



Transformation of Self

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"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:13

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Preface

At some point, I came across J. Sidlow Baxter's¹ volume, *“Christian Holiness: Restudied and Restated”*.² This volume is actually a compilation of three books on holiness: *“A New Call to Holiness”*, *“His Deeper Work In Us”*, and *“Our High Calling”*. Unfortunately, all of these books are currently out-of-print. In these writings, Baxter gives an overview, a comparison, and a biblical critique of the various schools of teaching on the essential topics of holiness. Baxter's writing in these books is very rich, very analytical, and biblically, very sound.

“Christian Holiness: Restudied and Restated” is a book which I have picked up again and again; but its initial effect on my understanding of holiness was just as the title states: It caused me to re-study and re-state my thinking on holiness. In my own words, some of the key issues Baxter drew my attention to are:

The saying, “Thoughts have consequences” is true; and it is also true that our words influence our thoughts, what we believe and therefore our actions. If we want to understand what Scripture can tell us about the process of sanctification, then in our discussions, we should endeavor to use the words we find in Scripture. If we stray from biblical words, we will

¹ Probably most well known for his *“Explore the Book”* commentary on the Bible.

² Zondervan (1977)

also stray from biblical theology, as well as biblical realities and experiences.³

The various schools of thought on holiness are founded upon their understanding and interpretation of Romans 6:6.

The colloquial speech used to discuss the commonly held concept of “death to self” or “crucifixion of self” does not hold up to biblical scrutiny or logic. It therefore does not suit the biblical process of sanctification.

It is important to understand the process. If we are mistaken with regards to the process, we will not see “fruit that remains”.⁴ This has caused not a few to become discouraged, and even become “shipwreck with regard to their faith”⁵.

While the concept of holiness is multi-faceted and should be defined and discussed as such (e.g., as “sanctification”, as “being conformed to the image of Christ”, as “increasing in the fruit of the Spirit” and the Beatitudes”, et al.), the concept of holiness as “transformation of self” (as opposed to “crucifixion of self”) is most useful for teaching and discussing Christian growth and maturity.

So, while this article doesn’t claim to be an overview of holiness or address all aspects of holiness, I have tried to communicate mainly these key issues which have caused me to re-study and re-state my personal understanding of holiness.

³ An observation I learned from David Pawson in his *“The Normal Christian Birth”*.

⁴ John 15:16

⁵ 1 Timothy 1:19

Introduction⁶

This article is about “Holiness”. It is specifically about the HOW of Holiness - that is, HOW one progresses in holiness or sanctification. I have chosen to use the term “Spiritual Transformation” (or simply “transformation”) to describe this method of spiritual growth.

I’d like to say something by way of introduction. And what I will mention here is itself introductory to the very experience of spiritual transformation. In fact, it is more than an introduction, it is a **prerequisite** to biblically authentic transformation (or sanctification, or holiness).

Scripture teaches that if one has not received the Spirit of Christ, he does not yet belong to Christ – that is, he is not regenerated, not born again, and not yet a “Christian”.⁷ The apostle Paul clearly states this in Romans 8:8-10.

So, receiving the Spirit of Christ is a prerequisite to the pursuit of holiness. This stands to reason, since it is “the Spirit of Holiness” Who is the agent of spiritual transformation. Both the Christian life, and the pursuit of holiness are entirely and absolutely impossible without the Holy Spirit.⁸ And if receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit is prerequisite to regeneration, repentance is prerequisite to receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. The apostle Peter indicated this in Acts 2:38.

⁶ Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations in this article will be from the *New American Standard Bible*.

⁷ See my booklets: “You Must Be Born Again”, *Some Thoughts On Spiritual Life and Growth*; “Receiving the Gift of the Holy Spirit”.

⁸ I am speaking of the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit as being one and the same.

Repentance

Repentance is absolutely essential for a biblically authentic Christian life. On the Day of Pentecost, after Peter's sermon, after the crowd asked Peter and the rest of the apostles, "What shall we do?". The very first word of Peter's response was "Repent"⁹. When John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness, the first word of his sermon was "Repent"¹⁰. After His temptation in the wilderness, when Jesus began to preach, His opening word was "Repent". Paul and the rest of the apostles also preached it.¹¹ It is at the top of the list of the six foundation stones in Hebrews 6:1-2. Unless there is an authentic repentance, there can be no authentic faith, no authentic baptism, and no receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. Salvation is a process; and if there is no authentic repentance, that process has not yet begun. Sanctification is also a process; and if there is no authentic repentance that process has not yet begun. Again, without repentance, there can be no biblically authentic Christian life, nor hope of holiness.

The topic of repentance requires a multitude of articles.¹² Repentance involves "turning" – turning away from sin and a turning towards God.¹³ Repentance involves godly sorrow.¹⁴ Repentance involves a change of

⁹ Acts 2:37-38

¹⁰ Matthew 3:1-2

¹¹ Acts 26:18-20

¹² See my booklet: "Repentance"

¹³ Acts 26:18

¹⁴ 2 Corinthians 7:10

behavior.¹⁵ But actually, all these things are not the essence of repentance. In fact, they are all results of repentance – “fruits of repentance”¹⁶ – the things that happen after repentance actually takes place.

