



Behold the Lamb
Publications

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

Volume I

Twelve Gospel Messages from our
Weekly SIMPLY CHRIST Newsletter!

Introducing

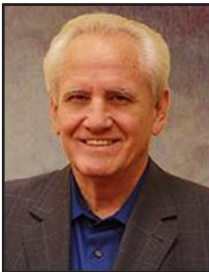
Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

Simply Christ is a weekly digital Newsletter dedicated to sharing the simple precepts of the gospel of Christ. Jesus rejoiced in spirit, saying, *“I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.”* You do not have to be a “theologian” to understand the mysteries of Christ, you just have to be willing to believe what God says. Each week in **Simply Christ**, Keith Surface and Leroy Surface share simple yet powerful insights concerning the gospel of Christ. Currently there are two ways to receive **Simply Christ**. You can visit our website at cochurch.org and register online to receive **Simply Christ** each week by **email** or if you use a **Facebook** account, search: www.Facebook.com/BeholdTheLambPublications

You can register on cochurch.org to receive each new Behold the Lamb Book as a **FREE pdf Ebook** or a **FREE** printed book.



Leroy Surface

We believe in the printed gospel because it will continue to speak to all who read it for generations to come. We encourage you not to discard your *“Behold the Lamb”* booklets. When you are finished with them, please pass them on to others who may be hungry for the truth. These



Keith Surface

messages are not given for entertainment, but for edification of the body of Christ. They are always given without charge to all who wish to receive them. If our message is from God, it belongs to you, and we will continue to send it as God provides. May this edition bless you!

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

Volume I

Table of Contents

LOVING JESUS, BUT REJECTING CHRIST.....	1
NO DEVIL IN CHRIST	3
NOT WRITTEN IN STONE	5
LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS.....	6
ASSUMPTION OR TRUTH?	9
COMPLETED BY THE BLOOD.....	12
ARE THE FATHER AND THE SON IN CONFLICT?	15
GOD IN MY IMAGE	18
TEMPTATIONS	20
GOD'S SELF-SACRIFICE	22
POWER OVER SIN?.....	24
FORGIVEN? ...OR FREE?.....	27

LOVING JESUS, BUT REJECTING CHRIST

When John the Baptist came preaching the baptism of repentance, all Israel was in a state of great excitement. Around five-hundred years earlier, the angel Gabriel pinpointed that year as the time that the one called Messiah, or the Christ, would appear. The scripture says, *“And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not.”* Luke 3:15 Israel loved Christ. Or ...at least they thought they loved Christ. He was in their words and their songs. He embodied all their hopes and dreams. How great things would be when Christ appeared! They knew what Gabriel had said, that Christ would *“make and end of sins”* and *“bring in everlasting righteousness.”* Daniel 9:24-25 Although they did not comprehend that the end of sin Christ would make would be in the heart and nature of those who trusted in him, they were confident that Christ would change everything. They believed the world would be a wonderful place for them when Christ came and took his rightful throne.

Even those who hated Jesus, loved Christ. The Chief priests who plotted his death did not see themselves as killing Christ. In their own minds they were only doing what was necessary to rid the nation of this Jesus who seemed to be such a threat to the establishment. Saul of Tarsus loved Christ. His rage against the church was in defense of his “idea” of Christ. It was not until he met Jesus on the road to Damascus that he understood that the Christ whom he loved and Jesus whom he hated were one in the same.

Still today, most Jewish people believe they love Christ, but reject Jesus who is the Christ. Sadly, some of our renowned Christian leaders have sought to assure them that it is alright to reject Jesus as long as they keep the Ten Commandments and accept Christ as whoever he is upon his return. Those who teach such things are damming the souls of those who believe them.

Today in Christianity we find an opposite, but similar situation. We, as Christians, love Jesus. He is the embodiment of every good thing that God has for his people. We tell of his love and mercy.

Such is the assurance of his love to us and our love to him that our songs often take the form of a romantic love story. We know he loves us and without a doubt we are sure that we love him. We are confident that Jesus will allow no one, not even God the Father, to bring harm our way. Yet with all the love we Christians have for Jesus, too many of us know almost nothing about what it means that Jesus is the Christ.

I would say that the average Jew knows more about Christ than most Christians. Many, if not most, practicing Jews understand that because of Gabriel's prophecy, Christ must make an end of sins when he appears. If he does not do so, he cannot be the Christ. For this reason the acceptance of sin among Christians is proof to many Jewish people that Jesus could not possibly be the Christ. For them, the belief that Jesus will forgive you over and over for the same sins that you continue to commit makes a mockery of all that Christ was prophesied to accomplish. Their idea of Christ making an end of sin often deals with nations and society instead of the individual believer, because they never understood the mystery that Paul preached, which is "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" Colossians 1:27 He came and died to fulfill the mission of Christ "in you!"

In you is where Christ makes an end of sin and brings in everlasting righteousness. This is the "Christ" that much of Christianity has rejected and this is why I say that Christianity is doing in reverse what the Jews did concerning Jesus. We love our "idea" of Jesus, but we reject any thought that Christ came to actually make an end of sin in anyone. If a minister says what the apostle John said, "*And we know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abides in him sins not,*" 1 John 3:5-6 that minister is looked upon as one who blasphemes the name of Jesus.

We love to hear that Jesus covers our sin, took our penalty, and hides us from God's eyes (none of which the scriptures actually say), but we refuse to hear the one who reminds us that he is "*the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.*" John 1:29 Yes, we love Jesus dearly, but it seems that we have rejected the Christ.

However, Jesus and Christ cannot be separated. Jesus is Christ and Christ is Jesus.

What Jesus told the Jews is still true today: *“If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.”* John 8:24 If Israel had received Jesus as Christ, they would have known the glories of His salvation and escaped the judgment of God in 70 A.D., but their love of Christ could not keep them as long as they rejected Jesus. Even so, those who love an idea of Jesus whom they believe accepts them in their sin, but reject the Christ who came to take away their sin, will find that their love of Jesus will not keep them in the hour of God’s judgment. You cannot separate the Jesus who loved you from the Christ who came into the world and died to take your sin away. If you reject one, you have already rejected the other. JESUS IS THE CHRIST!

