

# Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant. Psalm 25:14

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Straight and Narrow

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## The Issues are Black and White

While teaching in a public high school, I was frequently asked by the administration to turn in attendance reports that did not accurately reflect the true enrollment. The reason being that the greater the number of students enrolled, the greater the federal funding the school would receive. On one such day an administrator stated to me: "Stump, do you know what your problem is? You can't see any gray, you think everything is black and white."

### The Issues are not Gray

Gray is a mixture of black and white. In laymen's terms, gray theology is a mixture of truth and error, light and darkness. Today the world speaks of "gray areas" or "gray issues." This means issues, concepts, or values that, in their eyes, do not have absolutes; issues that are not black and white in their clarity.

Much of the church today is quickly following suit with the world in discarding absolutes. Values and moral concepts that were once clearly considered to be "clear cut" based on Bible teaching are today relegated to the whim of the "situation." Thus "situation ethics" pervade both the church and society today.

This graying of issues has permeated the doctrines of the church today. Foundational points of the faith delivered to the saints are today under attack. It is expeditiously stated by many that some areas of theology such as the nature of Christ or the Godhead are either not important or they are such a mystery that they cannot be understood.

While Peter states that there are "some things hard to be understood" in the writings of Paul, the Scrip-

tures are not a set of mystical writings that do not make clear the nature of our Creator God and His divine will for man. The Bible is full of clear, absolute expressions such as these: "*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.*" (John 3:3, 7, 14)

God is too kind to allow His children to be in darkness concerning the great truths that are essential to their salvation and character development. The issues are not gray. God has laid out in His word the crystal clear foundational truths that comprise the three angels' messages. The Godhead, the Incarnation, the Law (especially the Sabbath), the ministry of Christ in Heaven, and other important truths vital for our character development are part of those things which God has revealed to us and our children. (See Deut. 29:29.)

While *Old Paths* is usually printed with colorful titles, this issue is printed without color to emphasize the difference between truth and error is as clear as the contrast between black and white. . . . . *Editor*

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# THE DIVINITY OF THE SON OF GOD

by Doug Goslin

The divinity of the Son of God has been questioned, misunderstood, and in many religions outright denied. This study is designed to help us understand the divinity of the Son of God as it relates to His close relationship with His Father. “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3)

It is important before we start to study a subject that we look at the primary word or words of the subject we are studying. In this case the words will be “divine” or “divinity.” While the English word “divinity” is not in the King James version of the Scriptures, we do see the word “divine” several times. “According as his *divine* power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the *divine* nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” (2 Peter 1:3, 4)

It is important for us to know that we ourselves can be partakers of the Father’s divine nature, or “divinity,” through His beloved Son, Jesus Christ; the divine nature being “His eternal power and Godhead.” (Romans 1:20) “Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.” (Acts 17:29) The words “Godhead” and “divinity” come from the very same Greek word: θεϊος - *theios*. (#2304 *Strong’s Concordance*)

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20) The Power that made the worlds can also create a new heart in us. “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10) Jesus said that it was life eternal that we might know His Father as the only true God. What this means is that ultimately everything comes from the one supreme God! “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with

whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” (James 1:17)

The Father and the Son worked together in the creation of every created thing. All power originated from the Father and yet the divine Son of God is referred to as the master builder (Proverbs 8:30 definition for brought up). “And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.” (Ephesians 3:9) “God ... hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.” (Hebrews 1:1-2)

God the Father and His Son were further developing their relationship with each other during the creation of the universe. “Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell?” (Proverbs 30:4)

## The Wisdom of God

Before looking at the next verses having to do with the creation, we need to look at Christ in the word “wisdom.” “But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, *Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*” (1 Corinthians 1:24) “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us *wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.*” (1 Corinthians 1:30) “But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:* Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” (1 Corinthians 2:7-8)

Whom did God ordain before the world “unto our glory?” “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: *Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world,* but was manifest in these last times for you.” (1 Peter 1:18-20)

Christ is the “wisdom of God” who was ordained “before the world was.” As we read the next verses we will better understand the divinity of Christ in relation to creation. Listen as “Wisdom” (the Son of God) speaks, “When he [the Father] prepared the heavens, I [His Son] was there: when he [the Father] set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I [the Son] was by him, as one *brought up* [master builder] with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.” (Proverbs 8:27-30)

The Hebrew word for “brought up” means master builder, architect or one highly involved with the building of something. The word also comes from the Hebrew root that means to believe or to be nourished. (Gesenius) This means that as Christ was co-creator with the Father, He also believed highly in Him; He was the Father’s delight, always rejoicing before Him. Can you begin to notice a real Father and Son relationship? What a picture!

