

## **Called into the fellowship of the Son, Part 14 – Strengthen Your Spiritual Vitality**

God has called us into a unique fellowship with His Holy Son. Within this fellowship of grace, mercy and love, God has provided new life and possibilities.

- Job said, “What is man, that he could be pure? And He who is born of a woman, that he could be righteous? (Job 15:14)
- David asked, “What is man, that You are mindful of him, and the son of man, that You visit him?” (Psalms 8:4)
- Again he asked God, “What is man, that You take knowledge of him? Or the son of man that, that you are mindful of him?” (Psalms 144:3)

After sin entered and the whole world came under the control of the wicked one, these questions became more valid.

Why would an awesome and holy God consider mankind? Consider again the depth of grace, mercy and love that was involved in what God has done.

**1 Corinthians 1:9 NKJV** God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Holy angels of God stand in awe of the fellowship that we have been brought into. It is difficult to imagine the wisdom and power of God that brought us from the state of our ruin into this glorious fellowship with His Son. From the depths of sin and destruction, God has rescued and lifted us to sit with Christ in the heavenly places.

**Psalms 40:2 NKJV** He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps.

This is amazing grace and unending love that brings us into the fellowship of a holy God. In consideration of what God has done for us when He redeemed us and broke off the chains of our bondage, we must take steps to strengthen our spiritual vitality.

**Hebrews 12:12-15 NKJV** Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God...

**Since God has called us into the fellowship of His Son, we must take the necessary steps to strengthen our spiritual vitality.**

The Holy Spirit is addressing our relationship with a Holy God. He is indicating the quality of life that we should pursue.

**First, we are told to encourage ourselves in the Lord.**

The text shows a weary believer who is tired of the trials and difficulties of life. Their hands are hanging down and their knees are feeble. It appears they are staggering in weakness down the pathway of life. The Holy Spirit wants to encourage you to strengthen yourselves and make straight paths for your feet.

**What does that mean?**

One translation says, “Brace up and reinvigorate and set right your slackened and weakened and drooping hands and strengthen your feeble and tottering knees.” We must do all that we can in this life to cut through the discouragement and evil. At the same time we must stand strong and make clear, smooth and straight paths for our feet. This should be our constant pursuit. This exhortation is especially needed when our faith is being challenged and persecution arises. When you are feeling weak and overwhelmed, you have to take necessary steps to strengthen yourself.

Have you ever suffered an extensive time of sickness or emotional or physical distress? If you have, you know that recovery requires determined and consistent rehabilitation. One of the worse things one can do is yield to the weakness.

The Holy Spirit is encouraging believers to stay in fellowship with Christ. You need to remember that the Lord was faced with the same kinds of trials and temptations that you face. He tells us to cheer up, stand tall, strengthen your arms, hands, legs and feet, and encourage yourself. This is more than physical and mental exercise. You need to strengthen your spiritual vitality. The good news is, when we start doing this, we will be healed. You have come too far in your journey and fellowship with Christ to allow these tests, temptations, and trials to take you down. Seek healing from the Great Physician and keep following the Lord.

### **Second, we are told to pursue peace with all people.**

How can we live in peace with everyone? It is difficult at times to live in peace with those we love and are near. It is most challenging to live in peace with the attitudes and actions of difficult and wicked people.

The Holy Spirit is concerned with our total spiritual vitality. He is challenging us to walk in this life as Jesus walked. The Holy Spirit is addressing the fundamental constitutions of the Christian life. Our Christian life springs from this foundation.

**Hebrews 12:15 NIV84** See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

### **There are three dangers we must address.**

1. We must not fall short of God's grace or refuse Christ's offer of salvation and provision for our needs.
2. We must not become bitter or sour and turn away from the Lord.
3. Guard our heart so that we do not become defiled. Esau lost his inheritance and God's promises for one morsel of food.

Transitory and immediate pressures cause some to forfeit their inheritances. The Holy Spirit is encouraging us to renew our spiritual strength and energy.

### **Third, we are to make every effort to live a holy life.**

Everyone who is called into the fellowship of God's Son must make every effort to live a holy life.

**Hebrews 12:14 NIV** Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

### **Holiness is essential for anyone who hopes to see God.**

#### **How can we attain holiness?**

#### **First, holiness is positional.**

When we are born again, God sets us apart from the world. In doing so, He makes some strategic changes in us.

**1 Corinthians 6:11 NIV** And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

**Paul just gave an extensive list of what we were when God called us.** The list enumerated all manner of unrighteous lifestyles. It is easy to turn our focus on those things, but the major emphasis is not what we were, but what God has made us. He has washed, sanctified, and justified us in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our

God. By virtue of our union with Jesus Christ we are made holy.

Jesus Christ is the guarantee of our standing before God. He has become our righteousness.

### **Second, holiness is a daily process.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:23 NIV** May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is a progressive work, where we grow more and more like the Lord Jesus all the time. As we continue in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, we are changed into His likeness. The Holy Spirit is constantly in the process of conforming us into Christ's image and likeness.

### **Third, there is complete or perfect sanctification or holiness.**

One of these days the redeemed of the Lord are going to see Christ, and we will be changed into His glorious image. At that moment, we will forever be free from the power and effects of sin. The old nature will be swallowed up in victory. All of the struggles, trials and tests of this life will be over. Everything will be made new. Our physical and spiritual condition will perfectly correspond to Christ's standing with God. This is the hope and goal of everyone who has been called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ the Son.

**What is the Holy Spirit indicating when He says: "Without holiness no one will see the Lord?"**

**We have been considering the fellowship of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.** Hebrews 12 shows some things we have and have not come into. This fellowship with Jesus Christ is a fellowship of holiness, righteousness, love, joy and peace. When Moses and Israel were in fellowship with God in the wilderness, the glory and holiness of God could not be approached.

**Hebrews 12:18-24 NIV84** You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned." The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear." But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

**The sprinkled blood and redemptive work of Jesus Christ has brought us into this fellowship.**

We have been called by God into a fellowship that is greater than what Moses experienced. We have been called into the fellowship of God's Son.

- God has brought us to this faith and trust in Jesus Christ.
- He has brought us to Mount Zion, to the Heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the Living God.
- He has brought us to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly.
- He has brought us to the assembly of the firstborn who are registered and written down in the Lamb's book of life in heaven.
- He has brought us to God and to Jesus the Mediator of a new Covenant.

- He has brought us to the blood of Christ.

**Think about this eternal fact.**

**Through the blood of Jesus Christ our eternal destiny has already been settled.**

We are already made heirs and joint heirs with Christ. Heaven's certainties have been secured by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. What He has accomplished by His redeeming blood shall be fully realized in us.

**Consider the full implications of what Hebrews 12:14 means, "without holiness no one will see the Lord."**

The Holy Spirit is calling us to live a holy life. He is telling us that we must come to God through the sprinkled blood of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is showing us that we have been given incomparable privileges, glories and grace through Jesus Christ. By Christ, we have been brought into the very presence of Almighty God. In Christ, the things that had separated us from God have been moved out of the way.

If we refuse to walk in this privilege there is no recourse or escape. Through Christ, we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken. We are being made to be partakers with the host of all of the redeemed. We are being brought into the company of tens of thousands of Angels of God who are rejoicing.

**Hebrews 12:28 NIV** Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.