



ISSUE# 12 VOLUME# 3 May/June2001

**My Swim *through* "Cleansing Stream"  
Lonnie Schutz**

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**By the Bank of the River**

In the winter of 2001, I enrolled into the 13 week Cleansing Stream course for five dollars at the Vineyard Church in Davenport, IA. During that time, the Mississippi River flooded out of its banks causing severe damage to the downtown Davenport area, as well as many other cities along the river. The Vineyard church had about two feet of water in their basement from the flood and the floodwaters were only a block away from coming in the front door. When the Mississippi River floods, it is as far from a cleansing experience as you can get. The septic systems become overwhelmed and spill into the river along with the silt, mud and debris that naturally come with the torrential current.

It was in this setting that I enrolled in this hugely popular course. In our area, many of the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches offer this teaching.

**How "Cleansing Stream" Flowed**

"Cleansing Stream Ministries is submitted to and under the covering of The Church On The Way in Van Nuys, California with Dr. Jack Hayford, Founding Pastor and Dr. Scott Bauer, Senior Pastor." (1)

## **The Mission statement for the workshop:**

*"Cleansing Stream Ministries is dedicated to equip and disciple pastors, church leaders and maturing believers in the Church of Jesus Christ to victoriously wage spiritual warfare, experience personal cleansing, and operate in the miracle gift of deliverance as they equip and disciple others in the Body of Christ."* Cleansing Stream Workbook Introduction

Mr. Hayford teaches in a couple of the videos and the rest of the material is written and presented by Timothy Davis. The teaching sessions are about 30 to 45 minutes long and are followed by a time of group prayer for individual needs. Alignment, Consecration, Words, and Cleansing are the 4 categories that the workshop is broken into. Great emphasis is put upon going to the retreat, which can cost \$75 for a single individual or \$125 per couple. Our retreat was \$20 for a single and \$30 per couple for the first timers. After the retreat there is one more session called "Pressing On" which is designed to help us to continue to walk in alignment.

## **Alignment**

I know that alignment sounds like a term that a chiropractor might use, but it is the "foundation" of Cleansing Streams' teaching. It's not found in the Bible, but comes from a quote by Watchman Nee, "A spiritual man is not a man born again but a man born again and walking in alignment."

With this presupposition, everything then revolves around the alignment of our spirit, soul and body. We were asked, "what is hell (the term 'hell' is often used as a euphemism for Satan) using to get you out of alignment?" and we were instructed that "we want to make sure that our foundation is strong, alignment is our foundation." The only way that we can hear God, we were told, is by walking in alignment.

## **Consecration**

We were instructed that the devil uses "hooks" in us to get us out of alignment. These "hooks" are things like fears or curses that we have spoken against ourselves in the past. One illustration was given of a woman that had spoken years ago that "she would rather be depressed than fat". By revelation knowledge, Davis said that the devil used that "curse" as a "handwriting against her," a legal document that "God could not" break, to keep her in bondage to depression, while physically she became slender. The only way that "curse" could be broken was by the woman herself renouncing it, then the devil no longer had authority in that area. During the Consecration lessons, we were asked to write down on a piece of paper things that would get us out of alignment. Such things as materialism, relationships, experiences in our past and self were all mentioned. At the end of the teaching we were to take our "slips of consecration" and come forward and "talk to hell" about them. What I saw was a about 40 people holding up pieces of paper and after they had prayed they were instructed to lay the papers down at the foot of a wooden

cross that was erected on the platform. This act would bring consecration and deliverance in these areas of their lives.

### **Words**

There was also a pretext given to us from Proverbs 6:2 that said we were "snared by the words of our mouths" and that only our mouths could "bring redemption for us". It may have been curses that we were not even aware of in our past or things that we didn't even mean to say that brought spiritual damage to our lives and now the devil was using them as "legal" contracts against us. But there was hope! We were told that the same creative power that God used to create the world has been given to the church. "The church needs to learn to speak" these words of power and "advance the Kingdom of God by her words". We must take control of the atmosphere around us because "hell" is free to function in our families to the degree that we bind or don't bind things around us. Tim said that God told him that it was not His will that we should suffer or have pain and that God showed him that some people are not free because of their mouths.

