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The Three Levels of Maturity

I John 2:12-14

Little Children--Forgiven forever

Young Men--We overcome Satan by the BLOOD and our word

Fathers--We labor until Christ be formed in others

God as Savior

God as Power

God as Person

John 3:16--First steps of faith

Gal.2:20--No longer alive, but Christ lives

John 7:36--Out from you shall flow rivers of living water

Sins--Forgiven and cleansed from sins

Exchange Life--With Christ, I no longer live, He lives as me

Intercessor--We are living sacrifices

Galatians--We are crucified with Him

Colossians--We are raised

Ephesians--We are seated in heaven places with Him

Crucifixion--Christ died

Resurrection--Christ raised

Ascension--Christ ascended

Moses--Law

Joshua--The promised land of rest

Melchizedek--Royal Priesthood

Rom.1-5--Justified by the blood

Rom.6-8--Sanctified by the broken body

Rom.9-16--Take up your Cross

Little Faith--The disciples were of little faith

Great Faith--The Centurion spoke word of faith

Perfect Faith--Abraham sacrificed Isaac

Justification--Just as if I have never sinned

Sanctification--Circumcised from the power & dominion of sin

Glorification—Bodily resurrection

A Trilogy

Why three? Three in one is a heavenly pattern. God manifest Himself as three in one. So the same heavenly pattern manifests itself in the Trinity itself: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; Little Children, Young Men and Fathers; Sanctify us Spirit, Soul and Body; Outer Court, Holy Place, and Holy of Holies; Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification. I'm sure that we could continue on with many more examples of the three becoming one.

The most vital part of our maturity is our development in our understanding of ourselves, and our purpose on all three faith stages. Why can't we grasp it all at once? I think it has to do with the way our consciousness works, or how understanding evolves into knowing.

In our fallen condition our minds are blinded, our thoughts about ourselves are false, and our consciousness is deluded with ideas of independence. Through Christ, we already have the new mind of Christ, but because we don't know it, nor draw from this new mind, the old thoughts flood our consciousness and keep us in bondage. A good friend of mine says that we have "crystallized thought patterns." These thought patterns hold us in bondage and fear.

All understanding and insights come from discovering opposites. The one gains its definition and distinction from its opposite. Hot cannot be known except by its opposite, cold. Small cannot be understood except by its opposite, big. Soft is felt because it is not hard. Sweet is tasted and known to be sweet because it is not sour. You say yes to doing this, but hidden in that yes is a no to doing that, and so on.

Consciousness is realized the same way. We have a consciousness of oneness with Christ because we previously had a mind brainwashed with the Satanic lies of self empowerment and separation. The darkness of this lying consciousness is swallowed up in the light of the glorious truth of the gospel. One is defined by and made known by the other. In other words, we have to experience who we are not, before we can be conditioned to see clearly who we really are.

Now let us see the three stages develop throughout the scriptures, and let these Bible verses testify for themselves. We will use I John 2:12-14 for our illustration.

Little Children

The Blood of Jesus cleanses us of sin, gives us peace with God, and justifies us by faith.

Young Men

"I write unto you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one." ... "I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one" (I John 2:13-14).

How do we overcome the wicked one? Our sins are forgiven, but how about victory over sin; over Satan; over the works of the flesh; and over the world?

Victory and Power In Daily Living

- **Rom.5:10** We are reconciled to God, by the death of His Son, but saved daily by His life. The resurrection life of Christ delivers us daily from sins dominion.
- **Eph.3:19** That you might be filled with all the fullness of God. His Holy Spirit comes into us and fills us with his Spirit of victory
- **ICor.2:10** The Holy Spirit teaches us the deep things of God

- **Eph.1:18** We can know the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. It is not good enough to know about this inheritance, we need to be one with all that God has freely given us
- **II Cor.9:8** God makes all grace abound towards you that we might have all sufficiency in all things

The Provision For Daily Living--The Body Death Of the Cross

- **Rom.6:3** We are baptized into His death
- **2Peter8:1** We are "partakers of the divine nature
- **Col.1:22** Through the body of His flesh, He presents us before God the Father holy, and unblameable in His sight
- **Heb.10:10** We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ
- **Heb.10:14** By one offering He hath perfected forever them who are sanctified

The Law, Not Sin, The Problem

- **Rom.7:4** You also have become dead to the law by the body of Christ. The Law doesn't die, we die to it
- **Rom.6:7** He that is dead is freed from sin
- **Rom.6:14** Sin shall not have dominion over you for you are under grace
- **ICor.15:56** The power of sin is the law
- **Rom.11:6** Since righteousness comes by grace, there is no more law

How Does This Work Out In Our Experience?

