

Behold The Lamb

Publications

Perfected Forever

*An Eternal High Priest
A Perfect Sacrifice
A Complete Salvation*

*“Wherefore he is able also to
save them to the uttermost
that come unto God by him...”
Hebrews 7:25*

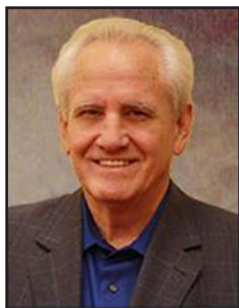
by Leroy Surface

Perfected Forever

There is an old adage that says, “Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.” Certainly I question myself on the wisdom of writing on the scriptural subject of “perfection.” I hear ministers say almost continually, “There’s no such thing as perfection,” yet every time I read Hebrews 10:14, it says *“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”* Whatever “perfection” means, Christ did it “to perfection” for the believer when He died on the cross to *“take away the sin of the world.”* I believe it would be far better for those who rail against perfection to find out, for the sake of those who follow their teaching, exactly what perfection is. It is always better to “turn on the light” than to “curse the darkness.”

The Greek word that was translated as “perfect” actually means “to complete.” We know that Christ came into the world to die on the cross as “the Lamb of God” to “take away the sin of the world” ^{John 1:29}. We know just as well that when He cried from the cross, “It is finished,” He had “completed” what He came into the world to do, and it was “perfect.”

Sin originated in the heart of an angel who had been created “perfect.” God said of Lucifer, who was His “anointed cherub” ^{Ezekiel 28:14}, *“Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee”* ^{Ezekiel 28:15}. Lucifer fell from “perfection” to being the basest of all creatures due to the “iniquity” that was found in him. We know there is no redemption for Lucifer, but if he were ever to be “perfect” again it would not require that something be added to him, but that his iniquity be taken away.



Leroy Surface

Adam was created “perfect.” He had no sin nature, but he received the nature of the serpent when he disobeyed God. All of humanity is fallen because of this sin nature we were born with through no fault of our own. Christ came into the world to take that sin out of all who would believe and trust in Him. When “sin” is “taken away,” that is what God calls “perfect,” or “complete.”



Keith Surface

We are still human, with human frailties, but certainly, we are not sinners, because Christ has died, risen again, and we who believe and trust in Him are free. Oh what a wonder salvation this is to me.

“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

Hebrews 10:14

Perfected Forever!

Message by: Leroy Surface

Introduction

“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” Hebrews 10:14

The message is simple, the language is clear. The only question remaining is, “Can we believe it?” Only those who can believe it will receive it. As a young person I was taught by my elders to “strive every day for perfection.” In later years, the message changed just a little, to “We must strive for perfection, but we know we will never reach it in this life.” My! What a recipe for a lifetime of struggle, striving for something we can never reach. To do so would be like tying a rope around the Empire State Building and trying to move it across the street by simply pulling on the rope. The strongest person on earth could “strive” every day for the rest of their natural life, but they would not affect the building whatsoever. Such is the success of “religious effort” to accomplish anything towards our complete salvation by human abilities. On the other hand, it is not enough to sit behind our podiums of religion and shout, “No one is perfect! We are all sinners by nature!” I would certainly agree on the first count. I know I am not perfect, but I also know that I have been “perfected forever” by the one offering of Christ at Calvary. A contradiction? Absolutely not! There is no contradiction between the scriptures and the reality of one who *“knows the truth”* John 8:32, but a great contradiction in the understanding of the religious multitudes.

The apostle Paul used a method of preaching he called *“opening and alleging”* Acts 17:2-3. He told them up front what he would prove by the scriptures. He “opened” with the Old Testament prophecies that foretold the sufferings of Christ, and having done so, he “alleged” that *“this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.”* I will open this message by telling you, *“perfected forever”* is not the lifetime goal of the children of God. It is the starting point of everyone who is

“born of God.” A “pure heart,” free from all sin, is what God calls “perfect.” Our hearts are *“purified by faith”* Acts 15:8-9 at the moment of faith, and everyone who is “born of God” has a *“new heart”* Ezekiel 36:26, which is *“free from sin”* Romans 6:18 and has God’s laws written within Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 8:10. ***“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”***

Going on to Perfection

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

Hebrews 6:1

“Going on to perfection” is not a process; neither is it a “journey.” Our “going on” is not fulfilled in either time or space, but in understanding. No one can be made perfect through religious education or discipline. The apostle Paul wrote this epistle to the Hebrews who had been under the Law of Moses for almost fifteen hundred years. They had every advantage of being God’s “chosen people.” They had the law and the prophets, the wisdom of Solomon and the Psalms of David, but when Paul asked the question, *“Are we (the Jews) better than they (the Gentiles),”* there was only one possible answer; *“No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin”* Romans 3:9.