NO DEVIL IN CHRIST

Many years ago a young man began visiting our services, and on several occasions he sought me out to ask questions about spiritual warfare. He was very interested in the subject and told me he had been attending a spiritual warfare seminar where part of the focus was on demonology. He was full of information on all sorts of demons, their sources and their work. I did not offer him the insight on demons that he desired because I would always turn the conversation back to Jesus Christ and his victory at Calvary.

Several weeks later he showed up again and was very troubled. He had begun to be tormented by demonic visitations. Apparitions were appearing in his room at night and he began to hear voices threatening his life. He told me how that one night he found himself running down the street fleeing from a demon who was chasing him seeking to kill him. He asked me, “What do you do when a demon is chasing you down the street at night trying to kill you?”

My first words might seem sarcastic to some, but I answered, “I cannot remember the last time a demon chased me down the street in the middle of the night.” I said, “Listen to me! The word of

God says that Jesus Christ destroyed the devil through his death on the cross. Hebrews 2:14 It also tells me that Jesus *“having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”* Colossians 2:15 The word of God says that in Christ is where I live. John 15:7 I simply ABIDE IN CHRIST and I know that Satan does not want anything to do with the one I abide in. As Psalms 91 says, I have made the Lord my habitation.”

This young man did not receive my answer. It was too simple, and perhaps too unexciting. Yet I knew that this young man had opened the door for demonic torment through filling his mind with “knowledge” about demonic things. The apostle Paul said, *“I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.”* Romans 16:19 You do not need to understand much about Satan in order to be victorious, but you do need to see Christ in all his victory.

There is a simple yet evident truth that every child of God needs to understand; just as there is no sin in Christ; there is no devil in Christ. Anyone who will simply believe the gospel and abide in Christ will live free from both sin and Satan. Jesus said *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”* John 16:33 Those who abide in Christ may walk through tribulation in this world, but they will do it with peace because their dwelling place is in Christ Jesus. In the same manner they may walk through a world of sinfulness, but live a life of overflowing righteousness because there is no sin in Christ who is their habitation. The torments of Satan may be all around, but he cannot torment those who live in a place where Satan does not even exist. This is the reality for those whose life is in Christ Jesus! Our wrestling with principalities and powers is NOT for our own peace and victory, but for those who are still lost and bound in the darkness of unbelief and sin.

NOT WRITTEN IN STONE

Thirty-five hundred years ago, the children of Israel stood at the precipice of glory. Having been delivered out of Egypt's bondage they were led to Mt Sinai where God had chosen to speak to them. God instructed Moses to tell the people *"...if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."* Exodus 19:4-6 If this people would simply listen to God's voice they would walk in a covenant of life. They would be a holy nation and they would be a kingdom of priest with each individual having access into the presence of Almighty God.

On the third day God came down upon the mountain and spoke to the entire congregation in an audible voice. All the promises God had prepared for them hinged upon whether they would hear and obey his voice. This would not have been the last time God would speak unto them, but, though perhaps not with an audible voice, God would have continually spoken to each of them as he did Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses. When God spoke what we know as the Ten Commandments, the people drew back from the voice of God and pleaded with Moses for God not speak to them again. In doing so they not only rejected God's voice, but also the promise that they would be a holy nation and a kingdom of priests.

The words that God spoke that day were intended to be received and "written" in the hearts of those who heard, but because they refused God's voice, the commandments would now be written on tablets of stone. The apostle Paul is clear that when these commandments were written on stone they became the *"ministration of death."* He wrote *"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious..."* II Corinthians 3:7 If these had been written in the hearts of the people, the commandments would have been a description of what the people were, but

written in stone, the same words became a witness of what the people were not.

Any commandment written on stone or paper tells you what you ought to be, but a commandment written in your heart is the reason you are what God promised that his people would be. *“Thou shalt not kill”* written on stone warns you of the wrath due the person who takes the life of another, but *“thou shalt not kill”* written in the heart of a person is the reason they cannot even hate the person who has done them wrong. *“Thou shalt not commit adultery”* written on stone may keep some out of the bed of adultery, but *“thou shalt not commit adultery”* written in the heart keeps the adultery and unclean lusts out of the heart of the person in whom it is written. The entire basis on the New Covenant is that God’s law is written in the heart of the believer. The apostle reminds us of God’s promise: *“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.”* Hebrews 10:16

No one can ever please God by seeking to obey that which is written on stone, but everything it takes to please God, He writes in the hearts of those who simply and truly trust in Christ. Please do not misunderstand me. I believe the Ten Commandments ought to be on the wall of every building in our nation. Yet we must understand that written on a placard, it is only a witness against sin, but written on the heart of those who trust in Christ it is a testimony that they have been delivered from their sin. Paul wrote *“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. ॥* Corinthians 3:3

LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS

There is a law that every human becomes an expert in at some point in their existence. From the infant to the elderly, from the drifter to the aerospace engineer, all of us are students of this law

and continually gain new understanding on how to function under its domain. This law I speak of is called the law of gravity. Everything upon planet earth is affected and bound by its power. Nothing breaks this law, but we all learn to compensate and deal with it. An airplane may seem to break the law of gravity, but that is only an illusion. A 707 jet airliner will burn through roughly 13000 lbs of jet fuel an hour as it struggles to stay airborne against the unrelenting pull of gravity. An infant must learn how to exert energy to compensate for gravity before he or she can even roll over or begin to crawl. Absolute "laws" like the law of gravity are define as *"something to which there is no exception."*

The word of God speaks of another such law which it calls *"the law of sin and death."* Romans 8:2 This *"law of sin and death"* is not a commandment, but rather it is a description of the dominion under which humanity has lived since the transgression of Adam. The apostle Paul tells what this *"law"* is and when it gained its dominion when he says that *"by one man **sin** entered into the world, **and death** by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"* Romans 5:12

The entrance of **sin and death** (condemnation) into the world changed everything. Its power became absolute. This is verified by the fact Paul reminds us of, saying; *"for that all have sinned."* If only *"almost everyone"* had sinned, this would not be an absolute *"law."* But because everyone other than Jesus Christ (who was not of the earth, but was the Lord from heaven 1 Corinthians 15:47) has fallen to sin's dominance, it is evident that this IS an absolute *"law."* No one breaks this *"law of sin and death."* People just learn to compensate and deal with it. All carnal religion in some form is seeking to equip mankind to survive and excel under its relentless oppression.

