



*"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16*

## **THE SANCTIFIED LIFE**

By Beverly Carradine

### **Chapter 8**

#### **The Loneliness Of The Life**

There are many paradoxes in the spiritual life. In the expression, "Alone, yet not alone," we find one of them.

The Saviour was in one sense the most solitary of men, and yet in another he was not lonely. He said to His disciples at one time, "Will ye also go away?" and then added that he was not alone, for the Father was with Him. He who was in unbroken intercourse with the Father, and had angels ascending and descending upon him, never knew such a thing as men do of the heaviness of his own company or the oppressiveness of solitude. He was adjusted by His perfect life and nature to every condition and surrounding, and was full of rest everywhere.

The sanctified life being God-centered, and having Christ abiding within, satisfying every longing of the heart can not be lonely in the sense that men use the term. Ennui is impossible with a soul full of the Holy Ghost. Every minute has its charm, every occurrence brings or is made to bring a blessing, the day has its glory, the night its songs, solitude its sweetness, and God is seen and felt in everything. The old-time necessity, forcing one to take hat or bonnet and run off in social gossip to get rid of an hour or two that hangs heavily on their hands, becomes an unknown experience. The social life is not despised nor given up, for Duty still calls in this direction, but the visit is now undertaken in a new spirit, and one's room or home is not left because its stillness and quiet can not be borne.

The sanctified life is not lonely in the true and high sense of the word. It brings a spiritual and heavenly companionship that made Patmos an ante-chamber of heaven to John, turned a bastile dungeon into a place of beauty and glory to Madam Guyon, and transforms the room of the invalid into a sanctuary of rest, fanned with angel wings and lighted up with the smile of Christ.

But in another sense the sanctified life is lonely. As viewed by the world it is painfully lonely, but as felt by the sanctified person himself it is lonely without painfulness.

There is a growing recognition of the fact of this separation and solitariness and a consequent shrinking from the experience upon the part of some, and an endeavor to so

shift, change and adjust the life as to deliver the individual from that same dreaded feature of loneliness. This, of course, is done mainly by those who have not received the grace of sanctification, and so can not understand it. But there are also those who have entered "into the holiest" and have not studied the truth itself and its relations and demands as they should. So they are found in their efforts trying to win, conciliate, and keep up old relations, to improve Bible nomenclature and to fill up chasms dug between men in the spiritual life by the Holy Ghost. The result of this has been disastrous to the experience they professed. They regained their old company and associations, but they lost the blessing. They wanted to bring it from its marble pillar of flagellation, from its solitary position of suspicion and rejection, from its star like shining far above the flaring candles of earth, but in doing this the blessed Form disappeared, the star vanished, and the glory went out.

We might as well come to the knowledge of the Truth, act accordingly, and be saved any more failures of a heart-breaking nature. If we want this swan of the skies to sing and float high in our hearts, we must not try to make it like the other fowls in the barnyard. We must take it as it is. It is a blessing beyond all price in value, it is a life the sweetest of all under the sun, but coupled with this is the feature of a peculiar loneliness. We had better not divide asunder that which God hath joined together.

Let it be understood once for all that the loneliness we speak of is not a Pharisee separatism which holds itself better, and will have nothing to do with other classes of religious people. Nor is it the exclusiveness of a hide-bound bigotry, nor a timid shrinking from all social life, nor the repetition of the ghastly mistake of the Dark Ages when the church judged that the highest piety could not be developed in the daily walks of life and hence removed to the shadows and silence of the monastery and convent.

No such unnatural, unhealthy and un-Christian loneliness is taught by the Bible and wanted by the world. The genuinely sanctified man is a social man in the best sense of the word. He is in touch and sympathy with all classes of people, and, like his Lord, is found in the market-places as well as the synagogue, and, like Him, always doing good.

The loneliness we speak of is to be found in other directions.

First, sanctification has to be sought in a solitary way, or isolation from the world for the time being.

The disciples separated themselves from every pursuit and from the noise and rush of roads and streets and came together in the quiet of the Upper Room. Even then it was ten days before the holy fire descended. What if they had not thus specially removed themselves and given the undivided attention and desire of mind and heart to God. Then it is certain we would never have heard of Pentecost, at least through them.

Jacob in the obtainment of the Peniel Blessing went out by himself on the brookside. A far off he could see the twinkling campfires, where wives, children and servants rested unconscious of the suffering and sorrowing man who wept and struggled atone all through the long hours of that starlit Syrian night.

