

Believe What God Says



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Message by; By Leroy Surface

Does the bible "teach?"

...or does the bible "say?"

A man once told me that the scripture which says *"The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God"* could not be true because it was *"contrary to the doctrine of grace."* Of course this was a foolish statement, but how often do we choose our doctrines over what the scripture actually says? The power of God's word is found in what it SAYS, and not in our doctrines about what it says. Many of the doctrines that are taught in our churches only serve to hold those who believe them captive to the sin that is in their hearts, because they believe they cannot be free. "Jesus said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."

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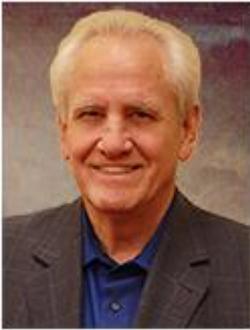
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Message by: **Leroy Surface**

Mark 1:14-15: *“Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: REPENT YE, and BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.**”*

The English word “repent” was translated from the Greek word “*metanoeo*,” which means “to think differently or afterwards, that is, reconsider.” When Jesus preached “repentance” to the people in Galilee, He was telling them to “think differently,” to “reconsider,” or to simply “**change your mind.**” The issue at hand was not that they were great “sinners” who needed to repent from their sins. They were Jews, a very devout people who were faithful to the synagogue and kept the Law of Moses to near perfection. They believed the prophets and were expecting the arrival of one called “*The Messiah* (anointed one)” who, according to Daniel 9:24-27, would come “to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness....” The first part of Jesus’ message to them was “*The time is fulfilled,*” calling their attention to the fact that this was the very year the angel Gabriel had told the prophet Daniel the Messiah would arrive. The scripture says “*the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not*” (Luke 3:15). In part two of His message, Jesus preached “*The Kingdom of God is at hand,*” a message the multitudes were ready to receive because they knew the time of the prophecy was fulfilled. They had their own imaginations about the kingdom of God, however. They looked

for a mighty warrior, a “*conquering prince,*” who would stand up to drive the Romans out of the land of Israel and restore the throne of David in Jerusalem. They believed he would destroy their enemies and establish Jerusalem as the “*capitol city*” of the entire world.

The third part of Jesus’ message was not so readily received when He preached “***Repent ye, and believe the gospel.***” When we think of repentance, we usually think of “*repenting from sin.*” This was not the case when Jesus told these Galileans to “*repent;*” He was telling them to “*change your mind, and believe the gospel.*” He was speaking to both men and women who were very devout to obey every precept of the Law of Moses. They were not “*sinners*” as were the Gentiles, because they were “*commandment keepers*” (Galatians 2:15). Consider Saul of Tarsus before he was converted to Jesus Christ. He was not a “*sinner*” in the sense of breaking the commandments of either God or of Moses. He was a devout Jew, and very proud of it. Years after his conversion to Christ, Paul told of his experience in the Jews religion. “*Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, BLAMELESS*” (Philippians 3:5). He hated the Christians and sought to eradicate the name of Jesus from the face of the earth by persecuting and killing the believers. The record of his conversion is given in the ninth chapter of Acts;

Acts 9:1-6: “*And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*”

And he trembling and astonished said, LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?"

Saul of Tarsus had a miraculous and instantaneous conversion to Jesus Christ. A moment ago, he hated the very name of Jesus. His every breath breathed out *"death to the Christians."* Then something happened in a moment of time that caused Saul of Tarsus to *"love Jesus"* with all his heart, and give the rest of his life to preaching Jesus Christ to the nations of the world. Saul of Tarsus *"repented"* in a moment of time. He *"changed his mind"* and God *"changed his heart."* There is no record of Saul begging God to forgive him; and no record of his shedding many tears of remorse before God would receive him. It was a supernatural event that got Saul's attention. A great light shined out of heaven upon him. He was blinded and fell to the ground, and heard a voice from heaven, saying, *"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"* He knew the voice was the Lord from heaven, so he answered, *"Who are you, Lord?"* The answer he received changed his life forever; *"I am Jesus whom thou persecuteth."* In that moment, Saul of Tarsus changed his mind about Jesus of Nazareth. He knew that Jesus is *"The Christ"* whom the prophets had foretold to come into the world.

