

# SINLESSNESS IN SINFUL FLESH

Examining what the Prophets have testified regarding  
the Gospel in Practice.

## PART 1:

### Sinlessness Not Only Possible, But Necessary.

#### INTRODUCTORY TEXT(S):.....

ROMANS 8:1-4 (KJV)>> <sup>1</sup>There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup>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: <sup>4</sup>That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

JUDE 1:24-25 (KJV)>> <sup>24</sup>Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, <sup>25</sup>To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

#### The Calling of the Gospel: Is Perfect Obedience Necessary, or is Sin Allowable?.....

**1) Does the gospel of Jesus Christ call us to perfect obedience, meaning total abstinence from every known sin?**

1<sup>ST</sup>PETER 2:21-22,24 (KJV)>> <sup>21</sup>For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: <sup>22</sup>Who did no sin,

neither was guile found in his mouth. . . <sup>24</sup>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.

1<sup>ST</sup> JOHN 3:3-12 (KJV)>> <sup>3</sup>And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. <sup>4</sup>Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. <sup>5</sup>And ye know that he was manifested to *take away our sins*; and in him is *no sin*. <sup>6</sup>Whosoever abideth in him *sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him*. <sup>7</sup>Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. <sup>8</sup>*He that committeth sin is of the devil*; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. <sup>9</sup>Whosoever is born of God *doth not commit sin*; for his seed remaineth in him: and he *cannot sin*, because he is born of God. <sup>10</sup>In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. <sup>11</sup>For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. <sup>12</sup>Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

GENESIS 4:3-8 (LEESER)>> <sup>3</sup>And it came to pass in process of time, that Cain brought of *the fruit of the ground* and offering unto the Lord. <sup>4</sup>And Abel—he also brought of *the firstlings of his flock, and of the fattest thereof*, and the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; <sup>5</sup>But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect; and it was very displeasing to Cain, and his countenance fell. <sup>6</sup>And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? <sup>7</sup>*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door; and unto thee is its desire, but thou canst rule over it*. <sup>8</sup>And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass when they were in the

**field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.**

The aforementioned scriptures have told us some pointed things about the calling of the gospel. One of the first things we would have found is that we are called to *follow in Christ's steps, for He left us an example* (1<sup>st</sup>Pet.2:21). And what was the example Christ left? The apostle Peter told us, Christ *did no sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth* (1<sup>st</sup>Pet.2:22). Peter shows us that Christ *bore our sins* on the Cross of Calvary – so integral and fundamental, yes – yet the apostle does not end there. The apostle lets us know that Christ, after *bearing our sins*, expects us thereafter to be *dead to sin* and to *live unto righteousness* (1<sup>st</sup>Pet.2:24). Now, what does *dead to sin* mean? It means just what it says. Not *half-way* dead, not *on-and-off* dead, not *figuratively* dead – as if any such things exist – but *literally* dead to sin. Sinless! Just as Christ, our example, *did no sin*, so we are called to *do no sin* after we have repented by way of the Cross.

The apostle John said the same thing as he wrote, "...[E]very man that hath this hope in him *purifieth himself*, even as He is *pure*." (1<sup>st</sup>John 3:3). This is not *half-way* purity, *on-and off* purity, but *the purity* of Christ himself. If we have truly received of the hope of the gospel, we shall, through Christ, be reflecting His sinless purity. This is why John says further that *whosoever abides in Christ does not sin* and, *whosoever does sin has not truly known or seen Christ for himself* (1<sup>st</sup>John 3:6). John meant every word of what he said. Do you believe it?

Do you believe it, beloved, when John says *those who commit sin are of the devil!* (1<sup>st</sup>John 3:8). Whether one sin, or two, or occasional, or periodical sin – whenever one knowingly transgresses God's law we are under the devil's control and shall be lost, if we do not experience true repentance. These are the honest facts. But yet again, do you believe it, beloved, when John says *whosoever is born of God does not commit sin, for God's seed – the Son of God, the Christ, the Promised Seed – shall remain in such a one truly born of God?* (1<sup>st</sup>John 3:9). In fact, John says such a person truly **cannot sin**, *because he is born of God*. If God and Christ truly and fully abide in each of us, beloved – by their Holy Spirit – we *will* not, we *cannot* commit sin. This is the true gospel in practice. These are strong statements from the plain *Thus saith the Lord*, and many – especially professing Christians – fear, ignore and mystify these precious words so that they mean nothing in end. Why? Because these statements teach about *sinlessness in sinful flesh*, a calling which nominal Christians either do not believe, or are unwilling to follow all the way. Such think there is no such thing as becoming sinless on this side of the fall. But the true root of their problem is that such love their sin too much to be willing to overcome them all in Christ. They refuse to surrender *all* to Christ in this life, that Christ's perfect sinless humanity may be manifest in their lives. Yet, let no one be deceived. John was faithful and told you that the true Christian, such who has the Spirit of Christ enthroned within, *does not commit sin*. The true Christian is called to lead a sinless life in sinful flesh. This is the gospel in practice. And John says, *this is the message that was given from the beginning*. It is the same gospel from Eden, which differentiates the children of God from the children of the devil (1<sup>st</sup>John 3:10-11).