It is not only well to be isolated at such a time, but necessary to obtain the revelation of the deep things of God. His voice is "a still small voice," and is not heard in its clearness amidst the world's loud talking, laughter and rush after money and pleasure. Certain instincts of the soul lead us away from the street into the sanctuary, or closet of prayer. And even when in a company of believers, like the case of the disciples, there must be a sinking away from each other and from every surrounding, a separation unto Christ alone, in the fulfillment of the prophet's words, when he says, "Each one mourned to himself apart."

We are confident that the difficulty with many in obtaining the blessing of sanctification is right here. They are not willing to be alone long enough for God to search them, and show them “the ground of their heart,” the dark principle within, which when Isaiah saw in the stillness of the temple while waiting on the Lord, made him cry out, “I am undone.” It pays to wait in solitariness before God. And garrets, cellars, barns, and the silent grove looking down upon kneeling and prostrate figures have witnessed revelations of divine glory that myriads of our cathedral churches know nothing of.

Again, the very announcement of the fact that you are seeking sanctification will produce a remarkable falling away of friends and acquaintances. The loneliness is now not only that of your seeking God in privacy, but a solitarism made by people holding themselves aloof from you in mingled doubt, pity and wonder as to the final outcome of your present proceedings.

But for Gospel explanation this social withdrawal would be as mysterious as crushing. He that seeks sanctification asks only for Christ. He sees that “Jesus only” is necessary for happiness, and seeks alone for Him. He has found that business, pleasure, marriage, money, children, position, honor, travel, having all been tried, fail to satisfy the soul. The aching void is left in the heart. He now wants Jesus only.

This simplification of life, this one desire left out of thousands, lifts the man away from the everyday thought and practice of men. It constitutes a philosophy that is at present beyond them.

Being past their comprehension they fall into the mistake that the anxious faced seeker before them is in an abnormal, unhealthy state of mind, in a word, deluded, and can only bring ridicule and failure on himself, and drag them with him into the maelstrom of public remark and judgment, if they are seen to be identified, associated with or in anyway connected with him. Hence in a figurative way the hands are washed, the skirts are shaken, and the feet walk off with those worldly, sensible heads.

And from a safe and respectable distance, rows of cool-looking eyes are turned critically, deprecatingly and pityingly upon the religious phenomenon before them at the altar, who wants Jesus and Jesus only. They hear him say he is willing to give up things that they know to be perfectly proper and legitimate; that he surrenders so excellent a thing as reputation, which required them twenty to forty years to build up; that he is willing to be misunderstood, abused, slandered and rejected by friends, family and church itself, if necessary; in a word, they hear uttered many things which, in their earthly wisdom and cool, level-headed judgment and good horse sense they pronounce extravagant, if not fanatical, and so with many misgivings and shakings of the head they leave the man to himself.

Still again, the reception of the blessing of sanctification will cause a final falling away from you not only of acquaintances, friends, church laborers and fellow Christians, but one's kindred and oftentimes family itself.

The man, even with his new-found purity and joy, is at first aghast over this social landslide and the sudden sense of distance and separation from those whom he never loved so tenderly and so well before.

He tries to explain the new life to his friends, and they look at him as if he was talking Sanskrit.

He pours out his experience to his family; they listen with outward respect in some instances, with ill concealed amusement in others, with evident sorrow and mortification in still others, and with unbelief in all.

He next goes to old church workers or to the ministry, and with flaming tongue gives his experience and tries to get them to see it. But through all the conversation he is held at arm's length, the faces turned upon him are cold, skeptical, unsympathetic, and there is an evident reluctance to being seen with him on the street, and an equally manifest desire to get away.

After this the man rushes into the religious press if he is allowed, and pours forth the fact of the new found blessing in glowing sentences. Surely all will see it now. But the following issue of the paper contains three articles in reply, one exceedingly bitter, a second ridiculing, and the third in a patronizing and pitying manner, telling the sanctified brother that he, the writer, had received an hundred blessings like the one he had written about, and there was still a thousand left; to keep on and get all he could; that there was no end to God's blessings, and so they could not and should not be numbered.

Religious correspondence on the same line also proved failure. Some letters were answered in a curt spirit, some with an offended, and others with a bored tone. Some remained long unanswered and still others were never granted a reply.

It was exceedingly hard to give up the friends of a religious lifetime, even after all these disappointments and rebuffs; and so effort after effort was still put forth to get in touch with certain church members and ministers with whom in former days he had enjoyed sweet fellowship and prayed, preached, shouted, labored, and won victories for Christ together. But it was all in vain. A chasm had been dug by the Holy Ghost in a distinct work of grace. The love and inclination to be "in touch" was on the sanctified side, the shrinking and distrust was on the other side, and the moral impossibility of coming together was on both sides.

