

Doctrinal Dissertation of

# Depravity and Its Cleansing

by

Kenneth Yoder



**A  
Doctrinal  
Dissertation  
of  
Depravity  
and  
Its  
Cleansing**

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## Preliminary Remarks

Although I do not believe this subject is the most important doctrine in the Word of God, nor do I believe that people must have a clear understanding of this doctrine to be able to serve the Lord, yet I do believe that the truth frees us from certain difficulties and confusion.

This presentation is a doctrinal dissertation. My approach will not be heaping one proof text on top of another to prove my point. In fact, often when we do that, all we end up doing is simply throwing scriptural passages at each other and condemning each other's position. Rather, my intention is to reason with you and attempt to persuade you to see this subject differently, that is, to see it as I understand it. I do not claim to speak authoritatively for the brethren within our fellowship. We do not have an official, formal, clear, and concise statement of this doctrine. What we do have is a general consensus.

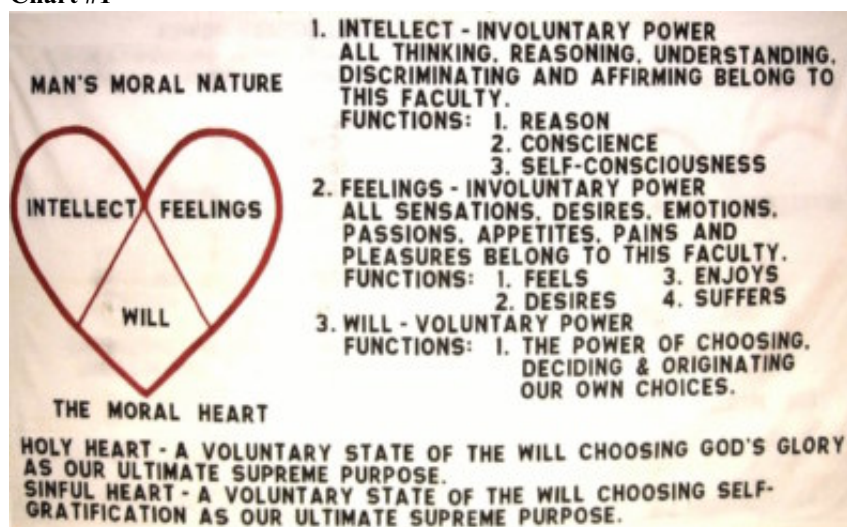
There are many areas of agreement between those who believe in a second definite cleansing of depravity and those who do not, but there are also some very important differences. I am going to focus on those differences. I am going to begin by explaining the things on which we agree, so that we can have a better understanding of the things on which we disagree. After reading this, you may still disagree with my position, but it is my hope that you will have a better understanding (to use a modern *cliché*) of "where I am coming from." In the end, we may have to respectfully disagree, but I trust that if we do, it will be with a clearer understanding of what we actually disagree on. I intend to confront the real issues that are involved and not make a "straw man" of things that are not real issues.

The real issue is not whether or not the flesh is depraved—on this we agree. The real issue is this: What is the nature of depravity? Nor is the real issue whether or not sin is universal—we all agree that at the beginning of moral character all men sin. The issue is how to account for the fact of universal sinfulness. Nor is the disagreement concerning whether or not Christians should be urged to experience deeper cleansings beyond regeneration. We are agreed that Christians should seek deeper cleansings beyond regeneration. The issue is: What is the nature of that cleansing?

At the heart of all of these various issues is but one issue: What is the nature of depravity? Once that is settled, then the other aspects of this subject follow by a logical course. Once you are convinced on one hand that depravity is inbred, something you are born with, or on the other hand that depravity is something that is acquired through a developmental process after birth, instead of something that is transferred at birth, from either one of these two different ideas will naturally flow the various aspects involved in this subject.

## Explanation of the Charts

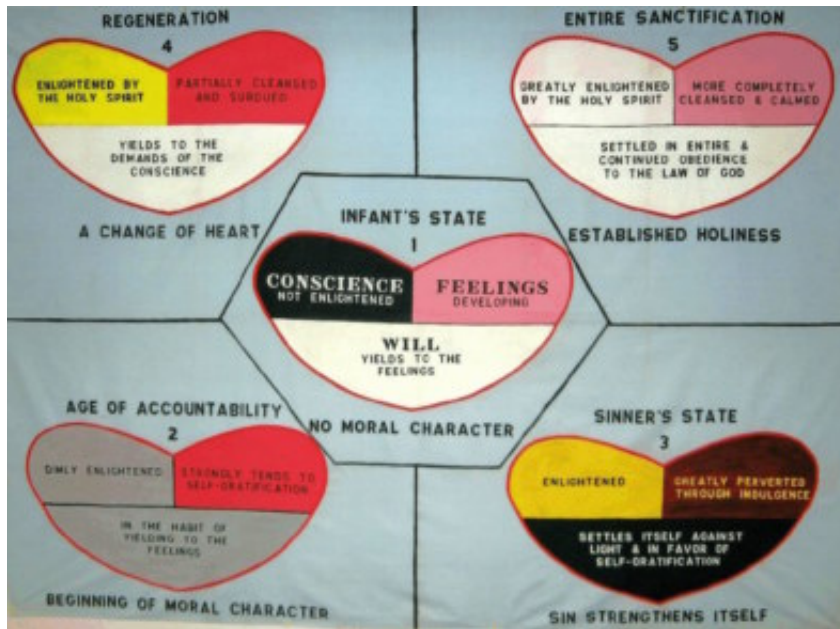
Chart #1



Normally when I teach on this subject, I use (2) charts.

This first chart is divided into (3) categories of man's moral nature: intellect, feelings, and the will. Most theologians would refer to what I call "feelings" as the "sensibilities," but since these charts were made for teaching in a local congregation, on a simple level, I call it "feelings." However, the theological words that are used are "sensibilities" or "propensities." On this chart I briefly define each category and include a definition of both a holy heart and a sinful heart. The second chart follows the same basic structure.

Chart #2



Five different moral states are represented.

(1) The infant state—no moral character due to the lack of being ethically enlightened; therefore, the will cannot make a conscious, voluntary choice. Thus, there is no moral character.

(2) The age of accountability—at the beginning of moral character, the will is already in a habit of yielding to the feelings or passions. These feelings, which have been developing since birth, strongly tend toward self-gratification. The intellect is dimly enlightened, and of course, it is natural for the will to continue to yield to the passions or feelings.