Here, I would like to attempt to communicate what I consider to be the essence of biblically authentic repentance. Like most aspects of the Christian life, repentance is also an ongoing process; but there is a very definite beginning to this process. It begins with “a once and for all time” **RADICAL change of perception**, which changes one’s heart and mind, and results in a radically changed life. Since repentance is an ongoing process, it can be described as “gradual”. What is “gradual” about it is the dealing with specific sins, and the working through particular categories or strongholds of sin. But there is nothing “gradual” about the beginning of repentance. It is a **RADICAL change of perception**, which changes one’s heart, mind, and life. I have used the word “radical”. It is from the Latin word, *radix* which means “root”. Repentance is a change that happens at “root level”. Repentance is like “an axe laid at the root”¹⁷ that exposes and deals with what is fundamentally wrong with Humanity. And what is fundamentally wrong with Humanity has its origin in the Garden, when our spiritual parents disobeyed the Lord, and ate the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

¹⁵ Matthew 3:8; Luke 3:8; Acts 26:20

¹⁶ Matthew 3:8

¹⁷ Matthew 3:10

The Self

I would define what is fundamentally wrong with Humanity as “Self-centeredness”. We were created to be God-centered, but the Fall has made us “self-centered”. When our spiritual parents chose to disobey God and eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, their free will decision was to not allow God to determine what was good and evil for their lives, but instead, determine for themselves – independent of God – what was good and evil for their lives. In other words, they would be their own gods and live independently of the One true God. A very simple but very significant result of living independently of God is that you have only your self to depend upon. Consequently, you feel “It is all up to you”; and therefore, “It’s all about you.” Quite the reverse, the Scripture says “It’s all about God”: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”.¹⁸ But there are many parts in our hearts, souls and bodies where we love our self more than God.¹⁹ It is the same with “you shall love your neighbor as yourself”: most of the time, we love our self more than our neighbor. At the root, all sin is basically loving our self more than we love God. This is what is fundamentally wrong with Humanity – “self-centeredness”. It resides in

¹⁸ Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37; Luke 10:27

¹⁹ It is the same with “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”: Most of the time, we love our self more than our neighbor.

every area of our inner being and has saturates every area of our external lives.

John Taylor, a South African friend of mine who is a missionary to Kazakhstan²⁰, pointed out to me the immediate and lasting effects of the Fall of Humanity recorded in Genesis 3:7-13:

v.7a “The eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked...” Humanity became “self-conscious”.

v.7b “... they sewed fig leaves together and made for themselves loin coverings.” Humanity became “self-righteous”, trying to establish our own righteousness through “good works”, as the Pharisees “white-washed” their external lives “to appear beautiful”.²¹

v.8b-10 “... and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God....” Humanity became, by nature, fearful, seeking “self-preservation”.

v.11-13 The man blamed his sin on the woman, and the woman blamed the devil for her sin; and thus, Humanity became “self-defensive”, “being deceived and deceiving”.²²

As my friend, John, pointed out, to truly get started with God, it is absolutely necessary to take personal responsibility for your sin, acknowledge that before God and yourself, and turn to the Lord in utter dependence for Him to redeem you. THAT is repentance. That repentance

²⁰ John and his wife, Amanda, have made disciples of Christ and helped establish churches in the homes of these disciples both in South Africa and Kazakhstan.

²¹ Matthew 23:27

²² 2 Timothy 2:13

is absolutely prerequisite to the biblically authentic Christian life and the pursuit of holiness.

There is something else of great significance in Genesis 3:6 “When the woman **saw** that the tree was good for food, and that it was **a delight to the eyes**, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit, and she ate....” They “saw” and “it was a delight to the eyes”. God told them not to eat the fruit of that tree, but they had a DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE – one that was INDEPENDENT of GOD’S PERSPECTIVE. Repentance is fundamentally A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE.

The apostle Paul described the call of God in his life in this way: ” to **open their eyes, that they may turn** from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me.”²³ “To open their eyes that they may turn....” THAT is repentance – an “opening of the eyes” TO GOD’S PERSPECTIVE that results in a turning away from sin and a turning to God.

There are many references in Scripture to Humanity’s **ignorance** of God. Humanity apart from God²⁴ is “**foolish in their reasonings, and their hearts, lacking understanding, have become darkened**”²⁵, “because of the **blindness of their heart, because of the ignorance that is in them**”.²⁶

²³ Acts 26:18

²⁴ e.g., Acts 3:17, 30; 1 Peter 1:14; Hebrews 9:7

²⁵ Romans 1:21, Cf. v.22

²⁶ Ephesians 4:18, Cf. 4:17-19

Paul said he was called “to open eyes”. There are other familiar phrases like “to see the light” and “to be enlightened”. The meaning is to somehow **come out of ignorance and come into understanding**. I believe that this is the essential meaning of the term “repentance” as it is used in the New Testament. The Greek word translated “repent” is: *metanoeo* – a combination of two words - *meta* meaning “change”, and *noeo*, meaning “mind”, or “perception” or “understanding”.ⁱ “Repentance” is coming to a change of mind - a change in our perception and understanding of God, ourselves, and life. Repentance is, in fact, **a change of perception that enables us to see things from God’s point of view**.

If this sounds like it is too abstract and theoretical to be an effective process for change, the fact is, Scripture shows this to be the way God has chosen as a “highway of holiness”²⁷. The two references to spiritual transformation in the New Testament are 2 Corinthians 3:18, which speaks of **transformation by way of revelation**; and Romans 12:2, which speaks of **transformation by way of the renewal of the mind**. From God’s point of view, those are the things that effect change in human beings. Those are the things that transform people into the image of Christ.²⁸

²⁷ Isaiah 35:8

²⁸ It is noted that the “renewal of the mind” in Romans 12:2 is in the context of the “presenting your bodies” in Romans 1:1. That is significant. In fact, the principle of presentation is what I will be discussing in this article as an essential aspect of the process of transformation.

Yes, the Spirit of Truth²⁹ working in and through the word of truth³⁰ has the power to change and enlighten our hearts and minds³¹ to see Him, to see ourselves, to see everything in life **from His point of view** – to see things as they really are – in truth and in reality. This is the heart of **repentance – seeing from God’s point of view.**

Listen to the beginning of Paul’s wonderful prayer for the Church in his letter to the Colossians – I quote here from *The New Testament in Modern English* by J.B. Phillips:

“We are asking God that you may **see things**, as it were, **from His point of view** by being given spiritual insight and understanding.” **Seeing from God’s point of view – this is the heart of repentance.**

Before moving on, I’d like to suggest a word of caution with regards to repentance, and that is this: **I believe we have a limited ability to evaluate authentic repentance another person.**

Much in the Christian life consists of external behavior, which other people can examine and attempt to evaluate. But, as we know, external behavior may not be authentically arising from the life of the Spirit. In fact, we human beings have a natural sociological tendency and ability to learn the language and behaviors of a peer group, social group, or even spiritual culture, and “keep the law”, even as did the Pharisees.