Correspondingly, through the same gospel message given from the beginning, the apostle John shows us that the question of perfect obedience was exemplified in the account of Cain and Abel (1<sup>st</sup>John 3:12). In acknowledgement of the promised Seed (Christ who was to be the Sacrifice for sin), God had instructed Adam and his posterity that the firstborn, unspotted animal sacrifice was to be the acceptable representation of this promise (Num.18:17; Deut.15:19-23; 1<sup>st</sup>Pet.1:19). Abel offered *the firstlings of his flock* to this purpose; while Cain offered *the fruit of the ground* (Gen.3:3-4). What was God's requirement? The unspotted firstlings of one's flock – that was the *perfect* standard. What did Cain give? The fruit of the ground – an *imperfect* standard. Could not Cain have offered the same as Abel? Of course – there was no shortage of supply of the requisite offering. But Cain offered what *he wanted* to God – *partial obedience*; while Abel offered what *God wanted* of him – *perfect obedience*. The fellow apostle Paul harmonizes this point when he said, “By faith Abel offered unto God *a more excellent sacrifice* than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was *righteous*. . .” (Heb.11:4). Perfect obedience – wholly obeying the requirement of God – was that which proved Abel's righteous character. But what about Cain who rendered *partial obedience*? The apostle John followed by declaring that Cain, “was of that wicked one,” (1<sup>st</sup>John 3:12), and another pronounced a woe upon those who have, “gone in the way of Cain.” (Jude 1:11). The inspired record concludes that Cain was wicked, of the devil; and Cain's wickedness was brought forth through his *partial obedience*.

In the very Genesis account, the Lord showed Cain very clearly how his partial obedience amounted to sin. The Lord's admonition should have been so instructive to Cain. The plain principle to Cain was: *If you do not well (perfectly), is it not clear that you will not be accepted? And do you not realize that if you do not perfectly, sin lies at your door? Sin desires to overthrow you, but you must rule over (overcome) it* (Gen.4:7). Cain should have repented right then and there; he should have gone afresh and given a perfect animal sacrifice. He would have reverted from partial obedience to perfect obedience. But Cain obviously did not do that. Instead of correcting his error, he remains in his sin, and cherishes envy and enmity at his own brother's perfect obedience (Gen.4:6). Cain's unrepentance finally ends up in his murdering of his own flesh and blood, his righteous brother (Gen.4:8).

Such is a telling lesson to show that God has always required perfect obedience. Perfect obedience is the only safeguard against sin. Perfect obedience is the gospel *which ye have heard from the beginning*. This gospel has never changed to make sin allowable, whether by partial obedience, or full disobedience. As the apostle John showed us, the children of God and those of the devil are manifest by their attitude towards whether perfect obedience is necessary (1<sup>st</sup>John 3:10-11). Remember, Cain did offer *something* to God. It is not that he offered God nothing; it was just that he didn't offer *everything*, he only offered *partial obedience*. Cain was neither one that was averse to God: he received communication and correction from the Lord. Cain was indeed acquainted with the Lord. Nevertheless, John describes Cain as being *of that wicked one* (1<sup>st</sup>John 3:12). Why? Because though the Lord was gracious enough to counsel Cain about his sin, Cain was not willing to yield perfect obedience. Cain was content with a form of godliness, thinking partial obedience was enough to please God. Cain professed to be worshipping the Lord, when by his false belief and half-way work, he became Satan's agent. He was

professedly worshipping God at one point, and yet at another point he ends up murdering his own brother over the very worship he himself should have rendered. What a sobering observation! Lukewarm obedience – an unwillingness to yield perfect obedience to God’s government – eventually corrupts the lukewarm heart to open bloodshed! Same with Lucifer, same with humanity. Lucifer was corrupted, Cain was corrupted, and even king Saul was befallen of the same self-deceit:

**1<sup>st</sup>SAMUEL 15:22-23 (KJV)>>** <sup>22</sup>And Samuel said<sup>[to Saul]</sup>, **Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. <sup>23</sup>For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.**

Beloved, what we are seeing from the Scriptures is that we cannot afford to tolerate one known sin if we shall be saved by the gospel. Like those who slid into perdition of old time, we can be tempted by the deceiver to think that one sin may be a trifle as compared with others; or that it is acceptable, by whatever circumstances or excuses, to give to God less than full obedience. Then we palliate what God calls *sin – transgressions of His Law* (1<sup>st</sup> John 3:4) – and instead, we say, we made a *mistake*, or we did something *unfortunate*, we *fell*, had a *moment of passion*, had an *indiscretion*, exercised *bad judgment*, and claim *we’re only human*. And then when we lie, we now only say we *mis-spoke*; when we steal money, we only say we *misappropriated funds*; when we commit adultery, we only say we *had an affair*, or *we found happiness elsewhere*; when we fornicate, we only say *we got caught up*; when we commit whoredom, we say *we’re exploring our options*. And in this world it goes on and on. This is the downward slope, beloved, borne when we detach ourselves from the call to obey God perfectly, and when we fail to wholeheartedly believe that sin is the transgression of His Law.

This regression can make us even dare to think that in our very transgressing of God’s Law, we can offer something to God’s glory. And all too irrationally, we start to justify ourselves in our sin, thinking that by doing evil, good may come. Just like Cain and like Saul, by not strictly adhering to the literal Word of the Lord, we lose sight of the exceeding sinfulness of even the slightest departure from God’s Law.

But beloved, no goodwill gestures, no pretensions of charity or harmlessness, no appeals to mercy (of the lawless kind), will excuse one wilful transgression. That which brought the malignant curse of sin upon our world was not a brazen, open, antagonistic thrust against God’s authority, beloved; it was but the simple eating of a fruit (Gen.3:6). This is the incontrovertible proof that the knowledgeable disregard of even *one iota* of God’s Law can never be tolerated, if our world is to be restored to its original purity. It is only perfect obedience in this life, through Christ, which is the guarantee that sin *shall not rise up the second time* in the kingdom made new (Nah.1:9). Only those who shall manifest this perfect obedience in this sin-cursed earth, by having Christ within, shall be admitted into the heavenly city (Rev.22:14). This is the gospel in practice.

