

Putting Away the Lie



Message by: Leroy Surface

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Among those doctrines that have been brought into the churches by false teachers is the idea that the children of God are still sinners. They teach that Christ's death on the cross was a "*punishment*" to "*take the penalty for our sins.*" They believe that God has forgiven every sin we will ever commit, "*past, present, and future,*" before we commit them. They insist that "*justification*" is only "*in the eyes of God.*" These "*doctrines*" are detrimental to those who *believe* them and damning to those who *rejoice* in them.

In this message, Brother Surface shows by the scriptures that "*Justification by Faith*" is very real, that it is received "*by faith alone,*" and not by "*the deeds of the law.*" He will also show that everything changes in the one that is justified, and they are "*freed from sin*" to serve God in "*righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost.*"

Galatians 3:16: "*...we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be **justified by THE faith OF Christ,** and not by the works of the law.*"

The Apostle Paul

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Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved...God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

II Thessalonians 2:10-12

Ephesians 4:17-19: *“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”*

The Gentile believers in the church at Ephesus were undoubtedly the most devoted to the truth of the gospel among all the Gentile churches. Paul gives them the admonition in our text to *“walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.”* The *“other Gentiles”* Paul referred to were not those who were still worshiping devils in pagan religions. Instead, it was so called *“believers,”* such as those in both the Corinthian and the Galatians churches, who were guilty of *“walking in the vanity of their mind.”* To the Galatians, Paul wrote, *“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ”* (Galatians 1:6-7). To the Corinthians, he wrote, *“And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?”* (I Corinthians 3:1-3). By contrast, he begins his letter to the Gentiles

at Ephesus by saying, *“In whom (In Christ) ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory”* (Ephesians 1:13-14).

There is absolutely no doubt that *“philosophy”* has gradually replaced the gospel of Christ to such an extent that the *“gospel”* that is commonly preached today is not the gospel at all. I remember the vision I received from God over forty years ago. I saw a huge snake with two heads, one at each extremity, wrapped around a sleeping church. I am reminded continually of that vision when I see the extremities in religion today. The Galatian and Corinthian churches were prime examples of those extremities. The Corinthian churches were lascivious, while the Galatian churches were extremely legalistic. Both of them were what they were because they *“walked as men”* in *“the vanity of their minds.”* The Galatian church *“moved away from Christ”* to trust in the Law of Moses, exactly as Adam and Eve moved away from the tree of life to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The Corinthian church must have been of those spoken of by Jude, who were *“turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness”* (Jude 1:4). The *“new creation”* of the sons and daughters of God are *“created in Christ Jesus”* (Ephesians 2:10). They are *“created in righteousness and true holiness”* (Ephesians 4:24). They have *“been made free from sin”* and *“become servants of righteousness”* (Romans 6:18). Sin, as it is spoken of in this verse, is the *“nature of the serpent”* that deceived Eve. Righteousness is the nature of God. Before we were *“born of God”* we served sin, because sin was our nature. Having been made free from sin, God has given us *“the gift of righteousness”* (Romans 5:17), which is the new nature of the children of God. Today, we *“serve righteousness,”* because righteousness is our nature, and *“holiness”* is our fruit (Romans 6:22).

“...being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart...” Both the Corinthian and the Galatian churches were *“alienated from the*

*life of God through the ignorance that is in them.” Ignorance is normally defined as the lack of knowledge. These churches had heard the truth of Christ from Paul and had rejected it for the doctrines of false teachers. The “ignorance that was in them” was the erroneous doctrines they trusted in, that had so moved them away from Christ. Paul warned the Galatian church, “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that 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).*

“...who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness...” Certainly this is an exact description of the Corinthian church. Consider I Corinthians 5:1: *“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you...;”* I Corinthians 6:1: *“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?”* and I Corinthians 7:1-2: *“Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.”* The Corinthians, who claimed to believe in Jesus, corrupted everything they touched. They claimed fellowship with God, but they walked in darkness (I John 1:6). They *“walked in darkness”* because of *“the blindness of their hearts”* as Paul said in our text.

Ephesians 4:20-21: *“But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:”*

Jesus told the Jews in Matthew 11:28-29, *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, **and learn of me;** for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”* Jesus called for the multitudes of Israel to *“come”* unto Him to receive *“rest for their souls.”* They were oppressed on every hand; by the Romans, by the scribes and Pharisees, and by Moses and the Law at the hands of the chief priests and the elders. If they would follow Him in meekness and lowliness, they would find rest for their souls.

Today, because of the death Jesus died and the blood He shed for us, to “*learn of Him*” takes on a totally different meaning. If an unregenerate man seeks to imitate the life and manner of Jesus Christ, he will only enter into a lifetime of struggle, trying to “*do the good*” and “*shun the evil.*” He will be “*eating*” of the same “*forbidden fruit*” that brought about the death and fall of Adam. That is the best those who “*walk in the vanity of their minds*” can do. We do, however, desperately need to “*learn of Him.*” We need to “*know who He is*” (He is the creator of all things; John 1:1-2), “*what He came into the world to do*” (He came to “*make and end of sins*” and “*bring in everlasting righteousness;*” Daniel 9:24), and we need to understand that He did it all when He died on the cross to “*take away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29).

