

# The Very God of Peace Sanctify you Wholly

Pastor and author A.W. Tozer  
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On the text found in 1 Thessalonians, the fifth chapter, the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, faithful is He who called you, who also will do it.

This is a topic not of academic importance, but of critical importance to all the children of God, and tragically and shamefully neglected by evangelicals almost everywhere. But before I preach, I want you to sing. I'll tell you about it.

I have a good friend in this audience. I don't see him very often, but he's my good friend, and he came up this morning and thanked me for talking about Jesus, Lover of my soul, and Rock of Ages. He said there were two favorite songs, and he'd never heard them in this church, and I said we've sung them, but he'd never heard us. Now that man with his wife every Sunday drives here from the border of Indiana. I'm not sure whether it's across the line or just on the line or somewhere very close, and he's back here tonight.

Now I think the least we can do is to sing that, brother. Number 627, and if you don't mind standing, you old folks can put up with it and you young people won't care, 627, and I want you to sing it full voice, worshipfully, and every verse of it, every stanza clear through to the end. Jesus, Lover of my Soul. There are those who would say that it's the greatest hymn ever written. That's open to question. There might be maybe it's in the half dozen greatest hymns ever written in the life of the church.

Number 627, so let's stand to sing. Jesus, lover of my soul.

Jesus, lover of my soul,  
let me to thy bosom fly,  
while the nearer waters roll,  
while the tempest still is high;  
hide me, O my Savior, hide,  
till the storm of life is past;  
safe into the haven guide,  
O receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none;  
hangs my helpless soul on thee;  
leave, ah! leave me not alone,  
still support and comfort me.  
All my trust on thee is stayed,  
all my help from thee I bring;  
cover my defenseless head  
with the shadow of thy wing.

Plenteous grace with thee is found,  
grace to cover all my sin;  
let the healing streams abound;  
make and keep me pure within.  
Thou of life the fountain art;  
freely let me take of thee;  
spring thou up within my heart,  
rise to all eternity.

Let's have a moment of prayer.

Lord, we feel as if we were, or had been, standing in front of a burning bush. O God, never let this yearning die out of our hearts. Let us die before Thou dost let the yearning die.

Now, Father, Thou knowest that we are neither worthy to speak, nor are these friends worthy to hear. But through the infinite merits of Jesus' blood, we both speak and hear. So, trusting alone in Him, and believing that He's good and kind and courteous and gracious, we approach this sermon. In the name of Jesus Christ, Thy Son. Amen.

Now, the man of God here writes to the Thessalonian Christians, that is, the assembly, which was meeting at Thessalonica, all of the assemblies. It could be there were more than the one. And he develops a thesis, more or less, rather several of them.

Then he comes to the fifth chapter, and he begins to exhort them. He exhorts you, brethren. And then he warns them in verse 21, to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

The Lord never wants us, nor is it Christian, to close our eyes and plunge in, because our emotions are moved, or because somebody has a good speaking voice. Prove all things and hold fast that which is good. And then in verse 23 he says, and may, that's the force of it, and I pray that, and may, the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body.

Now that's all there is to us, there's no more. There is the triangularity of the human spirit, the human personality, rather, corresponding with the Trinity, spirit, soul, and body, may these be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not at the coming, but unto the coming. Then he adds these very wonderful and encouraging words, Faithful is He that calleth you who also will do it.

Now, these words before us are important. You will notice, if you have been in attendance at this church, we have such tremendous turnover here, that those who have been, you'll excuse the expression, the hard core of our church. You know, they talk about the hard core, that means the ones that don't move away but come over the years. Not that you're hard, but merely that you're faithful.

Those of you who have been faithful over the years and have not lately moved in or moved away will know that I never deal with a topic that merely has academic interest. I

look at the Saturday daily news and smile a rather tired smile at some of my good brethren trying to get the crowds there, if it kills the crowds and them too. Anything to get people there, but I never do it. I never have done it. Lord, now help me, maybe that wasn't quite right. I think maybe I have sinned somewhere back down the years, but certainly not in recent years.

