

City Church Network - Tuesday Fellowship

4/28/2020

Streams of the Christian Faith: Holiness

facilitated by Wim Codington (cell: 423.505.6411; email: wimcodington@gmail.com)

Bible passages examined:

- Colossians 3:1-10
- Philippians 2:12-16

Thoughts and ideas shared after reading the passages above:

- Essence of stream:
 - Seeking the manifestation of God's power to change our desires and our will through a Christ-exalting, sin-killing, fruit-producing life.
 - Other streams emphasize the life of the mind (contemplative), the senses (incarnational / sacramental), or relational missions through word (evangelical) and deed (social justice).
 - Charismatic is similar to holiness in that it emphasizes God's power, but the manifestation of God's power in the charismatic is outward. The manifestation of God's power in the holiness is inward - in the heart through changed desires and wills.
 - The streams balance passive postures (reflection and prayer - contemplative, thinking - evangelical, observing - sacramental, waiting - charismatic) and active postures (making disciples - evangelical, routine and rhythm - sacramental, practicing gifts of the spirit - charismatic, helping poor - social justice). Holiness is decidedly active.
- Key questions asked by this stream:
 - Where in my life has the grace of God not yet fully transformed me into a new creation?
 - Where in my life do I have need for personal renewal?
- Historical background (why the stream emerged)
 - John Wesley: "By salvation I mean not barely according to the vulgar notion deliverance from hell or going to heaven but a present deliverance from sin a restoration of the soul to its primitive health its original purity a recovery of the divine nature the renewal of our souls after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness in justice mercy and truth."
 - Methodism, Church of the Nazarene, Salvation Army, etc.



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- John Owen - mortification of sin (“Be killing sin or it will be killing you.”)
- John Piper - *Future Grace*
- Theological themes in the stream:
 - General: progressive sanctification / maturation (vs. point-in-time justification)
 - More specific and controversial: “entire sanctification” of believer (I Thessalonians 5:23)
 - Here is an article presenting a classic summary of the concept of “entire sanctification”:
<https://www.gbs.edu/key-passages-that-teach-the-concept-of-entire-sanctification/>
- Bible passages:
 - *If then you **have been raised** with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **Set your minds** on things that are **above**, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. **Put to death therefore** what is **earthly** in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the **new self**, which is being **renewed** in knowledge after the image of its creator. (Colossians 3:1-10)*
 - *Therefore, my beloved, **as you have always obeyed**, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both **to will and to work** for his good pleasure. **Do** all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be **blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish** in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you **shine as lights in the world**, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. (Philippians 2:12-16)*



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- Dangers in the holiness stream:
 - Defeat and unbelief (it's impossible to overcome sin since sin is so powerful and pervasive; just let go and stop trying; trying itself is bad)
 - Antidotes:
 - We are more than conquerors! (Romans 8:37-39)
 - Put to death deeds of body (would not have been given this command if it were not possible) (Colossians 3:1-5)
 - Set mind on things of the Spirit (would not have been given this command if it were not possible) (Romans 8:1-15)
 - Our will has been set free - free to choose life; free to obey
 - Overconfidence (we are all victorious! We are more than conquerors! To be a Christian is to be perpetually victorious by definition!)
 - Antidotes:
 - Be watchful; be sober-minded; redemption and transformation are a process (I Peter 5:8)
 - Lord where have I not yet been transformed? Reveal to me. Help me to see as you see. (Psalm 139:23-24)
 - Heart is deceitful above all things; desperately wicked. Who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9)
 - Self-condemnation (losing sight of my justification and God's present delight in me)
 - Antidote: reflect on the "once for all" passages of Scripture and the passages that emphasize God's steadfast love and delight toward His people (Hebrews 9:12-14; Hebrews 10; Hebrews 12)
 - Legalism (belief that God's work in Christ is insufficient for me)
 - Antidote: reflect on the passages that emphasize our salvation by faith apart from works of the law (Romans 3:21-27; Galatians 2:16-3:12; Ephesians 2:8-9)
 - Antinomianism (overemphasis on grace or underemphasis on sanctification)
 - Antidotes:
 - Accept God's warnings throughout the Old and New Testaments against sin and His active commands to strive, aim, yearn, work, take care, walk in the manner in which we were called.



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- Believe that there is goodness in submission to the law; freedom comes through striving for holiness with a trusting and faith-filled heart, not apart from it.
- Obedience brings blessing; disobedience brings pain (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28).
- How we can practice each (choose 1 or 2 to incorporate into your personal or family life)
 - https://www.plcfantioch.org/dir/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/how_to_practice_each_of_the_streams_of_faith.pdf
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