The apostle Paul tells us about the workings of this *"law"* in the 7th chapter of Romans. As Saul of Tarsus, he was an expert at compensating and excelling under its dominion, but just as a jet cannot stay airborne forever, Saul of Tarsus found that this *"law"* never stopped pulling him down into captivity. He wrote; *"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For*

I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Romans 7:21-23

Indeed, every experience of every person under this "*law of sin and death*" teaches us that it is unbreakable inasmuch that anyone who even hints that you can be free from this "*law*" is thought a fool. But what about the word of God? Is it a fool? Listen to what the apostle Paul says concerning this matter: "*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus **hath made me free from the law of sin and death.***" Romans 8:2 How foolish is that statement? When every experience of humanity has proven to us that this "*law of sin and death*" is absolute in its dominion, how can Paul say such a thing? The answer is simple. He had discovered that in Christ there was another "*absolute law*" that superseded the "*law of sin and death.*" This greater "*law*" he called "*the law of the Spirit of **life in Christ Jesus!***"

Those whose life is IN Christ Jesus are made free from "*the law of sin and death*" and its dominion over mankind. Those who live in Christ Jesus do not struggle with either sin or condemnation, because Christ has delivered them from the bondage of sin and the condemnation that always accompanies it. Sin is washed from their heart and nature by the shed blood of Christ Revelation 1:5 and their old man of sin is crucified with Christ where the body of sin is destroyed. Romans 6:6 The gospel of Christ does not teach us how to compensate and deal with "*the law of sin and death.*" It makes us FREE from it! Those who protest such a thing are choosing to live under "*the law of sin and death*" and will never know the full victory and freedom of "*the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*" until they begin to hold the authority of the word of God over the authority of their carnal experience.

ASSUMPTION OR TRUTH?

When we consider what the truth of the gospel is, there are two vital factors to consider. One is simply what does the scripture say. The other is to recognize what the scripture does not say. When the scripture does not specifically speak to an issue, over the centuries men have at times formulated doctrines to answer the questions that they feel were not specifically addressed by the word of God. Many of these doctrines are often based upon assumptions. People “fill in the blanks” of what is not specifically said in the word of God, and formulate a doctrine that they feel may be true. These such doctrines are call “theories.” This action of itself does not make the doctrine wrong, but it leaves it without the full authority of God’s word. On the other hand, when the scripture specifically says something, there is no need to formulate a doctrine concerning the issue because the word of God has spoken. For example, we do not need a doctrine to tell us that Jesus is the Christ because the word of God specifically and clearly tells us that Jesus is the Christ. It can be said that some formulated doctrines “**may be true,**” but we must know that what the scripture specifically says **IS TRUE!** A problem is arises when the two contradict each other. When this happens, one must be discarded as untrue. Which do we discard; that which “may be true” or that which IS TRUE?

Consider this example: Over the years some have told me that the scripture which says “*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God*” 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 CANNOT be true because it contradicts the “doctrine of grace.” My response is “Are you kidding me? The apostle who wrote these words is the same apostle who told us almost everything we know about grace.” Yet people refuse to turn loose of their assumption about grace even when it contradicts

what the word of God specifically says. So instead they end up casting aside the word of God.

Another such example of this is the belief that Jesus died on the cross to “pay the penalty” for our sins. Now why would anyone question such a thing? After all, it sounds right, it makes people feel good, and it calms their fear of standing before God’s judgment. Wouldn’t it be easier to just leave such a widely accepted and beloved belief alone? Well, not if it stands in the way of people seeing the gospel truth that Jesus said would make them free. When a person holds to something that is untrue concerning the gospel, they not only become bound to a fallacy, but the fallacy blinds them to “the truth.” And if they are blinded to “the truth,” they are blinded to Christ and all that he did to make them free. Ask yourself, what passage of scripture actually says that Christ paid a penalty. As a matter of fact, where does God ever require that a penalty be paid for those who turn from their sins and return to Him? Consequences brought upon ourselves and a penalty required by God are two different things. An unfaithful husband may return to the Lord and be forgiven and delivered from the lusts that produced his actions, but he still may endure the consequences of his unfaithfulness in this life.

How many times does God tell us in his word that if someone turns from their sin, he will forgive and pardon them? Never does God require that a penalty be paid first. That thought is just an assumption, or something someone thought “could be” true. But this is what God said: *“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 55:7 If someone is pardoned there is no punishment or penalty required to be paid, otherwise it would not be a pardon. And if a penalty has been paid, there is certainly no need for a pardon.

The primary scriptural passage people use to seek to show that Christ paid a penalty on the cross is *“the chastisement of our peace was upon him...”* Isaiah 53:5 I do see how someone might say this

“could mean” Christ paid a penalty on the cross, but it also could mean that the reason the Roman soldiers were chastising Christ was so I could have peace with, and the peace of, God. In other words, his sufferings were for my benefit. Either way, without further input from the scripture, our thoughts here are really just assumptions.