And this tonight is more, I repeat, than of academic interest. These are the solemn words of an apostle. And he indicates here God's will for God's children. And these words have been fuel to the flame for one school of thought. The Methodists, for instance, and the Salvation Army grew up in it, and the Moravians, the great Moravian church, and they have been a source of embarrassment to many teachers of sinful sainthood.

Now I want you to hear that strange anomaly, sinful sainthood. And here, when we come to this passage, this 23rd, is it, verse, we embarrass certain teachers, but if these words are permitted to stand, you know all I want anybody ever to do is to read the Scriptures and let the meaning stand and not explain it away. If these words of the apostle are allowed to have a fair meaning, there will be a sorrow and regret on the part of many Christians.

I believe that some of us, some Christians and some I've preached to, God knows how long, have never quite faced up to the issue. You are still unprepared for the coming of Christ, and you hope that there is some intermediate state where you'll get fixed up.

Now, I believe that if we just allow these words to mean what they mean, that they will be the cause of some teachers humbly re-examining their teaching and reason for all of us to examine the Scriptures and ourselves.

Have you noticed that in the opening of the fifth chapter, we always let the words mean exactly what they mean. Nobody hauls out his Greek lexicon and goes to work to try to emasculate the text. Just let it stand as it is. But of the times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. Nobody tries to explain that away. We have Bible conferences that revolve around such passages.

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with a child, and they shall not escape, and so on.

Now, that's academic. That is, it is not instantly now binding with moral necessity upon the heart. It's something that is to come, and we can talk without any moral embarrassment about something that is to come. That is why teachers of prophecy are so fluent. They are able to talk about something that is to come and about which they have now no immediate worry.

Now, we allow the words to stand right as they are here, and then when we come to verse 23, we begin to twist and dodge and turn and hike up an alley and turn a corner and dig up Greek roots and marginal references and try to get away from this. The very God of peace make you holy, and I pray God your spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I've got to do a little defining, because if I use a word one way and you accept it another, then I haven't communicated with you at all. So, I want to define here the word sanctify. Some people have a phobia for this, and I don't blame them at all because that's all some people can see in the Scriptures. But what does the word mean?

Well, it's a verb, an adjective, and a noun. As a verb, it's sanctify you wholly. That's an act performed. As an adjective, it describes something sanctified. And as a noun, it is a state, holiness or sanctification.

Now, I know that I preach under considerable disadvantage because this has become, the word sanctified and so on, have become, what should we say, they are conventionalized. The thing has been conventionalized by certain brethren, and they carry it to an extreme that is not scriptural and push it beyond its scriptural context and make a great deal of it.

And the result is that some honest Bible teachers and Bible lovers have withdrawn or have drawn back from it. And I know that a good deal of prejudice has been raised in many minds. And to discuss this topic is to push myself, put myself into the middle of a very difficult, very difficult battle. But I don't mind.

Now, Webster says about the word that it means to set apart to a sacred office. And he says also that it means to make free from sin and purify. And the Baptist expositor and Greek student, Robertson, says that the word means to consecrate, to separate from things that are profane and to render or declare holy.

Now, I want to show you, I want to tell you what the lexicon says. It says it gives four meanings for the word as Paul used it here. One is to make holy. The other is to purify. The other is to consecrate. And the other is to venerate. Now I want you to tell me which meaning, see if you use an English word that has a number of meanings.

For instance, you use the word case. Well, the word case probably has 50 meanings in English. And when you use such a word, you have to know by the surrounding words what that word means. Take the word horse. Well, that word has a certain meaning, a fixed meaning in the animal kingdom, but it also means something to a carpenter.

So, it could have one of two or three meanings. And when we take this word, I'm not going to try to pronounce it in Greek. My Greek pronunciation is very much like my French. Nobody knows how it sounds. But it means one of four things, to make holy, to purify, to set aside in consecration or to venerate.