²⁹ John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13

³⁰ John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 6:7; Colossians 1:5; 2 Timothy 2:15; James 1:18

³¹ Hebrews 4:12

On the other hand, what we see in the lives of others may, in fact, well be authentic fruit of the Spirit. How can we really know?

Well, the scripture says that John the Baptist demanded that Pharisees “bear fruit in keeping with repentance”³². And Jesus said, “You will know them by their fruits....” But Matthew 7:15-20 is actually referring to true and false prophets rather than referring to people who have come to an authentic repentance, resulting in an authentic faith toward God, baptism in Christ and reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Ministry would require much less faith and patience if this were not the case, but, I don’t believe we can tell if a person has truly repented by “examining his fruit”. I say this because: Repentance is a gift of God. Romans 2:4 says, “the goodness of God leads to repentance”; Acts 11:18 says “**God gave repentance**”; and 2 Timothy 2:25 says that “**God may grant them repentance....**”. Repentance is a gift of God; and only God knows if someone has been given that gift, received that gift, and if the fruits of that repentance are authentic.³³

We communicate our experience of Christ to people through our words and our deeds; but others cannot fully know what lies between God and each of His individual children. He is a jealous God who reserves the

³² Matthew 3:8

³³ Looking at Ephesians 2:5 & 8, one might be tempted to say that faith is also a gift of God. But according to the Greek, that is inaccurate. The word “grace” in verse 8 has a definite article in the Greek, which refers back to the “grace” in v. 5. It is the salvation, not the faith, that is a grace gift of God. That grace of salvation comes from God and comes through faith on our part. So, it seems to imply a combination of the Calvinistic and the Armenian views – just like Philippians 2:12-13 “(You) work out your own salvation, knowing that it is God at work within you....”

realities of His redemption for an intimate relationship between Himself and each individual creature. We can examine and evaluate external fruit of others, but there is only One Judge³⁴ - only He knows for a certainty to whom He has given and who have received His gift of repentance.

Having said this, we must maintain firstly, that authentic repentance does “bear fruit in keeping with repentance”; and secondly, while there is a definite and significant beginning to repentance, it is also an ongoing process.



³⁴ James 4:12

A Mysterious Process

Hebrews 12:14 reads: "Pursue ... sanctification (or holiness) without which no one will see the Lord." Holiness, yes; but HOW? What is the process by which God works holiness into our souls and lives?

Actually, we could ask another question – a question which is related to the first: How does God create? And how does He re-create? 2

Corinthians 5:17 reads:

"If anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature (or "*there is* a new creation");³⁵ the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."

We have Scripture and we have science; and still we do not understand the *exact* details of how the creation happened. Here is another question: If we **did** know the *exact* details of how the creation happened, do we think that we would then be able to develop the ability to create; and "be as God"? Could it be God's wisdom and grace that has hidden the *exact* details of creation from Humanity?

Secular science doesn't seem to have the least interest in the New Creation and has no insight to offer regarding spiritual life. But we have the Scripture. Yet, the *exact* details of the New Creation are somewhat mysterious. *Exactly HOW* do we get "regenerated"? *Exactly HOW* do we get "recreated", "renewed", "transformed", "sanctified" – *exactly HOW* do we get "holy"?

³⁵ Greek: *ktisis*, Strong's #2937. "An original formation (properly the act; by implication the thing, literally or figuratively): formation, creation, creature", *Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionary*.

There is information in the Scripture. For example, I think Scripture indicates that spiritual transformation has a definite beginning; but it also involves a process. I believe the more we understand the process, the more we can **co-operate** with God's Spirit in that process. That "**co-operation**", which I believe the Bible refers to as "**presenting**", or "**surrendering**", or "**yielding**" ourselves to the Holy Spirit³⁶ - is the key to spiritual transformation.

This gives rise to other questions: If we **did** know the *exact* details of how spiritual transformation happens, do we think that we could then develop techniques to recreate ourselves; and "be as God"? Could it be God's wisdom and grace that has hidden the *exact* details of re-creation from Christians?

I admit that we are dealing with a mystery. But a mystery is not something which can not be understood. Rather it is something that needs revelation in order to be understood. The more revelation and understanding we can glean from Scripture regarding the process of transformation, the more we can **co-operate** with the Holy Spirit in that process. **Co-operating** with the Holy Spirit in transformation is a very important aspect of the process. But it is just as important to **understand the process**. If we are co-operative, but mistaken with regards to the process, we will not see "fruit that remains";³⁷ and we could grow discouraged and

³⁶ Greek: paristemi, Strongs # 3936, Romans 6:13, 19; 12:1.

³⁷ John 15:16

become “shipwreck with regard to our faith”³⁸. Scripture encourages us to “Be working-out your salvation with fear and trembling. For God is the One working in you both the wanting and the working, for His good-pleasure”.³⁹ This verse indicates A CO-OPERATION: We work, not because we think we can work our way to holiness; but we work, knowing that God, the Creator and Re-Creator, is at work in us. I hope to show you from Scripture that our “work” consists of “PRESENTING” ourselves to God for Him to do His work. And that “PRESENTING” consists of A SURRENDERING AND YIELDING OF OUR WILL TO GOD’S WORD AND SPIRIT.



³⁸ 1 Timothy 1:19

³⁹ Philippians 2:12b-13 *The Disciples Literal New Testament*

“Crucifixion of Self” ?

