

The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 63, JULY 2003

"He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit . . . does He do it out of the works of the law or out of the hearing of faith?" Galatians 3:5

In THIS ISSUE

- 1 LETTER FROM LIVING STREAM MINISTRY
- 1 WHAT IS SANCTIFICATION?
- 2 HIGHLIGHTS FROM LIFE-STUDY OF 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS
- 2 RESPONSE FROM LISTENERS
- 4 THE PATH OF LIFE—GOD'S DESIRE THAT WE WOULD LIVE HIM

And the God of peace Himself
SANCTIFY YOU WHOLLY, AND MAY YOUR *spirit* AND *soul* AND *body* BE PRESERVED COMPLETE, WITHOUT BLAME, AT THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23

Dear Life-study Listener,

Recently we began broadcasting *Life-study of 1 & 2 Thessalonians*. The church in Thessalonica had been established for about only one year when Paul wrote to them the first of two encouraging and strengthening epistles. Paul wrote to these young believers in Christ, yet his Epistles to them are full of depth. Do we who have been in Christ for a much longer time have the ears to hear what the Spirit is speaking in such an "elementary" way?

A few months ago in the *Hearing of Faith* we announced our one-minute *Scripture & Commentary* from the New Testament Recovery Version. You may remember that we asked you to pray for the distribution of these short gems on Christian radio stations around the country. We thank the Lord we can now announce that these features will be heard on Salem radio stations across the country from July 1, 2003 until the end of the year. The Salem radio network of stations is one of the largest Christian broadcast outlets, and *Scripture & Commentary* from the New Testament Recovery Version will be aired on more than two hundred stations. In addition to the broadcasts, the printed version will appear in Christian publications during this same time period. Please pray that the Lord would use these one-minute gold nuggets to reach His lovers and seekers with the riches of this ministry.

Living Stream Ministry

WHAT IS SANCTIFICATION?

God's full salvation of fallen mankind involves a process by which His chosen and redeemed people are made holy. The word *sanctification* is derived from the same Greek root as for *holy* and *saint*. In its basic meaning, to be holy is to be separated, set apart to God, and saints are those who are separated or set apart. It is helpful to realize that sanctification, as with many truths related to our Christian life, has both an objective and a subjective aspect.

(continued on page 3)

RESPONSE *from* LISTENERS

We invite you to share your comments with us and other listeners so we all may be encouraged in the Lord. Responses should be addressed to *The Hearing of Faith*, "Response from Listeners," 2431 W. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92801 or radio@lsm.org. Responses are subject to editing for the sake of space and clarity.

I am writing to say how much I have enjoyed listening to the Living Stream radio programs on the Internet. I also would like to thank you for the wonderful free publications you have sent to me. So far over the last few months I have listened to the entire life-studies on Genesis and Exodus. I am now moving into Leviticus. I think Leviticus is a difficult book, but with Witness Lee and the wonderful team at Living Stream Ministry, who in previous life-studies have revealed so much of Christ, I am sure I will be blessed.

Stirchley Birmingham, England

I thank the Lord so much for your radio ministry. I once was dead but now I am revived every day because of it. I can't express how precious it is to me personally. Without it, I am absolutely dead. May the Lord fully bless this wonderful ministry and have it prosper even more.

Minneapolis, MN

I have been truly blessed to hear Life-study of the Bible with Witness Lee. I am interested in hearing it every day; I really enjoy listening to Brother Lee. It really helps me to pursue the Lord in a deeper way. I have been encouraged to enjoy the Lord to such an extent.

Makiti City, Philippines

Highlights

FROM LIFE-STUDY OF 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS

"And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Thessalonians 5:23

The faithful God who has called us will also sanctify us wholly and preserve our entire being complete.

The word "sanctified" here means to be set apart; it is to be separated unto God from things common or profane.

The word "wholly" means entirely, thoroughly, to the consummation. God sanctifies us wholly, so that no part of our being, either of our spirit or soul or body, will be left common or profane.

