness**" because we have seen that only the righteousness of God satisfies. This is the foundation we must lay if we are ever to become **pure in heart**.
  - 2) This is really the process of sanctification. It is what Jesus meant when He told us that we were to take up our crosses daily. It is seeking God with all our heart. It is coming to God like David and praying, "**Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me**" (Psalm 51:10). It is desiring God more than all else.

## 3. The Result Of Heart-Purity

- a. The reason we must become **pure in heart** is that only those who are **shall see God**.
  - 1) God reserves intimate fellowship with Himself for those whose hearts are unmixed in their devotion to Him.
  - 2) Heart-purity is what tunes our spiritual receivers to the frequency of God's transmission
  - 3) And when we are tuned into Him, we will enjoy the privilege of catching a glimpse of His glory - a vision of His majesty.
  - 4) He desires to reveal more of His power to us. He desires to reveal more of Himself to us, that we might understand His ways and walk in them.
- b. God desires fellowship with us. God desires that we be enabled to see Him. And this is the promise to us - it is the result of becoming **pure in heart**.

### Conclusion:

**The pure in heart** are a rare breed in our society today. They are even rare in our churches. But I believe God is calling us back to that single-minded, unmixed devotion to Him which characterizes those upon whom He pours out His Spirit. But, in the Kingdom, the way up is always down. We must fall on our knees in repentance before we can look up to catch a glimpse of His glory. O God, purify our hearts that we may see Jesus!

*Rev Cosmos Mutowa  
Africa Regional NCM Coordinator*

## Dwelling In The Presence Of The Holy God

**Scripture:** Psalm 15

### **Introduction:**

Leviticus 19:2 says, “Be holy because I, the Lord your God am holy”. The temple had an inner room called the Holy of Holies which was the dwelling place of God amidst His people. This was a very sacred place because God’s presence was there. God’s presence is one of holiness. Only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies once a year, on the Day of Atonement. He had to make careful preparation by washing, wearing special clothing, and carrying burning incense as a ‘veil’ so he could enter to make atonement for the sins of the people (Hebrews 9:7). If a priest entered the Holy of Holies with sin or guilt, it would result in sudden death (Exodus 28:35-36). According to Jewish tradition, one end of a length of rope was tied to the High Priest’s ankle and the other remained outside the tabernacle. If the bells on his robe stopped tinkling while he was in the Holy Place, the assumption that he had died could be tested by pulling gently on the rope. Just as the High Priest had to be sinless in order to minister before God, it is absolutely necessary that we too be without sin, that we be holy, to enter His presence.

### **1. Psalm 15 shows seven qualifications for dwelling in the presence of a Holy God.**

- a. A Blameless Walk (v 2)
- b. Doing what is Righteous (v 2)
- c. Speaking the Truth (v 2)
- d. Love for neighbor (v 3)
  - 1) Does not slander
  - 2) Does not wrong
  - 3) Casts no slur on fellowman (malicious speech against others)
- e. Keeper of Oaths (keep your promises) (v4)
- f. Do not disadvantage others economically (if lending money, do not charge interest) (v5)
- g. Do not accept bribes (v5)

### **2. Why are these qualifications important to God?**

- a. At face value these qualities seem to be very insignificant.
- b. But if they are disregarded, they have the full potential of wrecking our salvation.
- c. Therefore, we must always guard our hearts against every form of evil (Proverbs 4:23).
- d. We should seek the presence of God at all times (1 Chronicles 16:11; Psalm 105:4).

### **Conclusion:**

God is Holy, and His desire is for His people to be holy and dwell in His presence every day. Take a moment to examine your life this morning. Is it in line with what God requires? If you need prayer, I invite you to come to the altar and meet with the Lord. He is willing and able to give you a new heart and a right spirit.

*By Rev Paul Mtambo  
Africa Central Field Strategy Coordinator*

## Holiness That Oozes

**Scripture:** 1 John 1: 5- 10

### Introduction:

Without minimizing the crises of the Christian experience, our relationship with God is a moment by moment holy lifestyle. We do not have to always preach or even talk about holiness. However, holiness should flow out from us through the way we live! The definition of ooze is: to trickle or leak slowly out. Our very way of life **leaks** Christ and holiness into our world. Christ says in Matthew 5:13-14, "You are the salt of the earth", and "You are the light of the world". As the salt of the earth, we should always keep our holiness flavor. And just as "A city on a hill cannot be hidden", so should our walk with Christ be a light for the people we come in contact with. In other words, our lifestyle should back up what we profess.

### 1. You are the light of the world

- a. 1 John 1: 5-6 says, "*This is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.*"
  - 1) If we say we are born again, but still live in the darkness by continuing with our old lifestyle of sin, we lie.
  - 2) Our lives do not back up what we say happened to us.
- b. But verse 7 says, "*But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*"
  - 1) This is what we call sanctification.
  - 2) The Holy Spirit cleanses and purifies our hearts from sin, and empowers us to live a life of victory over sin.

### 2. Confession and cleansing from sin comes first.

- a. The divine work of heart cleansing does not take place if we do not confess our sins. "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness*" (1 John 1:9). We must acknowledge our sin and confess it and ask the Holy Spirit to cleanse our hearts.
- b. Before we are born again, self is the centre of our life and we have a strong tendency to sin and displease God. However, when we are sanctified, Christ takes centre stage and controls our life. This is echoed in the words of the Apostle Paul, "*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me*" (Galatians 2: 20).

### 3. Holiness oozes from a clean and pure heart

- a. From a pure and clean heart that is filled with the Holy Spirit, holiness ought to just ooze out, like sweat seeps from every part of the body when running a race or when exercising vigorously.
- b. When we live a holy life it will be seen because holiness will permeate through all the areas of our life.
- c. When Christ is enthroned in our hearts, He controls all that we are and all that we do. Here are a few of the many things He will control as He leads us:



- 1) He controls the eyes- what we see!
- 2) He controls the ears- what we hear!
- 3) He controls the lips- what we say!
- 4) He controls the mouth- what we put in!
- 5) He controls the hands- what we do or do not do!
- 6) He controls the feet- where we go or do not go!

#### **4. A holy life manifests the fruit of the Spirit**

- a. In Galatians 5:22-23 Paul talks about the fruit of the Holy Spirit which “is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”.
- b. Unequivocally, the above qualities are present in a Spirit-filled life. Holiness naturally oozes out because it becomes our DNA.