In the days of eternity, Christ experienced divine origin. “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose *goings forth* [origin] have been from of old, from everlasting.” (Micah 5:2) We all recognize Christ’s birth at Bethlehem, but what about His goings forth (origin) that have been “from everlasting” or “in the days of eternity” (marginal reference). The word “origin” also means beginning, and without a beginning could Christ really be a Son?

Christ possess deity because He has also been the Son of God, even before Bethlehem. “The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.” (Proverbs 8:22-23)

In the very beginning of God the Father’s “way” He possessed Christ (Wisdom). The Apostle Paul writes, “And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.” (1 Corinthians 3:23) In another place we read, “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” (1 Corinthians 11:3) Not only now (in

time) but also in eternity, the Father possessed His Son.

From everlasting the Son of God was “set up.” The Hebrew word translated “set up” means “anointed.” This is where the English word “Christ” comes from. Christ means “the anointed one.” “Thou art the Christ [anointed one] the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16) Terms like “the Anointed One,” “Prince,” “Messiah,” “the Angel of the Lord,” and “the Son of God” could never refer to God the Father.

“When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.” (Proverbs 8:24) Before there were any depths, the Son received His rightful title when He was brought forth. The Hebrew word rendered “brought forth” means to be born. The very depths of the gospel can only be understood when we can see the true meaning of this verse. Understanding whom God gave means everything to the believer!

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” (1 John 4:8-9) How could God the Father send a Son into the world unless He had a Son to send? “Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth.” (Proverbs 8:25) Before the mountains and hills existed, the Son was brought forth.

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.” (Colossians 1:12-15) “Firstborn of every creature” in Greek means “to come into being before any created thing.” (*Thayer’s Lexicon*) It could not in any way mean that He is a created being because the next verse states that He created *all* things.

Doesn’t the Bible call Jesus “God?” Yes, it rightly does, because He is God’s Son. We are human beings created in the image of God. If we were to bring forth children, would they not be human beings? The same would hold true in all of God’s creation: like begets like. Christ is never referred to as the most high God, the Ancient of Days, or the supreme God. He receives

all things from the Father. “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” (John 5:26)

Please notice some of the times Christ is referred to as God. “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, *O God*, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; *therefore God, even thy God*, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” (Hebrews 1:8-9) The Father calls His Son “God” and then He clearly states that He is the God of His Son.

Jesus affirms this when speaking to Mary after the resurrection: “Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to *my Father*: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and *to my God, and your God*.” (John 20:17) In the Revelation we read, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of *my God*, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of *my God*, and the name of the city of *my God*, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from *my God*: and I will write upon him my new name.” (Revelation 3:12)

One of the most misunderstood passages in the Bible is this text, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, *and the Word was God*. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” (John 1:1-3) The Word (Christ) “was God,” yet this does not mean that He is the supreme God or the most high God. We have clearly shown that He was deity and that He was with the most high God. Do these texts say any more than that?

In the very context of this passage the Word who was God was *with* God. Also, a little later in the chapter we read that that same Word was made flesh. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14) No, the Word did not come and live inside a human body. The Word became a human being, “for the suffering of death.” (Hebrews 2:9) Although Christ became a man, he retained his divine identity and character.