Putting away "Childish Things"

I Corinthians 13:11: *"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."*

In this verse, Paul gives an insight to the transformation that took place in Him when He first believed that Jesus is *"The Christ."* He *"put away childish things."* Notice that the childish things he spoke of was *"childish thinking, childish speaking, and childish understanding."*

Galatians 4:3-5: *"Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law...."*

From the time the apostle was a small child he was very devout in the “*Jew’s religion*” (Galatians 1:13-14). He trusted in every precept and kept every ordinance of that religion, and was found to be “*blameless*” in all the righteousness the Law of Moses could offer. After his conversion to Jesus, however, he understood that he had “*trusted in the flesh*” to save him in his old religion. He described it this way in Philippians 3:4-7; “*If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, BLAMELESS. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.*”

Even though Paul (Saul of Tarsus) kept every commandment and ordinance of the Law of Moses to perfection, and even though he did not break a single commandment in the outward keeping of it, his heart was filled with hatred toward Jesus and bitterness and murder toward the Christians. It was this horribly sinful condition of his heart that at last brought him to cry aloud, “*O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death*” (Romans 7:24). It was then, and only then that he was ready for Jesus, and thus his salvation experience on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-6).

Philippians 3:7-8: “*But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.*”

Notice the word “*loss*,” which is used three times in these two verses. The Greek word is “*zēmia*,” which correctly translated means “*detriment*.” Saul of Tarsus was trusting in things that he believed to be “*great gain*,” but they were actually “*detrimental*” to him. It was the things he “*believed*” as a devout Jew that kept him from Christ. These “*childish things*” he spoke of in I Corinthians 13:11 were the “*dead works*” of his religion that

could not make him free, but actually held him in bondage to the sin that was in his heart. These were the things he had to “*put away*” before he could be free from the sin that was destroying him from within. Saul of Tarsus saw that the things he trusted in were not helping him, but they were actually hindering him. The things he once trusted in that were so very precious to him in the past he now saw that they were nothing more than the “*dung*” that a person must “*put away*” from themselves. His religion as a Jew under the Law of Moses was the “*childish thinking, speaking, and understanding*” that Saul of Tarsus had to “*put away*” before he could receive Jesus and thus “*gain Christ.*”

I have a brother that is six years older than I am. He is in my eyes a great man that has done many great things in his lifetime. When I was a small child, Bill was my “*hero.*” I’m speaking of the period of time when I was about six years old, and he was about twelve. I thought he could do anything. Everything he said to me registered in my mind as “*great wisdom,*” and there it remained throughout the years of my youth. I took Bill’s advice above the advice of any other person even as I came of age to be a man of my own. There came a time, however, that I realized that I was still living my life based on the wisdom I had received from a twelve year old. Bill had gone far beyond that point, but I was still locked in to the “*childish thinking, childish speaking, and childish understanding*” that I had received when I was a child, from one who was nothing more than a child at the time. I had to “*put away*” those things before I could become a man on my own. “*Putting them away,*” however, is hard to do when they are so deeply rooted in your subconscious mind as “*truth,*” and “*great wisdom.*”

Doctrines that can be Detrimental

Hebrews 13:9: *“Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.”*

Doctrines are stubborn things. Even though most of them are built upon the imaginations of men and not on the Word of God, they are almost impossible to root out of the consciousness of those who were born and raised in them. Most people believe what they believe, not because they have *“studied the scriptures”* and have *“come to the knowledge of the truth”* which will always make its believer *“free indeed”* from sin, but because they have heard it from childhood. That’s the reason those who are born in Muslim homes grow up to be Muslims; those who are born in Hindu homes grow up to be Hindus; and those who are born in Christian homes grow up to be *“Christians.”* None of these, however, *“grow up”* to be the children of God. As Jesus said, *“Ye must be born again.”*

John 3:3-7: *“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.** Nicodemus saith unto him, **How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.**”*

Regardless of what religion a person may have been *“born”* into, that person must be *“born again”* if they are *to enter the kingdom of God.* Jesus told Nicodemus, *“Except a man be born again,”* he cannot so much as *“see the kingdom of God.”* Any religious thing a person may do that does not result in a *“new creature in Christ”* is a *“dead work”* that cannot save the soul of the one doing it. Any doctrine of salvation that a person may *“believe”* without a corresponding transformation of their heart and

lifestyle is a doctrine that *“does not profit.”* I suppose there are thousands of variations of beliefs that people trust in to save their soul in the end, but most of them do nothing for the person in the present. Most of these are nothing more than the *“fables”* the apostle warned against in the scriptures.