The apostle’s purpose in writing to the Hebrews was to expose *“the weakness and unprofitability”* of the Law of Moses Hebrews 7:18, and the superiority of the New Covenant. He had *“laid the foundation of repentance from dead works (the law) and of faith toward God,”* and now, in his epistle, he would go on to teach them the perfection that is in the New Covenant. He did not teach them “how” to perfect themselves, nor did he give them never ending “principles of life” or a “step plan” to follow. When they would finally arrive at their destination (in Paul’s teaching), they would not be somewhere in their future at the end of a process, but rather at a certain place in the past. They would be at Calvary, where Christ offered His own body on the cross to *“put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself”* Hebrews 9:26.

What is “Perfect?”

The Greek word that was translated “*perfected*” in our text is “*teleioō*.” According to “Strong’s Greek Dictionary” it means “*to complete*,” which means that Christ “*finished*” something when He laid His life down on the cross. Do the words “*It is finished*” mean anything to you? These were the last words of Jesus, which He cried with a loud voice just before He “*gave up the ghost*” John 19:30 and died. Two verses previously, the scripture speaks of Jesus, “*knowing that all things were now accomplished*.” He had accomplished everything He came into the world to do on that cross. All that remained was to seal it with His death. After shouting “*It is finished*,” He willingly breathed His last breath and laid His life down. But what does that have to do with us who believe? What difference does it make in those whom Paul said He has “*perfected forever*?” That’s what this message is about.

Notice that our text for this message says, “*For by one offering He (Christ) hath perfected forever them that are sanctified*.” The correct understanding of this verse strikes down numerous “doctrines” of the modern church that have held the people in bondage to sin. Remember, Christ came into the world to “*take away our sin*” John 1:29, I John 3:5, but the modern church says “we are all sinners, who must sin every day.” Those who believe what the modern church teaches will never be “*free from sin*” Romans 6:18, 22, but will struggle with sin every day of their life and be lost in the end John 8:24.

What God calls “*perfect (complete)*” is what David called “*clean hands and a pure heart*.” This matter was so clear and dear to David that he wrote a song about it; “*Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? **He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;** who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation*” Psalms 24:3-5. While it is true that perfect obedience to the Law would give a person “*clean hands*,” it can never give them a “*pure heart*.” When Saul of Tarsus was persecuting the church, according to the righteousness

of the Law of Moses, his hands were clean, but his heart was filled with malice, hatred, and murder against the Christians. Paul testified of his spiritual condition during that horrible time in his life, saying, *“...circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless”* Philippians 3:5-6. Strange but true, the Law could have condemned Saul of Tarsus to death for *“gathering sticks on the sabbath day”* Numbers 15:32-36, but it could not condemn him for *“breathing out slaughter against the disciples of the Lord”* Acts 9:1, and *“making havock of the church”* Acts 8:3. Neither could it take the malice and hatred out of his heart.

What the Law Could Not Do...

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:3-4

A very simple way to discover what Christ came into the world to do is to find in the scriptures what the Law could not do. For example, the apostle Paul told the Hebrews, *“For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did...”* Hebrews 7:19. The object of this verse is *“perfection (completion),”* which the Law of Moses demanded of the people, but could not give. In this we see the “negative” and the “positive” confirmed in one verse: the law could not make any thing perfect, but *“the bringing in of a better hope (Christ) did.”*

A Great High Priest

“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was here that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?”