God the Father could not die! And yet somehow His Son had to! “Who, being in the form of God, thought it

not robbery to be equal with God: But *made himself of no reputation* [emptied himself], and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” (Philippians 2:6-7)

As was brought out earlier, Christ was brought forth in eternity. This being true, He could have been in no other form than the form of God. Now this is a beautiful story! He who was in the form of God by right, who created the universe along with His Father, emptied Himself and became a man for the purpose of dying for each and every one of us. This is the value of the gift: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

Could it possibly be any other way than that? Would it be the same if God sent someone to be a Son that really did not have the full capacity of dying? “And if Christ be not raised [from the dead], your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.” (1 Corinthians 15:17)

Jesus said, “For the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I *came out* (ἐξέρχομαι: “to come forth from physically, arise from, to be born of” (*Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*) from God. I came *forth* (ἐξέρχομαι) from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.” (John 16:27, 28)

“Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” (John 18:37)

The deity of Christ is not based on man’s thoughts or opinions. We must stand on the sure word of the Most High. Christ is the Son of God from eternity and in that fact is His full right to deity! May the Lord bless you in your studies. □□□

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# The Foundation of Our Faith Reprinted

Today the Advent Movement is experiencing a tremendous shaking both within the corporate Seventh-day Adventist Church and within the growing independent movement as well. The issues are much deeper than just liberal versus conservative ideas of worship. The difficulty we face today is not just apostasy within the educational or medical work, as serious as they may be. At the very center of the shaking is a doctrinal crisis that affects our very understanding of God and the plan of salvation.

Does the corporate Seventh-day Adventist Church have the answer to the crisis? Can the answer be found within the swelling "Historic Adventist" movement outside the church?

Following the pantheism crisis, Sister White predicted an omega apostasy to follow. Several books have been written on this subject, yet few authors or church members are able to grasp the situation. This apostasy is already among us and is much deeper than many suspect.

Why has the position of "Historic Adventism" been twisted by some so as to redefine the understanding of the pioneers?

What is the real position of "Historic Adventism" on the incarnation, the atonement in heaven, and the Sonship of Jesus Christ? Does it really matter what we believe about these teachings? Is an understanding of these teachings relevant for Adventists today?

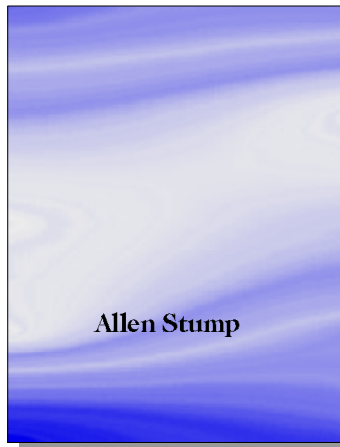
Find out why Sister White prophetically wrote: "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." (*Life Sketches*, page 196)

Why has a noted Adventist university professor stated that most of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church would not be able to join the church today? Did God raise up the movement or not?

*The Foundation of Our Faith* was written to answer these probing questions and to help you piece the present-day puzzle together. Due to the many requests

we have received since the first printing was exhausted, we have reprinted this helpful book.

This volume of over 230 pages explores the roots of Seventh-day Adventism from the Christian Connection and the Millerite movement to the present. Accepting the voice of Ellen G. White as presenting a sacred history of the Advent movement, this book explores Adventist Christology showing the harmony between the Bible, the writings of Ellen G. White, and the writings of the Advent pioneers.

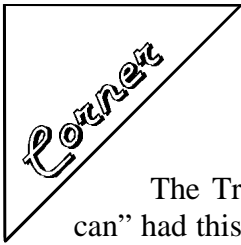


*The Foundation of Our Faith* has a descriptive table of contents and a comprehensive Scriptural index. Its twenty-one chapters and appendix provide documentation for the serious student who refuses to accept speculation, but demands the plain truth. If you are interested in getting ready for the latter rain and the coming of Jesus, we believe you will find this book extremely helpful.

The suggested donation is \$6.50 for one copy; \$12.00 for two copies; or \$55.00 for ten copies postage paid within the United States. For overseas rates please write or call us. You may send your requests to Smyrna Gospel Ministries, HC 64 Box 128B, Welch, WV 24801-9606 or call us at (304) 732-9204.

If you have requested books since the first printing was exhausted, please resubmit your request as we have failed to keep proper track of some of the requests and we do not wish to miss any. Sorry for the inconvenience and thank you for your help in this matter.