Two letters received in two months of one another from the same individual, but one written before, and the other after the party addressed had received the blessing of sanctification, would fully serve to show the chasm or distance we speak of. Indeed, there is no need to reproduce the letters entire, but simply the opening and concluding lines:

[Before.] MY WELL BELOVED BROTHER: I was delighted to receive your letter of the, etc., etc.

Cordially and affectionately yours,

[After.] Rev. \_\_\_\_\_, DEAR SIR AND BROTHER: Yours of the 15<sup>th</sup> inst to hand, etc., etc.

Yours Truly,

This last sent a pang through the heart on its reception, and caused additional wonder to the sanctified man as he realized that he never had entertained a warmer love for all men than now in this time of frosty notes, freezing bows and distant polar region manners.

But wonder or not, the fact remains that the man who obtains the grace of sanctification finds himself held off at arm's length by the church. He is viewed with suspicion, distrust, and even fear.

He is regarded as making claims to superior blessings and graces, and thus lauding himself over his brethren. He is supposed to ignore the Bible teaching of growth in grace, and all the melting, refining processes that come with time in the Christian life. He is felt to be presumptuous and arrogant in claiming to have reached at a single bound of faith what his brethren have been toiling after unavailingly along the Growth Route for twenty, thirty and forty years. In a word, in making the claims he does he "reflects on the brethren," or as it is written in the Gospel, "Master, in saying this you speak against us." This, of course, means a permanent landslide of church friends and church people. They

will, without doubt, “separate you from their company,” and in so doing will feel they have discharged their duty and done God and the church a service. We must remember that they really and honestly regard people claiming sanctification as being deluded and fanatical.

In one of our large Western cities a young married lady obtained the blessing of sanctification in a meeting held by the writer. She had been a great church worker before, and with a number of prominent church women was a member of a tea drinking circle, which bore quite a high sounding name. This circle had weekly meetings, and was migratory in character, so that it was the custom for an executive committee to issue notices to the members of the day, hour, and private dwelling for the next Bon Ton Tea-Drinking Caucus. But on the news flashing around that she had swept into the experience of sanctification, the lady's name of whom we speak was promptly dropped. No notice came to her. She spoke to us about it with eyes moist and a pained tone: “My old friends have all met together this afternoon without me”; then with a flash of joy in her face she added: “But oh, I am so happy, my heart is singing all the time!”

I saw at a glance that she was drinking something better than tea, and was in a higher and more select circle than the Bon Ton Tea-Drinking Sisterhood.

There are far graver separations than this, but the instance serves to illustrate the point in hand and reveal the spirit at work of which we speak.

Finally the loneliness of the sanctified life comes as a result of the work of grace itself.

God Himself by a second work in the soul lifts the individual into another and higher plane of Christian experience and living. There is a deeper knowledge of the heart, and a more intimate union with Christ. There are profounder joys, deeper peace, clearer light, abiding purity and unbroken communion with God. Such a work that gives new views of God, brings the soul out on the victory side of salvation, flings aside the weeping willow and waves a palm branch, quits complaining and whining, and instead rejoices evermore, prays without ceasing and in everything gives thanks; such a divine work that produces as a result so great a change, is bound to lift the man away from the ordinary rank and file of Christians and land him in lonely spiritual altitudes. For the one party to be astonished at this, and the other to fret about it, argues the lack of thought and failure to see certain well known principles at work on earth, as well as a strange forgetfulness of Bible statements.

The loneliness is nothing but character distance. It is a life removed by divine power. A chasm has been dug by the Holy Ghost. Men look across at each other, see each other, but can not touch as of yore, when all were on the same bank or shore of a common experience.

To attempt to bridge or fill up this moral space or gap between yourself and others when it was made by the Spirit of God, is to imperil and lose the grace you enjoy. It is not intended of Heaven that the space should be bridged. The Holy Ghost alone can bring your friends to you. You can not afford to go back where you once were.

Right here is a peril, and here many have lost the great blessing. They felt the loneliness and imagined they could go back and down into the neighborhood of a past grace, that they could discard their Canaan language, hide the new truths they had learned, say nothing of the precious secret, and so ingratiate themselves with their chafed and sore-spirited brethren as to win them. So the logs were hewn, the timbers laid, the passage way constructed and they went back in a sense, and became as one of them. But the distressing result was that while they came over to Moab by their bridge, they could not return to Canaan by it. It seemed to work only one way.