(3) The sinner's state—sin has the propensity to strengthen itself. The feelings become

greatly perverted through indulgence, and the will settles itself in the favor of self-gratification as the intellect becomes more enlightened concerning what is morally right or wrong.

(4) The state of regeneration—this is a change of heart. The biggest change is in the will; instead of yielding to passions and feelings, the will now yields to the demands of the conscience. The conscience is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and the human passions or fleshly desires are partially cleansed or subdued.

(5) The state of entire sanctification or established holiness—the will becomes settled in obedience to God. The intellect is greatly enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and the feelings or passions are more completely cleansed or calmed.

The various shades of color on the second chart are to illustrate the varying degrees of light, sin, and holiness. They are also to illustrate varying degrees of the perversion and cleansing of the human passions. Now, that gives you a basic idea of what is illustrated on both charts.

### The Flesh Is Morally Depraved

I want to begin with something I believe we agree upon and that is that the flesh is morally depraved. I want to begin here because some have the idea that when you deny the existence of inbred sin, you also deny that the flesh is morally depraved. But that is not true. This is not where the real issue lies. Thus, I want to clarify this because if we do not know what we agree upon, then we will not be able to see clearly where we disagree. I have chosen Paul's own personal experience to illustrate my point.

*Romans 7:5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions [or passions and emotions] of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.*

*6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.*

*7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*

*8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.*

*9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.*

*10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.*

Paul was speaking of a time when he did not know the law of God, what I would call the "infant state," a time

when his conscience was not enlightened. Paul said that he did not know that the Law said, "Thou shalt not covet." But when the commandment came (came to his understanding), that is he came to an understanding of what God's Law required: "but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." That means that he had been *coveting*, but was not aware that it was sin. Since he was coveting but without an understanding that it was sin, therefore, it was not accountable sin, or what we would call "known, voluntary sin." When the commandment came, sin revived. (Another translation says "sin sprang to life.") This simply means Paul became aware that what he was doing was sinful or wrong. That is when conscious sin came into his life.

When Paul spoke of "the commandment, which was ordained to life," he was referring to the moral law in the Old Testament, which says, "Do this and thou shalt live" and "Don't do this or thou shalt die." The commandment ordained to life, Paul found to be unto death. Sin taking occasion by the commandment deceived him and slew him.

*Romans 7:11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.*

*12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.*

*13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, [The things Paul was doing before he was enlightened were sin, but they did not appear as sin. The Law, or the commandments of God, is what brings to our understanding that sin is sin.] working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.*

*14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin [or a slave to sin].*

*15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.*

*16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.*

*17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*

*18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*

*19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*

*20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*

*21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.*

*22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:*

*23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

*24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

*25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*

Paul, in the latter part of this chapter, was analyzing his own struggle with sin. From my understanding of this passage, it was not from the perspective of an unawakened sinner. This passage is not describing a careless, indifferent sinner, but a religious man who was yet unregenerated. In my opinion, Paul was referring to his life as a Pharisee, because he delighted in the Law of God (verse 22). He admired the beauty of holiness but could not live a holy life. He was describing his own struggle with the flesh.

The words *flesh* and *carnal* in the New Testament are translated from a single Greek word. It appears 151 times, and 147 of those times it is translated as "flesh." Two other times it is translated as "carnal," and the remaining two times it is translated by some other word in the King James Version. The adjective form of the Greek word appears eleven times: nine times it is translated as "carnal" and two times as "fleshly." These words actually refer to the same thing. The two English words come from different sources but refer to the same thing. *Carnal* comes from Latin, and *flesh* comes from Anglo-Saxon.

The words *flesh* and *carnal* are used in the New Testament to make theological statements about the moral nature of man. As Paul said in verse 14, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." This is only one example, but in the New Testament the *flesh* is used to speak of a disposition contrary to things that are spiritual. The word *spiritual* means "of the Holy Spirit." The words *flesh* and *carnal* are used for things diametrically opposed to that which is spiritual. Paul said, "God's law is spiritual, but I am carnal." In other words, he was characterized by the flesh. Paul identified himself as carnal; then he interpreted what he meant by that, saying that he was "sold under sin." In plain English, we would say "a slave to sin." Paul was identifying the word



*carnal* with being enslaved or trapped in a life of sin.

Paul was very much aware of his moral weakness and man's inadequacy to conquer sin. Even as a strict Pharisee when he had a desire to do right, he could not. Of that he was well aware from experience. Paul placed the reason for his bondage to sin in what he called "the flesh." Verse 18 says, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Another way of putting what Paul meant when he said, "I am carnal or I am flesh," would be, "I am restricted or limited to the flesh." He was limited to the resources of the flesh because he was void of spiritual resources. He was carnal and not spiritual or not Spirit filled. Paul realized that there was nothing good in his flesh: ". . . in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing."

The words *flesh* and *carnal* are used in the New Testament to indicate the locality of sin in the human nature. It teaches us that the human nature is twisted, tangled, perverted, and distorted by sin. Another way of saying the same thing is that human perspectives, human understanding, human evaluations, human purposes, and goals are actually opposed to the perspective, understanding, values, and plans of God.

*Romans 8:5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.*

*6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

*7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

*8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

In this passage Paul was contrasting the "carnally minded" with the "spiritually minded." Paul used the expression "*carnally minded*" to refer to the mental outlook of the flesh. This outlook is described in the New Testament as being oriented toward self-gratification. Man is inclined toward himself—towards his own desires, pleasures, and ambitions. Carnal people consider self-gratification to be the good that ought to be sought, even though that is directly opposed to God's commandments.

A carnal or fleshly mind pursues its own good independent of God. Being carnally minded means to evaluate every situation in accordance with the flesh, that is, your decisions are made on purely human, natural, and temporal considerations. A fleshly mind leaves out the spiritual dimension in its assessments and judgments. Being "*carnally minded*" is the mental perspective of the flesh. By nature, it is hostile to God and incapable of genuine obedience to the law of God.

Paul said in verse 7, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: . . . [and] is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Anyone with a carnal mindset (or a fleshly outlook) will, of course, live a life that is often completely opposite of what God wants him to live. That is what Paul meant when he said, "The law is spiritual but I am carnal." Being carnal is in direct contrast to what God really desires for humans. I repeat, those who are in the flesh are those who live with an outlook oriented toward their own perceived good. Paul discovered that he could not live a righteous life, even as a religious man. He could not live the righteous life demanded by the law of God, even though he desired to do so, because he was carnal.