We now also have **Spanish tracts** on the **Law of God** that deal especially with the Sabbath and the mark of the beast. Suggested donation is \$5.50 per 100.



# Reading Between the Lines

The Trenton, New Jersey "True American" had this news article in its March 9, 1849 edition:

"As the express locomotive came with the President's group going to his inaugural ceremonies, a bolt broke within a very short distance of the Delaware Bridge. The locomotive was lifted from the track, but continued to run some distance in the direction of the road, until it reached the house of Mr. William Kitson. Then it turned abruptly from the road and buried itself in the cellar, tearing away a good portion of the house."

A mere train accident? The exciting events that took place before the crash changed the lives of the owners of the house.

President Zachary Taylor's inaugural ceremony was to see the largest crowd ever in attendance. The government was running a special express train containing the newly elected president, his wife, his staff, and a large number of his friends as well as political figures. People were gathering all along the train's route with the hopes of seeing the fast-moving express.

Mr. and Mrs. William Kitson lived with their four children on the edge of the train tracks. Their home, which was made up of four family units, was one of a number of such four-plexes that covered the entire block. The front yards were short as the tracks were just a little more than twenty feet away.

A bend in the tracks, taking the train to the right to cross over the Delaware River via the Trenton Bridge began about fifty feet from the Kitson home.

As the Kitsons were eating their evening meal on March the fifth, someone outside shouted that the train was going to come soon. The entire family went to the front door to see it. Mrs. Kitson and her daughter went out into the yard. Mr. Kitson held one son in his arms while another stood beside him in the doorway's arch. The fourth child, a son, had gone next door to tell the neighbors of the approaching special train.

"When I saw the engine coming," Mrs. Kitson relates, "something said to me, 'Run!' I said to myself 'How silly, I'm not going to run.'"



"Again, something said to me, 'Run!' I said, 'No, I'm not going to run! I'm going to stand here and see it pass.'"

Mr. Kitson said that as he stood in the doorway with his two boys, a voice said to him, 'Jump out a the door! Jump quickly!' He did not hesitate one moment. He grabbed one child's hand, while still holding the other one tightly in his arms, and leaped as hard and as far as he could. Falling down hard on the ground, he felt as if he should go farther so he rolled over several times taking his son with him with each roll.

Mrs. Kitson heard the impelling command the third time, "Run!" This time it was with such a force that she threw open the gate at the corner of the house that leads into the yard and around towards the back of the house.

"I ran into the yard, pulling my girl behind me. As soon as I passed the gate I turned and looked back. I fully expected to see the train pass by me on the track in a normal way. But it was just behind me, coming towards the gate!

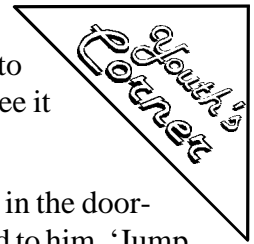
"It came about two-thirds of the distance from the road to the gate; then it took a sudden turn to the left. It crashed right into the house!"

The train's engine rolled right over the very spot where Mrs. Kitson and her daughter had been standing! It also came to a stop with a loud thud over the door where Mr. Kitson and his two sons had waited to see the special train!

"You cannot ever convince either of us, who heard separate voices at the same time telling us to get out of the way, that God does not look out for His own today just as He did in Bible times," they said later.

Mr. Kitson added, "And you can be sure that we'll always think of our living Lord and about His love for His children every time we hear those two words 'run' or 'jump.'"

(This story was reprinted from the book, *The Hand That Still Intervenes*, W. A. Spicer and Helen Spicer Menkel © 1982 by Concerned Publications. Permission to reprint this article was graciously granted by the publishers.)



# Christ Our Righteousness

## Faith

1. What is faith declared to be? **Hebrews 11:1**

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2. How necessary is faith? **Hebrews 11:6** (See note 1.)

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3. What is the basis of faith? **Romans 10:17**

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4. How are the just to live? **Romans 1:17** (See note 2.)