#### **Conclusion:**

Is your life oozing out holiness? If not, what is flowing from you to the world? Are you ready to allow Christ to take the throne of your heart and life and give you victory today? The altar is open for you to come and ask God to cleanse and purify your heart and empower you with His Holy Spirit to live a life of holiness, to be salt and light to your world.

*By Rev Paul Mtambo  
Africa Central Field Strategy Coordinator*

## The Holy Spirit Unifies

**Scripture:** Ephesians 4:12-15

### Introduction

The prophecy of the Holy Spirit being poured out on the Church at Pentecost, which Peter quotes in Acts 2:16-18, was prophesied by Joel (Joel 2:28-32). In this prophecy, we see the Holy Spirit coming upon a community of people instead of a singular person here and there. Not only was the Holy Spirit to come upon a community of people, He would also create a community of believers in the Church. This community of believers was in unity (Acts.2:44-47).

### 1. Perfect Unity Comes Through the Holy Spirit

- a. By Attaining faith in Christ (Ephesians 4:13)
- b. In Intimacy with Christ (Ephesians 4:13)
- c. Complete Obedience to Christ (Ephesians 4:15)

### 2. Perfect Unity Comes Through Love

- a. In Christ (Ephesians 4:15; Galatians 5:24)
- b. Within the Church Body (Ephesians 4:16; Galatians 6:10, 5:14)

### 3. Perfect Unity Comes With Denunciation of Selfish Pride (Galatians 6:14)

- a. Self-control Installed (Galatians 5:22)
- b. Persistence or Long Suffering Ingrained (Galatians 6:2)

### 4. Perfect Unity Eventually Wins

- a. It wins People
- b. It wins the World
- c. It wins over Satan

### Conclusion

It is evident that the unifying of the Spirit in the Church suffers when there are negative attitudes and actions at work; "hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy..." (Galatians 5:20-21). These things, strife, disputes, dissensions, factions, discord, all spring from the desires of the flesh which are always opposed to being led of the Spirit (Galatians 5:18, 5:22-26). By producing love in our hearts (Romans 5:5; Galatians 5:22; Colossians 3:14), the Holy Spirit binds everything together "...in perfect unity..." (Colossians 3:14). So, we can see that the Holy Spirit is bringing about a beautiful harmony in the Church community which is overflowing with love for each other.

*By Rev Collin Elliott  
Africa South Field Strategy Coordinator*

## The Truth About Sanctification

**Scripture:** Romans 6:19-22

### Introduction:

“If Jesus Christ is not Lord of all, He will not be Lord at all.” —R S Nicholson

### 1. Sanctification Is God’s Choice Gift for Every Believer: (1 Thessalonians 4:3)

*It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality;*

- a. God’s best for the believer (Ephesians 1:4)  
*“For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.”*
- b. God’s challenge for the believer (Hebrews 12:14)  
*“Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.”*
- c. God’s will for the believer (Hebrews 10:14-15)  
*because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.  
<sup>15</sup>The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this.*
- d. God’s desire for the believer (1 Thessalonians 3:13)  
*“May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.”*

### 2. Sanctification is God’s Holiness Imparted to Consecrated Believers (1 Thessalonians 4:7)

*For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.*

- a. It involves the forsaking of sinful behavior (Luke 14:33)  
*“In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.”*
- b. It requires discipline and self control (1 Peter 1:15-16)  
*“But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;<sup>16</sup>for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”*
- c. It calls for dedicated service (Luke 1:74b-75)  
*“...to enable us to serve him without fear <sup>75</sup>in holiness and righteousness before him all our days”.*
- d. It destroys divided loyalties (Romans 5:12-19)  
*“We consecrate, but God sanctifies.” —F. B. Meyer*

### 3. Sanctification is Received By Persistent Faith (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)

*“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.”*

- a. It is a crisis experience (Acts 4:31)  
*“After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”*

- b. It is achieved through obedient faith (John 14:11)  
*“Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles.”*
- c. It is confirmed by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:16)  
*“...to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”*

*Dr Stan Toler  
General Superintendent in Jurisdiction  
Africa Region Church of the Nazarene*

## The Integrity That Is Not Denied

**Scripture:** Job 1 - 6

### Introduction:

Some of the well known Biblical terms we use in our teaching and preaching are repentance, redemption, atonement, reconciliation, justification, love, sanctification, and holiness. In the book of Job we do not find most of these terms, but there is one which is so rich, full and meaningful - **INTEGRITY**. This was Job's most valuable possession.

### 1. The Nature Of His Integrity

- a. Job's integrity was godly, holy and Christian.
- b. The writer of the book says he was (Job 1:1, 8):
  - A blameless man.
  - An upright man.
  - A God fearing man.
  - A man who shunned evil.
- c. These beautiful words are taken from a testimonial letter written by God to Satan about Job's integrity (Job 1:8).
- d. Webster's Dictionary defines the term integrity as follows:
  - An unimpaired condition.
  - Soundness.
  - Firm adherence to a code of special moral or artistic values.
  - Incorruptibility.
  - The quality or state of being complete or undivided.
  - Completeness.
- e. This is what God wants us to be and He is able to make us blameless, upright, God fearing people who shun evil.
- f. This is the beauty of holiness we see in Job's life.

### 2. The Great Trials and Temptations of His Integrity

- a. His integrity was tested but he did not deny it (NIV). Remove it (KJV). Put it away (NKJV/RSV). Abandon it (NEB).
- b. His wealth and fame did not make him lose his integrity (Job 1:2-3, 9-11).
- c. Remember the words of Jesus, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:23).
- d. When he lost everything he had he did not put away his integrity (1:20-22).
- e. God's second testimonial to Satan about Job's integrity was given after he went through trials (Job 2:3).
- f. When his flesh and bone were touched by that terrible disease, he held on to his integrity (Job 2:4-8).

- g. When his wife denied him because he was now offensive to her, he refused to put away his integrity (Job 2:9-10, Job 19:17).
- h. When his friends accused him and discouraged him, he remained true to God.
- i. When God seemed to have moved away from him, he did not abandon his faith (Job 23:8-12).
- j. His integrity helped him to overcome sexual temptations (Job 31: see the IF'S).

