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Spring Cleaning

I am really thanking God for His seasonal approach to growing me up. Yes, there are seasons of each year, and this being spring and the world on hold, it is a great time to get our spring cleaning done. That is kind of what I had in mind as I settled into a season of lockdown/quarantine here in San Quentin. I wanted to get my house in order, had this need to do so. My cellie, Jack Ryan, was moved the day this quarantine started, as a result I have been single celled, a true rare treat in California's vastly overcrowded prison system. Please pray for Jack, he went to dorm living and that's rough. Jack is an awesome man of God and a great friend.

So, I felt this need to get my house in order. The cell in which I now exist is far smaller than your restroom at home; it is 6 foot by 10 foot. There are two bunks, a toilet, and a sink crammed in here. Needless to say, it did not take much time or effort to get it in order. I touched up the floor paint, a shelf at the foot of my bed, installed a new cardboard shelf for my bowls. Wa La! Done. But, I still felt a need to clean house.

Let me interject a few things here before I proceed to house cleaning. I "got saved" many, many years ago. That means I was baptized into Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit. Soon after, I received my water baptism. There is some controversy as to what this means, is it a "outward sign of an inward reality", is it a actual cleansing, a purification from the sins of the past? I believe the answer is yes to both. That's two of the three baptism mentioned and taught in scripture. The third is the Baptism in/with The Holy Spirit. I believe it is possible to receive the first without the second and third. I posit that is why so many of us struggle with facing life on life's terms.

Now, for some reason I told myself a long time back I would not use this Blog to preach, but at times I just can't help it. I studied Theology for about ten years, have a Degree on my wall to remind myself I should know better. ;) The Bible teaches that the Baptism in The Holy Spirit is the how and when we receive Power needed to live a victorious Life in Christ. (Acts 1:4-8) It takes me a while to type so I will not get too deep with the teaching, but trust me, Baptism with The Holy Spirit is needed if we're to deal with life on life's terms and to fulfill our calling in Christ Jesus. He told His original disciples that, so if they needed it, you and I sure do to!

Ok, back to house cleaning. Well, first let me say, I have explored the Baptism in The Holy Spirit in the past, have prayed the prayer if you will. But The Holy Spirit is a person, and as such He can be grieved. Trust and believe I have grieved The Holy Spirit! Yes, I have repented, do so many times a day usually, but just like we clean our house daily, but yet still need a good spring cleaning, I think it might be a good idea to get quite and do some serious cleaning on occasion. Does all this mean once Baptized with The Spirit, we can lose His presence? It means that just like our best friend, if we grieve Him, we need to take a special effort to get right. I had never specifically done this. It was this that I had been led to do, not paint my floor again! But...This is heavy and it really had me scared. I think that was appropriate.

"Therefore the sons of Israel cannot stand before their enemies: They turn their backs before their enemies, for they have become accursed. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy the things under the ban from your midst." (Joshua 7:12) This is the Word of God. We all, well some of us, like to dither about being under law, or under The Spirit. I don't. The Law of God is written on my heart and I live it out by The Spirit, not the letter, but the letter is still there to guide me along.

I have been struggling, really really struggling with the inability to love my neighbor. Oh, trust and believe listening to the conversations I have to listen to, watch the things that men are doing all around me, it should be tough. But it absolutely can never be impossible because we are commanded to do so. There has to be Power given if I am to do so, and I had come to the point of accepting hatred in my heart. It got real bad when I had to sit in a chow hall with three other men, all discussing literally the skinning alive of a murdered police officers children. Do you get what I am dealing with is real?

Long story short, there were some things "in my house" under the ban that had to be got rid of if I was to once again enjoy, and oh it is A joy!, the power of Holy Spirit operating in and through my life. I got rid of em! I am getting rid of those things "under the ban". How about you? Now, we are under Grace, not law, so that means that "whats under the ban" for me, may not be for you and vice versa. I have a feeling we all know exactly whats under the ban for us! Beyond any doubt! Lord knows I know!

And now, weeping, literally weeping, I bless Holy Spirit and thank Him anew for the renewal of His Baptism in me. The hate is as if it never was. My house is clean, both inward and outward, both of which are necessary for us believers. Have you ever been baptized with Holy Spirit, actually invited Him in? Pray about it please, about house cleaning and about making amends. Dear God have Mercy, the Joy!!! God bless and keep you and yours safe and protected, especially now. If your feeling anxious, remember Phil 4:6-7, and Rm 8:28, and The Cross. He Loves you more than words can say, so He showed us all at The Cross!

Love & Prayers,

Buss