Consider some of the more common things that many people trust in that cannot save a soul from sin. I must begin with water baptism, which is considered to be the greatest and perhaps most necessary ordinance of the church. Millions of people trust that God will receive them for no other reason than that they were *“baptized”* as a baby. A priest held them in his arms and sprinkled the waters of baptism on them, declaring them to be a *“new creation in Christ.”* They believe that *“original sin”* has been removed from the infant child by baptism, and only *“concupiscence”* remains, which is the *“desire for forbidden things”* that resides in every child of the flesh as a result of sin. A *“baptism”* that cannot save their soul has doomed them to a lifetime of *“penance”* if they are devout in their religion, because water baptism cannot *“take away sin.”*

Most of those who read this will agree with me about *“infant baptism,”* because they understand that a person must be of the *“age of accountability”* before they can rightly choose Christian baptism. Is there really a difference, however? How many do you know that have been baptized in water and continue in a life of sin? The most common answer I receive when I question a person concerning salvation is that they were *“baptized”* many years ago, usually at twelve years of age. When water baptism is offered as *“proof”* of salvation, I know that person has never been *“born again”* of the Spirit of God.

Repentance from “Dead Works”

Hebrews 6:1: *“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of **repentance from dead works**, and of faith toward God....”*

The epistle to the Hebrews was written by the apostle Paul to those Jews in the first century, encouraging them to “*continue in Christ*” and not return to the “*dead works*” of the Law of Moses.” For the devout Jew, receiving Jesus as His Messiah did not require repentance from sin, but “*repentance from dead works.*” The proper understanding of the “*dead works*” which Paul referred to in his letter to the Hebrews is “*the deeds of the law.*” In his letter to the Romans, Paul says, “*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight...*” (Romans 3:20). The “*deeds of the law*” are the things Moses commanded the children of Israel to do, such as the keeping of new moons, feast days, holy days and Sabbaths (Colossians 2:16). None of these had the power to change the heart or nature of man, so Paul labeled them “*dead works.*” Dead works have a way of getting into the conscience of religious people and holding them in bondage to things that can do absolutely nothing for them. They are, in fact, so powerful in their control over the people that Paul tells us it is only the blood of Christ that can “*purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God*” (Hebrews 9:14). When we were sinners, it took the precious blood of Jesus to purify our hearts from sin, and we received that cleansing when we “*repented and believed the gospel.*” Those who trust in the “*dead works*” of religion must also “*repent*” and “*believe the gospel*” before they will be free to serve God in “*newness of Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter*” (Romans 7:6).

A “*dead work*” is any religious thing a person might trust in or do that cannot deliver them from the sin that is in their heart and nature. Many “*Christians*” are bound to religious things that are no better than the deeds of the Law of Moses because they have no power to justify the one who trusts in them. They are to the believer in this generation just like circumcision was to the believer in Paul’s day. It is certainly not wrong for a believer to circumcise their male child as long as it is not in obedience to a religious commandment to do so. When it becomes a commandment, it is damning to the soul. For example, Paul told the Gentiles at the church in Galatia, “***If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man***

that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:2-4). This was Paul’s message to those who believed the doctrine of the false teachers of his day who taught; *“Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved”* (Acts 15:1). There were those in Galatia however, who had been circumcised from their childhood but did not trust in it. To these, the apostle says, *“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature”* (Galatians 6:15). If they were a *“new creation in Christ,”* nothing else mattered. They were free to serve God without the trappings of fleshly religion.

Water baptism has become the *“dead work”* of choice for millions of people in our generation. For those who do not *“trust”* in it for salvation, it can do them no harm, but it cannot save a single soul from sin, nor do them the least good. It has become the modern day *“circumcision”* that many people trust in. Has anyone ever told you that unless you have been baptized in a certain manner or according to a certain formula, you *“cannot be saved?”* These people believe a doctrine called *“baptismal regeneration.”* These, who have an *“ordinance”* to get saved by, must also have a *“law”* to live by, because they have trusted in something that cannot take their sin away. The most common answer I receive when I ask a person if they have been *“saved”* or not, is *“Oh, I was baptized when I was twelve years old.”* I know by their response that they do not know Christ nor have they ever been saved from sin.

Faith in water baptism has done as much as anything else to divide the church into many different factions. The apostle Paul discovered the same thing several years into his ministry. In Corinth, he saw the divisions among the people along the lines of who had baptized them.

I Corinthians 1:11-14: *“For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and*

*I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? **I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius.***”

Some would make the argument that Corinth was an isolated case; that Paul in fact did preach water baptism, and continued to do so throughout his ministry. To these, I would point out his words beginning in the seventeenth verse;

I Corinthians 1:17-18: *“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”*

Notice the similarity between his words to the Corinthians concerning water baptism and his words to the Galatians concerning circumcision;

Galatians 5:2-4: *“If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. **Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.**”*

When people trust in the works of man’s hand they fall from grace and Christ becomes of no effect to them. They will struggle their entire lifetime with inward sin and never know the “*glorious liberty*” provided for those who trust in Christ. Millions of people have been baptized in water at the time of their initial repentance and faith. I was baptized many years ago as well. My conclusion to this matter is similar to the words of Paul concerning circumcision; *“For in Christ Jesus neither baptized in water nor not baptized availeth anything, but a new creature.”* If you do not trust in it, it cannot hurt you, but neither can it do anything for you. If, however, you are one who believes you are “*saved*” and “*going to heaven when you die*” simply because you “*believe in Jesus*” and have been “*baptized in water,*” it could damn your soul, simply because it does not have the power to take sin out of the heart of man.