### 3. **The Strength of His Integrity**

- a. The strength of his integrity was in the redemptive plan given in the Old Testament.
- b. The sacrifice of purification and burnt offerings was a regular custom he practiced that kept him and his family pure before God and men.
- c. This was Job's Holy Communion similar to our Holy Communion today.
- d. We are not making sacrifices or burnt offerings today but are simply remembering the sacrifice made for us at Calvary. That is where our holiness, righteousness and integrity come from.
- e. Through this communion, when the going was so tough, Job was able to say: "I know that my Redeemer lives ..." (19:25-27).
- f. The strength of our integrity and holy life come from this intimate relationship and communion with our Redeemer as we read in the Johannine writings (1 John 1:5-7).

### **Conclusion:**

God wants men and women of great integrity. Through His wonderful plan of Salvation and saving grace He can give us this holy character. The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, will help us to keep and not deny our integrity when we are tested.

*By Dr Enoch H Litswele  
Former Assistant to Regional Director for Africa*

## Be Perfect As Your Father In Heaven Is Perfect

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:14-48.

### **Introduction:**

The call to Christian perfection continues to be discussed amongst believers from different perspectives. Christian perfection is attainable, but it does not come on a silver platter. There are a few things in a believer's life that need refinement in the pursuit of this call. Jesus Christ points out eight of these human struggles that call for divine help on our road to perfection.

### **1. Can a human being be perfect like God?**

- a. Perfection can be attained, and requires that we make the following choices:
  - 1) Do not hate people without any cause
  - 2) Reconcile broken relationships
  - 3) Do not entertain sinful thoughts
  - 4) Keep the sacredness of marriage
  - 5) Make honest statements
  - 6) Resist evil people
  - 7) Love our enemies and those who hate us
  - 8) Pray for those who persecute us

### **2. The road to perfection is not easy**

### **Conclusion:**

Jesus Christ is showing us the way to Christian perfection even if it does not fit our cultural logic. Facing these eight challenges and growing in our spiritual walk and relationship with Jesus Christ so that we overcome them is the way of becoming more like Christ.

*By Rev Chanshi Chanda  
Africa Middle Field Strategy Coordinator*

## Reflecting The Holiness Of God

**Scripture:** Exodus 3:5-6

### Introduction:

*“Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.”*

Reflecting God’s holiness means the putting aside of self and selfishness, for the redemption of others.

### 1. Why Should We Be Concerned About Holiness? (2 Corinthians 7:1)

*“Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.”*

- a. Holiness characterizes God (I Peter 1:16)  
*“for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”*
- b. Holiness is single-minded devotion to God (Hebrews 12:14)  
*“Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.”*

*“Holiness is not an option. It is as essential for our spiritual life as food is for our physical life.” –R S Taylor*

### 2. What Is Our Response To God’s Holiness? (Romans 1:20)

*For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.*

- a. A zeal for God (Matthew 6:24)  
*“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”*
- b. A separation from the world (Matthew 5:48)  
*“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*

*‘Holiness is separation for a higher goal, for service to human kind.’ – John A Knight*

- c. A desire to be Christlike (Matthew 22:37-38)  
*“Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.”*

### 3. How Then Should We Reflect God’s Holiness? (I Corinthians 1:30)

*“It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.”*

- a. An unconditional hatred of sin (I John 3:6)  
*“No one who lives in Him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen Him or known Him.”*
- b. An unconditional love for people (I John 3:1a)  
*“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God...”*
- c. An unconditional sacrifice for the good of others (John 3:16)



*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

**Conclusion:**

“Entire sanctification is not the end, but is often the beginning of a lifetime of service surrendered.” –R. S. Taylor

*Dr Stan Toler  
General Superintendent in Jurisdiction  
Africa Region Church of the Nazarene*

## The Positive Commandment of Love

**Scripture:** Matthew 22: 35 – 40

### **Introduction:**

The scope of holiness is wide and deep. It has an individual cleansing dimension that expresses itself in a relational context. In the New Testament teachings of Jesus in these passages, is a set of different ways of loving God and our neighbor. We are living in a world today where the word 'love' can mean anything and is applied to most everything. For a Christian, the meaning of 'love' is not the same as the common meaning on the street.

#### **1. Love is an expression of Holiness**

#### **2. Love is a quality of God**

- a. Human love proceeds from God's love
- b. We must display the love of God

#### **3. Holiness has a relational dimension**

- a. Love is the central message of Moses and the prophets
- b. Moses taught love for God and neighbor
- c. The prophets challenged people to love God and their neighbor
- d. Loving God only is not complete
- e. Loving man only is not complete

#### **4. Love considers the seed of good in the sinner**

#### **5. Love does not do onto others what one does not want to be done to one's self**

#### **6. Love is greater than outward performance**

- a. Love is greater than faith
- b. Love is greater than hope

#### **7. Love is an expression of transformation**

- a. Kindness
- b. Longsuffering
- c. Rejoicing in the truth
- d. Bearing all things
- e. Believing all things
- f. Hoping all things
- g. Enduring all things

### **Conclusion:**

Love is the single most important thing in our relationships, and it is to be positive. We are called to love, not the secular way, but the positive way of holiness.

*By Rev Chanshi Chanda  
Africa Middle Field Strategy Coordinator*

## Rest - The Next Frontier!

**Scripture:** Hebrew 3:7-19

### Introduction

I am grateful and excited about what God is doing in our church. God has blessed us in these last few weeks with an undeniable visitation of His Holy Spirit. Many people came to the altar and found victory and healing in the presence of the Lord. God is really doing a new thing in our church and I cannot wait to see where it leads. God has so much He wants to do for us and in us. He wants to do exceedingly, abundantly more than we can even ask or imagine. My concern today is this: How do we live our lives when we get up from the altar and leave our churches. Where do we go from here?