Shortly after the writer received the blessing of sanctification, he saw his ministerial

brethren looking shy and standing off from him. They actually appeared uncomfortable in his presence. So he with the intention, not of giving up his blessing, but in the hope of showing them that he possessed the same love and friendship for them, was the same man, and they had nothing to fear, thought he would construct a little footbridge and go down to them as of yore. In a word, he had been accustomed to indulge with them in anecdotal conversation of amusing character, in preachers' meeting jocularity, etc. Once it seemed all right. Now he attempted it again as a sanctified man, hoping to win "the brethren." But he got such a look from Christ, and the footbridge shook so dreadfully, that he ran back in a hurry. In other words, he saw that he could not safely bridge the chasm; that to discard the Canaan spirit and language would result in leaving Canaan itself; that he would imperil the blessing he enjoyed by anything like compromise; and that he must accept the loneliness that had come now as a feature of the blessing, as a result of the work of God in his soul.

We have known numbers to remain weak in the sanctified life because of their ignoring the fact we have been enlarging upon; and we have known numbers more who have lost the blessing altogether. They could not understand the loneliness of the life as being the very handiwork of Heaven, and in attempting to get in touch with people spiritually below them, get out of touch with God above them.

We once had a Senator from Mississippi after the Civil War who was far ahead in his political and social economic views of the commonwealth he represented. Many of his constituency thought from his speeches in Congress that he was untrue to his State and her best interests. There were threats of recalling him. But he kept calmly on. He knew he was right. He was farther up the mountain than his fellow citizens, and his view of the future was clearer and more far reaching. He could not afford to come down. And he did not come down, but held on his way. He knew that in a few years his party adherents climbing up would see as he saw, and then endorse him. He would wait until then. And it all proved as he thought. In ten years the people reached the standpoint he had been on so long before, and saw as he saw, and recognized that they had wronged him. The beautiful thing about it was that he did not come down because they could not, or did not see as he did. He stayed up on the mountain side and waited for them to ascend. They ascended.

We are to do likewise, as sanctified people. We know the doctrine of the second work to be true.

We have the experience. It lifts us up into lonely heights. The religious social world is farther down.

We call to them in gladness, and tell them what we have found and see. We speak of the widespread landscape, the nearness of heaven, and the cloudlessness of the place we hold. They may misunderstand us; moral distance accounting for that. They may misjudge us and say we are unsocial, unfriendly and altogether faulty. But we know in whom we have believed, and what we have received. We can not afford to go down because of adverse criticism and unjust judgment. Let them come up where we stand and see for themselves. Many will do this if we are true to God and remain on the heights.

Remember that this very loneliness of life will bring a blessing to men. It is not the man who spends his time in the crowd and merely reflects the opinion, spirit and attainments of men who most benefits the world, but the man who listens to and speaks of things that have their birth beyond and far above the street. John on the lonely Patmos saw more of heaven than the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem.

Such laymen bring the odor of the flowers of Paradise with them into their offices and stores.

Such preachers do not waste time in their pulpits on the questions of the day, about which most of their hearers are better posted than themselves, but gladden, revive and bless the audience with answers from heaven, and fresh tidings from the unseen but eternal world. Such writers give us books that are like Gates of Pearl, opening upon the City of God, while the chapters are like heavenly avenues fringed with trees of life and filled with fitting forms of spiritual truth and beauty.

We thank God every day for the conversation, preaching, writings and lives of these lonely men and women who find “sermons in stones, books in running brooks,” thoughts in stars, messages in flowers, see common shrubs by the road aflame and asparkle with divine glory, hear the surf as it thunders anthems of praise on the strand, and behold in the gold and crimson sunset one of the twelve gates of the Eternal City.

Most men note the storm, fire and earthquake that rend the mountain and shake the valleys. But these are they who stand at the entering in of the cave with mantle-wrapped head and hear the still, small voice that escapes the multitude. When they take away the vail to speak we notice that the face is shining. They have heard things that are only spoken in spiritual heights. And when they turn to speak or write or live before us, it is as if we had heard an angel singing in the evening sky, and life becomes invested with deeper and broader meanings, and a divine design is seen everywhere. Sorrow becomes a garment of moral beauty, Sickness and Disappointment methods of weaning the soul from clay, and the Earth itself is seen to be a college for the mind, a training school for spiritual activities, a theater for the display of God's power in grace, and the very ante-chamber or porch of the world of Glory just hidden from us now by a curtain of blue spangled with silver stars.

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