Look again at Romans 7:18, which says, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me [here he means a desire, he desired to do what was right]; but how to perform that which is good I find not." I believe that Paul made that statement as a religious man and not as a careless, indifferent sinner. Paul really did desire to live a holy life. The reason I believe this is true is because a careless, indifferent sinner would not have a desire to obey God. As a religious man, Paul not only had a desire to do what was right, but he also acknowledged and admired the moral beauty of God's law. Yet, even while he was admiring its beauty, he still found that he was a captive to sin because of the flesh.

*Romans 7:22 For I delight in the law of God [that would be a way of saying, 'I acknowledge and admire the beauty of the law of God—the moral and ethical beauty of holiness'] after the inward man [that refers to a function of the moral heart, namely the intellect and conscience].*

*23 But I see another law [the word law is used here in the sense of a principle, not in the sense of a commandment] in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

I want to emphasize the fact that Paul was well aware of his moral inadequacy to live a righteous life apart from God. When someone is "in the flesh," it highlights his or her moral inadequacy to live a righteous life. Mankind cannot live a righteous life apart from God. Why? Because he is carnal or he is in the flesh.

Paul stated this when he said, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8). When a man or a woman is isolated from God, he or she is enslaved, trapped, cooped up, or imprisoned in sin because he or she is in the flesh. Humans are energized by fleshly desires and guided by human perspectives, which together serve to twist and distort their views and outlook on life to the place that the life they live is for themselves and is not pleasing to God. In scriptural terms, they are in the flesh.

A couple of other passages that speak of the fleshly lusts or desires being man's moral problem:

*1 Peter 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.*

*Galatians 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

In conclusion: there is no disagreement between us brethren about whether the flesh is depraved. That is not the issue. I do not know whether I can state it any stronger than I already have. The reason I have presented this point so strongly is so that later, when I state that I do not believe in the existence of inbred sin, I do not want you to interpret that to mean that I do not believe that the flesh is morally corrupt, because I definitely do.

### **The Traditional View of the Nature of Depravity**

I have already shown how the moral nature of man is constituted. The (3) faculties being the intellect, the feelings (or the sensibility), and the will. These faculties make up our moral nature. It is how we are constituted morally. In fact, it is because of the existence of these faculties that we are a moral agent.

First, without an intellect or a conscience, we would not be able to grasp what is right and wrong; therefore, we could never be held accountable to God for our actions. We would not be a moral agent, because if we did not have ethical understanding, we could not make intelligent, moral choices.

Second, to be accountable to God, we must possess a will because without the power of choice (even if we did understand the difference between right and wrong), we could not be held accountable for our moral choices.

I am going to quote an excerpt from *Christian Theology* by Russell Byrum, under the heading "Made in the Divine Image," page 300: "Man is in the divine image, not merely in a particular aspect, but in a complexity of characteristics of his nature. . . . But in various particulars the human spirit has qualities similar to the divine Spirit. Spirit implies in both God and man personality with the characteristics that constitute one person: intellect, sensibility, and will. It is in these high qualities that the essential image of God consists. . . . This moral image is represented in the Bible as having been lost through sin. This loss was not by deprivation of any essential faculty or portion of human nature, but the derangement or weakening of the faculties in respect to moral conduct. In the work of regeneration the divine image is described as recreated or restored."

I have included this excerpt to show that my representation of man's moral nature is traditional in Church of God theology. These things did not originate with me, but they are traditional in Church of God theology.

In the book *What the Bible Teaches* by F. G. Smith, under the heading "Man Created in God's Image," on page 38, we read: "This expression *image of God* is comprehensive. It implies that special characteristics of the divine One are made a part of man's being. Thus, man is a moral being. In his normal state, his actions are not determined by mere instinct or expediency or self-interests; but they are regarded as possessing, in their own nature, a clearly defined rightness or wrongness. In this moral discrimination man is like God. In connection with this he possesses freedom of will so that he can, of his own volition, decide which course of conduct."

F. G. Smith said that moral discrimination is required to be able to have ethical understanding, which defines rightness from wrongness. He said, "In this moral discrimination, man is like God." Then he said, "Man must also possess freedom of will so that he really decides his own course of action." I wanted you to see that I am not out of line with traditional teachings on the subject of man's moral nature.

## What Is the Nature of Inbred Sin?

Let us look at the nature of inbred sin from the traditional point of view. On pages 330 and 331 of *Christian Theology* by Russell Byrum, under the heading of "A Bent to Sin, a Result of Depravity," we read: "Because of this derangement of the nature, the loss of the presence of God, and the consequent influence of the Evil One, depraved man has a tendency to commit sin. It is not strictly accurate to say depravity is a tendency to evil. It is more proper to state that it *causes* man to have a tendency to evil. The constituted nature of depravity is back of this tendency as before described."

Also, in *The Double Cure* by D. O. Teasley, on page 61, under the heading "The Nature of Total Depravity," he states: "All impulses and inclinations are from the sensibilities. . . . The question of native depravity does not pertain directly either to the mental or to the physical nature of man, but to his moral nature. The fact that native depravity is metaphysical, below consciousness, and cannot be analyzed does not destroy its actuality. It reveals itself through its activities, and these activities are conclusive proof of both its reality and its evil tendencies."

Under the same heading, on page 62, we read: "But when we fully understand the nature of this moral lapse of the race—that it is a moral state from which arises evil impulses and tendencies; we more easily understand the whole subject of sin and salvation."

Again, on page 63, we read: "Native depravity then is not of the nature of a physical entity, nor is it an intellectual faculty, but it consists in a condition of the moral sensibility that produces an evil tendency in the life. It is located not literally in the flesh nor yet in the mind, but in the moral nature."

I have cited these excerpts to show that depravity has been defined and identified as a condition of the sensibilities that produce an evil tendency in the human life. These quotations show that the traditional teaching among us concerning what depravity is, is that it is a condition of the sensibility that produces an evil tendency in life. In my opinion, depravity is not strictly speaking a disposition or a tendency to commit sin. I do not believe that is strictly correct. Rather, I believe it is a disposition or a tendency to gratify oneself in a sinful way, which is different.

It is not a love of sin, per se. By that I mean that you do not desire something sinful just because it is evil. That is not what you crave. What is involved, of course, is personal pleasure. It is a desire for personal gratification of something that happens to be sinful, but it is not seeking something sinful simply because it is evil. So, instead of saying "a tendency toward sin," I interpret it as "a tendency toward self-gratification." Both statements are referring to the same thing, but to state it as I have seems to me to help to clarify the subject. Depravity manifests itself in a tendency to gratify yourself without a proper regard for the law of God.