Now let us look at what the scripture specifically says about the purpose of Christ’s sufferings. If I went through everything the scriptures actually say, this letter would become a book, so I will take a witness from each of multiple sources in God’s word. God himself told us the “seed of the woman” (Jesus Christ) would come and “bruise the head” of the serpent. *Genesis 3:15* Gabriel told us that Messiah would come to “make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness...” *Daniel 9:24* John the Baptist said Jesus Christ is “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” *John 1:29* Paul tells us that the purpose of Christ’s crucifixion’s is so “that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” *Romans 6:6* Peter tell us that Christ “...bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness...” *1 Peter 2:24* The apostle John says “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not:” *1 John 3:5-6* and the writer of Hebrews tells us that “Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.” *Hebrews 13:12*

The difference between what the scripture says and a “penalty paid” assumption is night and day. One tells us that Jesus takes our sin from us while the other tells us that Jesus leaves us in our sin and pays whatever penalty we incur. With the testimony of the scripture being so clear as to why Christ died, why do so many hold to that which is not only just an assumption, but it denies and blinds people to the absolute clarity of the word of God? Maybe I cannot answer that question, but I do know that as long as anyone holds an assumption above the word of God, they will never know the

truth, and they will never be free from sin. So this is why we continually remind people of what the scripture specially says concerning Christ. For if we are truly ministers of Christ, we are commissioned to proclaim the truth that Christ Jesus said *“shall make you free!”*

COMPLETED BY THE BLOOD

Over the years I have met a few people who claimed to be perfect. Yet I can say with confidence that their claim was definitely “false advertising.” Their fleshly boasting, however, does not disannul the word of God. Let me be clear; I do not believe in a fleshly perfection, but I do believe the word of God. The blood of Christ will not make you to be the perfect husband or wife, the perfect pastor, or even a perfect person according to fleshly expectations, but it was shed to make you that which God had always ordained his people would be.

The Greek words the apostles usually used for “*perfect*” and “*perfection*” in the scriptures simple mean “*complete*” and “*completion*.” To help us understand what this “*completion*” is, we can look at examples Jesus gave of things that were incomplete. He said, *“ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.”* Matthew 23:25 What is more incomplete than a cup that has been washed on the outside, but inside it is filled with filth? Have you ever picked up a fork at a restaurant only to see dried food still caked on it? Whoever washed it did not complete their job.

Jesus also spoke about those who were like “*whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.*” Matthew 23:27 On the outside these had the appearance of life, but in their heart death still reigned. In these statements Jesus is describing the inability of religious works to make anything complete. People do things to change themselves outwardly, but on the inside nothing changes. Jesus deals directly with this “incomplete sanctification”

when he tells us, *“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”* Matthew 5:27-28 Abstaining from adultery and fornication is good, but the person with adultery in their heart is still an adulterer before God. They are very “incomplete.”

David gave us insight concerning the completion Christ brings us through the gospel when he said, *“Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.”* Psalms 51:6 David had fallen into adultery, and to cover his actions he had Bathsheba’s husband killed. On the outside David could magnify the Lord in words and song and tell of the virtues of righteousness, but on the inside it was lie. David had become the *“filthy cup”* and the *“whited sepulcher”* that Jesus spoke of. In his repentance he cried for an answer that would only come to mankind through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. He cried, *“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow... Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”* Psalms 51:7, 10 It is only when God fulfills this request that any person will have *“truth in the inward parts”* and be complete before God.

The apostle Paul said, *“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection (completion)....”* Hebrews 6:1 He then uses the remainder of his letter to the Hebrews to *“go on”* and explain what this completion is and to let us know that its only source is the shed blood of Christ.

Paul uses the weakness of the Law to give us insight into what true completeness is. He tells us that the sacrifices and offerings of the Law *“could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.”* Hebrews 9:9 The conscience spoken of here is a *“moral consciousness”* which is *“the inner most thoughts and feelings”* of a person. Carnal religion can never complete the job of sanctification, because it cannot wash your inner thoughts and feelings. This is where Paul tells us about the completion Christ

brings to us. He wrote, *“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, **purge your conscience from dead works** to serve the living God?*

Hebrews 9:13-14 The *“waters of purification”* Numbers 19 (mixed with the ashes of a heifer) under the Law could give you a bath, but its washing was only “skin deep.” Its sanctification stopped at *“the purifying of the flesh.”* The blood of Christ, however, washes all the way to the deepest thoughts and feelings of those who trust in Christ. It will wash you from the dead works of religion, and it will wash you from the dead works of sin. This is not common blood. It is the blood of the eternal Christ who became flesh for you and me!

This simple “completion” offered us through the shed blood of Christ is more precious than all the grandeur of someone’s supposed super spirituality. How many times have we seen so called spiritual giants fall into sin and shame because of the content of their own heart? Yet a newborn babe in Christ can have this wonderful completion, which is simply *“clean hands and a pure heart”* through the shed blood of Christ.

In his *“going on unto perfection,”* the apostle Paul finally takes us to the only source and fulfillment of true completion. He says, *“For by one offering he hath perfected (completed) forever them that are sanctified.”* Hebrews 10:14 The blood of Christ is the only thing that can ever *“cleanse the cup”* both outside and within. It is such a shame that so many have forgotten the simple truth that Jesus Christ, who shed his blood for our sanctification, is both the author and the finisher of our faith. When Paul wrote *“For the law made nothing perfect...,”* Hebrews 7:19 he was using the Law as an example of the weakness of ALL carnal religion.

Under the guise of *“going on unto perfection,”* God’s people have been led away from Christ’s blood, unto every unprofitable thing imaginable. The list of such things is almost endless: The Law of Moses, the Ten Commandments, self-crucifixion, renewing the mind with precepts and principles, steps to holiness, will power,

positive confession, philosophy, spiritualism, “how to” books and methods, three steps, five steps, ten steps, etc. When I consider all the things that are offered to God’s people for their completion other than full and simple faith in the shed blood of Christ, the futility of it all reminds me of a line from an old nursery rhyme which says, *“but all the kings horses and all the kings men, could not put Humpty Dumpty back together again!”*

ARE THE FATHER AND THE SON IN CONFLICT?