Hebrews 7:11

A thousand years before Jesus was born to Mary, David wrote these words which were a prophecy of Christ: *“The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool”* Psalms 110:1. The one David spoke of as *“my Lord”* is the eternal Christ, who was *“in the beginning with God”* and who *“was God”* John 1:1, and was *“made flesh to dwell among us”* John 1:14. The words *“sit thou at my right hand”* were a prophecy which was fulfilled after the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, when He ascended to His Father.

In the same Psalm, David wrote, *“The LORD **hath sworn, and will not repent**, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec”* Psalms 110:4. This “oath,” from which God “will not repent” makes the priesthood of Jesus Christ the basis for the revelation the apostle Paul gives in his epistle to the Hebrews. The decree of God concerning a great priest to come who would not be of the Levitical priesthood, which Moses initiated under his law, was a guarantee that the law itself would have to be changed when Christ would come.

*“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. **For it is evident** that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.”* Hebrews 7:12-14

The Levitical priesthood was instituted by the Law of Moses, which did not allow anyone to be a priest if they were not born of the tribe of Levi. Jesus was born of the tribe of Juda, and the Law rejected him as a priest, and most especially as a “great high priest.” The law would require His death if for no other reason than He was a high priest *“after the order of Melchisedec,”* and not after the order of Aaron. Notice the words *“...it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda...”*

*“And **it is yet far more evident**: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of*

an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” Hebrews 7:15-16

It was evident that Jesus belonged to the tribe of Judah, and could not be a priest under the Law of Moses, The apostle Paul says, *“it is far more evident”* that Jesus was a “priest” who was not made by man, but a “priest unto God” after the order of Melchisedec. No man had held such a title until Christ came into the world.

Those who were priests under the Law of Moses were made by the coincidence of their birth, because they were born to the tribe of Levi. This spoke nothing about their moral character. Some were very good men, but others were very vile. The two sons of Eli were priests, and not only priests, but were those “chosen” to carry the Ark of the Covenant upon their shoulders. They were also *“sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD”* I Samuel 2:12. The designation, “Sons of Belial” means they were absolutely “worthless,” with no redeeming factors in their character. They were immoral young men who seduced the young women who came to the house of God. They stole the best of the offerings for themselves, yet in spite of all these things, they were “priests” who were *“made after the law of a carnal commandment.”*

Christ, *“the eternal Word,”* who was *“in the beginning with God,”* and *“was God”* John 1:1, was *“made flesh and dwelt among us”* John 1:14. This is He of whom God had said, *“Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.”* He could be a *“priest forever,”* because He alone had immortality I Timothy 6:16, *“the power of an endless life.”*

Disannulling the Commandment

“For He testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.” Hebrews 7:17-18

The *“disannulling of the commandment”* (the Law of Moses) was necessary due to the decree by God that Christ would be a priest forever. It was because of *“the weakness and unprofitableness”* of

the Law of Moses that Christ came into the world to do *“what the Law could not do.”* In his epistle to the Romans, Paul deals with the issue of the “weakness” of the Law. *“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”* Romans 8:3. The Law could not perfect anything, but Christ did. He passed the death sentence on *“sin in the flesh,”* and carried it out on the cross where “sin” was nailed to the cross with Him. He bare the sin of the world in His own body to the cross II Peter 2:24; thus He *“taketh away the sin of the world”* John 1:29 that we might go free to serve sin no more. With sin taken away, and nailed to His cross, our hearts are *“purified by faith”* Acts 15:9 when we *“believe the word of truth”* and *“trust in Christ”* Ephesians 1:13. He hath *“perfected forever them that are sanctified.”*

We know that the Law of God is “spiritual” Romans 7:14, and is written on the “new heart” Hebrews 8:10 of everyone who is “born of God.” The Law of Moses is a “carnal commandment” Hebrews 7:16, which was made *“...for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons...”* I Timothy 1:9-10. The “weakness and unprofitableness” of the Law of Moses is that it is “carnal” and was made for carnal people. It was powerful to “kill the sinner,” but impotent when it came to destroying the sin that was in the sinner. It was *“weak through the flesh,”* having only “carnal commandments” to impose on “carnal people.” Those who trust in “step plans” and “keeping of principles” are in no better estate. They will struggle with sin in their heart as long as they live, and be lost in the end.

The “Better Hope”

“For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.”