### 1. The promise of Rest

- a. The Israelites had the same problem.
  - 1) They lived as slaves, under great oppression and suffering in the land of Egypt.
  - 2) Then God delivered them from Pharaoh's clutches and took them on this exciting journey to the Promised Land.
  - 3) They acted in great faith and obedience to God when they believed Moses and followed him out of Egypt.
  - 4) However, the reality of their "freedom" hit as soon as they left when they realized that Pharaoh was behind them, intending to take them back to slavery and captivity.
  - 5) Their freedom was not a happy ending to the story of their suffering; it was the beginning of their adventure with Yahweh. The intention was not just to be free from slavery, but also to enter the Promised Land, Canaan. God promised this rest to His people.
- b. This is the same for us today.
  - 1) Our salvation, accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, is just the beginning of the journey. We left the land of sin and slavery, but it is not the end of the story; God has so much more in store for us on this journey of faith.
  - 2) Like the Israelites, He wants us to enter into His rest. Canaan here does not refer to when we die and go to heaven, but it means that we can enter into God's rest right now.

### 2. The Barriers to Rest

- a. Their unbelief (Hebrews 3:19)  
God said to go and take the land. They said they could never do it, we are like grasshoppers (Numbers 13:33). Instead of focusing on their great God, they focused on their own limitations and the result was that they wandered in the desert for 40 years and none of them, only Joshua and Caleb, entered the Promised Land with the new generation.
- b. Their rebellious, hardened hearts (3:8)
- c. Their disobedience (3:18)

### 3. The Results of a Restless Christian Life

- a. Restless wandering, seeking but not finding satisfaction for our souls
- b. Dissatisfaction, discontent leading to all sorts of addictions and vices even leading to bondage
- c. Idolatry, Amnesia dust (which makes people forget the past few seconds)
- d. Estrangement from God

#### 4. Active Rest

What is this rest that Christ is offering us?

- a. It is a divine promise for all who will believe
- b. It is rest from trying to gain our salvation and sanctification by our own efforts. It is rest from trying so hard and always failing. The work that Christ did on the cross was a complete work. It no longer depends on our efforts. This is the principal message of the book of Hebrews: Christ is superior to the Old Testament priest and sacrifices because He went into the throne room of God and offered a sacrifice once and for all for the forgiveness of all sin.
- c. It is freedom from a guilty conscience. Many times, we are tormented by the wrong we have done and it robs us of our peace. Someone complained that they could not sleep and another person asked, "Who did you kill?" It is a fact that a guilty conscience can be the cause of much stress and turmoil in our lives. However, God made provision for this in Jesus Christ. Hebrews 10:22 says that we can come near to God, "having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience".
- d. It is freedom to enjoy God's presence. For the Israelites Canaan would be that place, the place where God resided and where they could worship Him in freedom. A place where they could enjoy God's presence. For us it is not a physical place, but it is the reality that we can enter boldly into the presence of God, not because of our own works, but because of the superior sacrifice of Christ. The wonder we experience when we are in church is ours to take home with us; we can enjoy the presence of the Most High God every minute of our lives.
- e. It is freedom to be fruitful. To live in God's blessings. To see the fulfillment of His promises. That is what was available to the Israelites. We are not destined to be stagnant and to live in defeat. We are destined for victory.
- f. It is peace with God. Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

#### Conclusion:

This invitation to enter into God's rest still stands. Hebrews 3:7 says, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you [the Israelites] did in the rebellion". Hebrews 4:1 says that the offer to enter into His rest still stands. Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Will you come and enter into God's rest today?

*By Rev Samantha Chambo  
Africa Regional NMI Coordinator*

## Worshipping The Lord In The Beauty Of Holiness

**Scripture:** Psalm 29:1-2

### 1. The Meaning of Worship

- a. It is reverence or respect shown to a Divine being.
- b. It is praise, honour and thanksgiving given to God.
- c. It is a ministry or service done to or for God.
- d. It is a ministry or service done to or for people for the sake of God.
- e. The act of worship begins when we are saved and continues throughout eternity.
  - 1) Worship does not start when we enter the church door and it does not end when the closing prayer is said (Romans 12:1-2).
  - 2) The Psalms and hymns are songs the church sings today in our worship, but the Hallelujah Songs we find in the Book of Revelation are the hymns we will sing in heaven forever and ever.

### 2. The Recipient Of Worship

- a. At the heart of Christian worship is God Himself.
- b. In worship we give Him glory and praise.
- c. In worship we forget about ourselves and concentrate on Him.
- d. We should be very careful that all our actions and activities in worship give honour and glory to His name and not to ourselves.
- e. Our worship should not be an act of self entertainment and amusement like the Pharisees in Matthew 6:1-5, or the Pharisee in Luke 18:9-12, but like the example of the tax collector in Luke 18:13-14.

### 3. The Beauty of Worship

- a. We are commanded to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness (Psalm 29:2; 96:9).
  - Worship the Lord in holy array (RSV).
  - Come to Him clothed in sacred garments (Living Bible).
- b. The holy array is like the robes of the priests in the earthly sanctuary.
  - 1) The custom of wearing our best clothes in worship is good and should be encouraged, but this command goes beyond that.
  - 2) Our worship uniform is the garment of Salvation given to us by God Himself (Isaiah 61:10, Revelation 7:9-14).
  - 3) This uniform is the recreated image of God in us. It is **Christlikeness**.
- c. When the Prophet Isaiah came to worship the Lord in the temple the garments of his life were dirty and red as scarlet, but when he cried in repentance and confessed his sin they were cleansed (Isaiah 1:18, 6:7).
- d. The Apostle Paul says we should put off the **old man, old self** and put on the **new man, the new self** (Ephesians 4:20-24; Colossians 3:12-14).

*By Dr Enoch H Litswele  
Former Assistant to Regional Director for Africa*

## Purified to Stop Sinning

**Scripture:** Romans 6:1-14

### **Introduction:**

It is good to be reminded from time to time of why Jesus died for us. If we allow the death and resurrection of Jesus to become 'old and familiar', we run the risk of taking it all for granted. We must be careful that we do not fall into the trap of thinking that since God is so quick to forgive our sins when we confess, that it really does not matter what we do in our daily lives as long as we 'clear our account' with God every night before we go to sleep. Jesus came to set us free from sin, not to make sin 'free'.

### **1. Sin leads to death**

- a. The penalty has not changed.
  - 1) God told Adam and Eve that they would die if they disobeyed His instructions.
  - 2) From the very moment of their disobedience, they were separated from God.
  - 3) Today, sin still separates us from God.
- b. God's law has not changed.
  - 1) Disobedience is still sin – obeying the evil desires of sin is to disobey God.
  - 2) Wickedness is still sin – participating in wicked acts shows a disregard for God and His righteousness.
- c. Something must die.
  - 1) If we continue to sin, then we will die.
  - 2) If we want to live in Christ, then sin must die.