Now let's eliminate. We take the word venerate out. He didn't surely say that, and the very God of peace venerate you holy. Let's cross a blue line through that and say, now that's out.

And then he meant, maybe meant consecrate, set aside for holy purposes. For that is one meaning in the Bible. It is used in the Scriptures to set apart to God as a vessel. A vessel that is set apart to holy uses. Now I want to read it again, and then you put, let's put the word set apart in here and see if you think.

Now if you think that, then I won't argue with you, we'll just go on. But do you think that Paul meant this? And the very God of peace set you aside holy, and I pray God that your whole spirit, soul, and body and so on. Do you think he meant that? I can't see how he could possibly mean that.

And remember that the word here, the very God of peace sanctify, that word is the same root word as the word for holy, when we say Holy Spirit or talk about a holy God. It's the same word. And so, we have two meanings left. We have purify and make holy.

Now brethren, I will not argue about it, and you don't go away mad if you don't agree. But I can't see, trying my very level best, leaning backwards to try to be fair, I can't see how this can mean anything, but the very God of peace make you pure, holy pure. And I pray God your whole soul and spirit and body be preserved blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I think that that is fair, and I do not believe we have to hide or run away from that. It is there. And whenever the word consecrate, or that word is applied to a human being, it's the same word that describes God. It's the same word that describes, I saw the holy city. Now did that mean I saw a city that had been set aside. Certainly, it had. But didn't it mean more than that? Didn't it mean more than that?

And then when Peter, when the Holy Spirit said in the Old Testament, repeated by the Apostle Peter, be ye holy for I am holy, do you think that it meant be ye set aside because I'm set aside? Do you think so? Do you think that God said that somebody had set him aside or consecrated him? Certainly, He did not. He was talking about a state of moral purity. And He said, be you holy because I am holy. And when applied to moral beings, that unquestionably is the meaning.

Then what did Paul mean? Did he mean no more than that we were to be set apart? That's what the easy doctrine of sinful sainthood that has cursed the church over the years has taught us. That it just means that we're to set aside. God comes along and sets certain people aside, consecrates them, that is, turns them over to a certain use. As you might allocate \$10 out of 100 and set that aside and say, this, this is my tithe.

Now, then the next words reveal the meaning. It means a deep inward work. It means a cleansing that shall preserve us blameless. The whole man inward and outward shall be preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ.

Now, how are we preserved blameless? Well, in a world like this, with people like us, there's only one way God can preserve anything blameless, and that is by dwelling in it.

How was the bush, the burning bush, preserved blameless? It was preserved by the Indwelling Fire that was in it. And while the Fire was there, the bush was a holy bush. If the Fire left the bush, as it no doubt did, it would only need to cool off, just take 12 hours or maybe less, until bugs and parasites and moths were beginning to crawl back up and lay their eggs, and fungi and all sorts of things were coming back into the bush.

As long as the Fire was in the bush, there was a clean bush. And there isn't any other kind of purity known in the Scriptures than the purity that results from the fiery indwelling of Jesus Christ the Lord, the Holy Spirit dwelling in the hearts.

Now, it says that we're to be preserved irreproachable, blameless. Now, that requires a state of inward moral purity. And how can this be done by men who have evil natures? And do you know that this, what should we call it, this yin to misunderstand Scripture and lift the pressure off and let the carnality have its way, has been so great that we hide behind everything.

We even hide behind such a song as this. I didn't think about it until we sang this song, and then I put a card in here so I could read it and remember it. You know what it says? It says, false and full of sin I am, thou art full of grace and truth. And here is a confession that the singer is false and full of sin.

And people say, well, now listen, Charles Wesley wrote, false and full of sin I am. And if Charles Wesley was false and full of sin, then what about us? And can we expect to be any better? Now, that's stanza three. But brethren, have we forgotten what he says in stanza four? Plenteous grace with thee is found, grace to cover all my sin. Let the healing stream abound, make and keep me pure within. The singer, when he cried out in distress, false and full of sin I am, was getting his heart confessed out. And in the next breath he prayed, let the healing streams abound, make and keep me pure within.