“...if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus...” In the phrase “*taught by Him*” the word “*by*” was translated from the Greek word “*en,*” and should have been translated as “*in.*” Every minister of Christ must preach Christ “*as the truth is in Jesus.*” We waste our time seeking to “*make disciples*” in every nation if we do not give them the “*truth*” that Jesus said would “*make them free*” and they would be “*free indeed*” (John 8:31:36). Jesus had told the Jews previously in John 8:24, “*If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*” All the Jews were expecting their messiah to come the same year that Jesus was baptized by John and received the Holy Ghost. They understood, according to the prophecy in Daniel 9:24-27, the very year that He would appear. They understood what He would do, because the prophecy said He would “*make an end of sins*” and “*bring in everlasting righteousness.*” They were still looking for the one who would “*take away their sin* (John 1:29)” while at the same time they were mocking Jesus. Jesus told them, “*If you don’t believe that I am the one you are looking for, you will die in your sins.*”

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus said to His disciples, “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations*” (KJV). This is the same thing He told them in Mark 16:15, “*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*” The Authorized King James Version of the Bible, however, is the only version that translates Matthew 28:19 to say

“teach all nations (preach the gospel).” Every other version, published in the twentieth century, says, *“make disciples of all nations.”* An erroneous understanding of this verse has opened the door for every manner of false teaching to enter, utterly twisting and destroying the *“gospel of Christ”* until it is no gospel at all (Galatians 1:6-7). In fact, the thing Paul warned of in Acts 20:29-30 has come upon the church worldwide; *“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”* In an effort to *“make disciples,”* we can only make them to be followers of men, and not of Christ. In fact, they teach their disciples that they must be accountable to man, and not to God. Jesus told His disciples, *“Ye know that the **princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you**”* (Matthew 20:15-26). He did not give us *“accountability partners.”* Those who are truly *“born of God”* are the *“sons of God.”* Paul tells us, *“Whom the Lord loveth **he** chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom **he** receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”* (Hebrews 12:6-7). God will discipline His children, sometimes harshly, but He does not do it at the hands of His ministers. In conclusion, every effort of man to *“make disciples”* can only teach them to *“walk as men”* (I Corinthians 3:3), *“in the vanity of their mind”* while struggling to *“walk with God.”*

Ephesians 4:22-24: *“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”*

These two verses of scripture can be the source of much struggle for those who do not understand the truth and power of the gospel of Christ. Why should it be so difficult to *“put off the old man,”* which the apostle Paul tells us *“is crucified with (in union with) Christ”* (Romans 6:6)? In the same verse, he tells us the *“body of sin (the sin nature)”* is *“destroyed,”* and that we are no longer

“slaves to sin,” because *“He that is dead (crucified in union with Christ) is freed from sin”* (Romans 6:7). Paul tells us in our text that the *“old man”* is *“corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.”* The word *“corrupt”* is translated from the Greek word *“phtheirō,”* which means *“to shrivel or wither.”* Our *“old man”* is not only *“crucified,”* he is *“dead”* and *“shriveled and withered.”* Certainly there are those who claim to be *“born again”* who also live their lives in the stench of death and decay. These are those who do not know the truth as it is in Jesus. They actually profess that they are still sinners, and that they will sin everyday as long as they live on this earth in a flesh body. If they have ever known Christ, they have returned to the bondage of corruption. Peter speaks to this issue in II Peter 1:3-4; *“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him (Christ) 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.”* Our *“knowledge of Christ”* is through the *“great and precious promises”* that were given to us by the prophets of God who testified of the *“sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow (I Peter 1:10-11)”* hundreds of years before Jesus was born to Mary. It is through His sufferings at Calvary that we have *“escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust”* (the *“corruption”* caused by *“sin”* that came into the world through Adam’s disobedience to God). We have been made *“partakers of the divine nature,”* which is the *“righteousness of God.”* Those who do not know this truth have not been *“renewed in the spirit of their minds.”* They do not *“reckon themselves”* to be *“dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through (in) Jesus Christ (Romans 6:11)”* because they do not *“know the truth”* that Jesus said *“shall make you free.”*

The Galatian churches tried to perfect themselves *“by the flesh”* (Galatians 3:3). It was the *“vanity of their minds”* that told them they could do so. The Corinthians churches *“walked as men”* (I Corinthians 3:3). We should understand that it is impossible for man to *“change himself”* from *“sinful to righteous,”* or from *“carnal to spiritual.”* He can no more *“put off the old man”* and

“*put on the new man*” than a cat can fly with the birds. We who are “*born of God*,” however, can cease from the things of man through setting our affection on the things of Christ (Colossians 3:1-2. Jesus tells us in Matthew 13:44, “*The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.*” We should notice that Matthew is the only writer in the New Testament that speaks of the “*kingdom of heaven.*” All the others speak of “*the kingdom of God*,” which is the same thing, and literally speaks of “*the realm of God.*” Jesus said it is like a “*treasure hid in a field*,” which when a man finds it, he will “*sell everything he has*” to buy that field, and he will do so “*with joy.*” Those who seek to “*make disciples*” will tell those who have “*never found the treasure*” what they must do in order to “*get the treasure.*” No wonder they struggle so, trying to “*put off the old*,” and “*put on the new.*” Those who have “*found Christ*” have not “*found a struggle*,” but have “*found the joy of knowing Him.*” It is with great joy that they “*put off*” that which is “*shriveled and withered*” to receive “*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*,” which is “*the kingdom (the realm) of God*” (Romans 14:17).

Ephesians 4:25: “*Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.*”

I know that the translators often gave the wrong translation because they could not comprehend the power of what the apostles understood and sought to convey to us. Those who know the truth understand that there is absolutely no need to tell those who are “*born of God*” to stop lying, fornicating, stealing, etc. These are things of the sin nature that have been taken out of the heart of those who are born of God. As pertaining to righteousness, God’s laws are “*written in our hearts*” (Hebrews 8:10-11), and we “*do by nature*” those things that are written in the law (Romans 2:14). This verse is better understood to say, “*Wherefore **putting away the lie, speak every man truth** with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.*” With this verse, we come to the heart of what this message is about.