The apostle Peter said that we are born again by the word of God.⁴⁰ I think we would all agree that God’s words recorded in Scripture have a vital effect on our thoughts, beliefs, and actions. While our words do not have the same creative power as God’s words, the words we use also influence our thoughts, what we believe and our actions.⁴¹ The saying, “Thoughts have consequences” is true; and it is also true that our words influence our thoughts, what we believe and therefore our actions. If we want to understand what Scripture can tell us about this process of transformation, then in our discussions, we should endeavor to use the words we find in Scripture. If we stray from biblical words, we will also stray from biblical theology, as well as biblical realities and experiences. A case in point, is the Greek word, *anthropos*⁴² in Romans 6:6. This is the Greek word from which we get our English word “anthropology”, the study of Man. *Anthropos* clearly means “man”, as in “human”; and in fact, often refers to mankind or Humanity⁴³. It does not mean “self”. Unfortunately, often the word “self” is used in our discussions instead of “man”.⁴⁴ We use the two words interchangeably, but they do have different meanings. “Self” refers to the

⁴⁰ 1 Peter 1:23

⁴¹ Proverbs 18:21; Matthew 12:37

⁴² Strong’s # 444

⁴³ Matthew 5:13, 16; Mark 11:2; 1 Timothy 6:16. W.E. Vine’s *Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* & Kenneth Wuest’s *Word Studies*.

⁴⁴ For *anthropos* the *New American Standard Bible*, *New International Version* and the *New Revised Standard Version* use the word “self”, which is obviously an interpretation rather than a translation, whereas, most other translations use the more accurate word, “man”.

personality of an individual soul. The word “man” in Romans 6 refers to, not our individual personalities, but our collective membership in the Adamic race – Fallen Humanity. It was Adam and the “old man”, which is the first creation, that was crucified and buried with Christ. And it is the Last Adam and the “New Man”, which is the New Creation, the Church, that is raised with Christ to “newness of life”.⁴⁵ I understand that may sound like an unfamiliar interpretation; but, in fact, it is held by a number of trustworthy bible interpreters.⁴⁶

While Scripture does refer to the crucifixion of the works of the **flesh**⁴⁷, it does not refer to the crucifixion of the **self**.

Also, Romans 6:6 says, “our old man **was** crucified with Christ, in order that the body of sin might be done away with....” The tense is in the past – “our old man **WAS** crucified with Him”, referring to the finished work of Christ, by which we are justified through faith. *Robertson’s Word Picture in the New Testament* explains that the tense of the Greek verb refers to a crucifixion that was a definite event which happened in the past.⁴⁸ Our “old man” in Adam was crucified on the cross with Christ some 2000 years ago, and through faith in the resurrection of Christ, the “Last Adam”⁴⁹, we are now part of a New Creation. **This past crucifixion has to do with our**

⁴⁵ Romans 6:3-5

⁴⁶ J. Sidlow Baxter, Darryll L. Bock, William Henrickson to name a few. There is an excellent article explaining this interpretation by Greg Herrick: <https://bible.org/article/old-man-and-new-man-paul>

⁴⁷ Romans 8:13; Galatians 5:24, Cf. vv.19-26. “flesh” or “body”, Greek: *sarx*.

⁴⁸ “first aorist active indicative of *stauroō* as in Galatians 2:19 (mystical union with Christ)” (*Robertson’s Word Picture in the New Testament*).

⁴⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

justification. It is inaccurate to attribute this to the present work of sanctification. The self most certainly needs to be dealt with in the process of sanctification; but Romans 6:6 is describing justification, not sanctification – it is describing the past, not the present. In God’s plan of Redemption, “our old man” needed to be crucified; but our “self” now needs to be transformed – and THAT is the work of sanctification or holiness – TRANSFORMATION, not crucifixion.

Let’s take a closer look at what Paul said in Romans 6:6. Firstly, and most importantly, we need to consider the context: What Paul is discussing in Romans 6 is part of the same context as Romans 5:12-21, where his theme is Justification, not Sanctification; and he is explaining Justification through comparing Death in and through Adam with Life in and through Christ, the “Last Adam”.⁵⁰ Both are representative heads of two different humanities: the old creation - the Adamic race - “the old man”; and the New Creation - the Church - the “One New Man”.⁵¹ It is significant to note that we find the same word, *anthropos*, in Ephesians 2:15, yet it is translated “One New Man”, not “One New *Self*”. “Self” definitely carries a singular connotation, whereas “Man” can refer to “Humanity”.

⁵⁰ 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 The theme of 5:12-21 may be simply stated as: “Death through Adam, life through Christ.” The structure of [Romans 5:12-21](#) is effected through an Adam-Christ typology where Paul is contrasting the effects of each man’s act, whether of disobedience in the case of Adam, resulting in death for all those connected to him, or obedience in the case of Christ, resulting in life for all those connected to him. Both men stand as representative heads of two different humanities. Adam represents sin and death and all that is under the *old* (former) order of sin (cf. [Revelation 21:3-4](#)). Christ, as the last Adam (cf. [1 Corinthians 15:21-22](#)), stands as the new head over a new humanity connected to him by faith—a new era of existence for people in which righteousness and life reign. (Greg Herrick)

⁵¹ Ephesians 2:15

Besides here in Romans 6, Paul uses the terms “old man” and “new man” in two other epistles – Ephesians (4:22-24) and Colossians (3:9-11)⁵². In both passages, the context is human relationships in community. Therefore, both the “old man” and the “new man” are groups of people, not merely individuals.

Paul says, “our old man”, plural; not “*your* old man” singular. Again, he is referring to a collective group of people, the Adamic race, that was crucified with Christ. You were certainly a member of that Adamic race, but Paul is not referring to your individual personality.