### **Cleansing**

The main thing in this seminar, we were told, is getting free. We were assured that what sets people free is their own will. "Our will is the strongest thing in the world." When we were born again, deliverance began in our lives, but the devil still has "hooks" in us that we need to take out. The steps to getting free are alignment, consecration, bondage (loosing hell upon us) and deliverance. At this point in the meetings (it was about the 10<sup>th</sup> week) a call was given for salvation. Mr. Davis told us that the Bible says that whatever two or three agree upon on the earth it shall be done, so he instructed his audience to look at him if they wanted to receive Christ and he would agree with them that the Spirit of God was coming into their life. There were about 10 people in his assembly that looked to him for salvation, and he would agree with them that God's spirit was coming to dwell in their "house". We were assured that on Calvary, God has made the provision for us to rule and reign right here on earth. Tim told us that, "I'm not a sinner," and "as long as I've got an attitude I'm not going to sin anymore, I won't." If we will renounce our sins, that will remove the legal right that "hell" has to stay in our life. In our prayer time, Tim told "hell" that he hates him "with a perfect hatred".

Keep in mind that even though we were told these incredible things about ourselves and being able to defeat the powers of the devil over us, there was always this anticipation of the retreat. We were to understand that the retreat is where the true deliverance comes and to expect great things from it.

### **How Pure is the Stream?**

The overwhelming problem with Cleansing Stream is the shift of focus away from Jesus and the Gospel, to an unbiblical concept of the powers of "hell". For those who are caught up in this kind of Christian "hyper spiritual" mindset, everything becomes an attack of the devil. At one point Mr. Davis said that every temptation is a demon talking to you. These kinds of illustrations and statements do not bring freedom to the believer but bondage. Whenever the focus is taken off of Jesus Christ and the sufficiency of Calvary to set us free from sin and Satan, then we are left to our own means to atone for sin and to bring us into a right relationship with God. Instead of looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, who is able to present us perfect before the Father, we are left to renounce past curses, pull out the "hooks" of the devil, and seek deliverance for various bondages in our life.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 *And 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.*

24 Faithful is **he** that calleth you, who also **will do it**.

### **What does "alignment" align with?**

As I mentioned earlier, alignment is not even found in the Bible and yet is the "foundational" principal in the curriculum. Even the concept is foreign to Christianity, but I was able to find some religious teachings that emphasis alignment in the New Age.

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**In an article entitled, "Opening the Oaken Door, Gaining Access to Spiritual Experience In the New Age" written by Solandriel, an interesting comparison can be drawn.**

*"Now begins perhaps the most difficult phase of the life Journey: when you know, mentally, that you are on a "Path" of some sort (even if its a pathless path), but you do not have a moment-by-moment awareness of your Divinity and the perfection of your experience. As you journey, you find you can experience life from a more expanded perspective more and more, **but still there is separation, struggling, and effort**. The Door seems to open when you don't look at it, then closes again when you notice it's open!"*

*I would say most seekers of today are working through this phase. **This is the period of Personality Healing and Alignment**, and it can last the rest of the Life. **It's a time of gathering tools, wisdom, self-understanding. It's a time to learn about your habits and hangups, your patterns and pains, your magic and magnificence, your darkness and dreams. It's about getting all parts of your Self pointed in the same direction-- i.e. understanding and evolving your physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects to a point where they can support your Self-realization.**"*

Cleansing Stream is also in error when they state that: *"because Abraham was a man walking in proper alignment and consecration he could hear Gods' voice clearly."*

Mike Oppenheimer helps dispel this statement in his article, **"Is Jesus Cleansing His Church with Cleansing Stream?"** In it he says,