And so, Charles Wesley is not on the side of those who teach sinful sainthood and say that we are supposed to go on as sinful saints, set aside, but still sinful. I can't conceive of God setting anybody aside for his use and not cleansing that person. Now, if you can, then we haven't read the same Bible, surely. Can we conceive of a moral being given over to God, wholly given over to God in consecration, and at the same time not be made entirely pure?

Now he says, sanctify, that is, make you pure, wholly pure. Now, just how much is holy? Well, now I'm quoting a Baptist here, so you'll know that I haven't gone to the Nazarenes for this. I've never been to Nazarene service in my life. I don't think that I can recall. Maybe when I was a boy I'd wandered in somewhere. But they've had no influence on me.

Robertson the Baptist says, and he's an honest Baptist, in the Greek he says it means the whole of each of you, every part of you, made holy. And Luther says, make you holy through and through. Doesn't that sound like Luther? Luther was readable and practical and salty and down-to-earth, and so he says, make you holy through and through.

Now, for the application of it to our own lives, it simply means that this apostle prayed for a deep, thorough, through and through cleansing. A moral conformity to a standard which God has set up. A spiritual conformity to God and a preservation of that state by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Now, I want to ask you, what does hinder? There is the deadly doctrine, I say. It is a deadly doctrine. It is the doctrine; I do not need to be holy. Another has been holy for me. Now, the terrible part about all this is that the latter part of it is true. Another has

kept the law for me, else I'd perish in hell forever. Another has been holy for me, or I should perish in hell forever. Another stands before God and represents me, or I should be driven to darkness from the face of God. That part of it is so. But the application, I don't need to worry about that. I don't need to be holy because another is holy for me. He has stood in my place. He has been holy for me.

My brethren, this is nothing short of a frightful and frightening misunderstanding and manipulation of a text to cover up a life that is not clean. And I am no more, I am little more than astonished at the children of God. I talked to some people, I talked to a preacher, and he said, I've heard him said more than once, said, I got so mad I could have, I was furious.

Well, nobody needs to come to me and tell me that anybody that gets furious and gets quite angry is clean. He's not. He's got a stain. He's got, he's got leprosy. He's got something in him that can be purged out. But you say, is it possible to get delivered from the temper?

Well, there was a man by one time, a great big fella by the name of John Fletcher. He was a student at Oxford College. He was a Christian, and he was a good Christian. But he had a temper, and obviously a pretty bad one. And once he got into an argument with a school friend, and the great big angry fellow picked this school friend up at the head of a pair of winding stairs and was going to plunge him down those stairs and would have broken every bone in his body and cracked his skull. It would have killed him.

And suddenly something came over him, the grace of God evidently intervened, and with shaking, with terror, he put the fellow down. And then he went to his room, and he put a sign on the door. And the sign said, "Do not disturb me."

And he was in that room 24 hours with the door locked, without meeting anybody. When he came out, the student said there was upon his face the tranquility of a saint. There was upon his face the calm, kind, shining countenance that Moses must have brought down from Sinai. And they said from that hour on, he was the easiest, smoothest, quietest chap, couldn't be offended and couldn't be made angry. He had almost committed murder in a flare-up of temper.

The God of peace make you holy through and through and purge and purify you. That's what it means unless we hide behind the meaning the God of peace venerate you. I don't think that's what it means, do you? The God of peace set you aside, do you think that's what it means? The God of peace make you like himself, holy, that's what it means.

Now my brethren, I am not preaching eradication here tonight. I have never believed it more than maybe six months of my life when I was a very young boy. But I am preaching that it is the will of God that a work of purgation take place in the life of every one of His children, that will deliver them from their habits, that will cleanse them from their carnality, that will make them spiritual, and that will take out, take out now, there are the words, take out the things that the world has that make sinners out of them.

