

## How Do I Rid Myself of Worthless Works!

God will do everything within His power to remove from our lives the worthless works of hay, wood, and stubble before we appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ -- *if* we will cooperate with His workings!

Christ, as Judge, said to the saints at Sardis in Revelation 3:1-3, "*I know thy works*, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy *works* perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and *repent*. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."

John, peering into the future, sees Jesus as Judge, and writes to the church at Sardis. Today, in our day and age, Christ is still our Savior -- and High Priest in the presence of God, for us. When Christ judged the church at Sardis, He found "*imperfect works*" and offered a remedy for them. The remedy was to "*repent*" and to remember how they had "*received*" and "*heard*."

This letter to the church at Sardis was preserved and kept by the Holy Spirit and placed in the canon of Scripture, for warning to many of God's saints today. If we neglect to heed His message, He will come to us as a thief; and it will be too late to remove same things before we arrive at the Judgment Seat of Christ, where He will be Judge, not Savior -- as He is today!

Peter, in his writings, writes, "*Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you*" (1 Peter 4:12). Peter is saying don't think that something outlandish has happened to you when difficult times take place in your life because Christ is doing His best to get you ready to appear before Him with fullness of joy. God is not dealing with us in the light of our lifespan down here on this earth; He is dealing with us in the light of Eternity because we are an "*Everlasting Creature,*" that will live forever.

God deals with us in the way any wise parent deals with his children. Every child needs discipline -- so more than others, depending upon what is require.

A child lives in his own little world and wants to be the center of it. He doesn't understand why his father does certain - or why things have to be a specified way. All he is interested in, when he is very small, is his own desires and what *he* wants. As he grows up, he begins to realize why things have to be and why it is important that they be a certain way, especially when he has children of his own. He sees things from a mature vantage point.

As a child of God, we will only understand the working of our Heavenly Father when we have grown up spiritually and begin to comprehend the purpose and plan for our lives in the light of eternity.

That's what Peter is writing about when he says, *"Don't think that things are worn and unnecessary, and wonder why they happen, just because you can't understand them at the time they take place. Just grow up in Christ Jesus and you will understand when you get to Eternity. Then you will thank God because all things worked together for your benefit"*

When I think back on my boyhood days, it isn't the gifts that my parents gave me that I thank them for, but it is the discipline that I received -- (though I could not understand it at the time) -- and the teaching of God's Word that will be eternally grateful for. They did not let me have my way and do as I pleased – that I, at the time, thought would be so wonderful – but they opposed cut off my will and corrected me according to their wisdom and foresight.

Someday, in eternity, we will do the same thing with God -- when we can look back over life and see as God saw -- not in the light of present knowledge, but in the light of eternity!

Hebrews 12:5-15 clears up a lot of questions in our spiritual journey down here, when it states, *"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled."*

This passage proves that God is working NOW to bring us into His presence some day with fullness of joy! God desires to remove in our present life those things that will cause us to be ashamed and suffer loss in Eternity! God even allows Satan to test us in certain areas of our life in order to work out His ultimate will – (as He did Job).

In Isaiah 6:1-7, Isaiah tells us what happened when he saw the Lord high and lifted up on His throne and the holiness of His dwelling place. It caused him to realize his own need, as he had never seen his self before. A clear vision of God will do the same thing for us today! Isaiah cried, *"Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts"* (Isaiah 6:5).

A revelation of the glorified Christ will first show us our need and then the condition of others around us. We need to have a heavenly vision of our own need before we see the need and condition of others.

When Isaiah made a confession of his need, God began to remove that condition sending a seraphim with a live coal from off the altar of God that took away his confessed iniquity and purged him of his sin. There is a need today for coals off the burning altar of God to reveal to us our need -- and a need for us cry out, "Woe is me," confessing our heart's need. There are those things that the fire of God can remove from our life before we go to the Judgment Seat of Christ.

God said through John the Baptist, in Matthew 3:11-12, *"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He [Jesus] that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but **He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.**"*

The "fire of the Holy Spirit" is God's remedy for the wood, hay, and stubble worthless works in our present life to be burned out -- instead of having them appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ and be burned with fire then.