We need to clearly understand the Greek word which is translated “crucify”. That word is *stauroo*, literally meaning to “impale on a cross”, and figuratively meaning to “extinguish” as in death. If it is God’s intention to “extinguish” the self, why would He have created it in the first place, and then redeem it by the costly sacrifice of the Lamb of God, only to then “extinguish” it? If it isn’t God’s plan and purpose to reflect Christ in a somewhat unique way through each individual personality, then why would He create more than one person? The apostle Paul recognized God’s intention to have each child of God be “**a letter of Christ**, to be known and read by all”,⁵³ for “Christ is all and in all”.⁵⁴ Paul prayed “that the

⁵² In Colossians 3, “The allusion to [Genesis 1:27](#) in 3:10 is unmistakable and thus the corporate associations with Adam and his posterity, and Christ and His, rise to the surface (see [Romans 6:6](#)). Adam stands as the representative head of the old man—i.e., the world “in Adam.” Christ stands as the representative head of the new man—i.e., believers “in Christ.”” (Greg Herrick)

⁵³ 2 Corinthians 3:2-3

⁵⁴ Colossians 3:11

communication of our faith would be operative and effective⁵⁵ through **the acknowledgment and recognition⁵⁶ of every good thing which is in each one of us in Christ.**⁵⁷ It is not God's intention to *extinguish* the self, but rather to **transform** the self.

Most translations⁵⁸ have the first half of Galatians 2:20 reading, "I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" It is interesting to note that the King James Version⁵⁹ reads, "I am crucified with Christ: **nevertheless, I live**; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" A very literal translation reads, ⁶⁰"Christ I have been crucified with, but I live, no longer I, but in me Christ lives"⁶¹ This is obviously a difficult passage to translate. But in any case, let's look at the whole verse:

- "I have been crucified with Christ;" This is past tense. Paul is not presently experiencing being crucified with Christ. This is the difference between Justification and Sanctification.
- "and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;" This part of the verse is communicating *spiritual union with Christ* - a spiritual reality which is difficult to put into human words.
- "and the life which I **now live** in the flesh I **live** by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me." The important

⁵⁵ Greek: *energes*, Strong's # 1756

⁵⁶ Greek: *epignosis*, Strong's # 1922

⁵⁷ Philemon 6

⁵⁸ Based on Eberhard Nestle's *Novum Testamentum Graece*.

⁵⁹ Based on the *Textus Receptus*.

⁶⁰ Theologically termed "Identification".

⁶¹ *Apostolic Polygot Bible*

thing to note here is this: there is an “I” – a “self” which is living in the present. THIS is the Holy Spirit’s target with regards to sanctification. This “I”, this “self”, is being **transformed**, not *extinguished*.

Jesus referred to *your cross* as an instrument of “**self denial**”⁶², so I think it overly figurative to speak of it in terms of “*extinguishing self*”. The principle of salvation “by grace, through faith” as “a gift of God”⁶³ does not allow for Justification or Sanctification to be earned through the human effort of self-denial. 1 Corinthians 1:30 says, “**It is by His doing that you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification....**” 2 Corinthians 3:18 says “we are being transformed ... **(by) the Lord, the Spirit.**” Salvation, including sanctification, is a supernatural work of God. When we “**take up our cross and deny our selves**”, we are **presenting, surrendering, and yielding ourselves** to this supernatural working of the Holy Spirit to **transform our selves** in progressive sanctification. I will be further discussing this **presenting, surrendering, or yielding of the will and the self** in the supernatural process of holiness.

But here, I’d like to suggest there seems to be a significant difference between the “body”⁶⁴ or the “flesh”⁶⁵ and the “self”. Paul refers to “putting to

⁶² Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23

⁶³ Ephesians 2:8

⁶⁴ Greek: *soma*, Strongs # 4983

⁶⁵ Greek: *sarx*, Strongs # 4561

death the deeds of the body” in the present tense.⁶⁶ Here Paul is speaking of our activity in the present, whereas, in Romans 6:6, he is speaking about Christ’s crucifixion in the past. We may understand this “putting to death the deeds of the body” as being the same as “laying aside the old man” as in Ephesians 4:22, and Colossians 3:9. He is referring to the “old man”, not putting off your personal individual “self”.

Also, “laying aside”⁶⁷ is not the same as “crucifying”. The meaning of the Greek words here are similar to “taking off a garment and laying it aside”. Paul did not refer to putting to death the deeds of “self” or laying aside your “self”. But if we wanted to connect these verses to the “self”, it would be more like “denying” self than crucifying self.

The difference between the “body” and “self” may be the phenomenon of being “in Christ”: The self is “in Christ”, but the body is “in the flesh”. The Scripture says, “the body is dead because of sin”⁶⁸; and “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God”.⁶⁹ It is the spirit and the personality of the soul that will live forever in the kingdom.

The Scripture does refer to *denying* the self⁷⁰ and the *transformation* of self⁷¹. But, after ordaining and allowing the crucifixion of Christ, I don’t think God has ordained the *crucifixion* of anyone else for the purpose of Justification or Sanctification. Rather, His plan and purpose are the

⁶⁶ Romans 8:13; Galatians 5:24, Cf. vv.19-26.

⁶⁷ Ephesians 4:22, Greek: *apotithemi*, Strongs # 659 & Colossians 3:9, Greek: *apekduomai*, Strongs # 554.

⁶⁸ Romans 8:10

⁶⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:50

⁷⁰ Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23

⁷¹ Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:18

transformation of people in Christ. Still, He desires the self to be renewed after the image of Christ⁷²; and this requires **self-denial** and **the transformation of self**.

The new self is not to be found in the grave, as it were, but rather in Christ. And we need not pursue our true self, but rather pursue Christ, for our true self will be found in Him. “He who seeks to save his (soul) life will lose it; he would lose his (soul) life for My sake will find it.”⁷³



⁷² Colossians 3:10

⁷³ Matthew 10:39; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24, 17:33; John 12:25

Holiness, yes, but HOW ?