If I believed the theories some people hold about redemption, I would have to conclude that there is a conflict between the Father and the Son over the salvation of humanity. As though God was demanding a debt be paid or he would cast all of us into damnation, so Jesus stepped up and paid the debt to pacify the Father. Or, that God searches the hearts of humanity looking for reasons to judge and destroy us, but Jesus covers us with his blood to hide us from the Father’s prying eyes. I know it is not exactly put that way, but consider what is presented as the gospel. They say Jesus paid our debt or penalty so we could be forgiven. OK..., if Jesus paid a debt or penalty, who was demanding a debt be paid? Is it correct to say an unforgiving God demanded that his Son suffer and die before he would considering forgiving anyone? Here is another one. If the blood of Jesus covers our sin from God’s sight, then is Jesus in fact hiding us from the Father?

In each of these scenarios the conclusion seems to be that Jesus Christ actually saves us from God. Of course we all know that this is ridiculous. The Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, are not and never were in conflict over humanity. In fact, from the moment of Adam’s transgression, everything God said or did was with our redemption in mind.

When I say that Christ did not die to forgive our sins, it confuses some people, but the truth is that Christ’s death wasn’t necessary for the forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness is something God has graciously offered humanity for all time. The only requirement put

upon God's forgiveness is that the forgiven would turn from their iniquity.

When God revealed his glory to Moses, he introduced himself as *"The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, **forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...**"* Exodus 34:6-7 The Psalmist reminds us of God's forgiveness saying, *"For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant. **But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away...**"*

Psalms 78:37-38

Most Christians know the words God spoke to Solomon at the dedication of the Temple: *"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, **and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.**"* II Chronicles 7:14 God proved himself over and over to be *"abundant in mercy... forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin..."*

There was absolutely no reason for Jesus to die in order for anyone to be forgiven of their sins. In fact, the apostle Paul lets us know that if Christ died for something we already had without his death, then his death was wasted. Paul preached that Christ died to make us righteous, Romans 5:19 so when speaking to those who thought the Law could make a person righteous, he said, *"...for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."* Galatians 2:21 In other words, "Christ's death was without purpose if you could receive that which he died for another way!" Anything you could receive from God before Christ shed his blood could not possibly be the reason Christ died for you and me. He did not die a useless or unnecessary death.

In our salvation, forgiveness is the easy part. I say easy because it has always been in the heart and nature of God to forgive. Nothing had to change about God or his ways in order for the repentant to be forgiven. The difficult part of salvation was not

what was in God's heart, but what was in our heart. God was always ready to forgive, but the heart of man was always ready to backslide. Forgiveness was a short term solution, because the heart of man was embedded with iniquity. Until the heart of man was changed, all the forgiveness that could ever issue out of the heart of our eternal God would avail nothing. It would always be as Peter spoke, *"The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."* ^{II Peter 2:22}

Something had to happen which would forever change the heart and nature of man. The message of Ezekiel chapter 18 is *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die,"* but God continued on to say *"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? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."* ^{Ezekiel 18:31-32} The problem was that no one could change what worked in their own heart, and without a new heart they could never truly turn from their iniquities. God, knowing this, spoke of a day that he would give the people a new heart and a new spirit. ^{Ezekiel 36:22-27} This is why Christ came.

Peter spoke after the lame man at the gate Beautiful was healed saying, *"Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."* ^{Acts 3:26} This turning from iniquity did not come through another law or commandment, but by receiving a new heart and a new spirit through the work of Christ.

Christ joined with the Father to solve the hard part of our redemption. The Father forgives, as he always has, but Christ's work is to cleanse the heart and nature of the people. I say this was the hard part, because it required that he shed his blood and offer his body to accomplish this. Only his body offered in death could cause our old man to be *"crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin,"* ^{Romans 6:6} and only the shedding of his precious blood could *"cleanse us from all sin."* ^{I John 1:7}

The Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, were never in conflict over our redemption, but always in perfect harmony. Due to the fact that both have availed for the salvation of humanity, those who come to the Father through Christ Jesus find that they together as one are *“faithful and just to forgive us our sins, AND to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* | John 1:9

GOD IN MY IMAGE

I was a complete mess before I came to Christ. I was angry, unclean, and my sins disgusted even me. Then one day almost thirty-three years ago Jesus Christ washed it all away while I knelt at an altar of prayer. I say with God as witness there has never been a day, an hour, or even a moment that I regretted calling upon the Lord or that I ever had the slightest desire for anything of that life again. Today, when I say “Jesus saves from sin” I am not preaching a theory. I know what it is to be dying in sin, and thank God I know what it is to be saved from sin!

One of the absurdities of that time (of which there were many) was how spiritual I sometimes felt even though I was so far from God. There was a particular secular song that could always trigger my supposed spirituality. Its words said, *“I don’t believe that heaven waits for only those who congregate. I like to think that God is love. He’s down below and up above. He’s watching people everywhere. He knows who does and doesn’t care.”* It was amazing how myself, and others I knew, could feel so spiritual when a song like this began to play. After all it told us everything we wanted to hear. “We didn’t need to go to church.” “We would be alright with God as long as we cared about someone.” “And most importantly, we could have God exactly as we liked to think that he was.” In other words, “We could make God to be whatever we wanted him to be just by wanting him to be it.” Now tell me if you think that is not absurd. The truth is it did not matter how spiritual I felt, I was lost, sinful, and headed for Hell. It was not until a man of God

challenged my “spirituality” that I even began to consider how I desperately needed a Savior.

When I look back, I laugh at my foolishness and my arrogance in thinking that my preference of how God should be had any bearing whatsoever on how God really is. Yet in one sense, my blindness was understandable. I was lost. I did not profess to know, follow, or even believe God. What is much more disturbing than the foolishness of an unbeliever who tries to make God fit their image, is a professing believer who attempts the same thing. Too many times the people of God have closed their ears and eyes to the word of God and said, “I just like to think things are this way,” even when the word of God says differently.

Another of the great proofs people use as justification to ignore the word of God is “their experience.” As though somehow the eternal truth of God is limited to what we have or have not experienced in our life or walk with God. Recently Bro. Leroy Surface was confronted by a man after a service who told him “I do not believe your theory about a child of God not being a sinner.” Bro. Surface reminded the man that he had only preached what was clearly spoken by the scriptures. The man replied that he had lived in sin for twenty-five years after confessing Jesus as savior so he knew by experience that the children of God were still sinners. Now I ask you, “Which was the truth; the word of God or the man’s experience?”