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5. By what principle is genuine faith actuated? **Galatians 5:6**

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6. What is the character of any act not performed in faith? **Romans 14:23**

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7. Are there any to whom God has not given faith? **Romans 12:3**

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8. Who is the “author and finisher of our faith”? **Hebrews 12:2**

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Please read **Matthew 8:5-13** before proceeding.

9. What did the Centurion want done? **Matthew 8:6, 8**

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10. Whom did the Centurion hope would heal his servant? **Matthew 8:5-8**

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11. Did the Centurion feel that Jesus needed to come in person? **Matthew 8:8, 9**

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12. What did the Centurion expect would heal his servant? **Matthew 8:8**

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13. What did Jesus say the Centurion had? **Matthew 8:10**

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## Notes:

1. “The knowledge of what the Scriptures means when urging upon us the necessity of cultivating faith, is more essential than any other knowledge that can be acquired.” (A. T. Jones, Review and Herald, October 18, 1898)

2. “This statement is the summing up of what the apostle has to say about the gospel in verse 16. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, but only ‘to everyone that believeth;’ in it the righteousness of God is revealed. The righteousness of God is the perfect law of God (Isaiah 51:6, 7; Psalm 119:172), which is but the transcript of His righteous will (Psalm 40:7, 8). All unrighteousness is sin (1 John 5:17), or the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4; Romans 7:7). The gospel is God’s remedy for sin; its work, therefore, must be to bring men into harmony with the law,—to cause the workings of the righteous law to be manifested in their lives. But this is wholly a work of faith,—the righteousness of God is revealed from ‘faith to faith,’ —faith in the beginning, and faith to the end,—as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’” (E. J. Waggoner, Living by Faith, p. 13)

## Search for Books of the Bible

There are 16 books of the Bible in the paragraph below. Circle the ones you find and let’s see just how sharp you are.

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu; kept people looking so hard for facts, and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will admit it usually takes a minister to find them, and there will be loud lamentations when they are found. One lady says she brews a cup of tea, so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now for there are sixteen names of books of the Bible in this story. One preacher found 15 books in 20 minutes, but it took him 3 weeks to find the sixteenth one. Have fun! *Sent in by Ron Bonner.*

# Should a Christian Claim to be Sinless?

by Lynnford Beachy

“If we say that we have <sup>2192\*</sup> (hold: possession of the mind, to cling to) no sin, we deceive <sup>4105</sup> (lead astray) ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” (1 John 1:8) If we say that we do not hold, or cling to, any sin (a possession of the mind), then we lead ourselves astray, and the truth is not in us. Notice that John, the author, included himself when he said, “If *we* say that we have no sin . . .” This is talking about anyone, from the most pure saint to the most vile sinner. If you are abiding in Christ, as John was, you will not say that you are without sin.

“Who can say, I have made my heart clean (literally: “I have cleansed”), I am pure from my sin?” (Proverbs 20:9) We cannot say that we are clean and pure from our sins.

“There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. . . . And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?” (Job 1:1, 8)

God refers to Job as a perfect and upright man, yet Job says in chapter 9; “If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life.” (Job 9:20, 21) If we say that we are perfect, then it will prove that we are perverse, or crooked. Even though Job was perfect, he says that he would not even know it, and that he would despise his sinful life.

Perhaps you have heard this saying before, “Humility is a strange thing, as soon as you think you’ve got it, you’ve lost it.” It could be just as truly stated: “Perfection is a strange thing, as soon as you think you’ve got it, you’ve lost it.”

“For I know (margin: or, I am not conscious of any fault) nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 4:4) Just because we are not conscious of any faults or

sins, that does not mean that we are free from sin, and therefore we cannot say that we are without sin.

“Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.” (Psalm 19:12) “Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.” (Psalm 90:8) We have sins that we do not know of, therefore it would be impossible for us to know when we are completely free from sin. “That which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.” (Job 34:32)

Please, do not misunderstand, the Bible does not say that we cannot stop sinning. In fact, it clearly states that God’s people can and must have victory over sin. “The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: . . .” (Zephaniah 3:13) God’s people can, and will, stop sinning but they will not boast about it. God’s remnant people that will stop sinning, before Christ returns will not say, “I am without sin, I have stopped sinning, even in thought.” Our only glory will be “in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” (Galatians 6:14)

“If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” (1 John 1:10) If we say that we have not sinned, then we make God a liar, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

“For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD. How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? see thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done: thou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways.” (Jeremiah 2:22, 23) How can any person say that he or she is not polluted?