Beloved, though each of us may be struggling with sin at different stages of the Christian walk, let us never deceive ourselves into thinking that God requires anything less than perfect obedience. Christ – through the perfect human life He lived, and His death upon Calvary's Cross – has made every provision that we might render this perfect obedience; that through Him we might lead sinless lives in sinful flesh. Any gospel standard which requires less than this perfect obedience is a satanic counterfeit. An inspired author concluded the matter this way:

Those who accept Satan's reasoning are terribly deceived. They accept a position which has no true foundation. God is unchangeable. **He is satisfied with nothing short of perfect obedience. Perfection is the only title which will gain admittance to heaven.** The law is the only standard of character. {RH, June 4, 1901 par. 9}

The gospel does not weaken the claims of the law; it exalts the law and makes it honorable. Under the New Testament, no less is required than was required under the Old Testament. **Let no one take up with the delusion so pleasant to the natural heart, that God will accept of sincerity, no matter what may be the faith, no matter how imperfect may be the life. God requires of his child perfect obedience.** {RH, November 1, 1892 par. 1}

One presumptuous act, one deed in disregard of God's expressed will, lost for Adam his beautiful Eden home, and opened the floodgates of iniquity and woe upon our world; and **yet men will declare that God is not particular, and does not require perfect obedience to his law.** The precepts of Jehovah are as unchangeable as his eternal throne. **To excuse sin on the plea that God is lax in his government is dishonoring to the great Governor of the universe, and perilous to man. It is an attempt to belittle his requirements, and to take away the force of law. Those who advocate such doctrine, place themselves in harmony with the first great rebel, and however high their professions of religion, Christ pronounces them "workers of iniquity."** They are saying to the sinner, "It shall be well with thee in thy disobedience and transgression," as said the arch-deceiver in the garden of Eden. {ST, December 15, 1887 par. 1}

**2) How can we furthermore know *exactly* how God judges righteousness and sin, in order that we may understand that perfect obedience is necessary?**

**EZEKIEL 18:20-31 (KJV)>> <sup>20</sup>The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. <sup>21</sup>But **if the wicked will turn from *all* his sins that he hath committed, and keep *all* my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.** <sup>22</sup>All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. <sup>23</sup>Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? <sup>24</sup>But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and *in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.* <sup>25</sup>Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? <sup>26</sup>When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; *for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.* <sup>27</sup>Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. <sup>28</sup>Because he considereth, and turneth away from *all* his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. <sup>29</sup>Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal? <sup>30</sup>Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from *all* your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. <sup>31</sup>Cast away from you *all* your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?**

If any soul wanted a clear summary of how the Lord deals with individual righteousness and sin, determinant to one's salvation, Ezekiel 18 is a most reliable place.

Once again as reflected in previous Scriptures, perfect obedience – a conscious avoidance of all known sin – is shown to be the condition of salvation. *The soul that sinneth it shall die* (Ezek.18:20). Period. There is no conjecture here. The gospel from eternity is what is being expressed here; there has been no change of conditions in the gospel since sin first entered our world. Christ's sacrifice upon the Cross never applied to transgressions which have not been turned away from. That is why we have to *repent*, or *turn away* from *all* our sins before we can be saved (Ezek.18:30; Mark 1:15; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:38, 3:19). Repentance involves not only acknowledging that you have sinned in the past, but even so a conscious commitment in Christ to *turn away from all sin* thereafter (Isa.1:18-20, 55:7; Rom.3:25-26). The blood of Christ does not cover anyone's future, conscious transgression of God's Law. The New Testament never modified this reality. Ask the Apostle Paul:

**HEBREWS 10:26-27 (KJV)>> <sup>26</sup>For **if we *sin wilfully* after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins*, <sup>27</sup>But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.****

God's way of judging righteousness and sin is very clear. If you accepted Christ as your Saviour from sin, and yet you still continue in sin, you will die eternally. Conversely, if you accept Christ as Saviour from sin, and through Christ live according to righteousness, conscientiously avoiding all known sin, you shall be saved. Wherever the will of the individual lies on either side of this question will determine whether they are saved or lost. Your eternal destiny, your fidelity to the Father and Son, is reflected in the choices you make for righteousness, and the choices you make against sin. So if you did righteous deeds before, and then decide to consciously commit even one sin, if you do not repent of that one sin, you will be lost by that one sin. In that moment you swerved your allegiance from Christ to Satan, and having not reverted, having not repented, your eternal destiny is cast with Satan. Conversely, if you had lived in sin under Satan's bondage, and since then came to know Christ as your Saviour from those sins, if you decide to live in righteousness and avoid all sin thereafter, your allegiance has indeed swerved from Satan to Christ. Despite the record of your past, your *present will* is proof of your present allegiance to Christ. Maintaining this allegiance to Christ will yield eternal life.

Some, comparing themselves among themselves, would in their hearts question the justice of the Lord in ignoring a past record of righteousness simply for one sin. Conversely, some others may question how a formerly notorious sinner, newly repentant, could find favour with Heaven above the formerly righteous backslider. But the Lord knew there would be such gainsayers, even in Israel, who would think thus. The Lord knows better than we ever could imagine. He affirms His infinite wisdom as He rhetorically questions those lingering under clouds of doubt and higher criticism. He asks them to turn and realize the self-evident fact: "Is not *my way equal?* are not *your ways unequal?*" (Ezek.18:25,29).