- **Rom.7:15** For that which I do I allow not: for what I would that do I not; but what I hate, that I do
- **Rom.7:24** O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

Why Are We Still Defeated?

Because not having completely learned, or easily forgetting, the basic helplessness of self, and its only function to be the container of the Spirit, we are constantly assaulted by temptation to be something or do something or not do something. Obey those commands pray more, give more witness more, be more patient, don't lose your temper, get rid of those evil thoughts, struggle against your lusts, and so on and so on.

The Human Being is Only a Receiver and not a Producer of Righteousness

- **John15:1** You are the branch, not the vine
- **Rom.9:22** We are vessels of mercy, but formally vessels of wrath, but always vessels
- **ICor.6:19** You are the temple of the living God
- **Rom.6:17** You are slaves of righteousness, formally slaves of sin
- **Rom.6:7** He that is dead is freed from sin
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The Human Being Has Never Been an Independent Self

- **LJohn3:10** Child of the devil, child of God
- **LJohn4:6** He that is in this world, and He that is in us

- **John4:6** Spirit of truth, and Spirit of error
- **Gal.2:20** I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me
- **Rom.7:17** It is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me

The Leap Of Faith

- **Rom. 7:25-8:2** No condemnation, and Spirit and Life set me free
- **Col.3:3-4** Christ, who is my live
- **Gal.5:24** In Christ we **have** crucified the flesh
- **Romans 6:6** The Old self **is** crucified with Christ
- **Col.3:9;Eph.22-24** You **have** put off the old man with the old man's deeds (sins)
- **Col.3:10** You **have** put on the new man which is renewed with a new mind

Soul and Spirit Differences

- **I Thes.5:23** Sanctify your spirit, soul and body
- **Matt.11:28-29** There is a rest for our souls
- **Heb.4:13** Sabbath rest for the people of God
- **Heb.4:13** Dividing soul from Spirit, joints and marrow, thoughts and intents

The School of Faith

- **Heb.11:6** For without faith it is impossible to please God
- **Mark11:22** Have the faith of God, say unto this mountain be thou removed and cast into the sea. And whatsoever you say, you shall have
- **Rom.4:17** Call the things that be not as though they are

Detachments

(Nothing in this life is yours)

- **Luke14:26-27** Hate not his father, mother, wife, children, brethren & his own life
- **Gen.22:2** Take thy son, thine only son Isaac, and offer him there a burnt-offering The Life Of Faith
- **Rom.4:20** Abraham staggered not at the promises of God through persuaded that, what He had promised He was able also to perform

Fathers

- **Heb.11** The great Intercessors of faith.
- **John 2:14** I have written unto you, Fathers, because you have known Him, that is from the beginning." Our life is poured out for others".
- **John21:18** When you are mature, another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou would not, and you will see how great a death will glorify me

Credentials of an Apostle

- **John10:17-18** Why does the Father love me? Because I lay down my life, that I might take it again, I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it up again
- **Heb.5:14** He that is full of age has their senses exercised to discern good and evil

- **ICor.4:9-15** God has set for the Apostles as last as it were appointed to death, We are fools for Christ sake, but you are wise, we are weak, we are despised, Being reviled, we bless, being persecuted we suffer it, being defamed, we retreat, we are made the filth of the world, and the off scouring of all things
- **IICor.1:5** For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us

Works of an Father/Apostle/Intercessor

- **Ezek.22:30** I sought for a man to stand in the gap
- **Col.1:24** I fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ
- **Gal.6:2** Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ

The Call Of An Apostle/Intercessor

Don't look for your intercession, it will find you. However, you might not want it. Jesus said "Take this cup from me."

- **Jonah1:2** Arise go to Nineveh
- **Ex.3:10** I will send thee unto Pharaoh
- **Isa.6:9** Go, and tell this people
- **John1:6** There is a man sent from God

The Cost of an Intercessor

- **Isa.54:4** He bore our grief, and carried our sorrows
- **Isa.53:12** He has poured out his soul unto death
- **IICor.1:9** We have the sentence of death in ourselves
- **IICor.4:8-12** We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed: we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in my mortal flesh.
- **IICor.4:11** For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh

The Completion and Fruit Bearing Of An Intercession

- **IICor.4:11b** Death works in us, but life works in you
- **John12:24** If the seed die, it brings forth much fruit
- **John15:16** He has chosen you to bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain
- **Heb.2:10** Bring many sons to glory¹

¹ See Programs 37