Christ will do it now, if we will let Him!

The fire that burns chaff will purify gold.

Farmers know that you can't have wheat without chaff, because chaff is the cradle of wheat during a certain period of time. There comes a time when the two must separate or the wheat will be useless. This separation must take place before the wheat goes to the garner. -- There are some things that we must "put away" for growth and development -- [See lesson on "Birth, Growth, and Development"].

There are some things that need to be removed from our life if we are to grow in God. God wants to make us men and women to labor and work with Him, not just to mark time, now that we are born-again. If our "works" are put out on the floor of our heart, the fan of Christ's own Word can work on them **NOW** by the power of the Holy Spirit -- changing a great deal for us at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

There is a fire that burns today as well as a fire that will burn at the Judgment Seat of Christ. A fire that can consume wood, hay, stubble, chaff and such *if we will give it to the flame NOW*. There will be a fire at the Judgment Seat of Christ, "For fire will try every man's works, to see what sort it is."

"He (Christ) will baptize you with the Holy Ghost" --and -- there is also a "fire experience" that goes along with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit --- "a fire to consume the chaff." There is a "fan" in His hand - which is the Word of God, and He will purge the floor of our heart baptizes as we place every thought and deed upon the floor of our heart letting the fan (of God's Word) work in the hand of Christ, the chaff will be burned up -- NOW in this present life -- with unquenchable fire!

We need the Holy Spirit to remove the chaff from our life. If cooperate with the Holy Spirit and let Him work in our life NOW, it can save us a great loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Read what Paul has to say, *“Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 3:4-14).

Paul speaks of what the Holy Spirit was accomplishing in his life, how the values of things changed after he was converted and led by the Spirit of God. Notice how low he counted the value of things the Holy Spirit led him to give up for the Kingdom of God. Only the Holy Spirit can give us power to place our self-attainments where Paul put his. By so doing he never had anything to return back to. We see only the power of the Holy Spirit and the results of a yielded vessel such as Paul's.

God help us to live in the purifying power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised *“the rivers of the Holy Spirit to flow out of our inner most being”* -- rivers that will carry away the works of the *“self-life.”*

*John 7:37-39, “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”*

Notice two experiences that Jesus speaks of: First, when a thirsty soul come to Christ for a drink of Living Water to quench the thirst of his soul. Jesus told the woman at the well, *“Whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst”* (John 4:14). This speaks of the Water of Salvation that can only be given by the coming of the thirsty soul to the Giver of Living Water, Jesus Christ, satisfying the soul thirst.

But, Jesus speaks of a second experience as well. Every soul who has come and has had his own soul thirst quenched in salvation, will then believe on Him as the Spirit hath said, For any real hungry, believing, soul, the best book yet on the Baptism of the Holy is the Bible. The Bible will lead you to the experience of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is likened to a river of water flowing OUT of the inner parts of the soul, carrying live and refreshing blessing and power to others. It is *“flowing out,”* not taken in

by the individual, as the Living Water is by the thirst soul. Jesus calls, *“If any man thirst, let him come and drink.”*

**Drinking** Living Water is different than having rivers of Living Water **flow OUT**. They are two entirely different experiences, as Jesus taught so plainly in these verses of Scripture.

A real living river will keep the fountainhead clean and purify itself as it flows out. We need these flowing-out rivers of the Spirit! For one thing, it will do is to carry away the many things that otherwise enter into the heart. If we keep the living rivers of life busy carrying out the works of the Spirit, there will be no place for the devil to send his works and thoughts into our heart.

Our heart works as a one-track railroad. The devil can't send his thoughts and works, as long as we keep sending out the River of Life that is within us. Dead things cannot stay in a live-flowing river, but almost anything dead can stay in a canal.

There are times when the fountainhead is stopped up, and we need a good Spiritual cleansing -- that only comes by pray though in the Holy Spirit.