Let not such be deceived by Lucifer. This exalted angel had a perfect past record of righteousness, yet he committed the first sin. His fellow sympathetic angels were also perfect, yet they sinned also. And Adam and Eve were perfect before they sinned too. Could the prior glorious perfection of all these beings, compensate for the slightest step of departure made against God's command? How far in ruination has our world come because of one sin? Our Lord knew the height, depth and breadth of what it meant to tolerate one sin. Yet in all this, God's Law could not be overthrown to support this dreadful departure, but Jesus Christ Himself had to die so that the Law would be proven immutable.

The issue of the Great Controversy and the Gospel is not how I *feel* about my record against another's, or what I *feel* should be acceptable to God, or whether I *feel* I possess a personal relationship with Christ. Feeling is not fact. God gave us facts: *sin is the transgression of the Law*, and Jesus Christ came to *save us from our sins*, that we, *being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness*. (1<sup>st</sup>John 3:4; Matt.1:21; 1<sup>st</sup>Pet.2:24). The Great Controversy and the Gospel is about whether I shall see sin in its true and horrible character that I may render full obedience through Christ my offered Saviour. The Gospel is about the permanent eradication of sin, and, through Christ, full provision has been made that this eradication shall take place in our hearts *here*, that the Christ-filled, sinless character formed *here* shall be worthy of the heaven and earth hereafter, purified from all sin. None shall be admitted into the new kingdom who, like Lucifer, is willing to tolerate even one temptation to the point of committing even one sin. Those who do not overcome *all* that they ought *now*, do not have the faith that would keep them from sinning in the *hereafter*. Such will not be found in the heavenly new Jerusalem, destined to descend onto a new earth, as a bride prepared for Christ her husband (Rev.21:1-2). The redeemed which shall inherit the new earth are prophesied to be *all righteous*, so that *sin shall not rise up the second time*. (Isa.60:21; Nah.1:9).

The prophet Zechariah also saw the conditions under which the redeemed would be re-admitted into the immediate society of the holy angels of heaven. Seeing the vision, under which the redeemed are symbolized by *Joshua the high priest*, the conditions for receiving Christ's robe of righteousness and the promise of heaven were clearly laid down:

**ZECHARIAH 3:1-7 (KJV)>>** <sup>1</sup>And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before **the angel of the LORD**, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist **him**. <sup>2</sup>And **the LORD** said unto Satan, **The LORD** rebuke thee, O Satan; even **the LORD** that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? <sup>3</sup>**Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.** <sup>4</sup>And **he** answered and spake unto those that stood before **him**, saying, **Take away the filthy garments from him.** And unto him **he** said, Behold, **I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and**

**I will clothe thee with *change of raiment*.** <sup>5</sup>And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So **they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments.** And **the angel of the LORD** stood by. <sup>6</sup>And **the angel of the LORD** protested unto Joshua, saying, <sup>7</sup>Thus saith **the LORD** of hosts; ***If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.***

The biblical narratives continue to yield one accord regarding God's treatment of righteousness and sin. The figure of Joshua the high priest was clothed with *filthy garments* representative of *iniquity*, sin. Satan stood by to pronounce condemnatory accusation over Joshua by virtue of his past sins. But notice *the Angel* of the Lord in this scene has the authority to forgive sin, just as the *Angel* or *Messenger* of Jehovah described in Exodus 23:20-23 and Malachi 3:1-3. That *Angel* was indeed *Michael the Archangel*, the *chief Messenger* of Jehovah, which is none other than Jesus Christ Himself (Dan.12:1, 10:21; Jude 1:9; Rev.12:7).

We therefore see in Zechariah's vision that Christ forgives Joshua for his *iniquity*, his sins. And how is this forgiveness symbolized? By the bestowal of new garments for Joshua's *filthy* garments of sin. Yet notice keenly how this symbolism was accomplished. Did Christ command that Joshua's new clothing – Christ's own robe of righteousness – be placed directly over Joshua's filthy clothing of sin? No! Those under Christ's command in that scene were first to *take away the filthy garments of sin* from off Joshua, and then he be given a *change of raiment*. All of Joshua's sin was taken away as the filthy clothing was removed, and then a *new* set of clothing – a robe of righteousness – was placed on him. This shows us that the righteousness of Christ is not, nor ever was, a *covering* for continued transgression, but *the evidence* of an absolute departure from all known transgression. If we are to be in Christ, we cannot maintain our filthy garments and expect to be covered by clean ones. Rather, we are to remove the filthy, turn away from all sin, that we may receive and maintain the pure sinless garments of Christ.

And how do we know authoritatively that Christ's robe of righteousness is only to be maintained by avoiding all known sin? Because Christ Himself said so by the authority of Jehovah. Christ gave Joshua the clear conditions for keeping his new robe spotless and having a place in heaven among the sinless angels: "*If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then . . . I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.*" (Zech.3:7). If Joshua did not continue to walk in God's ways, keeping all His commandments by the power of Christ, then he would not receive the eternal blessing. The blessing is on condition of perfect obedience, which is found in true repentance from sin. The conditions are for you and I to accept as they read, or we shall perish eternally.

## Answering Perceived Scriptural Difficulties on this Theme.....

**3) What about when we read of those in the Scriptures called of God, yet they had committed sins in their lives – sometimes very grievous sins? What of those we know who even died believing and practising things we know today are not in harmony with God’s truth? Are we to understand that, in spite of their former sins, such souls reached the point when they were perfectly obedient, and only thus they were saved?**

Acknowledging that souls may have sincere concerns on such issues as these, we want to see if inspiration yields deeper clarity therein. In searching this out, however, we must take care to reiterate what the prophets have already testified: there is no moral being whatsoever who is saved by Christ whilst in conscious transgression God’s Law. No one, whether Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Elijah, David, Solomon, Paul, Peter, John, or any likewise, shall be found in the kingdom of heaven having upon their record one wilful sin for which they did not repent of while on earth.