Putting Away “The Lie”

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.**

Mark 1:15

When Jesus began His ministry in the regions of Galilee, it was not to sinners that He directed His message to. He came “*preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God*” to those devout Jews in the synagogues throughout Galilee. He preached to those who understood by the prophets that “*the time is fulfilled*” and believed that “*the kingdom of God is at hand.*” Everything is wonderful to this point. Then He hit these devout Jews with the last point of His message; “**Repent ye, and believe the gospel.**” These were not “*sinners!*” These were those Paul spoke of in Galatians 2:15; “*We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles....*” Of course sin was in their nature, because Christ had not yet died to “*take away our sin,*” but they were “*law keepers,*” and as such they did not sin in the outward act. Even Saul of Tarsus could speak of the time that he hated Christians and persecuted the church, and say, “*Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, (I was) blameless*” (Philippians 3:6). Jesus spoke to His disciples at the last supper concerning those “*devout Jews (the scribes and Pharisees)*” that rejected Him; “*If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin*” (John 15:22). They could not cover their hatred for Him.

“*Repent ye,*” as Jesus preached repentance to the Jews, meant “*think differently, and believe the gospel.*” I believe this is the message God is sending to the churches today, though it is seldom heard at this time. When Paul wrote to the Hebrew Christians, he established what Jesus meant when He told the Jews to repent. According to Paul, the “*first principle of the doctrine of Christ*” is “*repentance from dead works*” (Hebrews 6:1). The Jews trusted in the “*ceremonial works*” of the Law of Moses for their righteousness instead of Christ. These are what Paul called the

“deeds of the law” that cannot justify man (Romans 3:20). They are *“dead works.”* A *“dead work”* is any and every religious work a person can do and not be changed by doing it. That includes all the ceremonial works of the church as well; works that a person may do and still be controlled by sin in their heart. The *“second principle”* of the doctrine of Christ is *“faith toward God”* (Hebrews 6:1). This is where the truth about *“justification by faith”* begins to be revealed. *“For by grace are ye saved **through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works** (dead works of religion), lest any man should boast”* (Ephesians 2:8-9). Notice that we are justified *“through faith”* that is not of us. We will show in this message that we are *“justified by **the faith of Christ”*** (Galatians 2:16), and what that means.

The repentance that Jesus preached would not turn the people to the Law of Moses; instead, it would free them from it. Paul tells us in Galatians 3:10, *“As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law (the ceremonial works of the law) to do them.”* Three verses later, Paul tells us, *“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree”* (Galatians 3:13).

The Law was not given for justification; *“...by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight”* (Romans 3:20). **Neither was it given for righteousness;** *“...if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law”* (Galatians 3:21). The ceremonial law of Moses consisted of nothing but *“dead works”* which were *“...added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made”* (Galatians 3:19). The Jews believed that they were greatly blessed to have the Law of Moses. They believed that it proved they were the *“chosen people,”* and did not understand that it was added as a punishment upon their fathers because they *“rejected the voice of God”* at Mount Horeb and promised to obey Moses instead of God (Exodus 20:19). They labored under a lie for centuries, simply because they did not *“believe God”* and trust in Him. When Jesus came to them

preaching “*repent ye, and believe the gospel,*” it was time for them to “*think differently*” and “*put away the lie*” to “*believe the gospel.*” Three years later, Jesus spoke in the harshest terms to those Jews who refused to believe the truth; “***Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it***” (John 8:44). Satan is the father of “*the lie.*”

Laboring Under the “Lie”

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.

I Timothy 4:1-2

At first mention, it would seem that “*doctrines of devils*” would be very apparently “*evil*” and obviously “*anti-Christ.*” The fact is, they may seem to be quiet harmless to the casual observer. Paul gave an example of two doctrines of devils in verse three; “*...forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats...*” (I Timothy 4:3). Certainly these, which have been in the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church for centuries, seem to be innocent enough, except for the fact that the apostle Paul called them “*lies,*” and Jesus said that the devil is “*the father of the lie.*” It is also very obvious that one of these, “*forbidding priests to marry,*” has brought the sins of homosexuality and pedophilia into the priesthood of that church for many centuries.

Listed among the “*...sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, and idolaters*” in Revelation 22:15 is “*whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*” This speaks of false teachers who bring false doctrines into the church of Jesus Christ. Sadly, this began even before the deaths of the original apostles, and has continued for all the centuries since. The greatest danger to the church is not those who openly preach witchcraft, devil worship, or atheism; the great danger is from those who are received into the churches as “*angels of light.*” Paul warned of these because they were already at work

in the church at Corinth; “...*such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works*” (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

It has been said that if you tell a lie that is big enough and tell it loud enough and long enough, people will believe it. That has certainly been true of many erroneous doctrines that have come into the churches during the centuries since the first generation of the church. Jude sent out a warning less than forty years after Christ died for us, that “...*there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness...*” (Jude 1:4). Ungodly men succeeded in changing the true doctrine of grace into a lascivious lie, and who, in the nineteen centuries since, has been able to eradicate the “*lie*” from the minds of the people?