### **2. Christ's death sets us free from sin**

- a. Those in Christ are no longer slaves to sin.
  - 1) The power of the Holy Spirit is greater than the power of sin.
  - 2) The resurrection of Christ destroyed the power of sin over those who put their faith in Jesus.
- b. Never again need we say 'the temptation was too strong, I can't help myself'.

### **3. Christ's new life gives us life.**

- a. Real life is communion with God.
  - 1) We were created for relationship with God.
  - 2) Our purpose is to worship and glorify Him in every aspect of our lives.
- b. We are instruments of God's righteousness.
  - 1) Our daily lives should be testimonies of grace.
  - 2) Our entire being – thoughts, actions, words – should reflect the holiness of God.

### **Conclusion:**

Forgiveness does not erase the record of our sins in order for us to start fresh with sin. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ purifies us of our sins so we can be set free to live a holy and pure life before God in the power of the Holy Spirit. We who are identified with Christ must not be identified with sin. Rather, we should be instruments of God leading others to the mercy of God and the paths of righteousness. We should be messengers of salvation to a dying and sinful world and living testimonies of the power and grace of God.

## Purified to Resist Temptation

**Scripture:** Matthew 4:1-11

### **Introduction:**

Is it a sin to be tempted? Absolutely not! It is what we do when we are tempted that determines whether or not we sin. Resisting temptation is like spiritual exercise – each time we resist, we strengthen our spiritual muscles. Does this mean we will eventually become strong enough to not be tempted at all? Unfortunately not. This is a danger we must beware of – temptations can be very subtle and if we become so arrogant as to consider ourselves beyond the reach of temptation, we may fall and never realise it until we hit the ground.

- 1. Jesus resisted temptation by obedience and knowledge of the Scripture**
  - a. Jesus was tempted to satisfy normal human needs in a wrong way.
    - 1) Satan tried to convince Jesus that satisfying a legitimate need was His right.
    - 2) Jesus responded that obedience was more important than 'rights'.
  - b. Jesus was tempted to manipulate the Scripture to force God to obey Jesus.
    - 1) Satan took a verse out of context to suggest that Jesus could make the rules that God must obey.
    - 2) Jesus resisted that trap by considering the entire context of the Bible.
  - c. Jesus was tempted to find a more acceptable version of God's will for His life.
    - 1) Satan offered an alternative to yield the same results without paying the price.
    - 2) Jesus again responded with Scripture and obedience to God's will as the best thing to do.
- 2. We can also resist temptation by obedience and knowledge of Scripture**
  - a. Having legitimate needs does not excuse us to sin.
    - 1) God does not disregard our need for food, clothing, shelter, etc.
    - 2) He wants us to bring those needs to Him so He can show us a better way.
  - b. We cannot manipulate Scripture to force God's hand.
    - 1) Clever speakers are not always telling the truth, especially if they say just what we want to hear.
    - 2) We must study the Bible so we can test their words to see if they are from God.
  - c. We must not try to accomplish God's will our way.
    - 1) We cannot choose an easier path and still end up where God wants us.
    - 2) To compromise part of God's will is to lose.
- 3. The Scriptures and the Holy Spirit provide everything we need to know.**
  - a. We must study so we cannot be tricked.
  - b. We must depend on the Holy Spirit to help us resist the temptations we will face.

### **Conclusion:**

God expects us to learn from our experiences and to turn to Him for guidance when we are unsure of the path to take. Jesus not only gives us the example to follow, but He also sends His Holy Spirit to empower us to resist the wiles of the devil. There is no temptation so strong that it cannot be resisted. Let us commit to study the Word and hide it in our hearts so we will not sin against God. Let us turn our hearts and minds over to the Holy Spirit so He may guide our steps in paths pleasing to God.

## Purified to Leave Your Life of Sin

**Scripture:** John 8:1-11

### **Introduction:**

Sometimes the children of God are more concerned with finding sin in the lives of other believers than they are with being personally accountable to the law of God. Maybe we like to think that if we can get God's attention on someone 'more sinful' than we are, He will not notice the areas of our life that are not as they should be. The problem with that approach is that even a 'little sin' is unacceptable to God.

#### **1. What dangers of sin does Jesus warn us about?**

- a. Doing something that God's law forbids.
  - 1) Breaking a commandment, as the woman was accused of doing (adultery).
  - 2) Putting God to the test, as the leaders were doing by trying to trick Jesus.
- b. Not doing something that God's law commands.
  - 1) Providing justice – if the leaders had been interested in justice the man would also have been included in the charges.
  - 2) Showing mercy – had they been interested in the woman's soul, humiliating her and then stoning her would not likely have brought her to repentance.

#### **2. What example does Jesus provide?**

- a. He reminds us that God will use our own standards of justice when He judges us.
  - 1) We must remember that it is only the grace of God, that has removed our sins.
  - 2) We must examine our own hearts and lives so we will not be looking at the speck in someone else's eye while we have a plank in our own.
- b. While we live, God's desire for us is not judgment but repentance.
  - 1) Jesus does not ignore our sin or pretend that it is acceptable to sin.
  - 2) When we acknowledge our sin, Jesus offers mercy and forgiveness.

#### **3. What instruction does Jesus give?**

- a. Go and leave your life of sin.
  - 1) First, He offers forgiveness without condemnation.
  - 2) Then, He tells us clearly that forgiveness is not a 'license to sin'.
- b. What Jesus commands, He makes possible.
  - 1) Since Jesus tells us to leave our life of sin, we know it is possible.
  - 2) Jesus, through His Holy Spirit, empowers us to live a holy life, without sin.

### **Conclusion:**

Is there un-confessed sin in your life? Are you trying to keep your struggle with a specific sin secret while you keep doing it? Have you been guilty of judging someone with a desire for punishment rather than repentance? Does your attitude towards sinners demonstrate an angry God, ready to hand out judgment, or a loving God ready to offer mercy and forgiveness? No, we do not want to disregard sin or pretend that sin does not exist or does not matter. Rather, we want to live out a Gospel that offers mercy and demands a life where sin is not master. Jesus commands us to leave our life of sin and walk with Him in holiness. His Holy Spirit makes this life possible when He purifies our hearts by faith.