Dear God, I pray that we may have the courage in this terrible day to dare to rise up and fight the heinous doctrine of sinful sainthood, to cancel each other out. For the word

saint means a holy one. And we go to the New Testament and we hear Paul say to the saints and faithful brethren, to the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, and to the saints and faithful brethren in Ephesus, and to the saints in Corinth, and we say, well, that means set aside, that means just that we are set aside, the same as I would set aside something for a certain use, a vessel to be used.

Well, all of God's children are set aside, there's no question about that, no question about that at all. But the word saint means a holy one. And when the word, as long as the word holy has to do with things, it means set aside and consecrated. When it has to do with moral beings, it describes a moral state.

And so, when we say the holy angels, we don't mean beings up there somewhere that have been set aside, as a sergeant might come in and say, you and you and you and you, you four come over here, I want you--to set them aside.

Did you ever hear of the sergeant who lined them up in the morning and said, I want four volunteers, you and you and you and you? Well, that's setting them aside, special detail, they call it, I remember, special detail. And then, O my God, only in heaven, only knows what you're going to have to do before the sun goes down.

But now that's setting four fellows aside for a certain purpose. But do you think that God has beings over in heaven that he has set aside, and they are not holy, pure beings? How then can we make the word holy mean morally pure to an angel and make it mean something else to a Christian?

Well, my brethren, maybe you won't agree with my interpretation. And I'm not too much concerned whether you do or not. But I'll tell you this, that it's an outrageous perversion of the doctrine of vicarious atonement, that says Jesus Christ was holy for me and died and rose and lived and pleads and therefore, I'm not to be concerned with whether I'm holy or not. It is simply a cover-up, a deep desire to preserve our Adam life alive, and also a fear to take issue with entrenched authority.

For 40, 50 years now we've had theological authority, entrenched authority. They've written the books, and they have written a good many of the songs, and it's entrenched authority. And that entrenched authority says sinful sainthood is the normal order. And that Christ was the holy One and that there's no reason why you and I should worry about whether we're holy or not.

Now, my brethren, nobody's saved because he's holy. He is saved because Christ is holy and died for him and rose again. But the very purpose of Christ in dying for him and rising again and sending the Holy Spirit and giving His blood as a fountain is that that man also might be made holy. And the work of redemption is not just to die to cancel the sentence. This doctrine of a canceled sentence is one of the cheapest doctrines I know.

Now, let the sinner come knowing that he's a guilty sinner, tragically terribly guilty and deserving of hell, and let him come and believe in Christ and one of the greatest joys of his life will be that he's had a canceled sentence. That will be one of the greatest joys. He'll leap to his feet like an old Methodist convert in the deep woods and shout the place down because once he had guilt on him and now it's gone.

God has laid on Him the iniquity of it all. I say that's perfectly normal and right and good. And the sinner that doesn't rejoice in the knowledge that his sins have been taken off and laid on another is not a normal man, and he's not been converted.

But the purpose of the Lord was not that we should stop there, my brethren. The purpose of the Lord was that we should go on to be conformed unto the image of Jesus Christ our Lord and that we should have purged out of our lives things that don't belong there.

Do you know that if you've got a hungry heart, God will teach you a whole lot of things in spite of some mixed-up theology? You know, He will, really. You know, God will do a lot for a fellow if he's got a hungry heart. In spite of mixed-up theology, there are a lot of people better than their doctrine. That's my hope. That's my optimistic hope is that a lot of people are better than their doctrine. For there are a lot of people that are thirsty after God.

I remember hearing a man one time. He was an ignorant man from down in the state of West Virginia. Kind of a one-horse preacher, sort of. You know, plow and harrow and pick pumpkins and preach on Sunday morning. That type of fellow. But he was a good man. He told me this. He said, Brother Tozer, I got converted a long time ago.

And when they get converted down there, you know, it's quite a production. They put on quite a show a lot of times. It doesn't often last. But then he got converted and it did, it lasted. And he said to me, you know, he said, shortly after I was converted, I had a dream.