Hebrews 12:14 reads: “Pursue peace with all men, and sanctification (or holiness) without which no one will see the Lord.” It is one thing to agree with this; it is another thing to truly believe it. But probably all Christians agree on this. So, holiness is not in question – the question is Holiness HOW? What is the process by which the Holy Spirit works holiness into our souls and lives?

In his epistle to the Romans, the apostle Paul sheds much light on this process of transformation. We discussed the “old man” and the “new man” with reference to the “self” in chapters 5 and 6. And in chapters 7 and 8 Paul makes reference to two “laws” influencing the soul of one who has received the Spirit of Christ and belongs to Christ.⁷⁴ Those two laws are: “**the law of God**”⁷⁵ and “**the law of sin**”.⁷⁶ He further describes these two laws as “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ”, which is in our “inner man”, and “the law of sin and death”⁷⁷ which is in “the members of the body”.⁷⁸ These are the two laws that compete for the soul of the one who belongs to Christ.

The human will is central in the process of transformation. In Romans 6 and 12 we learn about two principles regarding the submission of the will.

⁷⁴ Roman 8:8-10. Here Paul is not speaking to those who have not yet received the Spirit of Christ. And Paul is not speaking in the past tense to describe his life *before Christ*. He is speaking in the present tense regarding his life, and therefore I believe he is describing *the normal Christian life*.

⁷⁵ The Christian’s “law of my mind” is in agreement with “the law of God”. (v. 23)

⁷⁶ Romans 7:17-25

⁷⁷ Romans 8:2 Cf. Romans 7:15-8:11

⁷⁸ Greek: *soma*, Strongs # 4983; Greek: *melos*, Strongs # 3196

I will call these the Principle of Co-Operation and the Principle of Presentation.



The Principle of Co-Operation

Regarding the Principle of Co-operation, let's read Philippians 2:12b-13: **“(You) work out your salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.”** What does “work out” mean? Greek scholars Bengel and Robertson both say “to carry out to the goal”⁷⁹ of salvation which is sanctification⁸⁰. The “working out of our salvation” is the process of sanctification or transformation. But whose work is it? Ours or God's? Both. We work knowing that God is at effectively and efficiently at work⁸¹ in us. Paul told the Philippians, “I am confident of this very thing, that He who began A GOOD WORK IN YOU will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.”⁸²

One of the main problems with the “death to self” - “crucifixion of self” – “extinguish self” concept is that it gives an inaccurate picture of our union with Christ. The spiritual realities of “I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” and “Christ in you the hope of glory”⁸³ do not eliminate the existence of self. If self were “extinguished”, then it would be “Christ at work INSTEAD of you” rather than Christ at work IN you.

We cannot do this work of transformation without God, and He won't do it without us. It is a mysterious, yet beautiful, God-ordained process of

⁷⁹ Greek: *katergazomai*, to complete, finish. Strongs # 2716

⁸⁰ Romans 6:19

⁸¹ Greek: *energeo*: to be effective and efficient. Strongs # 1756

⁸² Philippians 1:6

⁸³ Colossians 1:27

co-operation between God's will and Spirit and the human will and spirit of one who belongs to Christ.

We see this New Covenant ministry of the Spirit⁸⁴ prophesied in Ezekiel 36:27: "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."⁸⁵ We can even see the **Principle of Co-operation** foreshadowed in the Old Testament. Let's look at Psalm 90:16-17: "Let Your work appear to Your servants and Your majesty to their children. ¹⁷ Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; and (You) confirm for us **the work of our hands**; yes, (You) **confirm the work of our hands.**" Whose work? God's and ours. Isaiah 26:12 states the concept very clearly: "**YOU have performed for us all our works.**"

⁸⁴ Cf. 2 Corinthians 3

⁸⁵ Cf. Ezekiel 36:23-27

The Principle of Presentation

Before discussing the will and the Principle of Presentation, I'd like to point out two related aspects in Romans 6, which we can refer to as **the Principle of Knowing**⁸⁶ and **the Principle of Considering**⁸⁷. These have to do with the finished work of Christ and how it relates to you.

The Principle of Knowing

The Principle of Knowing is simply knowing the truth which is recorded in Scripture about the finished work of Christ and how it relates to you. God's people are destroyed because of a lack of knowledge.⁸⁸ We must KNOW the truth in order for it to set us free.⁸⁹ We must know the truths regarding our UNION WITH CHRIST – for example, the implications in the life of the believer regarding what is written in Romans 6:3-14, where three times Paul uses the phrase 'KNOWING THIS'.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Romans 6:6 & 9

⁸⁷ Romans 6:11

⁸⁸ Hosea 4:6

⁸⁹ John 8:32

⁹⁰ ⁹⁰ It would require another article to delineate these truths and expound on their implications for the believer, as they belong to the category of Justification, whereas this article is concerned with Sanctification. But there are many materials freely available which deal with these "Positional" truths gleaned from the Pauline epistles. E.g., *Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, "Union with Christ". I could also suggest the first sections of both *The Wealth, The Walk, and the Warfare* by Ruth Paxton, as well as *Sit, Walk, Stand* by Watchman Nee.

The Principle of Considering

And there is the **Principle of Considering**. For the truth of the finished work of Christ to be effective in your life, you must CONSIDER it to be true FOR YOU. This is simply believing Christ's work was done FOR YOU PERSONALLY.

This is how John Wesley described his experience on Aldersgate Street: "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."⁹¹ Wesley CONSIDERED these things to be PERSONALLY TRUE FOR HIMSELF.

Romans 6:11 says, "Consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:14-16 reads: 14 "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...."

This inner witness between the Spirit of God and the human spirit that one is truly born of God is *the Principle of Considering* in action.

I associate this inner witness with a passage in another of Paul's epistles – Ephesians 3:16-19: 16 "that He would grant you, according to the

⁹¹ *John Wesley's Journal*

riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to **comprehend** with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height - 19 to **know the love of Christ** which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

Again, this PERSONAL “comprehending” and “knowing” is *the Principle of Considering* in action.