How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

Isaiah 1:21

It is an indisputable fact that the “*church*” was transformed from the “*glorious church*” of the first generation into the “*apostate church*” of the dark ages by the “*lies*” of the false teachers who found a place in the churches. For over twelve hundred years that history calls “*the dark ages*,” an apostate church exercised absolute rule over the consciences of men, and brutally oppressed them into submission to its doctrines and decrees through torture and death. Almost everyone, whether they are Protestant or Catholic, looks back on that period of time as a terrible atrocity. The “*apostate church*” of that time was foreseen in the scriptures as the arising of a great and terrible “*beast*” in Revelation 13:1-8. That “*beast*” would rule absolutely until the time it received a “*deadly wound*,” which was delivered to the beast by the reformation. The beast survived the deadly wound, but has never again attained unto the secular power that it exercised over the

nations during the dark ages. Instead, the scripture tells us that another “*beast*” would rise up in its place (Revelation 13:11).

The “Horns of the Beast”

This “*second beast*” would have “*two horns as a lamb*” but would “*speak as a dragon.*” Having “*two horns as a lamb,*” this second beast would have the appearance of a lamb. It would not appear to be vicious, as the first beast was, to force its doctrines and decrees upon the people. He rises to power by deception, and when it speaks, it “*speaks as a dragon*” (the devil), and it is the words of its voice that brings “*doctrines of devils*” into the churches. Remember that the “*serpent*” did not “*roar*” at Eve, but seduced her with cunning craftiness (Ephesians 4:14) and ungodly wisdom. While at its beginning the second beast may seem contrary to the first beast, it will ultimately cause men to worship the first beast (Revelation 13:12). It will have power to do miracles, by which it will deceive men, while telling them to make an image to the first beast, and to worship its image. Its vicious nature and secular power will be seen before the second coming of Christ, but at His return, both of these “*beasts* (the beast and the false prophet)” will be cast into the lake of fire for eternity.

The devil did not “*lie down and go to sleep*” when the reformation came. In the same way he succeeded to corrupt the true church of the first century through false teachers and false doctrines, he has succeeded in corrupting the doctrines of the reformation also. He has gradually done so until the “*church*” of the twenty first century is largely made up of very sinful people who do not believe that sin matters to God. This has become such a “*norm*” in religious thought that those few who speak to the contrary are considered to be in error. In fact, I have been accused of preaching “*doctrines of devils*” because I preach that a child of God is not a sinner. Do I have a scripture that says what I preach? Yes! I have dozens of them, from Jesus (John 8:34), to Paul (Romans 6:2, 6, 7, 11, 14, 18, 22), to John (I John 3:6, 8, 9; 5:18), to Jude (Jude 1:24), and to Peter, who also says the same things (I Peter 2:24, 4:1; II Peter 2:14-15). Where are the scriptures in the New Testament that says the children of God are still sinners and continue in sin? There are none, “*no not one.*”

There are two doctrines of the reformation that were largely successful in dealing the deadly blow to the secular power of the Roman Catholic Church. The first and foremost of these was the doctrine of justification by faith that Martin Luther brought. This doctrine has been called the “*weapon*” of the reformation because it struck its blow at the absolute power of the pope and the cardinal system. The masses had been held in bondage to the “*church*” through “*the fear of death,*” whether natural or spiritual (Hebrews 2:14-15). The people believed that in order to be accepted by God, they had to obey every decree that was given to them from the Vatican in Rome. They were “*slaves*” to a religious system that was very much like the “*Law of Moses*” that Christ came to redeem us from (Galatians 4:4-5). Martin Luther had launched the “*reformation*” by preaching his “*ninety five theses*” against the selling of “*indulgences for sin,*” which was the decree of the pope that a person could buy forgiveness of sins with money. They could even purchase a guarantee of heaven without first going to purgatory if they were willing to “*pay the price*” of the indulgence. Luther stirred a great controversy with his theses, but made little progress in delivering the people from the bondage of the system until his revelation of “*justification by faith.*” With this “*revelation,*” a wonderful thing began to happen. Millions of people, first in Germany, then around the world, began to understand they did not need the pope or the cardinal system to be saved. They could “*believe God*” just as “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness.*” Not even the inquisition could hold the people in bondage once the masses received “*the truth*” that freed them from the bondage of man.

The second doctrine of the reformation that was also instrumental in delivering multitudes of people from the Roman Catholic system of the dark ages was the doctrine of “*penal substitution,*” which was developed by John Calvin in Geneva. This is the doctrine that is commonly expressed today in the words “*Jesus took the penalty for our sin.*” Again, this doctrine was a tremendous weapon against the Catholic doctrines of penance and purgatory as the people began to understand its message. They had no need to do “*penance for sins*” as imposed upon them by the priests, because “*Jesus took the penalty for our sins.*” Neither did

they have to purchase forgiveness with money, because “*Jesus paid the price*” for God to forgive sins. There is one great problem with both Luther’s and Calvin’s doctrines. While they could deliver the people from the oppression of the Roman Catholic Church of the dark ages, it could not deliver them from sin. Those doctrines, as preached today, are no better than the blood of goats and bullocks. The blood of the Passover Lamb in Egypt was sufficient to deliver the children of Israel from bondage to Egypt, but it could not deliver them from the bondage of sin. It was not until the eternal Christ, our creator, came into the world and died as our “*Passover Lamb* (I Corinthians 5:7)” to “*take away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29), that we, who trust in Him, would be delivered from sin. The very doctrines which were so effective to deal the death blow to the “*first beast*” of the dark ages have become the “*two horns*” of a “*second beast,*” which is manifest today as a “*church*” that is incredibly corrupt and sinful.

One of the manifestations of the second beast must have been the Nazi, which rose to power in twentieth century Germany, and ultimately brought the entire world into World War II, with over 60,000,000 casualties worldwide. While the Nazis were an incredibly ungodly group, they also professed to be “*Christian,*” and received their anti-Semitic roots from the reformation of the sixteenth century, and more accurately, from the one who was the spearhead of the reformation. It is incredible, but true, that the same man who dealt the deadly blow to the first beast through the doctrine of “*justification by faith,*” near the end of his life also wrote a book titled “*The Jews and Their Lies,*” which was so filled with hatred for the Jews that it could have been Hitler’s blueprint for the holocaust.