Now, I never had a dream in my life, personally, that I believed in. That is, I never had a dream I couldn't trace to something I'd eaten or something I'd seen or something. So, I'm not a dreamer. Don't say, behold, that dreamer cometh. But I'm just telling you what this fellow said. He was just a poor, ignorant fellow.

And he said, Brother Tozer, I had a dream shortly after I was converted. And he said, here stood a tree. And he said, a man walked out with a pair of pruning shears. And he began trimming that tree. And he'd look it over and then he'd trim again. Then he'd look it over and then he'd trim some more. And he said, I wondered, why is this man trimming off these things? And he said, suddenly a Voice said to my heart, now, you're My child. You belong to Me now. Now I want you to get busy getting rid of things that hurt Me. Get rid of things that I don't like. He said, use your shears. He said, I came out of it. And he said, the first thing I saw was my pipe. He said, I tossed that thing over the bushes, and I was finished with that. And then he said, I began on my life.

Now this poor, ignorant fellow that thinks the King James Version, you know, is the one that Paul read out of, and has all ignorance in the world, but he had a hungry heart, and God will teach a hungry man, and he'll let the theological fellow go. For I have learned that theology is a good place to hide your carnality.

And many a man is as carnal as a skunk cabbage. And he knows just exactly where to go in the Greek to justify it. He just knows where to put his finger on the Hebrew root, and

say, you don't talk to me, I know what the Hebrew says there. Don't talk to me, I know the interpretation of Dr. So-and-so. And that's what he says about it. A place to hide our carnality. Brethren, I don't believe a man is converted unless he has a longing to be holy.

Now, there are differences of opinion about the matter of wholly, entire sanctification; differences of opinion, I say about that, and I'm not going to press that for tonight. I'm only going to say that if we do not have a deep longing to be inwardly pure, we have serious reason to wonder if the nature of God has ever been imparted to us.

And the person who will stand off and fight to preserve his temper and his lusts and his jealousies and his love of money and his worldliness, the man who will stand off and fight and quote the Greek to prove it, is to me, at least he leads me to wonder whether the root of the matter is in him.

For the man that has the nature of Christ in him has at least a great longing for through and through purity. And my brethren, without changing your position or your doctrine or your view of life, if you're a good, sound Calvinist, I'm not going to try to convert you.

And if you have views from your childhood other than what I'm preaching, we're not going to fuss about it. But I'm only going to ask you this. Is there within your heart a great longing to be like Jesus? A longing to be free from the things that bond you, that bother you, the moral blemishes, a longing to be like God. If that isn't there, then I, for my part, don't think the root of the matter is in you.

For Peter says that by exceeding precious promises, God has given us of His own divine nature. And the divine nature, the nature of God, longs to be holy. That is in you, longs for you to be holy.

Suppose now, I don't want to be thought silly, but let's illustrate it a little bit. Suppose that you had in you the nature, had imparted to you and added to your nature, say, the nature of a wild fowl, say, a duck. Well, within you, that nature would begin to long after water, long after water. Suppose you had within you the nature of a mole. That nature within you would long for the soft, cool earth. Suppose you had in you the nature of an eagle. It wouldn't be very long until that nature would begin to leap and reassert itself, and you'd long for the wild blue yonder.

And when I have in me the nature of God, that nature will assert itself and begin to long to be holy.

The Baptist preacher wrote that famous hymn, he's now with his Savior, but he wrote that famous hymn, help me to be holy, O Spirit of light, sin-burdened and lowly I bow in thy sight. How shall a stained conscience dare look on thy face? E'en though in thy presence thou grant me a place, A longing to be holy. And another one wrote, I long, O I long to be holy, Conformed to his will and his word. I want to be Christ-like and humble. I want to be just like my Lord.

And if you go to your hymn book, you will find in that hymn book a longing to be Christ-like, a longing for inward purity, a longing after the conformity to Christ. And yet we have had the thing so mixed up.

And you will hear the old rugged cross, for instance, sung over the air. And a bunch of cowboys will be singing the old rugged cross to a guitar. And they'll come to that verse, it was on that old cross Jesus suffered and died to pardon and sanctify me. They have no more idea what the word means than I know what Sanskrit means.