A lost person may know by experience that there is no savior, but their experience in lying to them. A sick person may know by experience that God no longer heals, but their experience has convinced them of a fallacy. Even so, a religious person may know by experience that no one is free from sin, but since the word of God says, “*Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness,*” Romans 6:18 I say their experience has deceived them.

Peter tells of a supernatural event he experienced when he was with Jesus in the mount. He saw Jesus transfigured with Moses and

Elijah and heard an audible voice from heaven saying of Jesus, *"This is my beloved Son."* What could be more sure than such an experience? Peter answers this question saying. *"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed..."* What is more sure than a supernatural experience? Peter says *"the prophecy of the scripture"* is! || Peter 1:16-21

Even as a minister of the gospel, I have seen times that the word of God contradicted and destroyed the things I thought I knew. On those occasions I was faced with a choice. Would I believe what I saw the scriptures were saying, or would I cling to my own personal preferences and traditions? Would I receive *"the love of the truth"* || Thessalonians 2:10 that the apostle Paul spoke of, or would I prefer and uphold the traditions of men? I would have to decide if I really believed that GOD IS TRUE.

Is your gospel the gospel of the bible? You can know for certain if you will simply look at what the scriptures say. Does the blood of Christ that you trust "cover your sin" or does it "cleanse from all sin?" Does the cross you glory in leave you "crucifying the old man" or is your "old man crucified with Christ?" Did your savior die to "pay your penalty" or was he "manifest to take away our sin?" Are "your sins hidden from the eyes of God" or are all things "naked and opened unto the eyes of him?" You do not need me to answer these questions for you today. It is all clearly written in the scripture for those who desire to know. If you want to, you can know Christ AS HE IS!

TEMPTATIONS

Before Jesus ever walked on water, healed a sick person, cast out a devil, or even taught a multitude, God spoke from heaven at the Jordan River saying, *"This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."* Matthew 3:17 At that time, Jesus had already lived among men for about thirty years and had been thoroughly tested with the same things that are common to all mankind, but no sin was found in him. His Father was indeed *"well pleased."* Now the tests

became even greater as Satan would rage against him with every device and means at his disposal. The results were still the same. Jesus would say the night before his crucifixion *“the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.”* John 14:30 This was not a mere man such as Adam, the one who had failed so miserably when tested. This was the Lord from heaven, the “Word made flesh,” the Son of the living God!

The scripture says that Jesus *“was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,”* Hebrews 4:15 The Greek words translated “tempt” and “temptation” in the New Testament scriptures mean *“to test”* and to *“put to proof.”* In other words, these “temptations” are the things that come and let us know if something is *“as it is presented to be.”* Often, when the scripture speaks of “temptations” it is speaking of hardships and afflictions or persecutions and other attacks of Satan. Peter wrote to believers who were *“in heaviness through manifold temptations.”* | Peter 1:6 Outwardly they were enduring great hardships and the furious attacks of the adversary, but inwardly they were rejoicing *“with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”* | Peter 1:8 These “temptations” were not moral temptations. These were great trials the adversary brought to see if he could destroy those who trusted in Christ. These believers had no reason to fear, because Christ was their habitation. Jesus had foretold of these things saying, *“...in the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”* John 16:33

Was Jesus tested with moral temptations? Yes, but not as many suppose. God does not test with evil, but Satan definitely will seek to. Jesus was *“tempted ...yet without sin.”* Opportunities for sin were set before him such as are common to man, but never once did he have any desire for such things. If he had lusted for immorality, according his own words (*“whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart”* Matthew 5:28) he would have been immoral in the eyes of God. Jesus was tested in every way, but there was no sin in him for these “temptations” to discover. Just because Satan sets sin in your

path does not mean that it is in your heart. A person who is tested with evil in their path will walk on by and sometimes not even know they have been tested, but the person tempted with evil that is in their heart will find no path to escape it.

As a child of God, moral temptations may sometimes be in our path, but they are not in our heart. If they are, something is already not right. James told us that when a person is tempted with evil it is because they are *“drawn away of their own lusts.”* James 1:13-15 Simply put: It is not Christ that works in them, but Sin. This is different than just a test laid in their path, but this is sin that dwells in their heart. James let us know that the end of this will be death.

People struggle with sin, not because it is in their path, but because it is in their heart. This is the reason that Christ came and *“washed us from our sins in his own blood.”* Revelations 1:5 After Cornelius and those with him received Christ and were filled with the Holy Ghost, Peter said *“And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, ...purifying their hearts by faith.”* Acts 15:8-9 It is through faith in Jesus Christ and his shed blood that sin is washed from the heart of a person. When that is the case, the tempter may come and his tests (temptations) may abound, but he finds no place in the children of God.

GOD’S SELF-SACRIFICE

Before He uttered a word after Adam’s great transgression, God knew what a mess Adam had made in this foolish act of rebellion, and how it delivered humanity into the hands of Satan, who would destroy them in life, body, and soul. He also was fully aware of the staggering price he would have to pay to redeem his fallen creation.

Over thirty years ago, an elder Pastor told me that Jesus did not have to die on the cross for our salvation. He said God could have saved us any way he wanted to, but he sent Jesus to the cross to show us how much he loved us. This troubled me for many reasons. Foremost were the words of Jesus in Gethsemane where he

prayed, *“O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me...”*

Matthew 26:39 What did Jesus mean by *“if it be possible?”* We know it was possible for Jesus to escape the cross, because he said to his disciples, *“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?”*

Matthew 26:53 This being the case, it had to be that our redemption was not possible if Jesus did not suffer the death of the cross.

Recently someone asked me who required that blood be shed for our redemption. Was it God? “No,” I responded, “God did not require it. Circumstance did!” Let me explain. We were lost. Sin had become master of our heart and nature. Satan had dominion. There was only one possible way to change all this, but it would require the death of the Creator to redeem the creation. God was not the one requiring it. God was the one who was faced with paying the unspeakable price.