Hebrews 7:19

In a word, the weak and unprofitable nature of the law was that it could not bring anything to completion (perfection). On the other

hand, those who know the truth and trust in Christ were “*made perfect (complete)*” when Christ died for us. “*For by one offering, He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified*” Hebrews 10:14. It is by this “*better hope*” that we “*draw nigh to God.*”

The “*better hope*” is Christ! It is He who “*by one offering, hath perfected forever them that are sanctified*” Hebrews 10:14. Some would say the “*better hope*” is the “*Better Covenant.*” That is true, but Christ is the “*Better Covenant.*” God gave the promise to Jesus Christ through the prophet Isaiah, saying, “*I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles*” Isaiah 42:6.

The apostle Paul tells us God sent His own Son “*in the likeness of sinful flesh*” to do “*what the law could not do,*” which was to “*condemn (destroy) sin in the flesh*” Romans 8:3. The Law could seek to keep the people from sinning, and it could “*kill the sinner,*” but it could never “*kill the sin*” that was in the sinner.

The “Guarantee”

“*And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:) By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.*” Hebrews 7:20-22

This is the sixth time in this epistle, and the third time in this chapter, that Paul has mentioned the priesthood of Jesus Christ as being “*after the order of Melchisedec.*” This repetition reveals the great importance the apostle places on this matter. God swore by an oath He will not repent of, that Christ, who is revealed as “*David’s Lord*” in the 110th Psalm, would be “*a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.*” This is one of the “*two immutable things*” Hebrews 6:18, which gives “*strong consolation*” to those who have “*fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us*” Hebrews 6:18. From the moment of the “*oath,*” which was sworn a thousand years before

Jesus was born to Mary, the end of the Law of Moses was guaranteed. Paul speaks of the oath when he says, “*By so much (the oath) was Jesus made a surety (guarantee) of a better testament (the new covenant).*”

The fact of “who Christ is” brought conflict between Jesus and the ecclesiastical heads of the Jews religion. It was no different than when the wise men from the east came to King Herod saying, “*Where is he that is born king of the Jews*” Matthew 2:2-3. Herod felt his position threatened, and conceived a plan to murder the child before He was two years old. Jesus Christ was by every right of inheritance “*The King of the Jews.*” Pilate asked Him during His trial, “*Art thou a king then?*” John 18:37, to which Jesus answered, “*Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice*” verse 38.

It has been falsely reported by those who do not know or believe the scriptures, that the crucifixion of Jesus was a Roman plot, carried out by Pilate. This very obviously is not so. Pilate’s personal judgment of Jesus was “*I find no fault in him*” John 19:6. The scripture says, “*And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him...*” John 19:12. When Pilate finally consented to the Jews to have Him crucified, He “*...wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS*” John 19:19. This was not done in mockery by Pilate. Instead, it was an indication that Pilate knew Jesus was of the lineage of David, and had a rightful claim to the throne in Jerusalem. Jesus made no such claim, however, because He had previously told Pilate, “*My kingdom is not of this world...*” John 18:37.

The scribes, the Pharisees, the lawyers, and the Sadducees, and even the high priest all felt threatened by this man from Galilee, who was obviously so much more than “just a man from Galilee.” As Paul has written, it was evident that Jesus was of the tribe of Judah, of which Moses allowed no priests, but it was “*much more evident*” Hebrews 7:15 that this man was much more than any of the priests in Israel; He was a “*priest unto God,*” exactly as Melchisedec had been

in the days of Abraham. The Law of Moses demanded His death, but as hard as the scribes and Pharisees tried, they could not trap Him in His words to condemn Him.

Jesus had been a highly favored young man in the synagogue at Nazareth for all the years of His life. The scriptures says, *“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man”* Luke 2:52. He held the honored position in the synagogue of reading the scriptures during the Sabbath Day services. During His first service at Nazareth after the Holy Ghost came upon Him, Jesus read the scripture from the prophet Isaiah which says, *“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD hath anointed me...”* Isaiah 61:1, Luke 4:18. After reading the text, Jesus said, *“This day this scripture is fulfilled in your ears”* Luke 4:21, indicating that He was the promised one, the Messiah of Israel. The congregation was stunned! As He continued speaking to them, the entire congregation was filled with wrath against this young man whom they believed to be *“the son of Joseph.”* They *“...rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong”* Luke 4:29.