Justification By Faith

Therefore we conclude that a man is JUSTIFIED BY FAITH without the deeds of the law.

Romans 3:28

Therefore being JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Romans 5:1

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be JUSTIFIED BY FAITH.

Galatians 3:24

I have great respect for Martin Luther in the early days of the reformation. I have no respect for him in his latter years, as his hatred for the Jews destroyed what faith he had once exhibited. I see Luther in the early days as being a very sincere young Catholic monk who was desperately searching for the truth that would free him from the torments of sin that lay within him. I have wept much while reading Merle D'aubigne's "*History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*," because I, as a young Pentecostal preacher, identified with him in that struggle. It was not Luther, however, that brought me to "*know the truth*." It was the Word of God as revealed to the apostles Paul and John, and Peter. Something stopped Martin Luther short of knowing the entire truth. If it were not so, then Protestantism, at least in its "*orthodoxy*," would know that Christ came into the world to "*make and end of sins*," and that He did it when He died for us, and rose again the third day. I will show by the scriptures that the doctrine of "*justification by faith*" as taught today is neither "*justification*" nor "*faith*."

The text that is commonly used to teach justification by faith is found in Romans 4:3; "*Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*." The entire fourth chapter of Romans is dedicated to showing how Abraham was "*justified by faith*," but it was not a onetime forever event. He not only "*believed God*," but he "*obeyed God*" repeatedly during a period of over forty years. Abraham must have been almost a hundred and twenty years old the last time God tested him, telling him to offer his beloved son, Isaac, on the altar of sacrifice (Genesis 22:1-14). That was the day God "*swore by Himself*" to bless Abraham and His seed, "*because thou hast obeyed my voice*" (Genesis 22:16-18). Our justification, however, is much more than Abraham knew in his day.

The "*proof text*" for "*justification by faith*" is found in Galatians 2:15-17 where Paul explains to Peter; "*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. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin?" Please notice that we are "*justified by the faith of Christ.*" It is not our "*believing*" that justifies, but what Christ did through His death and resurrection; that is "*the faith of Christ.*" Also notice that Paul asked the question of those who "*seek to be justified by Christ*" but are "*found to be sinners...is Christ therefore the minister of sin?"* We who say that Christ is living in us, is Christ sinning in us? I say with Paul, "*God forbid!*" (Galatians 2:17).

For by grace are ye saved THROUGH FAITH; AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:8-10

The "*faith*" that justifies a sinner is not the faith of the sinner; it is "*the faith of Christ*" (Galatians 2:16). Paul told Peter, "*We have believed IN Jesus Christ, that (in order that) we might be justified by THE faith OF Christ.*" Let me define "*the faith of Christ.*" If I were to speak of "*the faith of Buddha,*" you would understand that I meant the teachings of Buddha. If I spoke of "*the Catholic faith,*" the "*Mormon faith,*" or any other "*faith*" in those terms, you would understand that I spoke of the doctrines of those particular movements. I can assure you that there is no "*faith*" that will justify man except "*the faith of Christ,*" which speaks of "*the doctrine of Christ.*"

1. You need to know who Christ is: He is the "*Word of God*" who was in the beginning with God; who was God; and by whom all things were made (John 1:1-3). "*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth*" (John 1:14).

2. You need to know what Christ came into the world to do: He came "*to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins,*

and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness” (Daniel 9:24-27).

3. You need to know that Jesus is “the Christ,” and that He accomplished everything He came into the world to do when He gave His life for us on the cross: John said “*He was manifested to take away our sins*” (I John 3:5). He did it on the cross. “*The Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil*” (I John 3:8). Again, He did it through His death on the cross. The Apostle Paul tells us that He “*was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death*” (Hebrews 2:9), in order that “***through death, He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil***” (Hebrews 2:14). These three things reveal the “*doctrine of Christ*” in its simplest form. They are the “*faith of Christ*” that will justify everyone who will “*trust in Him.*” The fourth simple thing is to “*trust in Christ,*” and not in your own works, for the wonderful change that comes to those who “*believe the gospel*” and “*trust in Christ.*” Remember Paul’s words to Peter, “*we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law.* Believe these things and trust in Christ, and your life will be radically transformed from the inside out.

Justification Defined in the Scriptures

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Romans 4:5

God justifies the ungodly. There is not a single verse in the New Testament that tells us He justifies the righteous, because “*the righteous*” need no justification. It is true that there was none who were “*righteous*” with “*the righteousness of God*” before Christ died to “*make us righteous*” (Romans 5:19). Before that time, those who “*believed God*” and “*obeyed His voice*” were “*declared*” to be righteous “*in the eyes of God.*” We are not merely “*declared*” to be righteous, because we are “*made righteous*” through the righteous work of Christ on the cross. Romans 5:19 says, “*For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made*

righteous.” It was by the “*obedience*” of Jesus Christ to the “*death of the cross* (Philippians 2:8)” that “*many were made righteous.*” Justification is the means by which the “*ungodly*” are “*made righteous.*” It is God who justifies, and the cross of Christ is the instrument of His justification. Paul explains exactly how a sinner is justified if he will believe the gospel of Christ:

Romans 6:6: “*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him...*” The word “*with*” in this verse was translated from the Greek word “*sun,*” which means “*in union with.*” Christ, the creator of the old creation, died on the cross to destroy the old and was raised again from the dead to bring forth the new. For those who will believe, our “*old man of sin*” was nailed to the cross with Christ.