The Principle of Presentation

This leads to the **Principle of Presentation**, which has to do with **surrendering your will and yielding your soul and body** to the Holy Spirit for the work of transformation. It is an act of submission and obedience to the Lord. As it says in Romans 6:13, “Do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but **PRESENT** yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.”⁹² We can see here that this **PRESENTING**, which Paul is speaking of to the Romans, is essentially the same as the “laying aside the old man” and “putting on the new man”, which he was speaking about with the Ephesians and Colossians⁹³.

⁹² Cf. Romans 6:16 & 19

⁹³ Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:5-10

This PRESENTING is an act of **surrendering and yielding**. It says in Romans 6:19 to “now PRESENT your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.” THAT is the process of transformation.

In Romans 12:1-2 Paul tells us that this PRESENTING is, in fact, an act of worship – an “offering as a living sacrifice”- worship as a lifestyle – worship in Spirit and truth⁹⁴ – a PRESENTING of yourselves which leads to transformation.

“Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to PRESENT your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is your spiritual service of worship*. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed *by the renewing of your mind*, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Let’s investigate the meaning of these words:

- **“Present”**⁹⁵ means to offer oneself or to make oneself available.
- **“your bodies”**⁹⁶ means your whole being.
- **“a living and holy sacrifice”**⁹⁷ means a devoted life offered in worship.
- **“your spiritual⁹⁸ service of worship⁹⁹”** A more literal translation would be: “Your rational service”, which means it is service that has been

⁹⁴ John 4:23-24

⁹⁵ Greek: *paristemi*, Strongs # 3936

⁹⁶ Greek: *soma*, Strongs # 4983

⁹⁷ Greek: *thusia*, Strongs # 2378

⁹⁸ Greek: *logikos*, Strongs 3050

⁹⁹ Greek: *latreia*, Strongs # 2999

deliberately “proven”,¹⁰⁰ that is, “examined and accepted” by an act of the will.

- **“do not be conformed”**¹⁰¹ “The Greek word translated “conformed” means “to shape one thing like another”. The tense of the Greek verb is present passive imperative tense, meaning a continuance of an action already going on i.e. “(You already have been, but now) do not continue to be shaped or fashioned to the world...”
- **“to the world”** ¹⁰² means the whole of the fallen human system - separated from God, and in opposition to God.¹⁰³
- **“be transformed”**¹⁰⁴ The Greek word means to change (*meta*) into another form (*morphe*). W.E. Vine explains: “Be transformed’ is in the present continuous tense indicating a process.... (It means) a **complete change** under the power of God (the Holy Spirit) which will find expression in character and conduct.” Whereas “conformed” lays stress on the outward, “transformed” lays stress on the inward. The world exerts pressure from the outside to shape and mold us. God woos our wills from the inside to change us. Transformation is not just an outward obedience to the commandments of God; but an inward obedience to His will, that is, from the heart.

¹⁰⁰ Greek: dokimazo, Strong’s # 1381

¹⁰¹ Greek: *suschematizo*, Strong’s # 4964

¹⁰² Greek: *aion*, Strong’s # 165

¹⁰³ J.B. Phillips’ *New Testament in Modern English*: “Don’t let the world around you **squeeze** you into its own **mold**....” W.E. Vine: “*Suschematizo* could not be used of inward transformation.” This is a fashioning through **outward** pressure.

¹⁰⁴ Greek: *metamorphoo*, Strong’s # 3339 In other passages, the Greek word translated “transformed” is translated with a stronger word: “transfigured”.

- **“by the renewing”**¹⁰⁵ The Greek word translated “renewing” means to “renovate”, in the sense of changing the nature or character of something; not making something “recent” but making something “different”.
- **“of your mind”**¹⁰⁶ That is, your soul – your will, mind and emotions.”
- (this takes place through) **“proving”**¹⁰⁷ which means “examining and accepting”.
- **“the will of God”**, as revealed by His word and Spirit.

“Be transformed ... don’t be conformed”. Do you notice that something is working effectively upon the person? Depending on what he PRESENTS himself to, he is either **being conformed** by the world or **being transformed** by the Lord as he examines and accepts the will of God for the renewing of his mind. It would be inaccurate to refer to this as being “passive” because PRESENTING requires an act of the will. But there is a very real aspect of **surrender and yielding** in “presenting”. This is the nature of the **obedience** that is required in the process. Paul said, “Just as you have always **obeyed... work out your salvation....**”¹⁰⁸ But, it is important that we understand the nature of this **obedience**. Our obedience doesn’t make us holy. Our obedience allows the Holy Spirit to transform us. Again, this is **the Principle of Co-operation**. It is not just our obedience. It is our obedience in co-operation with God’s working effectively and efficiently in us. It is our

¹⁰⁵ Greek: *anakainosis*, Strongs # 342

¹⁰⁶ Greek: *nous*, Strongs # 3563

¹⁰⁷ Greek: *dokimazo*, Strongs # 1381

¹⁰⁸ Philippians 2:12

obedience plus faith in God's good work in us.¹⁰⁹ This is what the apostle James clarified: "Faith is working with works (of obedience), and as a result of the works (of obedience), faith is completed."¹¹⁰

I'd like to give you an example of this process in action. I am going to use the example of Peter walking on the water. If you agree that Self-centeredness is what is fundamentally wrong with Humanity,¹¹¹ then possibly you would also agree that transformation of self into Christ-likeness is no less a miracle than walking on water.

Matthew 14:22-28

22Immediately He made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. **23** After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone. **24** But the boat was already a long distance from the land, battered by the waves; for the wind was contrary. **25** And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea. **26** When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. **27** But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid."

¹⁰⁹ This concept is communicated in the old hymn standard, "*Trust and Obey*".