## Purified to Control Your Thoughts

**Scripture:** 2 Samuel 11:2-5; Matthew 5:27-30

### **Introduction:**

It is impossible to read the Bible sincerely and still think that sin does not matter to God. We may try to convince ourselves that as long as we are fulfilling our service to God, what we do in our personal, private lives does not matter, but we would only be fooling ourselves. God wants us to be 100% committed to Him, down to the smallest details of our lives, including our thoughts, fantasies, and imaginations. Nothing less can satisfy Him.

### **1. We do not sin 'by accident'**

- a. Temptation may present itself in very attractive packages.
  - 1) Temptation often appeals to our natural instincts and desires.
  - 2) It offers to fulfil those desires in inappropriate ways.
  - 3) Temptation may entice, but it cannot force us to sin.
- b. Temptation becomes sin for us when we make a move towards it.
  - 1) When a glance becomes a look – as when David watched Bathsheba.
  - 2) When we take action – when we dwell on the temptation and start thinking of ways to get whatever is offered.
  - 3) When we refuse to turn away and choose to remain in a tempting or compromising situation – had David turned away, he may not have sinned.

### **2. Neither are we kept pure 'by accident'**

- a. Believers must choose the right path each time a choice is presented.
  - 1) We must choose self-control when tempted to satisfy normal human needs and desires in sinful ways.
  - 2) When we find ourselves in tempting circumstances, we must choose to leave.
  - 3) We must choose holiness when we are offered sinful options.
- b. God does not expect us to be holy in our own strength.
  - 1) He offers us the strength of the Holy Spirit to cleanse us from our desire to sin.
  - 2) He offers us the presence of the Holy Spirit to empower us to live holy lives.
  - 3) God does not force us to accept and obey the Holy Spirit – this is also a choice.

### **3. Out thoughts are the doorway to sin or holiness**

- a. When we allow our thoughts to dwell on temptation, we have chosen the path of sin.
- b. When we refuse to dwell on thoughts of temptation, we have chosen the path of holiness.
- c. When we resist the devil and his temptations, he will flee from us and we will grow spiritually stronger.

### **Conclusion:**

The only way to have strong spiritual muscles is to exercise them. We exercise by resisting temptation and refusing to sin. We also exercise them by practising holiness. One of the best steps to practising holiness is allowing the Holy Spirit to purify our hearts and control our thoughts. What God commands us to do, He also empowers us to do. He has commanded us to live pure and holy lives. The Holy Spirit makes this holy life possible.

## Purified to Remain Faithful

**Scripture:** Daniel 6

### **Introduction:**

When we realise that holiness was possible in Old Testament times, before the Holy Spirit was available to all God's children, we must recognise that holiness is a realistic expectation for all of God's followers today. Daniel had everything against him – taken captive as a slave to a foreign king. He was the wrong race and the wrong religion in the land of captivity. He was hated by many. But Daniel had one good thing in his life that made his problems insignificant to him – he had a genuine personal relationship with the God of the universe. Daniel's faithfulness to God showed itself in his character of integrity and he was elevated to the top leadership in the kingdom in spite of everything against him.

### **1. God's people should have characters of integrity**

- a. Daniel so distinguished himself that he was placed in the top leadership of a foreign government.
  - 1) The king knew that Daniel could be trusted to ensure that the king would not suffer loss, whether from neglect or corruption.
  - 2) Even his enemies knew that the only way to find a charge against him was through his faithfulness to his God.
- b. What character and reputation do God's people have today?
  - 1) Could you be trusted to carry out a task – even to the benefit of your 'enemies' – without neglect or corruption?
  - 2) Are you so faithful that even your enemies know they could not bring a charge against you except to attack your relationship with God?

### **2. God's people should remain faithful to Him in spite of adversity**

- a. Worship must be a top priority regardless of other factors in our lives.
  - 1) Daniel continued to pray and worship God even when the law declared that it would cost him his life.
  - 2) Though the law was in effect for only 30 days, Daniel did not postpone his worship with the excuse that God 'would understand'.
- b. How high a priority is worship in our lives?
  - 1) What excuses do you allow to keep you from spending time with God each day in Bible study and prayer?
  - 2) What do you allow to keep you from gathering with other believers in corporate worship (on Sunday or in the week)?

### **Conclusion:**

Daniel's faithfulness in difficult situations is a great example for us. But we have an advantage over him. Not only do we have Jesus Christ as our model, we have the continual presence of the Holy Spirit as our source of strength. We can do even greater things than Daniel – our faithfulness can be rock solid in the face of adversity. When the Holy Spirit purifies us, He removes our self-centeredness and pride so that we can stand firm and remain faithful to God without worrying about our reputation or other consequences. We are purified to remain faithful no matter our circumstances or adversities.

## Purified to Beware of Greed

**Scripture:** Matthew 26:14-16, 27:1-10

### **Introduction:**

To some extent, we all come to Jesus Christ with selfish motives – we do not want to go to hell, we desire forgiveness, we want to be rid of our guilt, and so on. These selfish desires should be replaced with a deep desire to worship and serve Him because of who He is. Some people, however, want a relationship with Jesus only for what they can get out of it. Preachers who promise ‘health, wealth, and prosperity’ usually gain a large following very quickly. The same was true in Jesus’ day – many in the crowds who surrounded Him enjoyed the entertainment of miracles and teaching, but they did not want a transforming relationship with Jesus. Many people, including some of His 12 disciples, expected Jesus to restore the glory of David’s kingdom in Israel. As it became clear that this was not Jesus’ ambition, many were disillusioned and gave up on Jesus. Judas Iscariot was one of them.

### **1. Beware of greed in ambition**

- a. We must not follow Jesus out of a desire for personal gain.
  - 1) Gain then becomes our ‘god’ rather than Jesus.
  - 2) We are to have no other god but Him.
- b. We must not follow Jesus out of a desire for power or recognition.
  - 1) Jesus is not our tool or weapon to be used as we desire to defeat others.
  - 2) Jesus did not die for us to feed or satisfy our ego or desire for recognition.
- c. When we try to manipulate God’s will to serve our own ideas or ambitions, we will be disappointed.