Jesus said, “Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.” (Luke 16:15) You may think yourself to be a very good person that has not sinned for a period of time, but God knows your heart, and sees those things that you do not see.

“Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts.” (Proverbs 21:2) “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end



thereof are the ways of death.” (Proverbs 16:25) We must search our hearts and our ways, and see if there is any iniquity in us that we have not dealt with. “Let us search and try our ways.” (Lamentations 3:40) Just because you cannot find any sin in your life, that does not mean that you have overcome sin completely, there may be sins that you do not know about yet.

The prophet Isaiah was a man of God, yet when he saw the glory of the Lord he was compelled to admit that he was a man of unclean lips. “Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” (Isaiah 6:5)

Paul, writing to the Phillippians, said: “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.” (Philippians 3:12-15)

James declares: “For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.” (James 3:2) A perfect man will not offend any man, and is able to bridle, or restrain, his whole body. If you do not restrain your whole body, then obviously you are not perfect, even if you do restrain your whole body, that does not mean that you are perfect.

We can clearly see from these verses that we should not say that we are perfect and without sin. If any man says to you that he is without sin, and has overcome sin, you can surely know that that man is not free from sin, for in that very act he sinned. It is like saying, “I have never lied in my life.” In that very statement you would be lying.

We can continue to follow the light that is given us, we may be living up to all the light that we have, but we must never triumphantly say that we have stopped sinning even in thought. If this were the case, then we would have all the light, “. . . for whatsoever doth

make manifest is light.” (Ephesians 5:13) God shows us our faults and sins little by little, so that we will not be overwhelmed.

“When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through *ignorance* against any of the commandments of the LORD his God concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty; Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish.” (Leviticus 4:22-23) I may have walked all day following the Lord’s will to the best of my knowledge, as it was revealed to me, yet I would not, could not, say that I have not sinned today because there are things that I may have done that were contrary to God’s law. This would be a sin of ignorance. Perhaps, before learning about the Sabbath, you were living up to the light which you had, yet you were in violation of the fourth commandment. This clearly requires repentance and turning away from that sin. Only as sin is revealed to a person can he or she repent.

God’s law and its requirements are much broader than we have realized. It is not simply to refrain from killing or stealing. Jesus said that the first and greatest commandment is to love God with all the heart, all the strength, all the soul, and all the mind. If you are guilty of breaking this one commandment, then you are guilty of all. “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” (James 2:10)

“Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime.”

We are instructed to “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15) My ideas and my studies, or those of anyone else, will not be sufficient to gain entrance into the holy city. It is your own study and your own experience that will fit you for heaven. “Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide (teacher): keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.” (Micah 7:5) “Prove all things; . . .” (1 Thessalonians 5:21)

The following three paragraphs from *Acts of the Apostles* summarize this study in a concise manner.

“Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; *so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience.*

“None of the apostles and prophets ever *claimed* to be without sin. Men who have lived the nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God has honored with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ.

“So will it be with all who behold Christ. *The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves.* There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him. At every advance step in our Christian experience our repentance will deepen. We shall know that our sufficiency is in Christ alone and shall make the apostle's confession our own: ‘I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing.’ ‘God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.’ Romans 7:18; Galatians 6:14.” (*Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 560, 561 - emphasis supplied.)

May God give us all wisdom, so that we can discern between truth and error. I pray that each of you would be found among that group of people that will completely overcome sin. □□□

\*Superscripted numbers represent the reference numbers from *Strong's Greek Dictionary*.

# Christ in You, The Hope of Glory

By Lynnford Beachy

“If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” (John 7:17) The first word “will” means this; “to be resolved or determined, to purpose.” (*Logos Bible Software*) Christ tells us that if we have made the decision, or determined, to do God's will, then He will show us what His will is.