## The Nature of Depravity Is the Real Issue of Disagreement

Thus far in our study, we should be in agreement that man is morally depraved. What I have written is not out of line with what has been taught among us. The real issue of disagreement is concerning the nature of depravity, whether the depravity of the flesh is inbred or acquired after birth. For the sake of our discussion, I have given these differing views different names. I have chosen these names because I believe they are descriptive of what is being taught. I call one "The Addition Teaching" and the other "The Enlargement Teaching."

I want to begin by explaining what I mean by the term "The Addition Teaching." The following is a quotation from *Exploring God's Oracles* by Everett Carver. I corresponded with him concerning this subject. He was a professor at a Church of God college. In an article he had written, entitled "The Nature of Depravity," page 126, he wrote: "Still another explanation of carnality is to make it an addition. As disease-causing germs are additions to the body that contaminate and destroy the body, so carnality is said to be something extra. Because of its evil nature, this extra destroys a spiritual vitality and spirituality. According to this allegory, removal of carnality would be the spiritual cleansing which would bring the human nature back to the state of health [I assume he meant moral or spiritual health] it possessed at the time of Creation."

On page 31, "Carnality is the invasion of the personality by outside evil forces comparable to germs invading the body and producing a diseased condition [the spiritual disease of depravity]. Removal of carnality would be



restoration to [spiritual] health through the removal of the cause of the loss of health."

The reason I have included the above quotation is because it illustrates so well what I mean by "The Addition Teaching." It also illustrates my understanding of the connotation of inbred sin in the minds of many. My understanding of "The Addition Teaching" is this: there is something that has been added to man's moral nature—a spiritual, sinful element. This element is difficult, maybe impossible to fully describe. As previously stated, under the heading of "Nature of Total Depravity" in *The Double Cure*, by D. O. Teasley, page 61: "The fact that native depravity is metaphysical, below consciousness, and cannot be analyzed does not destroy its actuality. It reveals itself in its activities, and these activities are conclusive proof of both its reality and its evil tendency."

That word *metaphysical* may be unfamiliar to some, but it refers to "hypothetical or abstract reasoning that examines the nature of reality." It speculates about questions that are unanswerable to scientific observation, analysis, or experiment. Depravity is in that category. Although, you may not be able to definitely describe depravity, it is said to be known by its activity, which is a tendency toward sin. This spiritual sinful substance, whatever it is (for the sake of our discussion, we do not really have to define what it is), is affixed to the moral nature of every human baby born into this world. It has poisoned the moral nature of man; it causes him to crave forbidden self-gratification. It is called by different names: inbred sin, original sin, native depravity, Adamic nature, and possibly some others. This pollution of man's nature is a consequence of the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden.

In summary, "The Addition Teaching" states that there is a spiritual sinful element in every baby born into this world. It is an inborn or inbred moral condition. It is behind all outward sins in the life of every sinner. I believe that this is a fair presentation of the position that I am going to argue against.

Now, let us look at "The Enlargement Teaching." This teaching denies that anything has been added to the human passions and desires. We believe that it is a desire itself, which has been corrupted through yielding to temptation and sin throughout one's life as a sinner. The following is an important point. It is not necessary for something to be added to the human desires to urge humans to self-gratification or to experience temptation and sin. The strong craving of the human passions and desires toward self-gratification is due (according to "The Enlargement Teaching") to an inordinate and excessive enlargement of the desire itself.

I repeat, it is the desire itself that is corrupted. It manifests its contamination in a tendency toward self-gratification. According to this teaching, nothing has been added to the human desire, such as a spiritual sinful element or a substance of any kind. It is a perversion of the human passions, due mainly to indulgence from the time of birth, rather than to something that existed at birth. In other words, the corruption of the human passions is caused by a process of development from birth, rather than by something that existed at birth.

Now, both teachings are identical in the results in human experience. Both lead to a life of sin. Both lead to a bondage in sin. Both lead to a need of salvation. But the difference is that one teaching says it is because of something that has been transferred by natural birth from Adam in consequence of his fall; while the other teaching says it is a perversion acquired through a process of development involving temptation and sin. The problem is found in yielding to our passions and desires. The result is that the human passions and desires have become so corrupted that they crave self-indulgence.

Before I look any farther into the differences, I want to point out once again the areas of agreement between us. We do agree that the flesh is depraved or morally corrupted. There is no disagreement here. We also agree that the depravity of the flesh manifests itself in a tendency toward self-gratification and sin. There is no disagreement here either. Now, wherein do these two teachings disagree? First of all, they disagree in *how* the desires are corrupted and second, *how* those desires attained their strong craving toward self-gratification. "The Addition Teaching" believes that the sinful spiritual substance, whatever it may be, is added to the human desires at birth, causing the human passions to crave self-gratification. "The Enlargement Teaching" believes that the human desire itself is corrupted through indulgence, by yielding and submitting to temptation and sin.

These two teachings also disagree on how the human passions and desires are cleansed from depravity. "The Addition Teaching" says that the cleansing of depravity is affected by the removal of inbred sin in a second definite cleansing. "The Enlargement Teaching" says that the cleansing of depravity is a process, which begins in regeneration but continues and gradually purges the human passions and desires from their inordinate development.

It might be explained like this: Suppose a human passion is a certain size, and then as one yields to it, it simply enlarges more and more. The cleansing, then, would tend to reduce its size by cleansing it from its strong cravings. In the end, the results amount to the same thing, but it is the way of attaining the cleansing that is different.

For clarification, I repeat: those who hold "The Addition Teaching" believe the strong cravings of the human passions for self-gratification are mainly due to inbred sin; while those who hold "The Enlargement Teaching" deny that the strong craving of the human passions for self-gratification is due to inbred sin. I want you to listen carefully, because this is important. I deny the position of "The Addition Teaching" on these grounds: the very nature of any human passion or desire is to urge toward gratification. That is the very essential nature of it. It cannot exist without urging toward gratification. It is not possible to have a desire for something without that desire urging you toward gratification. Of course, the desire can be in varying degrees. But it is not possible to experience temptation without the emotions or feelings of the human passions urging us toward the object of that temptation. It is not possible, because by definition and by its very essence that is exactly what human passions are.

Temptations manifest themselves in involuntary urges or desires for things that are forbidden by God. By *involuntary* I mean a temptation can occur in a holy person against their will. If that were not true, then no holy person could ever be tempted. If we could perfectly control human passions, desires, and emotions by the will, if we could will them out of existence, then it would be impossible for a holy person to be tempted. Temptations are involuntary desires. Temptations occur when the human passions and desires reach out for something or urge us toward something that is forbidden by God.