*"This is not necessarily so. When we sin it is when God's voice can speak the loudest. God is not limited by our human condition, He can and does speak despite our obedience or disobedience. The main thing is that we cannot be instructed to do His will if we are in sin and so this needs to be dealt with first. Abraham wasn't walking in alignment when God came to him and spoke his promise in Gen.12. Many saints heard God's voice even in fear, Adam after he sinned was hiding and did not come because 'I heard your voice in the garden.' Another example is Elijah who was hiding out in a cave and God spoke softly in a still small voice to Him 'what are doing here?'"*

Another example of this is Saul on the road to Damascus. He was on his way to persecute the church at Damascus and the Lord Jesus appeared to him and spoke very clearly to him. (Acts 9:4-6)

We can be in complete and utter rebellion against God, read or hear His perfect word, and know that God is speaking to us to repent of our sins and to put our faith in Christ. If we are already children of God and born again by faith, then we can come boldly to the throne of grace because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done and not because we have gotten ourselves into alignment. The concept of alignment puts an unnecessary obstacle in our way of coming to the Father, rather than just coming to Him by faith in His goodness and forgiveness.

Eph. 2: 14-18 ¶ For he (Christ) is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Heb. 10:19-22 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

### **"Consecration" manipulation**

Consecration is a good Bible word, it means:

"The devoting or setting apart of anything to the worship or service of God. The race of Abraham and the tribe of Levi were thus consecrated, Ex.13:2,12,15; Nu. 3:12. The Hebrews devoted their fields and cattle, and sometimes the spoils of war, to the Lord, Lev. 27:28,29. According to the Mosaic law, the first-born both of man and beast were consecrated to God. **In the New Testament, Christians are regarded as consecrated to the Lord, 1Pe 2:9.**" Easton's Bible Dictionary

Wait a minute, does this mean that I am consecrated to God simply by being a Christian? Aren't there things that I need to get rid of in my life to get me into right fellowship with God? What about the "hooks" that the devil has in me from my past?

Look at what the Apostle Peter has to say about the Christian life.

*1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:*

Although the term "consecration" does not appear in the passage, the idea of being set apart to the worship or service of God is clearly presented. So as Christians, we are consecrated to the service of God when we are brought into the faith of Christ. Now in all fairness, Peter in this passage does tell us:

*Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. (1 Peter 2:11-12)*

Just because we have been saved from our sins and brought into the kingdom of God, does not mean we can behave anyway that we want, we clearly cannot. However, we must see that consecration happens at conversion, and continues as long as we walk in obedience to God so that we can bring forth His praises.

### **Who's "word" should we believe?**

For me, the worst Scripture twisting was done in the "words" section of the curriculum. Its roots are clearly in the word/faith error, but Davis puts a new spin on it incorporating spiritual warfare concepts into it.

The text from Proverbs 6:2 "*Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth*" used together with the phrase in Col. 3:14 "*handwriting of ordinances that was against us*" are construed to paint a picture of a believer speaking curses in the past that the devil has a legal right to hold against him until they can take the Cleansing Stream course or have some other revelation knowledge to have them broken.

When we look at those passages in context, we see that they are not saying anything remotely like what Davis is trying to make them say. The Proverbs 6 passage is speaking about making a vow to your friend or to a stranger to perform a task.

*1 My son, if thou be surety (make a pledge) for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger,*

*2 Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.*

*3 Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend.*

*4 Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids.*

*5 Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.*

This passage warns against making a hasty pledge. Use wisdom before you enter into an agreement with a stranger. If not, you will be snared by the words of your mouth, the vow that you promised to them will be like trap.

John Gill comments:

*"It is a rash and inconsiderate entering into suretyship that is here cautioned against; doing it without inquiring into, and having sufficient knowledge of the person engaged for; and without considering whether able to answer the obligation, if required, without hurting a man's self and family; otherwise suretyship may lawfully be entered into, and good be done by it, and no hurt to the surety himself and family."*

There can be no doubt that the this passage is not referring to old curses that we have spoken in the past that the devil can use against us. As Christians, it is important to be men and women of our word, and not to speak anything that is false, but this passage is clearly talking about pledges to our friends or strangers.