Given these acknowledgments, there may still be concerns which do arise on this point. Did not Abraham die having concubines (Gen.25:6), when we know God’s design for marriage was intended for one man and one woman exclusively? Could not the same be asked about Solomon (1<sup>st</sup>Kings 11:1-6)? Or even David his father, one described as a man after God’s own heart (1<sup>st</sup>Sam.13:14; Acts 13:22)? Was David so highly favoured, even with those multiple women, even with Bathsheba to whom he was adulterous, deceitful, and murderous, for which Uriah’s life was so unjustly sacrificed?

Sincere questions may be also asked of later religious forefathers. What about the Protestant Reformers who – despite the light they rekindled in our world through the Bible – taught in the same breath diverse unscriptural errors? Some of whom even taught *original sin* for which we have to battle against to keep souls from being lost today? Could such Reformers be saved while teaching *original sin* in their day, and then today, the same teaching serves now to condemn souls to perdition? Could God approve such Reformers for heaven, when the Bible weight of evidence disproves such things as the *Co-eternal Trinity, Sunday Sacredness, Antinomianism, Eternal Punishment in Hell, Infant Baptism, Predestination*, to name a few? How about the reality that some Reformers were even responsible for the execution of those who dissented from cherished doctrines, when we know now that the Bible never permits the Christian to exercise force over the consciences of others? How can we reconcile these facts, yet still believe that perfect obedience could be ascribed to the great mass of these historical Christians? Could not souls be tempted to think that if the Reformers could possibly be saved despite their errors, then cannot we today also be safe in cherishing errors of doctrine and religious practice?

Beloved, I believe that if we understand a Scriptural principle, evident within the message of the sanctuary, we can be able to see that God has not changed in His justice, nor in His mercy, in dealing with the apparent difficulties as we have just mentioned. Note the following beautiful principle of the sanctuary, from the book of Numbers.

**NUMBERS 15:22-31 (KJV)>>** <sup>22</sup>And if ye have *erred*, and not observed *all* these commandments, which the LORD hath spoken unto Moses, <sup>23</sup>Even all that the LORD hath commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the LORD commanded Moses, and henceforward among your generations; <sup>24</sup>Then it shall be, **if ought be committed *by ignorance without the knowledge of the congregation***, that all the congregation shall offer one young bullock for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour unto the LORD, with his meat offering, and his drink offering, according to the manner, and one kid of the goats for a sin offering. <sup>25</sup>And **the priest shall make an atonement** for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and **it shall be *forgiven* them; for it is *ignorance***: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD, and **their sin offering before the LORD, for their ignorance**: <sup>26</sup>And **it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; seeing all the people were in ignorance**. <sup>27</sup>And **if any soul *sin* through *ignorance***, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering. <sup>28</sup>And **the priest shall make an *atonement* for the soul that *sinneth ignorantly***, when he sinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be *forgiven* him. <sup>29</sup>Ye shall have *one law for him that sinneth through ignorance*, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them. <sup>30</sup>**But the soul that doeth ought *presumptuously***, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same *reproacheth* the LORD; and **that soul shall be cut off from among his people**. <sup>31</sup>**Because he hath *despised the word of the LORD***, and hath *broken his commandment*, that soul shall utterly be *cut off*; his *iniquity* shall be upon him.

Beloved, I believe anyone with an honest conscience can see the principle at work here in the sanctuary service. The words of John should strike the mind as this truth comes home: *There is a sin not unto death*. (1<sup>st</sup>John 5:16-17). If Ezekiel told us, *the soul that sinneth, it shall die* (Ezek.18:20), how can John say, *there is a sin not unto death*? Because, according to the sanctuary principle shown in Numbers, a *sin of ignorance* will not be imputed to one's own guilt. Such is the mercy of the Father, through His only-begotten Son, that transgressions for which we are not properly cognizant, are covered wholesale under the blood of Christ. If we sincerely did not understand a principle of God's Word, if we had not received sufficient light in order to perform such a principle aright, if our

knowledge had been darkened as to the perfect duty of God, through legitimate circumstances, then as the sanctuary shows us, *the priest* – in reality Jesus Christ our High Priest in the temple above – *shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly*. Such a sin of ignorance shall be forgiven us; it is a sin *not unto death*.

But yet a stern warning follows. The justice of God is equally declared, in light of this gracious interposition of mercy. The Lord admonishes that those who sin *presumptuously* – having sufficient knowledge and opportunity to study and perform the will of God – are those that *reproach* the Lord and *despise* His Word. Those who have had the privilege to view the weight of inspired evidence, yet still take license to transgress God’s requirements – *that soul shall be cut off from among his people*. Such persons, whether they feel to acknowledge God’s Law or not, *have broken God’s commandments* and their *iniquity shall be upon them*. It is a striking thing to see that a *sin of ignorance* can only be a *sin of ignorance* when placed in reference to the Law of God. For *by the law is the knowledge of sin* (Rom.3:20). It is actually for our ignorance of all the height and depth and breadth of God’s Law, that Christ has given His blood to freely cover such sins. Where sincere ignorance and spiritual darkness prevailed in regard to God’s Law, there was grace given to cover a multitude of sins.