### **A Sinful Nature Is Not Necessary to Be Tempted**

A sinful nature is not necessary for the existence of either temptation or sin. It is not necessary for a foreign, sinful element to be added to the human passions or desires before they seek or crave indulgence or gratification. You do not have to add anything to a human passion for it to tempt toward things that are wrong. A sinful nature or inbred sin does not have to be present for a person to be tempted toward things that are wrong. For proof that the human passions do not need a sinful substance added to cause them to urge toward self-gratification or sin, I appeal to the temptation of Adam and Eve. I do not believe anyone would disagree with the thought that Adam and Eve were created pure and holy. They had absolutely no moral pollution in them whatever, none. Yet, through the natural desire for food and knowledge, which was excited by the temptation of Satan, they not only experienced temptation but yielded to sin. Their sin can be accounted for through their unpolluted, human passions urging them to gratify themselves in a way that was forbidden by God.

In Genesis 2:17 God said, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Then Genesis 3:6 says, "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

The power of temptation through human passions was sufficient to affect sinful action in those who were perfectly holy and entirely pure. Inbred sin was not involved neither in the temptation nor in the sin. No spiritual sinful additive was necessary to induce the human passions to urge toward sinful indulgence.

For further proof that it is not necessary for any spiritual sinful substance to be present before we can be tempted is the fact that Jesus Himself was tempted in all points, like as we are. He was purer, in one sense of the word, than even Adam and Eve.

*Hebrews 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

The human passions and desires themselves, excited by temptation, through external stimuli, are enough to lure us into sin. You do not have to have the presence of a sinful nature or inbred sin to account for the fact of sin. It simply is not necessary.

Some people believe that if inbred sin is not present, then there are no grounds or basis for the universal sinfulness of man. They believe that there would be no way of explaining the fact that all men become sinners. But

I repeat, temptation through the human passions themselves is sufficient to lead men and women to sin.

*James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

*13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:*

*14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*

*15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

James said that *every man* is tempted in the same way. I do not believe he was making a distinction between sinners and saints. Sinners are tempted this way. Saints are tempted this way. This is how *all* men are tempted. "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." In this passage, the word *lust* has caused confusion, because for most Christians, the connotation of the word *lust* is "sinful desire, meaning inbred sin." But the original word, as it is used in the New Testament, simply means "a strong desire for something." When Jesus said, "I have desired to eat this supper with you," the word translated as *desired* is the same word translated as *lust* in James. In my mind, the context explains what James meant when he used the word *lust*; he was referring to the human passions or desires. It is through these human desires that we are tempted and enticed.

Now, "when lust hath conceived . . ." Lust conceives in the moment that the will embraces the desire, either internally embracing it or externally by committing the act. When the will embraces a wrong desire or yields to a human passion in a sinful way, which is a violation of God's law, then that is when sin is born: "it bringeth forth sin." Then, when sin is finished (if it is not forgiven), it "bringeth forth death." I repeat, in my opinion these two points are very important. Due to the nature of the human passions and desires to urge us toward self-gratification, it is not necessary that a sinful nature be present before a person can be tempted and led into sin.

Another point we need to consider is that the human passions are strengthened with each indulgence. It is their nature to develop in this way. This can clearly be seen in people who are addicted to sinful practices. The natural progression of every human passion is to strengthen itself with every indulgence. As sin strengthens itself, the will becomes firmly settled in favor of the passions. The results are that the passions become greatly perverted through indulgence.

### **The Cleansing of Depravity**

As we consider the question, "What is the nature of the cleansing of moral depravity of the flesh?" we need to understand that the strong cravings of the human passions are due to a natural progression from birth, rather than something that existed at birth. This is important because it is foundational to how one views the *cleansing* of depravity.

### **"The Addition Teaching"**

Let us now turn our attention to the subject of the cleansing of depravity. We will first take a look at "The Addition Teaching." Metaphorically, the cleansing of depravity is looked upon as a divine surgical operation. It is considered to be a second definite cleansing after regeneration, which is affected by the baptism or a filling of the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps not everybody would agree with the above statement, but that is how I once understood a second definite cleansing of depravity. I once taught this doctrine myself. I am going to take a digression here concerning whether or not entire sanctification and receiving the Holy Spirit are identical experiences. No doubt, there have always been differing views about this, even among those who believed in a second definite cleansing. I want to read something from *Living Thoughts of John Wesley*, a compilation of several of John Wesley's writings, edited by James Potts. On page 536, under the title "Extracts From His Correspondence," there is a letter to Joseph Benson. Wesley wrote the following: "If they like to call this [referring to receiving entire sanctification] receiving the Holy Ghost, they may; only the phrase in that sense is not scriptural and not quite proper, for they all received

the Holy Ghost when they were justified. God then sent forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts crying, 'Abba, Father.' Oh, Joseph, keep close to the Bible, both to sentiment and expression!"

Identifying entire sanctification with receiving the Holy Spirit actually became popular in the mid-1800s, during the holiness awakening in the United States. It was made popular by Mrs. Palmer and other holiness leaders.

In summary, "The Addition Teaching" teaches that inbred sin, or a sinful spiritual additive (whatever it may be) is cleansed, eradicated, crucified, or removed (and possibly some other expressions are used) from a Christian's moral nature in a second definite cleansing.

### **"The Enlargement Teaching"**

Now, let us look at the cleansing of depravity from the viewpoint of "The Enlargement Teaching." Following through on the medical metaphor instead of a divine surgical operation, the cleansing of depravity is looked upon as reducing of inflammation or swelling. Also, the cleansing is considered a progressive work that is a gradual reduction of the inordinate development of the human passions. It is a cleansing that begins in regeneration and is achieved in a more perfect degree throughout one's entire Christian life. These deeper cleansings, beyond regeneration, are accomplished by subsequent refreshing of the Holy Spirit, so that the enlargement of the human passions is thus cleansed and subdued gradually, not instantaneously, but over a period of time. The basic human passion remains while the inordinate development is gradually cleansed or subdued.