Even more warped is the idea that the devil has "handwritings against us" than not even God can do anything about. This phrase in context actually says the opposite of what Mr. Davis attempts to make it say.

*Col. 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the *uncircumcision of your flesh*, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;*

*14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;*

*15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

Let's look at few things about this passage:

1. It is clearly talking about Christians. "You...hath he quickened together with him."
2. These Christians are in the grace of God. "Having forgiven you all trespasses."
3. The handwritten ordinances that were against us:
  - a. have been blotted out ("to rub out, wipe off, erase", Robertson's Word Pictures).
  - b. Jesus took them out of the way.
  - c. are nailed to the cross.
1. Jesus spoiled ("wholly put off from one's self", Strong's) the powers of demons and authorities against us (principalities and powers).
2. The triumph came in the cross, not by writing down past curses on slips of paper or being prayed over at a retreat.

Rather than the handwritings being currently held against us by the devil, the Bible tells us that they have been blotted out, taken out of the way and nailed to the cross. We no longer have to worry about those handwritings (which were the Mosaic laws, not legal documents of the devil) being against us if we are in Christ.

### **Cleaning up "cleansing"**

(So which is it, am I free or "hooked"?)

It is a terrible thing to have blood bought believers meditate on their past in an effort to break unknown "curses" or strongholds. There are things in my past that are under the blood of Jesus and I never want to bring up as long as I live. God does not want us to remember these things with all of their sinful details. That person is dead and we are new creations through Christ Jesus our Lord. The reason Cleansing Stream does it is so these "bondages" can be broken, but is this how God instructs us to deal with them?

*Romans 6: 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:*

*9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*

*10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

*11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

*13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

*14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

How do we deal with past sins, hurts and struggles? We thank God that Jesus has paid the penalty for them, look to the cross as fully redeeming us and consider that old man to be dead and to walk in righteousness unto God. Whenever someone adds something to the cross, they take away from its significance.

Look at what God thinks of our past sins if we are in Christ:

*Psalm 103:11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.*

*12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*

*Isaiah 43:25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. (God doesn't remember our sins, why should we!)*

*1 Cor. 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*

*31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*

As far as the teaching of curses and deliverance goes, again we look to the cross of Christ.

*Gal 3:13-14 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

Dr. Opal Reddin puts it this way:

*"When your 'feelings' say you need deliverance, believe God, not your feelings. If misguided persons say you need 'deliverance ministry,' remind them of what God says, 'Stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage' (Galatians 5:1). 'Whom the Son sets free, is free indeed' (John 8:36)."* 3

## The True Cleansing Stream

God has already provided a cleansing stream for us, where we can truly be cleansed from all of our iniquities and be fully forgiven for all of our past sins, addictions, hurts, and "curses".

Hebrews 9: 11 *But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;*

12 *Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*

13 *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:*

14 ***How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?***

God has forever decreed the cross as the only means of atonement for mankind. Cleansing Stream attempts to replace this sacred sacrifice by inner-healing, spiritual warfare and psychotherapeutic techniques. It is an abysmal state when believers will openly participate in any kind of extra-biblical activity, and so easily turn away from the cross of the precious savior who redeemed them. This is what I saw at Cleansing Stream. Once the cross goes, anything goes.

Colossians 2: 4 *And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.*

5 *For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and **the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.***

6 ***As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:***

7 ***Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.***

8 *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

9 ***For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily***

10. ***And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:***

*11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:*

*12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*

### **Don't Drink the Water**

I would rather attempt to swim across the floodwaters of the mighty muddy Mississippi than dive into the deceptive tide

of teachings from Cleansing Stream.