Therefore, woe unto them who compare or even think themselves better than the trying patriarchs, prophets and servants of old, who had their own grand, sometimes superhuman difficulties with which to contend. With the prevailing influences of their time, most today could hardly aspire to one-tenth the honour they wrought to the name of the true God. Many of those who even think to say they could never have committed such sins as those of Bible characters, do not realize they would have done even worse in the shoes of their forefathers. In fact, many are already doing worse, because they have not learnt the lesson of Cain nor Saul. For whilst they disparage the ancient Bible narratives as sometimes barbaric and insensible, in today’s time of relative ease and safety, such *critical Christians* yet hold on to much less over-mastering sins, and that without repentance.

Beloved, *one thousand grievous sins* repented of and forsaken will find more favour with God, than *one microscopic sin* cherished and maintained in the life. A single cherished sin of Lucifer grew into all the abominations we see in our world; a single cherished sin of Cain grew to the murder of his own brother; a single cherished sin of Saul grew into his unfailing, murderous envy of David, and ultimately the murder of his own self (1<sup>st</sup>Sam.31:4). It is plain from Scripture that all the Bible characters who were saved – despite whatever grievous sinful circumstances befell them – they were saved by the same principle for all humanity, made efficacious by the blood of Christ: “He that *covereth* his sins shall *not* prosper: but whoso *confesseth* and *forsaketh* them shall have mercy.” (Prov.28:13). Beloved, these redeemed surely forsook all their known sins in order that they could be saved. There is no other condition for mercy. In the things of which they fell short *in their ignorance*, the Lord has abundantly atoned.

Yet there is another woe, I see, unto them who expect that because their forefathers were spared condemnation in their prior age of ignorance, that today one can safely continue in the same sins and errors as their predecessors. “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but *now commandeth* all men every where to *repent*.” (Acts

17:30). The Reformers were emerging from a generation which had gone for centuries without public access to the Word of God. Unmitigated access to the Scriptures, even in the times that the Reformation held sway, was still a rare privilege for a select few. The task was already monumental to decipher what was authentic Scripture, translate it, and get it to the public through long, primitive, and painstaking processes. Not to mention the persecuting eye of the Papacy. Amidst all these battles, beloved, we can see how these bold, diligent, yet fallible men could yet have retained religious errors in their ignorance. Grace was given sufficient to cover the errors of ignorance which then held influence over these heavy-toiling servants of God; yes, grace sufficient even to cover the blind persecution of heretics. The blind persecutor can be saved by the same grace afforded his innocent victim. Behold the justice and mercy of God!

Yet we today who are the beneficiaries of the Reformers, are accountable to the light and privileges we now have through their legacy. We have Bibles, concordances, libraries, and numerous helpful references at our fingertips. Therefore, what was a sin of *ignorance* for them, in most cases, would turn out to be a sin of *presumption* on our part. To take up today any precise erroneous position cherished by the Reformers would – in light of increased knowledge – yet mean *innocence* on their part in history, but the same would mean *guilt unto destruction* on our part today. Take heed to the words of the Saviour: “If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: *but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.*” (John 9:41).

But probably the greatest and final woe I see here, may be unto those who have lost unto themselves the eternal claims of the Law of God: for they have rejected the very standard by which their sin is pointed out, and the very source from which their sincere ignorance could have been proven. As such have rejected God’s Law as being of little to no significance, they have cut away the mirror which was designed to show them their true condition, that they might receive the true remedy (Gal.3:24; James 1:25). There is no hope or light in these things for those who have rejected or diminished the eternal authority of God’s Law. Without truly acknowledging that God’s Law is the only standard to detect sin, one loses sight of the fact that a sin is *an act against, a transgression of* God’s Law (Rom.3:20, 7:7-13; 1<sup>st</sup>John 3:4). It is only those who confess and forsake their sins, their transgressions, who can receive mercy through the blood of the Cross of Christ (Prov.28:13; 1<sup>st</sup>John 1:9). Therefore, if you diminish God’s Law, then you diminish what is truly sin, and then you cannot truly repent, you cannot truly confess and forsake the very things you should, which in turn would bring you the mercy of the Cross. For those who conscientiously are diminishing God’s Law, the full purpose of the gospel is fundamentally unable to penetrate their minds. I pray that such souls may come from under this diabolical woe, and accept the eternally binding claims of God’s Law, before it is too late.

Whether such want to claim Christ, they fail to truly recognize what He came to earth to save them from: their *sins*, their *transgressions* of God’s Law (Isa.53:5,8; Matt.1:21; 1<sup>st</sup>John 3:4-5). Therefore He is no *Saviour* to you if you consciously misrepresent what He came to *save* you from. And, as the Word of God is true, you will continue to sin, and sin worse and worse, like Lucifer, like Cain, like Saul. You may not do the same sins, but the Bible principle yet will prove to be true. And at the Second

Coming, a gloried, purified body would be of no relief to your condition, because you need not have a sinful nature in order to commit sin. Lucifer did not originally have a sinful nature and yet he committed sin (Eze.28:15). He cherished the thought of not rendering perfect obedience to God's Law, and then manifested it (Eze.28:16; Isa.14:13-14). Sin came into existence because Lucifer stopped seeking to live perfectly with God's Law. Therefore, if we do not overcome all known sin in this life as Christ overcame, like Lucifer we would carry into heaven a character of not rendering perfect obedience. Just as Lucifer, we would be fully liable to commit sin in heaven, because we did not strive on earth to render and maintain perfect obedience through Christ. Mark this one last time: heaven shall make no more provision for even the chance that one may sin again. *Sin shall not rise the second time* (Nah.1:9). Any who have failed to become fully obedient, by total surrender here, will not make it there. Christ has already made full provision for perfect obedience here. The choice is yours: either, through the life and death of Christ, *perfect holiness in the fear of God here*, in sinful flesh; or perish eternally. Divine mercy pleads for you to understand this, and grasp onto Christ's sacrifice in its true light.