“*...that (in order that) the body of sin might be destroyed...*” The word “*destroyed*” is translated from the Greek word “*katargeo,*” which means, “*to be (render) entirely idle (useless).*” Many take this to mean that the “*old man of sin*” is only asleep, and that he can awake at any time. We should be aware that Paul used this same Greek word when he said “*The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death*” (I Corinthians 15:26). We know for certain that when God casts “*death and hell*” into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14), they are not coming back. It is possible for sin to revive in a believer (Romans 7:9), but only if they are “*moved away from Christ* (Colossians 1:21-23)” to trust in something else. “*Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not*” (I John 3:6). The gospel believer should understand that his old sinful man was nailed to the cross with Christ, and there is no prospect of its reviving in those who know the truth and trust in Christ.

“*...that henceforth we should not serve sin.*” The Greek text of this phrase actually says, “*that we will no longer be a slave to sin.*” The next verse tells why we need not be a slave to sin, and at the same time, gives us the true scriptural definition of “*justification.*”

Romans 6:7: “*For he that is dead is freed from sin.*” In order to understand the power invested in these few words, there are a couple of things we need to know. First, the “*death*” that Paul speaks of in this verse is the “*death*” that we died “*in union with*

Christ.” It is a death that we die “*by faith in Him who died for us.*” Jesus died as our “*proxy,*” which means that when He died, sin died in us, and we died to sin with Him. The second thing we need to know is that the Greek text of this verse does not say “*freed from sin,*” but “*justified from sin.*” “*Freed from sin*” is a wonderful truth that Paul shows in this same chapter in verses eighteen and twenty-two, but in verse seven he actually gives the definition of justification; “*He that is dead (crucified in union with Christ) is justified from sin.*” It is a justification that radically changes the one justified. They are “*born again (John 3:3)*” with a “*new heart and a new spirit (Ezekiel 36:26).*” They receive “*the gift of righteousness (Romans 5:17)*” as their “*new (divine) nature*” (II Peter 1:4), and “*true holiness (Ephesians 4:24)*” is their fruit (Romans 6:22). When God justifies the ungodly, they are no longer “*the ungodly.*”

The apostle John says of those who have believed the gospel and trusted in Jesus Christ, “*...now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*” It is now, through our new birth, that we are made to be “*like Him,*” because it is now that we may “*see Him as He is.*” Oh what power there is in “*seeing Him as He is.*” Look at those four things again.

1. *Know who He is;*
2. *Know what He came into the world to do;*
3. *Know that He did it to perfection when He died on the cross;*
4. *Put your total trust in Him who loved you, and gave Himself for you (Galatians 2:20).*

Justification that does not Justify

Justification that does not justify is a lie. It is a lie that has been told for so long and by so many that today, millions of people believe it. In fact, it is considered to be the orthodox doctrine of the modern church. One popular evangelist explains “*justification by faith*” to millions of people on his telecast in this way:

“Whenever the believing sinner says yes to Christ...the perfection of Christ, who was our representative man for all who will believe

Him, was transferred to the believing sinner, and that person is automatically justified. Now let me tell you what that means: it means that they are forgiven, and it means that they are also DECLARED not guilty. It also means that person is DECLARED to be innocent. Now listen to this, it also means that person is DECLARED to be perfect, because God cannot accept anything less than perfection. Now we all know that we aren't perfect...that's ridiculous, we aren't, but Jesus Christ is, and on the merit of Jesus Christ we are justified, and this is the way that God does it."

Notice that nothing changes about the one justified, according to the doctrine that is held by the vast majority of ministers and people today. They are only "declared" not guilty, "declared" innocent, and "declared to be perfect." Now I know that nobody is "perfect" in the human understanding of perfection, because not even Jesus could pass the "sin test" that the Pharisees judged Him by. After all, He "healed on the Sabbath Day." His disciples plucked corn on the Sabbath and ate it with unwashed hands. They said of Jesus, "We know that this man is a sinner" (John 9:24), because they had seen Him heal a blind man on the Sabbath. Certainly, no man is "perfect" before man, but the scripture says, "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14). It was a "perfect sacrifice," that brought a "perfect salvation," to "save them to the uttermost (completion) that come unto God by Him" (Hebrews 7:25). We should understand, however, that "perfection" in the gospel speaks of the "completion" that the Law of Moses could never give to man. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That (in order that) the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us..." (Romans 8:3-4).

A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.

Proverbs 11:1

Justification, as it is preached today, is a "false balance," and an abomination to God. It is an accusation against Christ that He could not do what He came into the world to do. If a person is

“willing to see the truth” (there are millions of people who are “willingly ignorant;” II Peter 3:5), they can readily see that “justification by faith,” as commonly preached in the churches today, makes God a party to deception, “declaring” a sinful man to be righteous when even the preacher says, “now we know that we are not righteous.” Such a doctrine is nothing more than “doubletalk,” and contradicts the scripture that says, “...by the obedience of one (Christ’s obedience to the death of the cross; Philippians 2:8), many are *made righteous*” (Romans 5:19).

A just weight and balance are the LORD's: all the weights of the bag are his work.

Proverbs 16:11

It is God who justifies the ungodly. Everything changes in the one justified, and “*the ungodly*” become “*the righteous*” through the working of God that was finished in Christ on the cross. Those who believe that “*nothing changes*” when God justifies a sinner, must also admit they believe every “*change*” that takes place in the one justified is accomplished through much effort on the part of the believer. All their “*righteousness*” must be “*self-righteousness*,” or they have no righteousness at all. They become like the vain little king in Hans Christian Anderson’s fable, “*The Emperors New Clothes*;” they walk naked, while believing God sees them in the beautiful garments of “*His righteousness*,” while the entire world around them sees only “*the nakedness of sin*.”