### **2. Greed leads to betrayal**

- a. Once greed is allowed a foothold in our lives, our loyalty to Jesus Christ is dislodged.
  - 1) It will be easy for us to make excuses to justify our greed.
  - 2) Putting anything or anyone as our number one priority is a betrayal of Jesus’ sacrifice to restore our relationship with God.
- b. Once our loyalty to Christ is diluted, our commitment to Him is weakened.
  - 1) We fool ourselves into believing that we can serve both God and money (see Matthew 6:24).
  - 2) We begin to justify ourselves to God, trying to convince Him that we deserve what we desire and therefore our desires and actions are good and acceptable.

### **3. The Holy Spirit purifies us of our selfish desires and ambitions**

- a. The Holy Spirit cleanses us of selfishness, so the only way it can grow in a sanctified heart is if a seed of greed is allowed to take root and grow.
- b. The Holy Spirit will prick our conscience when greed or selfishness tried to take root to give us the opportunity to prevent the growth of greed.

### **Conclusion:**

Those who Christ has set free are free indeed. We are free from greed and selfish ambition. The Holy Spirit purifies our hearts, so we can always test our motives to ensure that our desires and actions are truly designed for the glory of God and the good of His Kingdom.

## Purified to Forgive and Forget

**Scripture:** Genesis 42; 45:3-7

### **Introduction:**

The people of Africa, in general, have suffered horrible atrocities at the hands of others at various times through the ages – whether from neighbouring tribes or countries or from other nations. Likewise, the Israelites, the chosen people of God, have been persecuted through the ages. Today, we read the story of Joseph, one man who was terribly mistreated by his own brothers and then sold into slavery. Terrible things, unforgivable things, happen to God's people. How should God's people respond?

- 1. We must not allow past or present circumstances to distance us from God**
  - a. Even as a slave in a distant land, Joseph maintained his relationship with God.
    - 1) Though his circumstances were painful, Joseph trusted God to care for him.
    - 2) It was the wisdom and discernment he received from God that put Joseph in a position to be mightily used of God.
  - b. Are you enslaved by any past or present circumstances in your life?
    - 1) Do you find yourself dwelling on the wrongs that you have suffered or things people have said or done to hurt you?
    - 2) Are you so consumed with anger or hurt or the desire for revenge that you have blocked your soul from experiencing the presence of God in your life?
- 2. Forgiveness is a godly virtue, so our relationship with Him will be reflected in our relationship with others**
  - a. We must try to persuade others to repent and receive forgiveness.
    - 1) Joseph tested his brothers, to see if they had repented and changed their ways.
    - 2) Even when we have been wronged, the greater sin was against God.
  - b. Whether we see repentance or not, we must still forgive.
    - 1) Refusal to forgive hurts us worse than anyone else.
    - 2) Forgiveness frees us from bondage to the wrongs of the past.
- 3. When the Holy Spirit purifies our hearts, we are free to forgive**
  - a. Keeping our eyes on Christ helps us to maintain a right perspective.
    - 1) We recognise the depth of our own sin and the forgiveness we have received.
    - 2) We acknowledge that God is trustworthy to bring justice in His time.
  - b. The Holy Spirit make the impossible, possible.
    - 1) What we cannot forgive in our own strength, He can help us forgive.
    - 2) Those we cannot love in our own strength, He can love through us.

### **Conclusion:**

One of the things that distinguishes God's people from the world should be the quality of forgiveness. The love, grace, and power of the Holy Spirit is available to us to wield in forgiveness, if only we will. May it never be said that God's people are unwilling to forgive. Rather, let us be living testaments to the forgiveness of God in Christ Jesus by forgiving those who have wronged us. We cannot do it in our own power, but let us live as those purified by the Holy Spirit to forgive and forget the wrongs against us.

## Purified to Live Like Jesus

**Scripture:** Ephesians 5:1-10

### **Introduction:**

Children imitate their parents. What they see their mother do or hear their father say, they are likely to also do and say. This can worry us at times, especially when we see our children copying our 'bad' characteristics while it seems the 'good habits' are ignored. But as God's children, we have a role model who does not display bad examples. We are to imitate God as His children, and Jesus is our perfect example. But we do not simply copy Him – He has given us His Holy Spirit to live in us so we will have His character.

### **1. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live a life of love (5:1-2)**

- a. Love should be what characterises us.
  - 1) God is love, not a weak, powerless emotion but a firm, strong force for good.
  - 2) We must allow His love to flow through us and begin to define our character.
- b. Love should be what motivates us.
  - 1) Jesus Christ lived and died because of His great love for us, putting our need for salvation above everything else.
  - 2) Our choices should flow from unselfish love.

### **2. The Holy Spirit purifies us to live a life of holiness (5:3-5)**

- a. There must not be a hint of impropriety amongst God's children.
  - 1) We must avoid even the appearance of immorality, impurity, or greed.
  - 2) These are signs of idolatry and have no place amongst the children of God.
- b. God's children should be filled with thanksgiving.
  - 1) Obscenity, foolish talk, and course joking are out of place.
  - 2) These are signs that we have forgotten that we were bought at a price and adopted into the family of God.

### **3. The Holy Spirit purifies us to live a life of light (5:6-10)**

- a. Do not be blinded by the darkness.
  - 1) Do not allow empty words to deceive you.
  - 2) Test everything against the Word of God to recognise the truth.
- b. Shine the light into the darkness around you.
  - 1) When we practise goodness, righteousness, and truth, we shine Gospel light.
  - 2) We can each make a difference because even a tiny light dispels the darkness.

### **Conclusion:**

Today let us celebrate God's gift of His Holy Spirit living within us, daily transforming us more and more into the likeness of the Son. We are God's children, adopted into His family when we accepted Jesus Christ. No matter what else is in our lives, let us accept the charge to be imitators of God as His dearly loved children. Have you submitted yourself before God to be transformed into His likeness by the Holy Spirit? There is no better time than now to consecrate yourself before God to be entirely sanctified, to live a life of love, holiness, and light. We can only do that when we have been purified and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

## The Great Hungering And Thirsting For Eternal Life

**Scripture:** Mark 10:17-31

### Introduction:

Some of the very important questions in the Bible are: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17); "Brothers, What shall we do *to be saved*?" (Acts 2:37); "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30).