I have dealt with some serious theology in this article, but my main interest in this subject is practical, not theological. I once zealously believed with all my heart the teaching of a second definite cleansing of inbred sin or the Adamic nature. The greater part of my personal library consists of books by holiness authors, and many of them are old *Gospel Trumpet* books. At one time I advocated expelling from our fellowship anyone who did not believe this teaching. I made it a test of fellowship and a matter of confidence, as many of my brethren know. My practical interests came from two sources: (1<sup>st</sup>) from my own personal experience and (2<sup>nd</sup>) from my experience as a pastor. The confusion of "The Addition Teaching" is what brought me to carefully study this subject. The confusion arises from the fact that even if "The Addition Teaching" was correct, it could never be consciously known. You could never be aware of an experience of the cleansing of the inbred sin.

Although, I once held this teaching firmly in my mind as a true doctrine and a traditional belief of the church, I never knew it consciously in my own experience. This confusion, which I personally experienced, and which also existed in the lives of those whom I pastored, awakened a desire in me to find a solution to this problem. I would like to share my personal experience to explain how I came to understand this subject as I now do.

One of the reasons I once believed the doctrine of a second definite cleansing to be true was because of my own personal experience. I do believe that in a Christian's life there comes a time when he or she is faced with the challenge of the entire consecration of one's self to God. It is something more, something beyond regeneration, and it is a definite experience. It was during a cottage prayer meeting that I felt a need of a deeper experience in my heart. A chair was brought in from the kitchen and placed in the middle of the living room as an "altar." I knelt there and began to pray. As I began to pray, a very close friend of mine, whom I had been praying for since I had gotten saved, came and knelt down beside me at that chair. For the time being, I forgot about my need and began to pray for him. He gave his heart to God, and as we were rejoicing and thanking God for saving my friend, the young preacher who had conducted the cottage prayer meeting looked at me and asked, "Brother Kenny, has your need been satisfied?" I answered, "No." He said, "Well, let's pray." As we continued to pray, he asked me, "What do you need?" I told him, "I don't exactly know." I was young in the Lord, and I had not been brought up in a church. I did not have very much theological understanding. So, I expressed my need to him with these words: "Brother, I feel like an old, empty rain barrel. I want God to come in and fill me, to just fill me with His presence."

This young preacher answered, "What you need is sanctification." That was the first time I consciously remember anyone speaking of sanctification. So, we began to pray. I prayed for a while and a thought came up in my mind, "What are you going to do with your life?" Now I had plans. I was a seventeen-year-old senior in high school at that time. That question brought me to the decision of giving my life to God. I was not backslidden; I was

not repenting of any sin. I was not seeking a second cleansing, but that is what people told me happened. Because that is what the church believed, I did too.

In my personal experience, this filling or refreshing of the Holy Spirit was a definite experience. There may be a process leading up to it, but there is a definite moment in which it takes place. In my case there was a physical sensation that attended it. This sensation started at the top of my head and went clear through my body. It felt like someone pouring warm water over me. After I made this consecration, for the next few weeks I felt a call from God to preach. In fact, it was a month later when I surrendered to the call to preach.

Some might say, "God was calling you to preach and your consecration was necessary." For every Christian, there ought to be a place of an entire consecration to God in a deeper sense than you ever understood when you were converted. Putting it in the words of Paul, it is to "present your bodies a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1). This consecration is not for atonement, but in view of all of the mercies of God, that is in view of all God has done for us. This entire consecration is in appreciation to God. We appreciate what God has done for us through salvation so much that we are willing to give ourselves entirely to Him.

Now, because of my personal experience, I believed with all of my heart in a second definite filling of the Holy Spirit and a second definite cleansing of depravity. It is hard to argue with a man armed with an experience. I believed that it was inbred sin that caused my human passions to urge me to gratification. I expected that after I was cleansed from inbred sin, I would not have to struggle with the strong cravings of human passions. This expectation was logical, because it naturally flowed from what had been taught. I repeat, I was very zealous for this teaching. I even advocated expelling people from our fellowship, boldly saying, "Don't have anything to do with those people who don't believe in a second definite cleansing."

It was actually while I was studying to support and defend this teaching that I came to the understanding I now have. The confusion that this belief brought into my life and the lives of many others was that after several seasons of earnest prayer, I would bring myself to a place of claiming entire sanctification, but the results that I expected never occurred. Yet, I was a true believer in this doctrine. For many years, I never questioned the teaching. I always concluded that I had omitted something from my entire consecration to God. Then I would start over, seeking and searching, asking myself: "What did I miss? What have I overlooked? Why don't I have the cleansing that I had expected?"

### **A Normal Temptation or Inbred Sin?**

However, there was one question that kept coming to my mind, a question that I could never find an answer to. Here is that question: How could I consciously know the difference between a normal temptation of the human passions, which urges me to gratification, and the activity of inbred sin, which also manifests itself by urging me to gratification? How could I consciously know the difference? I mean, in my own consciousness of my emotions and passions, that is in my personal experience, how could I know when inbred sin was cleansed from my moral nature? Both as a pastor and as an evangelist, I have dealt with many people who had this same problem. I observed that every time I preached a searching message on sanctification, the same people came to the altar for sanctification. In camp meetings, in revivals, or in my local congregation, the same people came, seeking sanctification. More often than not, they were the best people in the church. I have dealt with many people in more than fifty years of ministry who sincerely sought to be entirely holy or entirely sanctified, who suffered from this confusion.

Today we have a generation in the church that is kind of mediocre about holiness, but in my earlier years there were many Christians who had a passion to be holy in every aspect of their lives. They desired to live a life that was God-honoring in absolutely every aspect. Often people would confide in me and ask: "How can I know, Brother Yoder, when I am cleansed from inbred sin? I have this certain temptation. Is it inbred sin or is it a normal temptation?" We know that no Christian ever lived a life free from temptation, even our Lord did not. In fact, if you have that hope or belief, it is a false one. Therefore, if *inbred sin* manifests itself in a tendency toward self-gratification and *normal temptations* of the human passion manifest themselves in a tendency toward self-

gratification, how are you going to know the difference? Someone may answer that you can know the difference by the intensity. But that has a fallacy in it. That means that every time a Christian, who has claimed entire sanctification, is strongly tempted, he will be thrown into confusion. The intensity of the temptation does not show impurity at all. In fact, I believe that the stronger the temptation, in which a person is faithful to God, actually demonstrates the strength of one's holiness, not one's sinfulness.

Jesus went through an intense time of temptation, both in the wilderness and in the Garden before the Cross. It was so intense that "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood" (Luke 22:44). If we measure temptation by the degree of its intensity and conclude that if it is strong, then it is inbred sin or if it is weak, then it is a human passion, we will be thrown into confusion and doubt whenever the enemy puts us in a position of strong temptation. Whenever there is an intense battle with one's passions, then that person will actually be weakened by this teaching. They will be doubting their own "sanctification" in addition to facing the temptation, which would have the tendency to weaken that person even more.