What did Jesus take? Our Penalty? ...or Our Sin?

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN of the world.

John 1:29

And ye know that he was manifested TO TAKE AWAY OUR SINS; and in him is no sin.

I John 3:5

If we believe what the scriptures say instead of what men tell us about the scriptures, we will readily see that Christ did not merely

take our “*penalty*,” but He took our “*sin*,” and we have it no more. This speaks of more than forgiveness. It was not necessary for the eternal Christ, our creator, to be “*made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death* (Hebrews 2:9)” only to “*forgive us*.” God has always forgiven those who repent and turn from their sins. He has never required punishment, penalty, or payment from those who humble themselves before Him, confessing their sins and turning from them. The prophet Isaiah called the people to repentance, saying, “*Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*” (Isaiah 55:6-7). Forgiveness and pardon are not concepts of the New Covenant only. Jonah preached the message of God’s judgment to the inhabitants of Nineveh, saying, “*Yet forty days and forty nights, and Nineveh shall be destroyed.*” The people humbled themselves and repented, and God not only forgave them, He “*pardoned them*.” The punishment did not come, because when God “*pardons*,” He does not punish, but when He “*punishes*,” He does not pardon.

Who 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

Millions of innocent lambs were sacrificed from the time of Adam to Christ, and every one of them was offered as a “*sin-bearer*.” The sins of the one who offered the lamb were symbolically laid upon the lamb before it was slain, and its blood was offered to atone for the sins of the one who brought the lamb. The lamb was not being “*punished*,” nor was it “*taking the penalty*,” or “*paying the price*” for the sinner; it died so that the sins it bore would “*symbolically*” die with it. Because of the fact that “*it is not possible that the blood of goats and bullocks should take away sins*” (Hebrews 10:4), another lamb had to be offered every year by the head of every family in Israel. King Josiah offered thirty thousand lambs and three thousand bullocks in one Day of Passover, besides the thousands of sacrifices brought by the people

(II Chronicles 35:7). Solomon offered twenty two thousand oxen and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep at the dedication of the temple (II Chronicles 7:5). Not one of these was being “*punished*” for the sins of the nation or the people. Every lamb, bullock, or oxen was slain as a “*sin-bearer*” for the people. Millions of lambs were offered during the period of time between Adam and Christ because they never found a lamb that could “*take away sin,*” either the “*sins*” of the people or the “*sin*” that entered the world through Adam’s disobedience. It would take the “*obedience*” of Christ, who came into the world as “*The Lamb of God*” to “*take away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29). That is why Jesus died on the cross for us.

For He (God) hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might BE MADE the righteousness of God in him.

II Corinthians 5:21

God does not deal with sin as merely being the sinful things we do. Instead, God sees sin as the “*nature*” of the “*serpent*” that deceived Eve, and caused Adam to disobey God. When Adam submitted to the serpent (which is what he did when he disobeyed God), he lost the image and likeness of God and received the nature of the serpent, which is “*Sin.*” God cannot receive man with the nature of the serpent remaining in him. Even though a man may change his actions, he can never change his nature. We know that a man is not a sinner “*because he sins;*” he commits sin “*because he is a sinner,*” and sin is his nature. Man cannot change his nature, but God, who made man, most certainly can. He does not do it through a “*process*” however, because the “*processes of religion*” require the assistance of man, and are no more than a “*self-help*” program. We know that “*step-plans*” are not the answer to the sin problem. “*Alcoholics Anonymous*” may do a lot of good in helping a person “*dry out*” from their addictions, but it leaves them saying, “*I am an alcoholic; I will always be an alcoholic.*” The processes of religion are even weaker. They leave a person saying “*I am a sinner; I sin every day, and I will always sin as long as I live in this body of flesh.*” The alcoholic

can say, “*I will not drink today,*” but the “*believer*” who trusts in the lie instead of the truth must say, “*I will sin every day.*”

“Cannot Sin” or “Cannot Cease from Sin?”

I would be a fool if I said I could not sin. The adversary knows that if we can be “*moved away from Christ*” like Adam was “*moved away from the Tree of Life,*” we will most certainly sin. It is those who “*abide in Christ*” who cannot sin (I John 3:5-6, 9). The apostle Peter, however, spoke of those who “*cannot cease from sin.*”

Having eyes full of adultery, and that CANNOT CEASE FROM SIN; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children.

II Peter 2:14

We should take a moment to see who these horribly depraved creatures are that Peter speaks of. He identifies them in the first two verses of this second chapter; “*...there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying (contradicting) the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.*” (II Peter 2:1-3). I do not believe it is possible to read this warning from Peter and not realize that we are living in a church age that is overflowing with the “*false teachers*” he spoke of. We can recognize them by their “*covetousness,*” their “*merchandising,*” and their “*pernicious ways,*” but I will deal with the fact that they “*cannot cease from sin.*” In fact, it is their “*cardinal doctrine*” that man “*cannot cease from sin,*” and they speak evil of those who abide in Christ and do not commit sin.

Those Who Rejoice in Iniquity

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.