Calvary was not a human sacrifice. If it were, it would have availed nothing. If it had been just a sinless human offered on Calvary’s cross, nothing would be changed; we would all still die in our sins. It was not because Jesus’ blood was the blood of a man that it has the power to wash away sin, but because it is the blood of Christ. | Peter 1:19 The reason Christ *“was made flesh”* John 1:14 was so that he would have blood to shed and a body that could die. Hebrews 10:5 The eternal *“Word”* John 1:1 could not die, but when Christ took upon himself *“the likeness of sinful flesh,”* Romans 8:3 he became one who could lay down his life.

No, Calvary was not a human sacrifice. It was God’s self-sacrifice! God did not choose or require that a man die to save anyone. Christ became as man so that He, Christ, could suffer death, and thereby destroy Satan and deliver us. The scripture says, *“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death; that is, the devil. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”* Hebrews 2:14-15 Only as a man could Christ partake of death, but he came forth out of the grave in absolute

victory because he was not just a man, he was the eternal Christ, the Son of the living God!

The first promise of redemption is found in God's words to the Serpent shortly after Adam's transgression. God told the Serpent, *"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."* ^{Genesis 3:15} No one but God could understand its meaning at the time, but this stands as one of the most powerful promises of redemption ever given. The statement, *"...it shall bruise thy head,"* tells how Christ would destroy Satan and all his works. John says, *"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."* ^{1 John 3:8} The statement, *"and thou shalt bruise his heel,"* tells us that in order to destroy Satan, Christ would also be "bruised." The phrase *"seed of the woman"* in this prophecy tells us that God already had committed himself to send Christ into the world to be *"made of a woman"* ^{Galatians 4:4} and become a *"partaker of flesh and blood."* ^{Hebrews 2:14} From Adam's day forward, every lamb that was slain on the altar, and every other sacrifice that was offered before God, was testifying of the great self-sacrifice God would one day make for the salvation of all. This is the love of God commended to us. ^{Romans 5:8}

POWER OVER SIN?

Everyone has power over sin ...until they don't! An alcoholic has the power not to take another drink ...until he does. A liar has the power to tell the truth ...until he lies. And a religious man has the power not to sin ...until he sins. Many people wonder why we continuously preach "freedom from sin" through the blood of Christ. The answer is simple. "Freedom from sin" is the only answer that is offered in the gospel. Any other answer is no answer at all. Jesus did not say "The truth will give you power over." He said, *"the truth shall make you free."* When the people asked him to clarify what he meant, Jesus told them clearly that he had come to make them free from sin. ^{John 8:30-36}

There is an analogy we use seeking to give understanding concerning Jesus' promise to make you free. A man shares his house with a wild hungry lion. This man happens to be a "lion tamer" so he knows how to keep the lion at bay. He seems to be in full control of the lion as he uses the tools of his trade, a whip and chair. He can make the lion back away. He can make the lion sit. He has power over the lion. As great as this "lion tamer" is, there is one thing he cannot do. He can never close his eyes in rest. If he does, all his power over the lion becomes useless and the "lion tamer" will be devoured. As long as he lives in this house, this man can have no rest until the lion is dead or until the lion is taken away. When that happens, he is finally free from the lion.

The analogy above describes every religious effort of man to deal with sin. The things that promise you control or power over sin, are making a lion tamer of you. It will work as long as you are vigilant, determined, and never let down your guard. It comes in the form of "how to books", precepts and principles, laws to keep, or "walling off" everything around you. The power it promises is sometimes said to be by the Spirit, or the blood, or faith, or knowledge, or determination, or something else. It always works ...until it doesn't. The day you grow too weary, you will fail. It's a great walk for someone who doesn't need rest for their soul.

Jesus said *"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."* Matthew 11:28-29 Do you see how different this is from being a "lion tamer?" Christ did not come, suffered and die, to give us power over sin. He came *"to take away our sins."* 1 John 3:5 You do not need power not to do something that is not in your heart to do. Christ is not a lion tamer. He is the lion killer. He nailed our *"old man"* to his cross *"that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."* Romans 6:6 Sin is the lion! Only when sin is washed out of your heart by the blood of Christ will you ever find rest for your soul.

Jesus told the disciples, *“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”* Luke 10:19 As we stand for Christ, we will face attacks of Satan and the powers of darkness. If we remember that it is *“Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts,”* Zechariah 4:6 we will see these things bow at the exalted name of Jesus Christ. It is important to understand that these things are external to a child of God, and not internal. These are things “without” and not things “within.”

You only struggle with sinning if sin is “within.” But, some ask, If Christ takes sin, and therefore the struggle with sin, out of our hearts, why did Paul say *“Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin?”* Hebrews 12:4 Ask yourself, “Has anyone in the history of the church ever ‘resisted unto blood’ striving against sin in their own heart?” Of course not! Paul was speaking of the persecutions they suffered while they strove against the sin that holds lost souls captive. This “*striving*” was the preaching of the gospel of Christ to a sin-filled world. They were striving against sin, not in their own hearts, but in the hearts of those who fought the gospel of Christ.

The simplicity of the gospel is that Christ washes sin out of the heart of those who believe the gospel and trust in him. This is how Christ makes them free. They are not as strong as the “lion tamer.” Neither are they as “wise” as the one who knows all the principles. They are not even as determined as the one who has perfected himself. They don’t have to be, because Christ has made them free!

Let me leave you with this: It’s not the power of sin that destroys you, but the presence of sin. Where sin is present, it has power. But when, through the blood of Christ, sin is no longer “present” in your heart, it has no power whatsoever concerning you. This is the freedom that is promised in the gospel of Christ.

FORGIVEN? ...OR FREE?