Whilst we have shared our time together in grasping these things out the Bible, I would like just to include some harmonious inspired insight, given through *the last-day gift of prophecy*. For those new to this truth, the last-day gift of prophecy has been given by God in mercy – through visions, dreams, and prophesyings (Acts 2:17-18; Joel 2:28-32). Prophecies within the Scriptures foretold that the work of inspiration was again to manifest in a marked way during these last days, for the sake of the work of the remnant church (Rev.12:17, 19:10). Such an author as E. G. White has exemplified this gift. Listen to some of the insight she reveals on this theme we have looked upon today. Writing on the legacy of David with regard to his great sins, she wrote:

Very many, reading the history of David's fall, have inquired, "Why has this record been made public? Why did God see fit to throw open to the world this dark passage in the life of one so highly honored of Heaven?" The prophet, in his reproof to David, had declared concerning his sin, "By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." **Thus a reproach has been brought upon religion, God and His word have been blasphemed, souls have been hardened in unbelief, and many, under a cloak of piety, have become bold in sin.** {PP 722.4}

**But the history of David furnishes no countenance to sin. It was when he was walking in the counsel of God that he was called a man after God's own heart. When he sinned, this ceased to be true of him until by repentance he had returned to the Lord.** The word of God plainly declares, "The thing that David had done was evil in the eyes of the Lord." 2 Samuel 11:27, margin. And the Lord said to David by

the prophet, "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? . . . Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised Me." **Though David repented of his sin and was forgiven and accepted by the Lord, he reaped the baleful harvest of the seed he himself had sown. The judgments upon him and upon his house testify to God's abhorrence of the sin.** {PP 723.1}

Skeptics have assailed Christianity, and ridiculed the Bible, because David gave them occasion. They bring up to Christians the case of David, **his sin in the case of Uriah and Bath-sheba, his polygamy, and then assert that David is called a man after God's own heart, and that if the Bible record is correct, God justified David in his crimes.** {1SP 378.1}

**I was shown that it was when David was pure, and walking in the counsel of God, that God called him a man after his own heart. When David departed from God, and stained his virtuous character by his crimes, he was no longer a man after God's own heart.** God did not in the least degree justify him in his sins, but sent Nathan, his prophet, with dreadful denunciations to David because he had transgressed the commandment of the Lord. God shows his displeasure at David's having a plurality of wives, by visiting him with judgments, and permitting evils to rise up against him from his own house. The terrible calamity that God permitted to come upon David, who, for his integrity, was once called a man after God's own heart, is evidence to after generations that God would not justify any one in transgressing his commandments; but that he would surely punish the guilty, however righteous and favored of God they might once have been while they followed the Lord in purity of heart. When the righteous turn from their righteousness and do evil, their past righteousness will not save them from the wrath of a just and holy God. {1SP 379.1}

The closing years of David's life were marked with faithful devotion to God. He mourned over his sins and departure from God's just precepts, which had darkened



**his character**, and given occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. {1SP 387.2}

**David solemnly charges his son to adhere strictly to the law of God, and to keep all his statutes.** He relates to Solomon the word of the Lord, spoken unto him through his prophets: "Moreover, **I will establish his kingdom forever, if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day.** Now, therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of our God, **keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God**, that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you forever. And thou, Solomon, my son, **know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind;** for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. **If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever.** Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary. Be strong, and do it." {1SP 388.2}

Therefore David, as all the rest of the redeemed Bible characters, had to repent of all known sins, and render full conscious obedience to God's commandments, if heaven would be their reward. We may not be able from most Scripture accounts to decipher exactly when or how this repentance personally would have taken place in each life, but we know it must have. For according to the Scriptural conditions for salvation, repentance and full obedience according to knowledge is a must; any other outstanding fault would have to be a legitimate sin of ignorance.

Correspondingly, on the issue of *sins of ignorance*, Sis. White wrote:

I was then pointed to a company. It seemed to be a family, with others present. I saw them bowed. . . I saw that the family there had but just tasted of the third angel's message. A good work had just been wrought for them in bringing them to God and His truth, and **although they felt the power of spiritual magnetism that night and its effects since, God would not lay the sin to their charge for they were innocent, being inexperienced.** I saw that they had much to learn and if they were humble, God would lead them along and teach them His will and the present truth and what they must be in order to be saved and reign with Christ in glory. {Ms3-1854.11}

Those who break the seventh commandment should be suspended from the church and not have its fellowship or the privileges of the house of God. {Ms3-1854.5}

Said the angel, **“This is not a sin of ignorance. It is a knowing sin and will receive the awful visitation of God, whether he who commits it be old or young.”** {Ms3-1854.6}

**Men often commit wrong through ignorance or want of judgment. In many instances there is no premeditated wrong; it is caused through a lack of thoughtfulness. The one who treats this as sin is himself a sinner.** There is with many a keen imagination that makes them offender for a word or action. **But often the one judged is innocent in the sight of God.** {11MR 371.2}

The most solemn warning and the most awful threatening ever addressed to mortals is that contained in the third angel's message. The sin that calls down the wrath of God unmixed with mercy must be of the most heinous character. Is the world to be left in darkness as to the nature of this sin?--Most assuredly not. **God does not deal thus with His creatures. His wrath is never visited upon sins of ignorance.** Before His judgments are brought upon the earth, the light in regard to this sin must be presented to the world, that man may know why these judgments are to be inflicted, and may have opportunity to escape them. {ST, November 1, 1899 par. 7}