The idea that the purpose of Jesus Christ was to “keep the Law of Moses perfectly, and impute His ‘perfection by the law’ to our record” is ridiculous. The moment Jesus was born to Mary and placed in a manger, He was the “guarantee,” given by God that the Law of Moses would be abolished, because the baby in the manger was *“Christ, the Lord”* Luke 2:11. He was the one David wrote about in his Psalm when he said, *“The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool”* Psalms 110:1. Those who believed *“Jesus is the Christ”* called Him *“the son of David,”* but in fact, He was *“David’s Lord”* Matthew 22:41-45.

Salvation to the Uttermost

“And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

Hebrews 7:23-24

“But this man...” speaks of Jesus, who is the “incarnation” of *“The Word,”* which was *“in the beginning with God, and was God”* John 1:1, and was *“...made flesh, and dwelt among us”* John 1:14. He was not “just a man” however, He was *“the Lord (David’s Lord; Psalms 110:1) from heaven”* I Corinthians 15:47. His blood was “holy blood” Hebrews 10:28-29, and His body, though dead and in the tomb for three days, *“saw no corruption”* Acts 13:37.

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” Hebrews 7:25.

Our original text for this message is *“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”* This is the fulfillment of the promise to *“save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.”* The words *“to the uttermost”* speak of the same *“completion”* that *“perfected forever”* indicates. We will see even more of the wonderful estate of those whom He has *“saved to the uttermost”* in verses to come.

“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens” Hebrews 7:26.

This verse simply tells what kind of “high priest” was needed if the worshipers were to be *“saved to the uttermost.”* He must be “holy” by nature, and not by obedience to carnal ordinances only. He must be “harmless” and “undefiled,” with no sin in His heart or nature. He must not have a “sin nature” if He is to *“save His people from their sins”* Matthew 1:21. The “high priest” we needed must be *“separate from sinners,”* which must speak of a “difference,” and not “distance,” between himself sinners. The scribes and Pharisees would not approach a sinner, nor would they allow a sinner to approach them, but Jesus sat down and ate with sinners, yet He was *“separate from sinners.”*

“....and made higher than the heavens.” These words indicate that the high priest we needed must not only be above sinners, but also *“above every name that is named”* Philippians 2:9, whether they be *“in heaven, in earth, or under the earth”* verse 10. No man

of earth could ever attain to such heights. Jesus, however, was *“higher than the heavens”* by virtue of His being “born” the Son of God. The Greek word *“ginomai,”* which was translated *“made”* in this verse, is defined by “Strong’s Greek Dictionary” as *“to cause to be (gen-erate), that is, (reflexively) to become (come into being).”* The “incarnation,” which took place in the womb of Mary, birthed a man-child who was *“higher than the heavens.”* God said, *“Let all the angels of God worship Him”*

Hebrews 1:6.

The birth of Jesus was under incredibly poor circumstances. He was born in a stable, surrounded by the sheep and cattle, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and placed in a manger, yet this “baby in the manger” was our *“...Savior, which is Christ, the Lord”* Luke 2:11. He was *“made (came into being) higher than the heavens.”* There was never a time when He was less.

“Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself” Hebrews 7:27.

The high priest we needed could not have been born with a sin nature. Under the Law of Moses, the high priest was required to offer sacrifices for his own sins before he could offer for the people. Such a high priest could never offer a sacrifice or sprinkle blood that could sanctify the people. It was only “pomp and ceremony,” a “show of religion” which was required of them by the *“carnal commandments”* Hebrews 7:16 of Moses, which were *“...imposed upon them until the time of reformation”* Hebrews 8:10.

Consecrated For Evermore

For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore” Hebrews 7:28.