Why did Christ die on the cross? Was it to “take our punishment?” If so, who was wanting to “punish us?” Perhaps it was to “take the penalty for our sin?” If so, why did He “rise again” on the third day? Does that mean that the penalty for sin is crucifixion and three days in the grave? Did Christ die to “pay our sin debt?” If so, who demanded a debt to be paid? Centuries ago some theorized that Jesus was offered as a payment demanded by Satan for our freedom. Almost everyone today understands the absurdity of that theory, but is it not even more absurd to say God would not “save us” until His “only begotten Son” suffered to pay our debt? Each of these theories I have mentioned contains one common ingredient. Christ “took our punishment,” “suffered the penalty,” or “paid our sin debt,” whichever we may choose to believe, in order that God could “forgive us” for sinning, while leaving us in sin to continue in sin, and perhaps “learn how to sin less” as we “mature in Christ.” That, in retrospect, is the most ridiculous theory of them all.

The reality of the gospel of Christ is far different from any of these theories which have been developed during the twenty centuries since Christ died for us. The “*truth*,” however, is very simply laid out in the scriptures for anyone who will dare to believe what God has said in His word. I ask you to take a short imaginary trip with me into the truly absurd.

A life guard is sitting at his post at the beach. He hears the cries of one who is drowning, “Save me! Save me!” Now this life guard is trained for the purpose of rescuing those who are drowning, but instead of rescuing, he simply picks up his megaphone and shouts to the victim, “I forgive you.” As the one drowning is going down for the last time, and gives one last gasp for help, the life guard says again, “I forgive you for drowning! You must believe that I have forgiven you,” as the drowning man sinks beneath the waves to rise no more.

You are traveling through a national park, when in the distance you see a family being attacked by a wild lion. They are crying to the game warden who is standing nearby, with everything that is needed to put the lion down. He responds to their cries for help with the same response as the lifeguard, "I forgive you! Just know that you are forgiven," as he watches the parents and children torn and ravaged by the lion.

A little further down the trail, you come upon a scene that further horrifies your sensibilities. A child has fallen over a ledge hundreds of feet above the canyon below. He is clinging to the ledge by his fingertips, and slipping while screaming for someone to save him. Again, for the third time in one day, you hear the same answer given to the desperate child who cannot save himself. "Just believe you are forgiven, and when you die, you will 'go to heaven'." If there is no "savior" for these in my analogies, they will all die within minutes. Forgiveness is not what they need; they must have "rescue" and "deliverance," which is what Christian salvation truly is.

The word "*saved*" as used in the scripture means "to deliver or protect." A "savior" that offers forgiveness, but leaves the people in bondage to sin is no savior at all. Did not the angel say "*He shall save his people from their sins?*" Matthew 1:21 Our God has always been "*merciful, gracious, and longsuffering*" Exodus 34:6. He has always forgiven those who turn away from sin to serve Him Isaiah 55:7. He revealed Himself to Moses as "*...merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty*" Exodus 34:6-7. If God has always forgiven the sins of those who turn to him, Jesus' death had to be about something more than just forgiveness. According to the message God sent to Daniel by the angel Gabriel, Christ's mission was "*...to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness...*" Daniel 9:24-25.

A translation error of one word used in the scripture has blinded many generations to the simplicity of Christ. Paul wrote *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins..."* Ephesians 1:7 Colossians 1:14. The English word *"forgiveness"* was translated from the Greek word *"aphesis,"* which is defined by Strong's Greek dictionary as *"freedom."* The word *"aphesis"* was translated as *"forgiveness," "remission," "deliverance,"* and *"liberty,"* but in every place it is used it means *"freedom."* Words have meaning, and if we will believe the words spoken by our Lord and His apostles, we will know that Christ came into the world and died on the cross to make us free from sin. Believe the truth of why Christ suffered and died on the cross, and He will take sin out of your heart and nature, and you will serve Him in *"righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost"* Romans 14:17.

"Behold the Lamb" is a publication of Calvary Outreach Ministries. It is dedicated to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Messages by Leroy Surface, Keith Surface, and others will be printed for your edification. "Behold the Lamb" is sent without subscription charge to all those desiring to receive it. It will be published on a regular basis as funds permit.

"Behold the Lamb" is financed by the love gifts of those who love the truth. Your love gifts and offerings to this ministry are tax deductible and will be receipted upon request. Make all checks payable to CALVARY OUTREACH, and address your correspondence to...

Leroy Surface
Calvary Outreach
P.O. Box 750
Porter, Texas, 77365

If you are not on our mailing list, and would like to receive "Behold the Lamb," OR if you have a friend who would appreciate "Behold the Lamb," simply fill out the coupon below and mail it to the address above.

Please send "Behold the Lamb" to...

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

4/17

Email address _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

4/17

Email address _____

Remember, "Behold the Lamb" is financed by the love gifts of those who appreciate the messages they receive. Help us do more. Thanks!

Four Ways to Receive

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

Simply Christ is a weekly digital Newsletter dedicated to sharing the simple precepts of the gospel of Christ. Each week in **Simply Christ**, Keith Surface and Leroy Surface share simple yet powerful insights concerning the gospel of Christ. Visit our website at cochurch.org and register online to receive **Simply Christ** each week by email.

Gospel Foundations

Foundational Gospel Preaching

Register for **Gospel Foundations** and receive anointed gospel sermons ministered by Leroy Surface or Keith Surface and sent to you via email. Twice each month you will receive without charge a download link to a special mp3 audio message. These are not just sermons, but messages preached as God anoints us to share the glorious gospel of Jesus the Christ. Visit cochurch.org and register to receive **Gospel Foundations** today.

Behold the Lamb **PDF Ebooks**

Register for **Behold the Lamb PDF Ebooks** and receive each new issue of Behold the Lamb sent to you free of charge as a PDF Ebook via email. Visit cochurch.org and register to receive **Behold the Lamb PDF Ebooks** today.

Behold the Lamb **Printed Books**

Register to have each printed issue of **Behold the Lamb** mailed to you free of charge. Visit cochurch.org and register to receive **Behold the Lamb Printed Books**

or write to:

Behold the Lamb P.O. Box 750 Porter, TX 77365