But yet, and we sing these songs, we sing songs and then get up and cancel our songs by our theology. And we hear a man say, cleanse and make me pure within. And then get up and spend 45 minutes proving that the Lord never meant we should be pure within at all. That we've got somebody in heaven that stands for us and so let's go play golf. What's the difference? Let's go have a soda.

Brethren, a lot of people think they're converted that haven't been converted at all. They have never had an impartation of divine life to their souls. They've run and hidden behind a mantle of Jesus and said, I accept Christ now and I'm not going to go to hell. I accept Jesus and I'm not going to go to hell. But they're living like the people that are going to go to hell.

And you'll always go where you live like. Don't pay attention to the grammar there. That's poor grammar, but it's good truth. You'll always go the place that your life and heart prepare you to go.

So, choose you this day, my brethren, whom you will follow. The contented, carnal purveyors of proxy purity? We say I am all right, I know I get mad, sure I know it. I'm grouchy all day, I know it. I know I don't feel like praying, I know it. I don't feel like reading the Scriptures, I know it. I know I get jealous; I know all these things. But the Lord died for me, amen.

Our brother used a word a while ago, what do you call it, flippantly? Glibly. Glibly, yeah. That kind of glibness worries me. That kind of glibness worries me, brethren. For that doesn't sound as if the seed of God was in that man's heart. That sounds as if he wanted to get some of this world and some of heaven too. That sounds, as Dr. Brown says, as if he wanted to raise hell on his way to heaven.

Whenever a man allows any doctor or any interpretation of the text or any secondary meaning of a Greek word to provide an excuse for carnal living, that man is a hypocrite. And that man, I have serious reasons to believe, has never been born again.

Now I want to read an old hymn to you here. I want to read an old hymn. I went upstairs and got this because I want to read it to you. Here's a man, and here's what he says. Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, thine all-victorious love, shed in my heart abroad, then shall my feet no longer row, rooted and fixed in God. Oh, that in me the sacred fire might now begin to glow, burn up the dross of base desire and make the mountains flow. O that it now from heaven might fall and all my sins consume. Come, Holy Ghost, for thee I call, Spirit of burning, come! Refining fire, go through my heart, illuminate my soul, scatter thy life through every part and sanctify the whole.

Does that sound like Paul? It does. Then he concludes by saying, my steadfast soul from falling free shall then no longer move, While Christ is all the world in me and all my heart is love.

You see, the Wesleys have been greatly misunderstood. And they have been made to teach a patented sinless perfection, which they never taught at all. They taught perfect love. They taught that when God had sufficiently purged us and cleansed us, that we were filled with love, then we wouldn't backslide and we wouldn't go astray, and the old things we used to do would fall off, and we'd be innately pure, because of the love of God that was shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

But we have that in the text now, and people get up and quote that text, but they don't have it. The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. They taught perfect love, the Wesleys did. And somebody said, But Mr. Wesley, I have perfect love, and I failed the Lord in sin. What shall I do? Confess it, he said. Let the people know. He said, this doctrine won't be harmed by honest confession, but it'll be harmed by hypocrisy. He said, tell it out.

I'm not a Wesleyan. I'm not a Moravian or Nazarene or Methodist, but I believe what the Bible says. And my brethren, if we would spend more time, or as much time, seeking to be holy as we do, proving that we can't be, our spiritual lives would rise wonderfully, and the love of God would be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

We sing the songs of Francis Ridley Havergal. Sing them glibly, almost flippantly. But do you know what Francis Ridley Havergal said? She said, I had been reading my Bible, and I had been reading 1 John, and she said, I had been longing, oh, how I'd been longing in my heart that I might be holy.

And she said, I read in my Bible, where it said, in the first chapter of 1 John, The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. And she said, suddenly God enabled me to believe, and I bowed my head over my Bible, and raised my hands to God, and for the first time in my life believed that God meant what he said. And she said from that, oh, the change, the change, the change.