Paul's word concerning our spirit and soul and body strongly indicates that man is of three parts: spirit, soul, and body. The spirit is our inmost part, the inner organ, possessing God-consciousness, that we may contact God (John 4:24; Rom. 1:9). The soul is our very self (Matt. 16:25; Luke 9:25), a medium between our spirit and our body, possessing self-consciousness, that we may have our personality. The body is our external part, the outer organ, possessing world-consciousness, that we may contact the material world. The body contains the soul, and the soul is the vessel of the spirit. In the spirit of the regenerated ones, God as the Spirit dwells; in the soul, our self; and in the body, the physical senses. God sanctifies us first by taking possession of our spirit through regeneration (John 3:5-6); second, by spreading Himself as the life-giving Spirit from our spirit into our soul to saturate and transform it (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18); and last, by enlivening our mortal body through our soul (Rom. 8:11, 13) and transfiguring it by His life power (Phil. 3:21).

God not only sanctifies us wholly, but also preserves our spirit, soul, and body complete. "Wholly" is quantitative; "complete" is qualitative. In quantity God sanctifies us wholly; in quality God preserves us complete, that is, He keeps our spirit, soul, and body perfect. Through the fall our body has been ruined, our soul has been contaminated, and our spirit has been deadened. In God's full salvation our entire being is saved and made complete and perfect. For this, God is preserving our spirit from any deadening element (Heb. 9:14), our soul from remaining natural and old (Matt. 16:24-26), and our body from the ruin of sin (1 Thes. 4:4; Rom. 6:6). Such a preservation by God and His thorough sanctification sustain us to live a holy life unto maturity that we may meet the Lord in His *parousia*, His presence.

In verse 24 Paul says, "Faithful is He who calls you, who also will do it." The faithful God who has called us will also sanctify us wholly and preserve our entire being complete. This is Paul's word of assurance to the believers.

Life-study of 1 & 2 Thessalonians, pp. 168-169, by Witness Lee

SANCTIFICATION *(continued from page 1)*

In the objective aspect of sanctification, nothing of our effort is involved. We believers “have been sanctified” as Paul wrote to the Corinthians believers (1 Cor. 1:2). When we believed into Christ, our position before God was permanently changed because Jesus suffered for the very purpose “that He might sanctify the people through His own blood” (Heb 13:12). Based upon this perfect and complete work of Christ, Paul could write an encouraging salutation to the fleshly and immature Corinthian believers and say that they were “called saints” (1 Cor. 1:2). It may seem to us that they were not at all separated to God. Paul was speaking, however, of

We experience sanctification in its subjective aspect until every part of our being is saturated with the divine nature.

their changed position before God, the result of their faith in Christ Jesus. Objectively speaking, sanctification is a completed matter.

However, Hebrews 12:14 exhorts us to “pursue peace with all men and sanctification, without which no one will see the Lord.” Here we see sanctification in its subjective aspect is a matter needing our pursuit. This is because sanctification involves not only an objective positional change before God, our being separated to Him, but also a subjective

dispositional change, our being made holy. This dispositional change takes place in us as we submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit’s discipline: “He [disciplines], for what is profitable that we might partake of His holiness” (Heb. 12:10). Our being subjectively sanctified is by the Holy Spirit imparting into us the very holy nature of God. Peter also declared the wonderful fact that we have “become partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:3-4). By partaking of His holy, divine nature, we are sanctified dispositionally.

At the time of our salvation, we are both positionally and dispositionally sanctified by being washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:11). As we continue to grow in the divine life, the Spirit’s sanctifying work continues (Rom 6:19, 22). By the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying us, we are being transformed in our soul into the same image as our Lord Jesus (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18). As God’s holy nature is wrought into us through this lifelong process, we experience sanctification in its subjective aspect until every part of our being is saturated with the divine nature. This is very different from any futile attempt we might make to live a sinless life. We must realize that our sanctification is in the Holy Spirit (Rom 15:16) and not in our effort. As we partake of His holy nature and cooperate with the sanctifying Spirit, He will carry out in us the answer to the prayer Paul uttered in his Epistle to the Thessalonians: “And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly” (1 Thes. 5:23).

For further reading on this subject, please see *Life-study of Romans*, messages 17 and 55; *Life-study of 1 Corinthians*, message 2; and *Life-study of 1 Thessalonians*, message 5 by Witness Lee, published by Living Stream Ministry.

LIFE-STUDY OF THE BIBLE

RADIO ARCHIVES

Living Stream Ministry has now completed radio programs for two-thirds of *Life-study of the Bible* (www.lsm.radio.org).

All past radio archives are available on cassette tape for you to listen to in your car or home and at your own pace. A sample list is below.

HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS:

L-S of Deuteronomy
L-S of Hebrews
L-S of Galatians
L-S of Genesis

COMPLETE SETS:

L-S of John
L-S of Revelation
L-S of Daniel
L-S of Philippians
L-S of Colossians
L-S of Ephesians
L-S of Ruth
L-S of Samuel

To get a complete listing and prices call us at (888) 543-3788

The PATH OF Life

Below are excerpts focused on matters and practices of the spiritual life as revealed in God's Word. May the Lord show us "the path of life" (Psa. 16:11) that we may have a daily living of enjoying, experiencing, and gaining Christ.

GOD'S DESIRE THAT WE WOULD LIVE HIM

Each of us who has believed into the Lord Jesus has Him within us. He is within us, and He does not want us to do anything. This is altogether different from our religious concept. Our religious concept always tells us that we should do many things and that we should do our best to be a proper husband or wife. We have heard enough of these teachings. Now I would like to tell you in the Lord that the Lord Jesus within you does not want you to do anything. You are not able to do anything anyway, and even if you could, it would be worthless. The Lord tells us clearly in John 15, "For apart from Me you can do nothing" (v. 5b). However, I am afraid that many people believe that apart from the Lord they can do many things. It is true that apart from the Lord we can do many things. We can do things like lose our temper and throw things at others. If a wife is apart from the Lord, she may even steal her husband's money, and if a husband is apart from the Lord, he may even lie to his wife. We can do many things apart from the Lord; however, whatever we do is worthless. Therefore, the Lord said, "Apart from Me you can do nothing." Hence, all of us should stop all of our doing. We need to resign from being humble and retire from loving others. Whether we are over sixty years old or we are teenagers, we must stop all of our doing. Even if we try to do something, it is useless, because apart from Him we can do nothing. The way to be blessed is to inwardly resign and retire from all of our doing. Then the Lord Jesus will be the One who is living with us. The Lord said, "Abide in Me and I in you" (v. 4). He also

said, "Because I live, you also shall live" (14:19b). In saying these words, the Lord seemed to say, "I want you to live in Me, and I want to live with you. You and I are meant to live and move together."

The real Christian life is the living of the Lord Jesus within us.

I believe that we have all heard this teaching before. However, we cannot deny that in our living there is not much of this experience. From now on, we must be strict concerning this matter. We must say, "From now on it must be no longer I who lives. It must be Christ who lives in me. When I love others, I do not want to be the one who is loving them; rather, it must be Christ in me who is loving them. Even when I sing hymns or pray, it must be no longer I who pray and sing but Christ in me who is praying and singing."

Countless times young Christians have asked me whether or not they should do certain things. When asked questions of this kind, I often answer that it is not a matter of whether or not we can or cannot do something. What is important is that we ask the Lord....

...The real Christian life is not something that is out of ourselves. It is not out of our own doing or behaving. The real Christian life is the living of the Lord Jesus within us. It is His living, not our living. Many

Christians have heard this teaching, but very few live it....

Each one of us must see that the Lord has done a great thing. Not only has He solved our problem of sin on the cross, but He has also become the Spirit. As the Spirit He has entered into us. Now He desires to live for us and that we would live together with Him. This is the unique characteristic of a Christian. A normal Christian is one who has the Lord Jesus as the living Spirit living within his spirit. No Christian should live by himself. Every Christian should have Christ living within him. Thus, we all must stop our doing and stop our living.

Living with the Lord, pp. 10-11, by Witness Lee

THE HEARING OF FAITH

is a publication of Living Stream Ministry. All subscriptions are free. In addition to portions of ministry, this newsletter features broadcast updates and other items of interest. We hope that this newsletter will not only inform you of current news but will also nourish and refresh your spirit. Please be sure to read our reply card and feel free to use it to make comments or ask questions.

Living Stream Ministry
P.O. Box 2121 • Anaheim, CA 92814
Phone: (714) 236-6020
Fax: (714) 236-6024
E-mail: radio@lsm.org
Web site: www.lifestudy.com

According to the revelation of the Scripture, we believe that any ministry that comes from God should trust in God for all its needs. Therefore, we have made it our policy not to solicit donations or contributions. However, if any of our listeners are led by the Lord to give, we will accept offerings as from the Lord and will use them for the furtherance of His truth.

© 2003 Living Stream Ministry. All rights reserved.
No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means – graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval system – without written permission from the publisher.