¹¹⁰ James 2:22, Cf. vv.14-26

¹¹¹ pp. 10-16

28 Peter said to Him, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”

Peter’s revelation of Christ and his relationship with Christ inspired in him a desire to be like Christ - in this particular case it was something rather supernatural - the ability to walk on water! Peter said, “Lord if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” Peter’s desire and faith were both founded upon his revelation of Christ and his relationship with Christ.

Matthew 14:29-33

²⁹ And He said, “Come!” And Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. ³⁰ But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!”

³¹ Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and *said to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³² When they got into the boat, the wind stopped. ³³ And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, “You are certainly God’s Son!”

Peter’s obedience to the Lord’s command was not based upon his ability to obey. It wasn’t as if Peter had been practicing walking on puddles, and now he felt ready to try to walk on the sea! When he was sinking and cried out to the Lord, he plainly demonstrated his utter dependence on Christ. THAT IS TRUE FAITH – UTTER DEPENDENCE ON CHRIST – as it says in Philippians 3:3 - to “boast¹¹² in Christ Jesus and put no confidence

¹¹² Greek: *kauchaomai*, Strongs # 2744

in the flesh.” Peter’s obedience was based upon his faith in the Lord’s ability to “COMPLETE the good work” ¹¹³of transformation. We do not obey because we believe that our obedience - in and of itself - has the ability to transform us. That form of obedience would lead to “the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees”. In Matthew 5:20, Jesus said that “your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees” . In Philippians 3:9, Paul described this higher form of righteousness: “... not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.” For THIS righteousness we must obey, believing that our obedience allows the Holy Spirit to transform us into the image of Christ.

Through this process of faith and obedience to God’s word and Spirit we are “transformed by the renewing of the mind” – by the renovation of our will, mind, and emotions. Gradually, we find our nature and character becoming different – becoming more Christ-like.

¹¹³ Philippians 1:6

The Principle of “Beholding”

Scripture tells us that TRANSFORMATION ALSO COMES THROUGH REVELATION: “⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, **beholding** as in a mirror the **glory**¹¹⁴ of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.” This is 2 Corinthians 3:18. If we combine this verse with another that follows it in 2 Corinthians 4:6, we see that “the knowledge of the glory of the God (is) in the face of Jesus Christ”. **WHEN WE RECEIVE REVELATION OF CHRIST, WE ARE TRANSFORMED INTO HIS IMAGE.** This is a process – “from glory to glory”. And it is clearly the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in us.¹¹⁵ But again, it requires our co-operation with the working of the Holy Spirit. We cannot do it without God, and He won’t do it without us.¹¹⁶ This is the same beautiful process which combines God’s work with our obedience and faith. Through this process, the Holy Spirit’s transforming power imparts the life of Christ. This is “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus”.¹¹⁷

Let’s look into this word, “beholding” – “beholding as being reflected in a mirror”.¹¹⁸ This **Principle of “Beholding”** indicates TRANSFORMATION BY REVELATION. Again, if this sounds like it is too abstract and theoretical

¹¹⁴ Greek: *doxa*, Strong’s # 1391

¹¹⁵ Philippians 1:6; 2:13

¹¹⁶ Philippians 2:13

¹¹⁷ Romans 8:2

¹¹⁸ Greek: *katoptrizomai*, Strong’s # 2734

to be an effective process for change, the fact is, Scripture shows this to be the way God has chosen as a “highway of holiness”¹¹⁹.

What is it that we are to “behold”? “The glory of the Lord...in the face of Jesus Christ”.¹²⁰ Greek scholar, W.E. Vine, says: “The glory of the Lord is **the character and the ways of God** as exhibited through Christ”.¹²¹ There is a similarity between “**beholding** the character and the ways of God” and “**proving**”¹²² of the “will of God” discussed in Romans 12:2. Both the will of God and the character and the ways of God were perfectly revealed through “the face of Jesus Christ”.¹²³ **WE ARE TRANSFORMED BY REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.**

This work of transformation is undoubtedly the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁴ But again, the Lord requires our co-operation – our faith and obedience. When we obey the will of God, we get revelation of the character and ways of God in the Man, Jesus of Nazareth. When we see His obedience to the will of God, and when we see the character and ways of God in Jesus, “we are transformed into that same image”¹²⁵ – “the image of His Son”.¹²⁶

I would like to give you my perspective of how this supernatural process takes place: John 14:21 says, “The one who has My commands

¹¹⁹ Isaiah 35:8

¹²⁰ 2 Corinthians 3:18 & 4:6

¹²¹ *Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*

¹²² Greek: *dokimazo*, Strong’s # 1381

¹²³ John 1:14, 17:5, 24; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Hebrews 1:3

¹²⁴ 2 Corinthians 3:18b

¹²⁵ 2 Corinthians 3:18a

¹²⁶ Romans 8:29

and keeps them is the one who loves Me. And the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father. I also will love him and will **reveal** Myself to him.”¹²⁷
When we obey the Lord, we express our love of the Lord. And when we love and obey the Lord, He expresses His love towards us and REVEALS Himself to us. When the Lord **reveals** Himself to us, Scripture says that the Holy Spirit works a wonderful, supernatural process within us - “we are transformed into that same image”¹²⁸ – “the image of His Son”.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ *Holman Christian Standard Bible*

¹²⁸ 2 Corinthians 3:18a

¹²⁹ Romans 8:29

Bill & Frances Furioso
~ At Christ's Table ~



Bill Furioso and his wife, Frances, have been married for more than 40 years, and have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Bill and Frances served as missionaries in South Africa for thirteen years making disciples, establishing churches, and training church leaders. Over a span of 40 years, they also traveled extensively in an itinerant Bible teaching ministry which took them to hundreds of gatherings on four continents ministering in churches, conferences, spiritual formation seminars, and home gatherings. They have shepherded several churches, discipled many to Christ, and mentored church leaders in the USA and abroad.

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