Unprofitable Works

I Corinthians 13:1-3: *“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I AM BECOME AS SOUNDING BRASS, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I AM NOTHING. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, IT PROFITETH ME NOTHING.”*

Proper understanding of these verses requires a proper understanding of the Greek word that was translated “*though*.” The Greek word is “*ean*.” Strong’s Concordance and Greek Dictionary defines it as “*a conditional particle; in case that, provided, etc.; often used in connection with other particles to denote indefiniteness or uncertainty.*” These three verses give three different hypothetical situations. The first two speak of impossibilities; the “*impossibility*” of being presently “*filled with the Holy Ghost*” and having the gifts of “*tongues, prophecy, wisdom, knowledge, and faith,*” working in them, and not also have “*charity,*” which is the love of God, in them. In the modern church, there are millions of people who “*speak in tongues,*” but have never received the Holy Ghost. They have been taught that it is man and not the Spirit that speaks. They have “*learned how*” to speak a “*prayer language*” and can do so at their will. Only these can “*speak in tongues*” without the love of Christ dwelling in them. They can also “*speak in tongues*” and continue in sin, because their hearts have never been “*purified*” from sin by the precious blood of Christ, which is prerequisite to receiving the baptism with the Holy Ghost, of which Jesus Christ is the baptizer. It is impossible to have the reality of Christ living in you without the love of Christ also working in you. Those who can “*speak in tongues,*” or “*prophecy,*” or even “*preach*” at their own will do so without the mighty working of the Holy Ghost in and through them. The apostle Paul says they are nothing more

than “*sounding brass*” and “*tinkling cymbals.*” Everything they do is nothing more than “*dead works.*”

Verse three gives a third hypothetical of those who may give everything they have to feed the poor without the love of Christ dwelling in them. The word “*charity,*” which is translated from the Greek word “*agape,*” speaks of love that only God is the source of. Human love can do great things and many good deeds without being moved by the love of Christ. Jesus said that even sinners “*love one another.*” Paul said that some would even lay down their lives for a righteous man or for a good cause (Romans 5:6-8), but the love of Christ is revealed in that He died for sinners, the ungodly, and even His enemies. Even without the love of Christ there are those who can give all their goods to feed the poor, and give their bodies to be burned, but it will “*profit them nothing*” (I Corinthians 12:3). To do these things without the love of Christ is nothing more than doing the other “*dead works*” that cannot save a soul.

“**Fables**” that have become “**Orthodoxy**”

II Timothy 4:2-4: “*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*”

A “*fable,*” such as the apostle warned us about, is anything that people believe for salvation that is not explicitly spoken in the bible. They are such things as people come to believe the bible “*teaches*” even though it does not “*say*” those same things. When I hear a minister say “*The bible teaches*” a certain thing, I know that minister cannot turn to the scripture that “*says*” what he or she wants to say. We need to clearly understand that the bible does not “*teach;*” it only “*says.*” Whenever a council of elders or a committee made up of the best “*scholars*” of the time find it necessary to determine among themselves what the children of God should believe, it is obvious they are seeking a

way to “*teach*” something the scripture does not explicitly “*say*.” Many of these “*councils*” convened hundreds of years in our past, but they lived hundreds of years after the eye-witness apostles had penned their last epistle. Much of that which is considered to be “*orthodoxy*” today would have been called “*fables*” by the apostles. The message the apostles preached was said to have “*turned the world upside down*” in its day. The doctrines we have been asked to believe in the modern church leaves its believer no different than the world around it. These are those “*meats which have not profited them which have been occupied therein*” (Hebrews 13:9), spoken of by the apostle. The result of a study on morality in the church was published in the August 2014 edition of Charisma Magazine. One of the shocking and to me almost unbelievable findings was that sixty eight percent of men in the churches watched pornography, as well as fifty percent of the pastors. The truly shocking thing about this, however, is that most people in the modern church believe these things to be the “*normal*,” especially for men, because as someone said recently, “*That’s just the way God wired men.*” NO! That’s the way the devil “*wired men*” through the entrance of sin. It’s just one part of the “*sin*” that is in the heart of men that Christ came into the world to “*take away*.” Please don’t stop reading right now. It may be that you need to know what the bible explicitly “*says*” instead of what you have heard that it “*teaches*.”