**In his sufferings and death Jesus has made atonement for all sins of ignorance, but there is no provision made for wilful blindness.** Those who have hid their eyes from the truth lest they should be convinced, must exercise repentance toward God for the transgression of his law, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, that their sins of ignorance in the transgression of the Sabbath may be forgiven. {RH, April 25, 1893 par. 10}

Let none plead as an excuse for not keeping the Sabbath, that their fathers died accepted of God when

keeping the first day of the week. **No doubt they were accepted; for they did not sin against the light that is shining upon you in your day.** God would have us walk in the light which shines upon us. We are to appreciate the truth that is presented to our understanding; for if we do not walk in the light, it becomes darkness, and our darkness will be proportionate to the light that is given. {RH, April 25, 1893 par. 11}

To worship God on a common working day upon which He has placed no sanctity, **in our ignorance is not sin,** but when light comes to us showing us what is truth, we are to give up error and accept the truth. **If God plainly states that He requires one thing, and we present to Him another, claiming for ourselves that it makes no difference, we deceive our own souls to our own ruin, for God will not be trifled with.** {Lt97-1893.2}

They that "follow on to know the Lord" shall know that "his going forth is prepared as the morning" Hosea 6:3. **He that is unfaithful in the least will mar his conscience and separate himself from God. Unless he repents, even in the least dishonesty, he will go on in this course of action to become unfaithful in much. No one will now plead ignorance of what constitutes sin. All sin - the least to the greatest sin - is transgression of the law of God.** {Ms169-1897.9}

## Conclusion.....

We shall seek to bring closure to this theme by letting inspiration answer succinctly whether fallen human beings, having Christ within, are called to sinlessness. Let the words of the prophets boldly answer as to the calling of the gospel toward Christian perfection, and the evidence that human beings, through Christ, can and have attained unto sinlessness, despite having sinful flesh:

**MATTHEW 5:48 (KJV)>>** <sup>48</sup>Be ye therefore **perfect**, even as your Father which is in heaven is **perfect**.

**DEUTERONOMY 18:13 (KJV)>>** <sup>13</sup>Thou shalt be **perfect** with the LORD thy God.

**2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 (KJV)>>** <sup>16</sup>All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup>**That the man of God may be **perfect**, throughly furnished unto *all* good works.**

**JAMES 1:4 (KJV)>>** <sup>4</sup>But let patience have her **perfect** work, that ye may be **perfect** and entire, *wanting nothing*.

**1 CORINTHIANS 1:8 (KJV)>>** <sup>8</sup>Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be **blameless** in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**2 PETER 3:14 (KJV)>>** <sup>14</sup>Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, **be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, *without spot*, and **blameless**.**

**LUKE 1:5-6 (KJV)>>** <sup>5</sup>There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named **Zacharias**, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was **Elisabeth**. <sup>6</sup>And **they were both *righteous* before God, walking in *all* the commandments and ordinances of the Lord **blameless**.**

**GENESIS 6:9 (KJV)>>** <sup>9</sup>These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a *just* man and **perfect** in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

**GENESIS 17:1 (KJV)>>** <sup>1</sup>And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; **walk before me, and be thou perfect.**

**JOB 1:8 (KJV)>>** <sup>8</sup>And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, **a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?**

**PSALMS 37:37 (KJV)>>** <sup>37</sup>Mark the **perfect** man, and behold the **upright**: for the end of that man is peace.

Christ has made every provision for the sanctification of His Church. He has made abundant provision for every soul to have such grace and strength that he will be more than a conqueror in the warfare against sin. The Saviour is wounded afresh and put to open shame when His people pay no heed to His word. **He came to this world and lived a sinless life, that in His power His people might also live lives of sinlessness.** He desires them by practicing the principles of truth to show to the world that God's grace has power to sanctify the heart. {RH, April 1, 1902 par. 8}

**Those who believe on Christ and obey His commandments are not under bondage to God's law; for to those who believe and obey, His law is not a law of bondage, but of liberty.** Every one who believes on Christ, every one who relies on the keeping power of a risen Saviour that has suffered the penalty pronounced upon the transgressor, every one who resists temptation and in the midst of evil copies the pattern given in the Christ-life, will through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ become a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. **Every one who by faith obeys God's commandments, will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression.** {ST, July 23, 1902 par. 14}

Beloved, I pray you shall accept and believe what the prophets have testified regarding the calling of the gospel. I pray you have realized that such a calling is unto the likeness of Christ, who did no sin, who came in the likeness of sinful flesh and condemned sin within that sinful flesh, that we now, accepting Christ and becoming dead to sin, should live unto righteousness. It is a high calling fraught many times with trials, temptations, and even seeming disappointments; but in as much as we *will in Christ* to remain faithful, *surrendering all* that is of our sinful flesh to His Spirit, we can be of good cheer. For as Christ overcame all sin in this life, we may also overcome all sin through Him (John 16:33; 1<sup>st</sup>John 5:4; Rev.3:21, 21:7). This is not presumption, this is not self-exaltation. This is the faith, the promise, the very calling of the Word of God! Press towards the mark of perfection, beloved, that you may at last be saved:

**PHILIPPIANS 3:12-14 (KJV)>> <sup>12</sup>Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. <sup>13</sup>Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, **forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, <sup>14</sup>I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.****

May God bless you.

AMEN.

*Shared with you out of love, in the service of the gospel,*



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