### **My Search for the Answer**

People would ask me, "How can you know whether an urge toward gratification is a normal temptation of my human passions or an activity of inbred sin working in and through my human passions?" I searched for an answer. I answered people, "I don't know the answer to that question, but if there is an answer, I'm going to find it." I was always honest with people. I did make a search for an answer. I honestly did not know how to distinguish between these two things. I am not talking about theological distinctions, but about consciously knowing in your personal experience the difference. I knew the standard ways in which it is said that they differ, but none of them satisfied the question in my mind.

I want you to consider the following statements as we continue this study. I was not one of those who never believed in a second definite cleansing. I was a true believer, a true son of this teaching. I believed it with all of my heart. I was dogmatic. I studied this subject with a double purpose: (1<sup>st</sup>) to refute those who did not believe in it, and (2<sup>nd</sup>) to discover answers to the questions I had, in particular how to tell the difference between inbred sin and temptation. It was during that study that I came to the understanding of this subject that I am presenting to you. When it dawned on me that I was in error, I cannot explain how I felt. I do not have the words to adequately describe the mental struggle that I faced during that time. I was not being pressured by anybody to change my belief. In fact, all the pressures were on the other side, because at that time if I accepted what I was beginning to believe was true, I would be disfellowshipped by the fellowship I was in. (And that is exactly what happened.)

But that was not the main reason for my distress. It was because of my own personal experience, which I have explained above, that made me so sure that the teaching of a second definite cleansing was right. That was why I had such a struggle. The idea that what I believed could not be true was very repugnant to me. I highly prized the teaching of a second definite cleansing of the Adamic nature, partly because of my own experience and partly because of the church where I was saved. But I was too honest not to submit to the truth as I was beginning to see and understand it.

The thought that inbred sin as a spiritual sinful substance or additive was not true was gradually forced upon my mind by the weight of evidence to the contrary. The string of logic that made the second definite cleansing of the inbred sin so confusing was this: if such a thing as a sinful spiritual element (whatever it is) exists, an element that is affixed to the moral nature of every person at birth, and if that additive causes the human passions to urge to self-gratification, then the natural conclusion would be that once the sinful element was removed, then the passions would not urge for self-indulgence. Or if they did, there would be a conscious, noticeable difference in their intensity, their strength, and their potency. This logic is what causes many sincere Christians, who are strongly tempted after claiming entire sanctification, to be thrown into doubt concerning being cleansed from inbred sin. It was that struggle which has brought me to where I am today.

The people I was in fellowship with would make a distinction between "carnal" and the "flesh." They thought that "carnality" is inbred sin, while the "flesh" is human passions. But that is a fallacy, because being either of the



flesh or carnal refers to exactly the same thing. There are no differences. When I studied the history of the doctrine of inbred sin, where it came from, and why it arose, I found that it actually came from a controversy between Saint Augustine and Pelagius. It became the major opinion in Christendom. I realize what I am teaching is certainly a minority opinion, and that is putting it mildly.

### **Some Serious Questions for Your Consideration**

If you believe in what I call "The Addition Teaching," I am not indicting you; I am not trying to condemn you. I am simply trying to reason with you. I ask you to seriously consider the following questions. These are honest questions, not meant to entrap you, but questions that I trust will bring a clearer understanding of why I believe as I do.

First, how does inbred sin differ from normal temptation in its conscious manifestation? Since both natural temptation and inbred sin are described as an urge toward self-gratification, how do they differ?

Second, how can you distinguish between a manifestation of inbred sin and a normal temptation from the human passions? Again, I am talking about an inward, conscious distinguishing between them. When I am tempted, how do I know whether it is inbred sin or simply a manifestation of our natural human passions? If it is true that inbred sin manifests itself through the human passions, and if it is "beyond consciousness," then I could never consciously know whether it is inbred sin or whether it is a temptation of the human passions.

Third, if we are made aware of the presence of both temptation and inbred sin through identical, conscious manifestations (namely, an emotional urge toward self-gratification for something forbidden by God), then how can we ever be conscious of a cleansing from inbred sin? Because all Christians are tempted as long as they are in this world.

Fourth, if you cannot distinguish between the two by their conscious manifestations, how do you know that inbred sin even exists? Or how can you ever know if you are rid of it?

Fifth, if the difference cannot be consciously known, then by what standard is a person to determine that they have experienced the second cleansing? In this case entire sanctification becomes a *theory*, rather than a conscious *experience*. It is something that is believed to have occurred. If you teach entire sanctification as something to be accepted without conscious assurance of its reality, then that will pose no problem to those who are not conscientious, discerning, or imaginative. But for those who are conscientious, discerning, and imaginative in their thinking, such a teaching will prove to be their worst nightmare. They will be in constant doubt and confusion concerning their relationship with God.

Some sincere Christians have been driven to insanity, struggling with what I have described above. They have literally broken under the burden of trying to seek such an experience. I ask you to seriously consider these practical questions concerning a conscious experience. I repeat, if there is a spiritual sinful substance added to the human passions, and if it does not differ from normal temptations in its manifestations, how can you know when you have been cleansed from that inbred sin? Do you merely accept it by faith? Is it just a theory that you believe in? Or is it a conscious experience?

Years ago, when I had been disfellowshipped because of this teaching, I was preaching in a revival meeting and a group of three or four ministers came to the meeting one night. I knew why they were there, so I asked God to help me, as I had intended to preach on this subject. After the service, one of the ministers said: "Brother Yoder, I see how you teach this. You teach it as people live it." I responded to him, "Why teach a theory that people cannot live?" Dear one, I say the same to you.

Concerning the question of "How can we know whether we have been cleansed from inbred sin?" John Wesley attempted to answer that question in *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*. I quote from page 85, under the heading "Further Thoughts on Christian Perfection."