I Corinthians 13:6

The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians is called “*the love chapter*” of the Bible. The apostle Paul who wrote it calls it “*the more excellent way.*” He gives the attributes of love that are manifest in everyone who has the love of Christ abiding in them. In verse six, the love of Christ “...*rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.*” In II Thessalonians 2:10-12 the apostle Paul speaks of those who hear the truth, however, and cannot rejoice in it because their “*pleasure*” is in “*unrighteousness.*” He says, “...*because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved...God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but HAD PLEASURE IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.*”

There is no salvation for those whose “*pleasure*” is found in unrighteousness. They may be church members, sing in the choir, teach a class, or even be the pastor, but those whose pleasure is found in the ungodly elements of this world are “*lukewarm*” at best, and Jesus said “*I will spue thee out of my mouth*” (Revelation 3:16). On the other hand, there are those who are slaves to sin and unrighteousness, who know they are slaves. They continue in sin and hate what they do, but they cannot deliver themselves. To these, Jesus says, “*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light*” (Matthew 11:28-30).

The “*yoke of Christ*” is not a “*yoke of bondage*” like the Law of Moses was to the children of Israel. Instead, it is an invitation to receive Christ and be made one with Him, exactly as Jesus prayed in John 17:21; “*That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*” A “*yoke of oxen*” is two oxen in one yoke. When we accept His yoke, we are made to be one with Him. This is not bondage, but the glorious liberty of the children of God. It is “*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*” (Romans 14:17).

Rejoice in Truth

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Romans 6:1-2

The question is asked; “*Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*” The apostle answers the question for every lover of the truth; “*God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*” He not only said we “*should not,*” but he expressed the impossibility of one who is “*dead to sin,*” to “*continue in sin.*” Paul takes the remainder of this chapter to explain and reinforce his statements in the second verse.

Verse 3: “*...so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*”

Verse 6: “*...our old man is crucified with him (Christ), that the body of sin might be destroyed;*” We are no longer slaves to sin.

Verse 7: “*For he that is dead (with Christ) is freed from sin.*”

Verses 10-11: “*For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*”

Verse 14: “*Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*”

Verses 17-18: “*Ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.*”

Verse 22: “*But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*”

Spitting in the face of everything Paul tells us about justification at the cross with Christ are those who proudly say, “*Jesus took the penalty for my sins. I am still a sinner, and I sin every day, but God has forgiven every sin that I will ever commit, past present,*

and future, even before I commit them, because Jesus has taken my punishment. God sees me as righteous and perfect because of the righteousness and perfection of Jesus, and He cannot see my sins because they are covered by His grace and righteousness.”

The things that I have just paraphrased in the preceding paragraph are lies that are given to comfort those, whose “*pleasure is in unrighteousness.*” Perhaps you have heard that kind of preaching all your life, but you are one, as I was twenty five years ago, that is seeking for “*the truth*” that Jesus said will “*make you free.*” That “*truth*” is given all through the writings of the apostles Paul and John. Don’t let anyone give you a “*doctrine*” that is based upon an “*interpretation*” of one or two scriptures. If you are a “*seeker of truth,*” study the sixth chapter of Romans and the third chapter of I John in the KJV until the light of what the apostles understood shines into your heart. You will “*know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*” (John 8:32). You will rejoice in the truth!

Putting Away the “Childish Thing”

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.

I Corinthians 13:11

Many children are taught to believe in Santa Claus. He is “*very real*” to them, because they see him every Christmas; they sit on his lap and tell him the things they want. On Christmas morning those things are under the Christmas tree, wrapped in a beautiful bow, with their name on the package. Mom and Dad go to great lengths to prove that “*Santa*” did come in the middle of the night while the children slept. Whether you approve or disapprove of such things is not the issue; those are “*childish things,*” which should be “*put off*” when you know better. An adult that still “*believes in Santa Claus*” is living in a make believe world. Sadly, there is a direct parallel between “*faith in Santa*” and “*faith in Jesus*” for many who are very religious, because the doctrines they have been taught in their churches are nothing more than the “*cunningly devised fables*” that the apostles warned us of (II Peter 1:16, II Timothy 4:3-4).

It is a sad thing to consider that many of the “*childish things*” a person must “*put away*” are actually the “*lies*” that were given to us by those who should have known better. Our “*speaking*,” our “*thinking*” and our “*understanding*” were all shaped in our childhood by things that were not what we thought they were. As a young Christian, I was made to believe that almost everything was a “*sin*,” but the time came that I had to put away that thinking before I could be “*free from sin*,” to serve God in “*righteousness, peace and joy*” (Romans 14:17). The opposite is true in most churches today, because the new wave of “*Calvinism*” that is sweeping through many churches basically leaves the multitudes believing that sin no longer matters to God. We must heed the call of Jude, to “*earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints*” (Jude 1:3). Many people think they are doing exactly that when they hold up the banner of reformation doctrine. They are ready to fight for what Luther or Calvin taught, because that is “*orthodoxy*.” Perhaps we should see the definition of “*orthodox*” according to the “*American Heritage Dictionary*:”

Orthodox: 1. “*Adhering to the accepted or traditional and established faith, especially in religion.* 2. *Adhering to the Christian faith as expressed in the early Christian ecumenical creeds.*”

I need not be concerned for what the “*early Christian ecumenical creeds*” say if I am diligently seeking to understand what Jesus, and His apostles said, as recorded in the scriptures. It matters little what Augustine, Luther, Calvin, or the puritans believed because they were not the foundation layers of the church. We have access to the same words of the apostles that they had in their day. I have studied the King James Version along with Strong’s Concordance and Greek Dictionary for almost fifty years. I have discovered many things that are taught as “*sound doctrine*,” today that are in conflict with the things the prophets and apostles clearly said in the scriptures. When I find these things, I “*throw out*” everything that contradicts “*the record that God gave of His Son* (I John 5:10)” by the prophets and anything that contradicts what the apostles said after the fact. Today, I know the reality that Jesus took my sin, and I have it no more. You can have that same assurance.

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