There are times we need to pray as David prayed in Psalm 51:1-15, *“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.”*

David is cleaning out his well. His trouble had started from within. The God of heaven heard and answered his prayer. If we pray with the same kind of a broken heart and spirit, God will hear us. Many things can be removed in this present life if we will yield to the Holy Spirit's voice.

Oh! How we need to live in the life-giving flow of the Holy Spirit. So many of our *“works of the flesh”* will be carried away. Paul said that *“he spake with tongues more than ye all”* (1 Corinthians 14:18) -- referring to the Church at Corinth. Paul was only able to minister to the people of his day because he kept his heart clean and pure and filled with the love of God, by the cleansing of his own soul, by praying in other tongues in the Holy Spirit - (See Romans 8:26-27).

Luke 22:61-62 says, *“The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.”*

A look **FROM** Christ changed Peter. We are not to just look **TO** Christ Jesus, but we need to allow Him to look **AT** us! What a message must have come from the eyes of Jesus into the eyes of Peter. Scripture says, *“then Peter remembered.”* His memory was set on fire, as he backed away from the crowd and out of the gate he went into the darkness, shedding some bitter tears. That night he removed some things from his heart and life that were brought to light by a look from the eyes of Jesus.

What would you do if Jesus were to look into your eyes? Meeting the eyes of Christ NOW is also God’s remedy for some wood, hay, and stubble works in this present life. Many times we want to only look **AT** Him. He is the Lily of the Valley, the Rose of Sharon, the Bright and Morning Star, the Fairest of Ten Thousand. He is wonderful to look **AT**. But a look **AT** Christ will not do for some things that a look **FROM** Christ will do.

When Jesus looked **AT** Peter, no words needed to be said, no sermon needed to be preached, or a finger pointed at him, but a look **FROM** Jesus’ eyes into the eyes of Peter awoke his memory and all he had ever told the Master now stood before him.

Our memory is going with us to heaven and to the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is this part of our soul that outlives our natural bodies. Oh! What a day when our memories will be awakened by the living eyes of fire at the Judgment Seat of Christ. God help us to ask Him **NOW**, in this present life, to look at us, to search our hearts and memory and to bring to light those things that can be adjusted while He is still our Savior and High Priest in the presence of God and not wait until we will meet Him as a Judge.

God help us to lay our hearts bare before His Word for it is the basis of His judgment. It will be the standard of judgment in eternity.

Jesus said, *“The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day”* (John 12:48).

And 1 Corinthians 11:31 states, *“For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.”*

If we use God’s Word to judge us **NOW**, we will save our self a lot of trouble and remorse and loss later at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Some Christians will have to settle things at the Judgment Seat of Christ because they put off doing them in the time of opportunity here in this life.

At the Judgment Seat of Christ, the Lord will adjust all things for **His presence demands it**. His presence will produce it and bring it to pass. Many adjustments will be made at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Some Christians who have injured others by spreading false reports and doing things prompted by their self-life will make apologies and confessions before the High Court of Heaven. If God’s Word calls for reconciliation

and adjustments here, how much more in the hour when everything is being settled for eternity. God will not change His Word just because we will be in Heaven. There is only one thing that gives us a conscience void of offense before God and man. That is one based on God's own Word. The Rapture does not settle anything in the soul or spirit life. The Rapture changes our outer man giving us a body like unto Christ's own body. The inside person, the one we are ourself, must be changed *in this present life*, as the New Testament teaches, and not in the Rapture. So, many Christians will suffer loss and have remorse before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

I close this lesson on, "*Ridding Yourself of Works of Wood, Hay and Stubble*," by quoting 1 John 1:9, "***He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.***"

Confession is the only means that is able to cleanse memory, in relationship to God and man. It opens the fountain of soul-cleansing by the Blood of Jesus Christ.

Confession TODAY -- NOW -- is God's remedy for all our bad works and the only way to keep them from meeting us at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Revelation 12:11 says, "*They overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb...*" Satan cannot touch or bring up anything that is under the blood. Even God Himself will not remember that which Christ's blood has removed or covered.

The verse continues, "*...and by the word of their testimony...*" - (that was the life they had lived on the basis of God's Word) *...and they LOVED not their lives unto the death.*"