*Question 14: But can one that is saved from sin be tempted?  
Yes, for Christ was tempted.*

*Question 15: However, what you call temptation, I call the corruption of my heart. And how will you distinguish the one from the other?*

*In some cases it is impossible to distinguish without the direct witness of the Spirit. But in general, one may distinguish thus:*

*One commends me. Here is a temptation to pride. But instantly my soul is humbled before God. I feel no pride; of which I am as sure that pride is not humility.*

*A man strikes me. Here is a temptation to anger. But my heart overflows with love. And I feel no anger at all; of which I can be as sure that love and anger are not the same thing.*

*A woman solicits me. Here is a temptation to lust. But in an instant I shrink back. And I feel no desire or lust at all, of which I can be as sure that my hand is cold or hot.*

In my search for an answer, I have read a lot of holiness literature. I read everything I could find on this subject, seeking for an answer. I remember, years ago, when I first read Wesley's statement (quoted above): "It is impossible to distinguish without the direct witness of the Spirit." Think about that! If what Wesley wrote was true, then it would be nearly impossible to live a life of entire sanctification with any assurance. Because in most temptations, you would need a divine revelation to discern between whether this urge to self-gratification was inbred sin, or whether it was a normal temptation. This would introduce the element of the necessity of a miracle of divine revelation. That is impractical to the nth degree. I am telling you from my personal experience and my experience as a pastor, Christians cannot live a Christian life like that.

Another fault that I find with this way of thinking is found in Wesley's statements about being tempted. He said, "I *feel* no pride; I *feel* no anger at all: I *feel* no desire or lust at all." Such statements are confusing, and I believe they are in error and off the mark. These statements place sin in the involuntary feelings or emotional responses to temptation instead of recognizing that sin is a willful and voluntary choice of the will.

I realize that what I have written is not easily digested in one sitting. But I ask that you think and pray about it.

Let me summarize my understanding of the subject of the nature and cleansing of depravity. I believe that man is morally depraved. This moral corruption is not a sinful substance, but rather it is a perverted state of the human passions and desires. Moral depravity is more an *acquired* condition than a *transferred* component. It is acquired through one's experience with temptation and sinning since birth, rather than something transferred from Adam at birth. Therefore, the cleansing of moral depravity is not so much the *removal* of a substance, but a *correcting* of a condition.

### Some Further Questions and Answers

**Is there a deeper cleansing beyond regeneration?** Yes, I believe there are deeper cleansings. Some identify entire sanctification with entire consecration, but in my opinion there is a difference. An actual cleansing of the human passions and desires does occur as we live a life in the Spirit and as we put to death the deeds of the flesh (Romans 8:13). The result of living a holy life is that you actually experience fewer temptations in some areas than what you have before. My passions and desires are more cleansed or calmed, after fifty-five years of serving God, than when I was a seventeen-year-old lad. There is a continual cleansing of the passions beyond regeneration.

**Isn't sanctification a lifelong process?** Sanctification is a broad subject, which I barely touched on in this article. In my opinion, the words *sanctification* and *holiness* mean exactly the same thing. In fact, in the King James Version, the Greek word that is translated as *sanctification* and *holiness* appears ten times. Five times it is translated as *holiness*, and five times it is translated as *sanctification* (Strong's number 38). The Greek word that is translated both as *sanctification* and *holiness* is exactly the same word. It means the same thing. Sanctification is a noun, and sanctify is a verb. We do not have a verb form of the word "holy or holiness." We do not say, "God is holing me." What we do say is, "God is sanctifying me." In my opinion, sanctification in its broadest sense means "the process of making holy." Now, that process of making holy could include setting apart for holy purposes, but it could also include a moral or ethical cleansing. The New Testament refers to a state of "entire sanctification." That means that if there is such a thing as *entire* sanctification, then there is such a thing as *partial* sanctification. (But that is a whole subject in itself.)

I have not gone into any depth on the subject of sanctification. I have tried in this article to stick with the central issue: the nature of depravity and its cleansing. However one interprets the nature of depravity dictates what one believes about the cleansing of depravity.

**You once claimed the experience of a second work. Are you now renouncing it?** No, I have not denounced that experience. It is as real as when I first surrendered my all to God. I believe that the holiness movement, as a whole, is actually concerned with a genuine spiritual need. If you investigate in some depth the holiness movement, you will discover that they were not beating the air. They were dealing with the real issues of living an entire holy life, issues that needed to be dealt with. I simply do not interpret the experience the same way that they have. I am a friend of the holiness movement. I believe that as a Christian follows the Spirit of God, he will be led to a place of entire consecration to God in a deeper sense than when he first gave his heart to the Lord.

I realize when one is converted, he has to give up all known sin; that is the essence of true repentance. But there is a further need, in light of God's claim on one's life, for a person to come to the place of giving up himself/herself completely and fully to God. I do not believe my experience or the experience of others in the holiness movement was something that was simply emotional. I believe that the Holy Spirit actually leads men and women to a place of an entire surrender or entire consecration of themselves to God. And it is not just for those who are called into a public ministry. I am constantly urging Christians to seek such an experience.

The main issues I have dealt with in this article are the issues of the nature and cleansing of depravity. When I was on trial by my brethren for these very issues, I said, "If you will let me explain sanctification in my own words and terminology, then you will discover I believe in a deeper cleansing." But they demanded that I ascribe to the teaching of a second definite cleansing of the Adamic nature, which I could not do. I do believe that Christians experience deeper cleansings of the human passions and desires in subsequent refreshings of the Holy Spirit. I am talking about *crisis* experiences. Do you know what I mean by the word *crisis*? It means "something instantaneous, even though it involves a process before realization." It is like a hen that sits on her eggs for twenty-one days, but there comes a moment when those chicks come out of the shells. So it is with the experience of deeper cleansings. There is a period of development and a time of seeking, but there is such a thing as a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit. These fillings of the Spirit empower, but they also affect deeper cleansings of our moral nature so that we experience greater victory over sin and thereby become established in holiness.

When a person is first converted, he or she is not established in holiness. Let me ask you a question that I have asked many times in church services, revival meetings, and camp meetings. I always direct this question to those who have been saved for more than one year. "If you have never had to ask God to forgive you for something you

said or did, please raise your hand." Not one hand has ever been raised in all the meetings where I have asked this question. Established holiness is not synonymous with regeneration. I believe the New Testament offers the promise of victory over all known willful sinning, but such a victory is not obtained in regeneration. Therefore, there is a genuine need for deeper cleansings of our passions and desires beyond regeneration in order to become established in holiness. I believe that this is accomplished through the Holy Spirit.

### **A Final Summarizing of My Understanding**

Let me repeat one more time what I believe about the nature and cleansing of depravity. I believe that man's moral nature is depraved. This moral depravity is not a sinful substance, but rather it is a perverted state of the human passions and desires. Moral depravity is more an *acquired* condition than a *transferred* component. It is acquired through one's experience with temptation and sinning since birth, rather than something transferred from Adam at birth. Therefore, the cleansing of moral depravity is not so much the *removal* of a substance, but a *correcting* of a condition.