Well, now, my friends, if you Christians, whatever denomination you belong to, whatever group you are with, if you Christians can run a temper and not worry, get over it and cool off, I worry about you. And if you can commit any other kind of sin, inward, in thought, outward, in act, or in your words, and still not be distressed over it, I have reason to worry about you. For nature always seeks nature, and the nature of God in a man will seek God again and leap up as fire leaps to fire.

Oh, that in me, oh, that in me that from heaven it now might fall, and all my sins consumed. Do you believe that there is provision in the gospel to deliver you from sin?

Now, this is not a question of eradication. We're not going to be metaphysicians tonight, practical Christians, down-to-earth Christians. Let the metaphysicians fight over that. Just in case any of you don't know what's going on in the world, I'll tell you something. Fundamentalism has gone bankrupt.

That is, the old, dried fundamentalism that we used to know, that insisted you couldn't be clean, and that there was no such thing as being filled with the Holy Ghost and all that. There's been a change, rather.

And when God sent a certain Englishman to the north side, he did a wonderful work for Chicago. And he helped, he helped me. I didn't need his preaching, but I needed a big man over there that could believe about the same thing and dare to say it. And I heard him stand before an Alliance Council once.

This man, and I don't make him responsible for my teaching, only for his. But he said this. He said, is there another work of grace to purge a man after his conversion? He said, how could I deny it in the face of what the Bible teaches and what Christian biography says? I heard him say it.

And so, there are hungry souls who find him in Moody Bible Institute, who find him in Wheaton College. And they call me up and say, I'd like to talk with you. I don't have any panacea. I've got no pill I can give them. But I only know this, that nobody ever longed to be holy that God didn't meet him pretty soon. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

And for you to go about judicially protected from the fires of hell and satisfied with it is a frightful blasphemy. But for you to go about reverently thankful that you're saved from the fires of hell and then go on from there and say, O God do for me. I don't quite understand it, Father. All kinds of doctrines afloat about it.

But I only know one thing. And Thou hast said and given me reason to believe you would make me holy. And my heart, deep calleth unto deep. And my heart calls unto Thy heart that I might be holy. O God, make me holy. You can't talk like that to God very long until changes begin to take place within you, brethren. Yes, sir.

In the olden days they used to have Methodist preachers come up for ordination. They'd say to them, has God made your heart holy? Well, they said, I don't know. They said, are you longing after it? They said, oh, yes. They said, okay, they'd ordain it. They just wanted to know that the longing after God was there.

All right, I've preached myself out and it's time to quit. There's lots more to say. But what are we going to do about it? Now, I could do this. I could give an altar call and a lot of you people, especially young people, would be up here at the altar. But I don't think it'll do you any good.

I think what you need to do is to seek God like Moses and Paul and Christ and the saints of other days and go to Him with confession, detailed and painful confession of inner impurity, and ask Him by the fire of the Spirit and the power of the blood to make you inwardly, deeply, purely clean. And dare to believe that He will do it. And keep pressing your case.

I believe that the Lord will help you and hear you. And you can't go to very many people in Chicago and ask about this because they wouldn't be able to help you. They'd either give you a stereotyped formula that they've gotten or else they'd dismiss you and say

you're worried about yourself. Don't you know Christ was holy for you? So, neither one would help you. So why don't you go home and look up in your Bible every passage that tells you you can be a clean and inwardly pure of heart and clean and like Christ, and then press on and press on and press on. Don't worry about doctrines but press on until He has made you inwardly pure and cleansed you from these things.

Somebody says, has God done that for you, Mr. Tozer? Well, I'll tell you this. You don't know my disposition. And you don't know what a tangle you'd think when I was a boy, first converted. You would think that I was a cross between a wolverine and a wildcat and a bull. And the fact that I can even be reasonably decent is a triumph of the grace of God in a disposition such as I have by nature. And brethren, God can do this for you, and He wants to.

Now, Brother Chambers, we're going to sing. I don't want you to pick the number or not.