Where is the scripture that says the blood of Christ “*covers our sins*?” I can’t show you the verse, because it isn’t in the bible, but it is very easy to show what the scriptures do “*say*” about the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 1:7: “*In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*”

Hebrews 9:14: “*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?"

Hebrews 13:12: *"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate."*

I Peter 1:18-19: *"...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."*

I John 1:7: *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.**"*

Revelation 1:5: *"Unto him that loved us, and **washed us from our sins in his own blood....**"*

Revelation 7:14: *"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have **washed their robes**, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."*

Revelation 12:11: *"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb...."*

It is true that the blood of the old covenant sacrifices was a covering for sins. The English word "atonement" as used in the Old Testament was translated from the Hebrew word "kaphar," which means "to cover." In almost every instance, the word was used in conjunction with the words "shall make." It was the duty of the Old Covenant priest to "make an atonement" for the sins of the people through their daily offerings of animal blood, which became a "covering" for the sins of the people. In Hebrews 10:4 the apostle Paul says, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." It was for that reason that future sacrifices had to be offered, two lambs every day, and thousands of lambs and bullocks on the feast days, to "make a covering" for the sins of the people. Even when the covering was made, it did not hide the sins of the people from the eyes of God, "before whom all things are naked and open" (Hebrews 4:13); the Old Covenant "covering" was provided by the Law of Moses

to protect the people from the judgments of Moses, which he wrote into his law.

The blood of Jesus Christ does not “*cover sins.*” Those who believe His blood is a covering are guilty, even if innocently so, of “*counting the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, to be an unholy thing*” (Hebrews 10:29), which the apostle Paul considers to be worthy of worse punishment than those who were stoned under the Law of Moses. Animal blood could make a covering for sin, but the blood of Jesus, and only the blood of Jesus, “*takes sin away.*”

Say What God Says!

God has reminded me many times over the years to simply say what he says. He told Isaiah, “*I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people*” (Isaiah 51:16).

Isaiah was a prophet of God, chosen by God to foretell the wonderful salvation that would come to man through the “*sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow*” (I Peter 1:10-11). We are amazed at the detail with which the prophet described Jesus’ sufferings for us, but he could do so only because he had heard from God, hence, “*I have put my words in thy mouth.*” It was up to the prophet to say exactly what God said and nothing more or less. God will always do what He says He will do, but He will not respond to the imaginations of man. The true prophet of God is never the cause of future events; he is only the messenger. There is incredible power, however, in simply “*saying what God says.*”

What Did God Say?

I John 5:10: “*He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*”

What is the “*record that God gave of His Son?*” Jesus told the Jews, “*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me*” (John 5:39). When you have found those scriptures that “*testify of Jesus Christ,*” you have found “*the record that God gave of His Son.*” It would be impossible to give them all in this short message, but I will give just a few.

The Seed of the Woman

The same day sin entered into the world through Adam’s disobedience, God gave a promise in Genesis 3:15 of the “*seed of the woman*” who would “*bruise the head of the serpent.*” The apostle Paul records the fulfilment of this promise in the book of Hebrews; “*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil*” (Hebrews 2:14).

The Lamb of God

In Genesis 22:8, while journeying to the place where Abraham was told by God to sacrifice his son Isaac, Abraham told Isaac, “*My son, God will provide himself a lamb....*” Later that same day, after Abraham offered the “*ram caught in the thicket*” instead of Isaac, he named the altar “*Jehovahjireh,*” which means “*Jehovah will provide Himself a lamb.*” Over four hundred years later, when Moses wrote this account, he spoke of that altar, and added, “*...as it is said unto this day, ‘In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen’,*” which is a prophecy of Calvary where the Lamb of God was offered to take away our sin. John the Baptist confirmed the words of Abraham on the day after he saw the Holy Ghost descending and remaining on Jesus, saying, “*Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29).

Immanuel; “God with Us”

In Isaiah 7:14, the prophet Isaiah, speaking by the Spirit of God, said, “*A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*” Seven hundred years later, when the young virgin girl Mary was found to be with child before she was married to Joseph, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream with this message; “*Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying **Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, GOD WITH US***” (Matthew 1:19-23). The apostle Paul confirmed this very thing years after the death and resurrection of Christ with these words; “*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory***” (I Timothy 3:16).

Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace

In Isaiah 9:6, the prophet tells us, by the Holy Ghost, a little more about the child Immanuel, whom we first met in the seventh chapter. “*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*” In Luke 2:10-11, the angel of the Lord confirmed the fulfilment of this promise to shepherds in the field one night with this message; “*Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*”

The Sufferings of Christ

Throughout the prophecies of Isaiah we continually learn more and more about the child Immanuel. In Isaiah 53:2-5, it is spoken of the child; ***“He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. BUT he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”***

These words from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah are an explanation of last two verses of the fifty-second chapter; ***“His visage (his face) was so marred more than any man, and his form (his body) more than the sons of men. SO SHALL HE SPRINKLE MANY NATIONS; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider”*** (Isaiah 52:14-15).

The words *“so shall He sprinkle many nations”* are very important to understand. It is through His sufferings and death that we are *“redeemed from all iniquity”* (Titus 2:14). It is by the blood that He shed at Calvary that we are *“washed”* (Revelation 1:5), and *“cleansed from all sin”* (I John 1:7). The apostle Paul reveals the purpose of the sufferings of Christ better than most in Hebrews 13:12; ***“Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, SUFFERED without the gate.”*** The apostle Peter also reveals the wonderful estate of the children of God as a result of the sufferings of Christ in our behalf; ***“Who (Christ) his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed”*** (I Peter 2:24).

The “*stripes*” by which we are “*healed*” speak of so much more than the scourging which Jesus received on His back. Isaiah said that both his “*face*” and his “*body*” would be “*marred more than any man.*” The “*stripes,*” he suffered are correctly defined by Strong’s Concordance and Hebrew Dictionary as “*whelps*” and “*black and blue marks*” that covered his entire body to such an extent that He was beyond recognition. In fact, the Greek word “*mōlōps,*” which was translated as “*stripes*” in II Peter 2:24, is defined by “*Strong’s Concordance and Greek Dictionary*” as follows: “*Probably akin to the base of G3433) and probably ὄψ ὀψ (the face; from G3700); a mole (black eye) or blow mark.*” Jesus was beaten, not only on His back, but His entire body and face were destroyed beyond recognition. We are shocked at the thought of His receiving thirty nine stripes, which is one short of the forty stripe limit set by the Law of Moses. We are seemingly unaware that Jesus did not suffer and die under the Jewish laws, but under the Roman laws. Moses’ law prescribed that He should have been stoned to death as a blasphemer. The Law of Moses would have limited his scourging to no more than forty lashes, but the Roman law had no such limitation. The apostle Paul suffered the Jewish scourging five times, but it is doubtful that he could have survived the Roman scourging as it was laid upon the body of Jesus Christ. It is by these “*stripes*” that we are “*healed.*” The “*disease*” is “*sin,*” which has destroyed the heart and nature of man through Adam’s disobedience. The submission of Jesus to suffering at the hands of roman soldiers and His “*obedience unto death, even the death of the cross*” (Philippians 2:8), is the “*cure*” for everyone who will believe and trust in Him. “*For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous*” (Romans 5:19).

David describes Calvary

Perhaps the most vivid and detailed account of the sufferings of Christ was given by David in the twenty-second Psalm, a thousand years before Jesus was born to Mary. David begins his psalm with the words, “*My God, my God, why hast thou*

forsaken me” (Psalms 22:1). A thousand years later, the apostle Matthew confirms that this was the cry of Jesus just before He “gave up the ghost” and died. “*And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” (Matthew 27:46).

Prophecy in Psalms 22:7-8: “*All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head saying, He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.*”

Fulfilment in Matthew 27:43: “*He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.*”

Prophecy in Psalms 22:16: “*Dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.*”

Fulfilment in John 19:17-18: “*And He bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.*”

Prophecy in Psalms 22:18: “*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*”

Fulfilment in Matthew 27:35: “*And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.*”

The Promise of “The Christ”

There are dozens of prophecies of Christ throughout the Old Testament, but there is one that stands preeminent among all other prophecies. It is the message that God sent to Daniel by the angel Gabriel, telling Him of one called “*The Messiah*,” which is the Old Testament word for “*The Christ*.” Gabriel told the exact

year that He would come in ministry, and exactly what He would come into the world to do.

Daniel 9:24: *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and TO MAKE AN END OF SINS, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and TO BRING IN EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*

Daniel 9:25: *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the MESSIAH THE PRINCE shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*

Daniel 9:26: *“And after threescore and two weeks SHALL MESSIAH BE CUT OFF (Christ crucified), but not for himself (but for the sin of the entire world): and the people of the prince that shall come (The “prince that shall come” is identified as “Messiah the Prince” in the previous verse. The “people of the prince that shall come” speaks of the Jews in Jesus’ generation. The apostle John said, “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not” - John 1:12) shall destroy the city and the sanctuary (This “destruction” does not speak of that which was done by the roman armies in 70 A.D. The prophet Hosea prophesied of the children of Israel, “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help” – Hosea 13:9); and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined (Only with these words, “the end thereof” does the destruction by the romans come into view; The “end of the war” speaks of the end of all conflict, which will come only when the Jews “look unto Him whom they pierced” (Zechariah 12:10), and “mourn” for Jesus*

Christ, which will take place just before the second coming of Jesus Christ to earth.).