These questions show us someone who is hungry and thirsty for salvation. The Bible says: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). Here we see a young rich man with a great question seeking for an answer.

### 1. His Great Hungering And Thirsting For Eternal Life

- a. He might have thought that he was hungry for education.
- b. He tried to find satisfaction through religion; he kept the law (Mark 10:20).
- c. He tried to quench his thirst by achieving public position - Ruler (Luke 18:18). He was probably head master of the synagogue, teacher and/or a member of the Sanhedrin (John 3:1-2).
- d. He tried riches (Mark 10:22).
- e. Like the great Teacher of the Ecclesiastes who tried to quench his thirst with materialism, he came to realise that everything was meaningless (Ecclesiastes 1:2).  
(*Illustration*)

### 2. His Great Encounter With Jesus, The Eternal Life

- a. He at last knew that his number one need was eternal life; a need money could not buy.
- b. He knew that it was Jesus who could help him (John 14:6).
- c. He was so hungry and thirsty that he came running to Jesus (Mark 10:17).
- d. He was so hungry and thirsty that he forgot his position and humbled himself before Jesus (Mark 10:17, 2 Chronicles 7:14).
- e. He came to the right man and asked a very good question.
  - He was told to keep the law because this was his main problem.
  - He had broken the first commandment - his riches were a god to him.
  - He had broken the second commandment - he did not love his poor neighbours (Matthew 19:19).
- f. Jesus loved him (Mark 10:21).
- g. He needed only one thing - life eternal - not all the material things he had.  
(*Illustration*)

### 3. His Great Refusal To Accept Jesus The Eternal Life

- a. He refused to get rid of that which was making him hungry and thirsty.
- b. He rejected the heavenly treasure and preferred earthly possessions.
- c. He refused to accept the invitation to follow Jesus.
- d. His face fell and he went away from Jesus sad, unhappy, and more hurting.
- e. He came to Jesus with a problem but left Jesus with his problem greatly multiplied.

- f. He came to the threshold of the treasure of heaven but refused to enter.
- g. When he came to Jesus he was heading toward heaven, but when he left Jesus he was heading towards eternal destruction.

*(Illustration)*

**Conclusion:**

After the young man had left, Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God" (Luke 10:23). He is looking at you now and He sees your need and hears the great question of your soul. As He looks at you, He loves you just as He loved this needy young man 2000 years ago. You are at the door steps of heaven but you need to go through its door like a camel used to go through the eye of a needle. Please do not refuse and go away from Jesus with a fallen face and sad. Do not leave here without Him.

*By Enoch H Litswele  
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## God's People Turning Away From Their Wicked Ways

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 7:14

### **Introduction:**

The title of this message does not seem to be right according to our holiness tradition - God's people turning away from their wicked ways!

According to our way of thinking, it is the ungodly and pagans who are supposed to turn away from sin and wickedness. However, our scripture reading clearly shows us that God's people are not above sinning and that if they do sin they should humble themselves and repent from their wickedness.

### **1. God's People Are Not Wicked People**

- a. They have been redeemed from their wickedness.
- b. They have been forgiven and instructed to sin no more (John 8:11).
- c. They do not continue sinning because they have died to sin (Romans 6).
- d. They have been set free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8).
- e. Through the grace of God they are able to say no to ungodliness (Titus 2:11-12).

### **2. God's People Can Choose To Sin**

- a. Adam and Eve were God's people created in the image of God. They did not have any scars of sin but they fell away from grace. They fell away from Adamic perfection.
- b. The sin of God's people, those who call themselves by His name, hurts more than the sin of the pagan. This is true in the Old Testament, New Testament, and in the church today.
- c. The wickedness of God's people blocks the flow of God's blessing from heaven.

### **3. God's People Are Forgiven If They Repent And Turn Away From Their Sin**

- a. Saul and David were God's people and both of them sinned. Saul's sin was disobedience and David's was murder and adultery. Saul chose not to repent but David repented.
- b. Isaiah was God's prophet but he was wicked. When he was convicted of his sin he humbled himself and repented (Isaiah 6).
- c. Peter and Judas Iscariot were God's people and both of them sinned. Both were convicted of their sin. Judas refused to repent and he hanged himself (Matthew 27:3-5). Peter humbled himself and repented (Luke 22:60-62).
- d. We are not supposed to sin, but if we sin, we have Christ, the atoning sacrifice for our sins.
- e. 1 John 1:9 is for God's children and not for pagans.

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## Sin, A Human Problem

**Scripture:** 2 Kings 5:1-19

### Introduction:

Many times we find people in life who have different diseases, some more severe than others. Naaman had a serious disease that needed attention. Even though he appeared fine and successful in the presence of others and had won favour with the King, He had a problem.

#### 1. Sin is deadly

- a. Leprosy was a deadly disease if not treated and so is sin; it can destroy one's life.
- b. A soul that sins will die (Ezekiel 18: 20)

#### 2. Sin is contagious

- a. Leapers like Naaman had to be in isolation and wear a bell to warn the people that they were coming and of their unclean state. Like leprosy, sin has great influence
- b. People we spend time with have a great influence on us. *"Bad company corrupts good character"* (1Corinthians 15:33).

#### 3. Sin is curable

- a. The priest was to examine the skin of a leaper or anyone with a disease, and pronounce the person clean or unclean depending upon his observation of the facts. So today, since Christ has provided cleansing from sin, every believer as part of "God's chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation (1 Peter 1:9), is to detect sin in their own life and pronounce it sin when it first appears
- b. Naaman learned of a prophet in Samaria from a servant girl, and went to visit Elisha, the man of God. When he was obedient to the instructions given for cleansing by Elisha, he was cured of his leprosy.
- c. Paul states in Romans 7:24-25, "What a wretched man I am! Who will deliver me from this body of sin? Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord".
- d. We are cleansed by the blood of Jesus. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus** Christ His Son **cleanses us from all sin**" (1 John 1:7).

### Conclusion:

There are many people in the world who are doing good and gaining popularity and favour with people, but in their hearts they have a problem called sin. This sin is deadly, contagious, but CAN be purified by the Blood of Jesus Christ who is the perfect Lamb of God.

"Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Are you washed in the blood of Jesus? You can be cleansed right now and set free to live a victorious life in Christ.

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