God wants us to make the decision, once and for all, to “follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. . . .” (Revelation 14:4) We must decide that we will do God's pleasure, no matter what the consequences may be, no matter what supposed benefits, to ourselves, that we must give up. With this thought in mind, David wrote these words; “My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.” (Psalm 57:7) The word “fixed” means: “to be firmly established, be securely determined.” (*Logos Bible Software*)

David had made the decision that he would follow God's revealed will and instruction regardless of the consequences. David was called a man after God's own heart.

With a securely determined heart, Elihu, a friend of Job, uttered these words; “That which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.” (Job 34:32) Note that Elihu was the only one of Job's four friends that the Lord did not rebuke and require a sacrifice for speaking wrong words. (See Job 42:9.) This is a representation of the attitude that we are all to have. When we are shown where we are going off the path, or have gone off the path, we are to repent whole heartedly, forsaking those sins and do God's will when it is presented before us.

If we have made the decision to do God's will, no matter what the consequences, then Christ says that we will know of the teaching or the way to walk in. “And thine ears shall hear a word <sup>1697\*</sup> (speaking, utterance) behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.” (Isaiah 30:21) The Lord can show us when we begin to stray off the straight and narrow path.

When we feel guilty, it is Christ that is pointing out our wrong doings and admonishing us to forsake those evil thoughts and actions. If we are doing something that is questionable then we must ask the Lord to show us if this is what He wants us to do. If we have made the decision to do the Lord's will, no matter what, then God's Spirit will impress upon our minds what He would have us to do.

“My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.<sup>3559</sup> Turn not to the right hand nor to the left (see Isaiah 30:21): remove thy foot from evil.” (Proverbs 4:20-27)

We are to ponder our ways to see if they are according to the Lord's will. We are not to turn to the right hand nor to the left. But if we do, Isaiah says that we will hear a word behind us, saying, “this is the way, walk ye in it.”

If I choose to employ my spare time in doing something that is vain, and I question whether or not this is the Lord's will, then I must ask Him to show me which path to take. If I am convinced that I must first seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and yet I continue to employ my time in vain things, then I am walking contrary to the light that is given me. This is an example of disregarding God's instruction. What does it mean to disregard God's instruction? “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law (God's instruction).” (1 John 3:4) If I disregard God's instruction, then I am transgressing the law, which is sin.

“He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth (abides in Christ) cometh to the light, that

his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” (John 3:18-21)

Can you actually be sinning just by doing some very minor thing that you know is contrary to the will of God? Yes. “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” (James 4:17) If I know that God does not want me to be engaging in vain activities, and I continue to do so, then I am sinning. Surely, it is evident that studying the Bible would be of much more value to my eternal life than spending my time thinking vain thoughts.

Let our heart be like that of David who prayed: “Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.” (Psalm 119:33-37)

Here is a man that had determined to do God's will, and prayed that God would show him the path to walk in, because he delighted in His law. “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (Psalm 40:8) Do we delight to do God's will, or is it a burden to us? “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.” (1 John 5:3)

No tongue can describe the satisfaction that comes from abiding in Christ.

Christ tells us that we must abide in Him if we are expecting to be cleansed from our sins. “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” (John 15:4, 5) To abide in Christ is to always do those things that the Lord reveals to you as His will. The moment that you turn to your own way, then you have stopped abiding in Christ. But if we sin, “we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 John 2:1)

“If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide



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in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” (John 15:6, 7) Christ abides in us by His words. “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (John 14:26). We will be reminded of Christ’s words concerning those things that we are in need of.

“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” (John 15:4-11)

No tongue can describe the satisfaction that comes from abiding in Christ. All that the Lord asks us to do is only for our benefit. He never withholds things from us that would help us or that would benefit our spiritual growth. At every temptation, we have a

chance to get closer to God by refusing the evil. There is also the danger of going farther away from God by yielding to sin. Satan has endeavored from the beginning to show that God is withholding some good thing from us, and we would be better off to indulge in that thing. This is the deception that caused the fall of the first woman; may it not be ours! □□□

\*Superscripted numbers represent the reference numbers from *Strong’s* Greek Dictionary.

**“Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end.” Psalm 119:33**

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