1. Cleansing Stream Ministries Web page, under "About CSM".
2. <http://www.allheal.com/joyfire/refl/oakdoor.html>

"Encountering 'Generation Curse'", Dr. Opal Reddin, Discernment Newsletter  
September/October, 1999

### **Letter from a Reader in California -**

It is with tremendous joy I write to give praise to God for your life and ministry. Thank you for your perseverance and faithfulness in proclaiming the Gospel of Truth. Standing against the tide of the current apostasy can be very discouraging as we are literally labeled "the enemy" - divisive, judgmental, unloving. I discovered your writings on the Internet some years back and now eagerly look forward to each newsletter. . .

I rejoice to find there are many others out there contending for the faith once delivered to the saints who are actively standing up against the powerful deception seducing the church away from the simple Truth of the Gospel into mysticism. I'm an ordained minister, have been a Christian for 51 years, raised in the Assemblies of God, back when the Word that pierced your heart and convicted your soul was preached. Today's church mocks hell fire and holiness preachers and they close their ears to anything that calls them to crucify self and walk in holiness. They want the smooth word that pats them on their backs, tells them their sin is not a problem and tells them what great things they are destined for. When you are raised in solid Bible teaching, the divergence from the true gospel is striking, yet I'm amazed at how few can discern between the true and the false.

In the late 80' and early 90's, the Lord placed me in the Vineyard and a high position in Women's Aglow for many years to preach the old-fashioned gospel and to confront false teaching with the Word of God (of course, I was crucified). These people were very zealous, yet it is indeed grievous how quickly the false gospel of mysticism was lapped up by these two groups, and then the Assemblies of God. I realized people do not want to

see the error of their ways and are titillated by the excitement of the "hidden" (occult) knowledge; they lust for all things occult, they're addicted to the sensational, craving entertainment. The preaching of the simple Word of God that can save their souls is "dull" to them. I thought if I kept preaching God's Word - confronting the false gospel with scripture - people would see. Then people began throwing away their Bibles. "That's Bibliolotry, we don't worship the Word. We have our experiences. The Spirit is doing a new thing now." Yikes! Jesus IS the Word! The Word is God! What are they worshipping" I finally realized it was futile, the apostasy so great and that they have made a deliberate choice to continue in this deception because they do not love the truth. Their excitement is not with Jesus but with words of knowledge, etc. - or to call it like it is - they are enamored with divination and soothsaying. I went away very discouraged and doubled over in grief for the condition of the church. It was after several years of feeling like Elijah all alone that I discovered there were 7000 others who had not bowed their knees to Baal. Hallelujah. Praise God. Praise God there are those who, discouraged or not, rejected or not, still continue to preach the true Gospel. I'm greatly encouraged by everything I read in your newsletters, it's confirming that the word I have been hearing is not "off" as most would have me believe. So, I will keep on, keeping on till Jesus comes.

May God greatly bless you and grant increase to this, the Lord's ministry.

Carol Guffey

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**From the Editor - Jewel (van der Merwe) Grewe**

You can't imagine how encouraging this letter was! We praise God for those who responded in such a precious way in the past two months. It was so helpful to even have those who wanted to have their names removed, to write and request that to be done. I haven't heard from folk in Canada and would like to hear back from all the readers if they would like to continue receiving the newsletter, or have their name removed. If you would like to continue receiving the newsletter and can not afford a donation, we still want to hear from you and will continue sending you the newsletter.

You will note the advertising with this newsletter regarding the upcoming conference next month in Pensacola. We know this conference is very timely and are looking forward to God's blessings as very able teachers of the Word set forth the Biblical perspective on so many teachings that are leading folk astray today. The "New Apostolic Paradigm" being led by the Gnostics of today is taking the church further and further away from the simple message that the TRUE Apostles preached that is CLEARLY laid out in Scripture. We do not need "another Gospel". We do not need A NEW PARADIGM! These that call themselves Apostles "art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked".

They are teaching people to prophecy, but they only prophecy "blessing, encouragement, prosperity" . They are indeed "rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing".

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich: and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear: and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

Rev. 3:17 & 18

We must be bold in the Lord - and not afraid to stand for the truth. These are serious days. **Pray folk!**

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