Daniel 9:27: “**And He** (Christ) **shall confirm the covenant** (God’s covenant with Abraham; Genesis 22:16-18) **with many for one week** (The seventieth week of the prophecy.): **and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease** (Jesus was crucified in the very middle of the seventieth week of the prophecy, a fact of history, thus ending the sacrifices that were offered under the Law of Moses. Those who believe that the “*seventieth week*” has been delayed until the time of the “*great tribulation*” are mistaken.), **and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate** (Only days before His rejection by the Jews and His death on the cross, Jesus grieved over Jerusalem, saying, “*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate*” (Matthew 23:37-38).), **even until the consummation** (The final destruction before the return of Christ, prophesied by Isaiah; “*Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth*” - Isaiah 28:22), **and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.**” It is only this last phrase that brings us to the last three and a half years before the return of Jesus to earth. It will be the “*time of trouble*” spoken of by the angel Gabriel (Daniel 12:1), and the time of “*great tribulation*” spoken of by Jesus (Matthew 24:21). There is not a single scripture in the bible that speaks of a seven year period of time called “*The Great Tribulation.*”

An End of Sins

Our adversary the devil has warred against this prophecy of seventy weeks more than any other in the scriptures, because it is

“the record that God gave of His Son.” Most of the old scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as Adam Clark, Matthew Henry, and Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, believed and taught the seventieth week of the prophecy almost exactly as I have in this short message. Each of them believed that it is Christ, and not *“antichrist,”* who *“confirmed the covenant,”* for one week, and that He was crucified in the midst of the week, thus causing the *“sacrifice and oblation to cease”* through the offering of His own body upon the cross. Each of these great scholars were studying the authorized *“King James Version”* of the scriptures, along with other ancient manuscripts. The mind of the church has been changed during the last century and a half concerning end time prophecy, largely due to the fact that every bible translation since 1881 has *“perverted”* Daniel 9:27 to such an extent that no one who trusts these versions can see the truth that Satan has sought to hide. If Satan can seduce the *“church”* into believing the theory that *the “seventieth week”* was separated from the sixty nine weeks, not to be fulfilled until after the rapture of the church, he has succeeded in making the sufferings and death of Christ, the Son of God, to be of no effect whatsoever. Those who teach that you are *“justified,”* but you are still a sinner have already been seduced.

These four verses of scripture (Daniel 9:24-27) give the clearest insight into the purpose of Christ’s coming into the world as a man. They tell exactly what He would do, and exactly how He would do it, through His death on the cross. They are *“the record that God gave of His Son”* (I John 5:10). He would *“...finish the transgression, **make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness**”* (Daniel 9:24). Jesus accomplished each of these things in the middle of the seventieth week of the prophecy when He died on the cross to *“take away the sin of the world”* (John 1:29), and rose again the third day.

The Simplicity that is in Christ

II Corinthians 11:3: *“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”*

The “*simplicity that is in Christ*” is revealed in three very simple things.

- 1. Know who Christ is:** Christ is as eternal as God is. He is the one the apostle spoke of as “*The Word*” in the book of John; “*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). John concludes the “*mystery*” of who Christ is in the fourteenth verse; “*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). Christ became a man, and thus, “*The only begotten Son of God,*” born of a woman (Galatians 4:4). The apostle John tells us, “*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God*” (I John 5:1).
- 2. Know what Christ came into the world to do:** Always remember the promise of “*The Christ,*” which God sent to Daniel by the angel Gabriel. Christ came into the world “*...to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness...*” (Daniel 9:24). Nothing can be more clearly stated than this “*record*” that God gave of His Son.
- 3. Know that all of these things were accomplished to perfection through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross:** The apostle Paul wrote, “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...*” (Romans 1:16). Notice that the “*gospel of Christ*” only works for those who “*believe it.*”

Anything that contradicts the record that God gave is not the gospel of Christ, and will not do anything for those who believe

it. We are told, and correctly so, that justification is by “*faith alone*.” The “*faith of Christ*,” who He is, what He came into the world to do, and that He did it through death on the cross, is the only “*faith*” that has the power to “*justify*” its believer. The apostle Paul was speaking with Peter in Galatians 2:15-16: “*We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed IN Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith OF Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*”

There is a fourth thing that must be in place for the “*believer*” to receive the “*glorious liberty from sin*” that the gospel of Christ promises; we must “*trust in Christ*,” who has finished the work of salvation, even before He ascended to the throne at the right hand of God. Paul confirms this in Hebrews 1:3: “*...when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*” Do not try to do for yourself what Christ came into the world to do. Instead, simply “*trust in Christ*” who has already done the work. Avoid “*self-help*” programs like you would avoid the plague, and “*look unto Jesus*,” who is “*the author and the finisher of our faith*” (Hebrews 12:2).

Another Jesus?

II Corinthians 11:4: “*...if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted....*”

The apostle warns of “*another Jesus*” and “*another spirit*,” but it all begins with “*another gospel*.” The purpose of the “*other gospel*” is to move the people away from Christ. The apostle John makes a clear statement in I John 3:5-6: “*And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not....*” In these verses, two very simple truths are shown; first, Christ came into the world to “*take away our sins*,” and second, those who abide in Him do not sin. Those who profess to know Jesus but deny the gospel of

Christ tell us that the children of God are “*still sinners,*” but they “*do not practice sin.*” Some teach this because they actually believe it. They heard it from some other teacher that they respected. There must be others, however, who know what the scriptures actually say, but cannot “*say what God says*” because their own hearts condemn them. In the words “*sinneth not,*” the word “*not*” was translated from the Greek word “*ou,*” which Strong’s Concordance and Greek Dictionary tells us is “*absolutely negative.*” In other words, John clearly said, “*whosoever abides in Christ absolutely do not sin.*” The “*secret*” is to “*abide in Him.*” If any of us are “*moved away* (Colossians 1:21-23)” from Christ to believe another gospel, we will most certainly come into the bondage of sin, because none of us can keep ourselves (Jude 1:24).

There is another word in John’s epistle that we must also consider. In two verses, I John 3:8-9 respectively, the apostle says, “*He that committeth sin is of the devil...*” (verse eight), and, “*Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin...*” (verse nine). It is almost universally taught that this word “*commit*” or “*committeth*” actually means “*to practice,*” which is how some of the modern versions actually translate the Greek word. They are mistaken, however, because the Greek word that is used in the Greek text is “*poieo,*” which is properly defined as “*to make or do,*” and actually refers to “*a single act*” (see “*poieo,*” Strong’s number 4160, and compare to “*prasso,*” Strong’s number 4238). If John had meant to say that the children of God “*do not practice sin,*” he would have used the word “*prasso,*” which is properly defined as follows by Strong’s Greek Dictionary; “*to practise, that is, perform repeatedly or habitually (thus differing from G4160, which properly refers to a single act).*”

To hear these things can, at first, strike terror to the hearts of many sincere people because they are convinced by their own experience that they are still “*sinners*” because of the sin that is in their heart, whether committed or not. Do not “*fear,*” but rather “*believe.*” When Jesus first came into the region of Galilee, He preached “*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of*

God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15). Jesus was not preaching His message to sinners, but to those who were waiting for the appearing of their “*Messiah.*” Jesus told them, “*The time is fulfilled,*” meaning, “*This is the year the angel Gabriel said the Messiah would come.*” His message to these Jews was literally “*Change your mind, and believe the gospel.*” If they would believe the message God sent to Daniel through Gabriel, they would also believe that “*Jesus is the Christ*” who came into the world to make an end of sins.

Some of us have made the mistake in the past of believing that “*repentance*” consists of crying in the altar, and begging God to forgive us, promising that if He will only forgive us one more time, we will never do it again. I tell you that true salvation has never been based upon our promises to God, but upon His promises to us. Some who read this message have been deeply troubled by the message I bring, because of the sin that is still in their heart. Many times you have sincerely wept over your “*weaknesses*” and “*sins.*” You have been told not to worry, God can’t see your sins because they are “*covered by the blood.*” That is not the “*gospel of Christ;*” it is “*another gospel.*” My message to you is the same that Jesus came to the Galileans with; “*Change your mind, and believe the gospel.*” If you continue to believe that you can never be free, you will “*never be free.*” If you think that you can “*work it out*” through self-help programs, you also will never be free. Cast yourself helplessly at the feet of the one who “*loved you, and gave Himself for you*” (Galatians 2:20). Trust in Him to do in you what He came into the world to do. It is Christ plus nothing, and it is Christ or nothing. Believe the gospel, trust in Him, and He will make you free; “*you shall be free indeed*” (John 8:31-36).

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