Again, remember our original text for this message: *“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”* The words *“consecrated for evermore,”* which refer to Jesus Christ, are synonymous to the words *“perfected forever,”* which refers to

“them who are sanctified” Hebrews 10:14. In fact, both the words *“consecrated”* and *“perfected”* in these two verses are translated from the same Greek word, *“teleioō,”* which is defined by “Strong’s Greek Dictionary” as *“to complete.”* From the moment sin entered into the world by Adam, there was never again a “complete (perfected)” man or woman until the incarnation of Christ. The Levitical priesthood could not bring completion (perfection); the Law of Moses could not do it; the sacrifices which were offered under the law could not do it. We needed a total change in the system that had so totally failed those who trusted in it.

The first phrase of this verse speaks of the *“infirmity”* of those men who were made to be high priests under the Law of Moses. The *“infirmity”* spoken of could not have been any physical infirmity whatsoever, because all such were forbidden by the law to approach the altar. *“Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God”* Leviticus 21:17. The “blemishes” were delineated in the verses that follow; *“...a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous, or a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded, Or crookbackt, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken; no man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire...”*

Leviticus 21:18-21.

The “infirmity” of those priests, including the high priest, was “sin” in their heart and nature. They, as every other child of Adam, were polluted with sin in their heart. They were “all sinners” even though they may not have been guilty of committing any act of sin. By contrast, our great high priest is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is *“consecrated for evermore.”*

The second phrase of this verse speaks of *“the word of the oath, which was since the law.”* This was the oath God swore to Christ a thousand years before Jesus was born to Mary, *“Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec”* Psalms 110:4. This “oath,” which was given by God about five hundred years after the Law of

Moses was given, superseded the Law and would, at the time appointed, replace the Law Galatians 4:4-5.

The Law made men to be high priests who were polluted with sin in their hearts and natures. There were none who were otherwise. Consider Aaron, the brother of Moses and the first high priest of Israel. Every high priest of Israel was a direct descendant of Aaron. Consider the great honor which is imputed to Aaron unto this day by those who trust in the Law, yet Aaron was the one who fashioned the golden calf for the children of Israel to worship in the absence of Moses Exodus 32:2-5. He declared the golden calf to be the “god” who brought them out of bondage to Egypt, and even went so far as to call the calf by the name of “*the LORD* (Jehovah).” Such was the manner of priests which were made under the Law.

The “*oath*,” which was spoken by God almost five hundred years after the Law of Moses was given, made Christ, who as “The Word” had been eternally “with God” and “was God” John 1:1 to be our great high priest, “consecrated forevermore.”

“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” Hebrews 8:1-2.

The 110th Psalm is the prophetic key to understanding so much of what the apostle writes in this epistle. “*The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*” Psalms 110:1. This is a prophecy of Jesus Christ in His ascension to sit down at the right hand of His Father after He had “...*put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*” Hebrews 9:26. In the same Psalm, David writes “*The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*” Psalms 110:4. The apostle Paul brings these together, showing by the scriptures that “*Jesus is the Christ*” Acts 17:3, I John 5:1, and “*Christ*” is our great high priest. He is everything the apostle said we “needed” in a high priest. He is “...*holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens*” Hebrews 7:26.

“For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law” Hebrews 8:3-4.

“This man,” speaking of Christ Jesus, if He is a “high priest” as the prophecies said, must have a “sacrifice” to offer. His “offering” could not be the body and blood of animals. This was the offering of the Levitical priesthood, which was proven to be “weak and unprofitable” Hebrews 7:18, because “...it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” Hebrews 10:4. *“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me”* Hebrews 10:5. Christ is the one who “came into the world” when “the Word was made flesh” John 1:14. That “flesh” was the body of Jesus Christ, whom John the Baptist declared to be “The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” John 1:29. He was also our “great high priest,” and the “sacrifice” He would offer would be His own body and blood.

The Better Sacrifice

*“The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that **could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;** Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.”* Hebrews 9:8-10

Under the Law of Moses, the High Priest was the one chosen to enter once a year into the place called the “holiest,” which was behind the second veil of the temple. He was to enter with the blood of a Passover lamb to sprinkle upon the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant, for the sins of the people. It was required of him to offer “both gifts and sacrifices” for his own sins before he went behind the veil to offer for the sins of the people Hebrews 7:27. While the high priest could be “perfect” in his obedience to the precepts of the Law,

those “*gifts and sacrifices*” which he offered for his own sin “*could not make him that did the service (the high priest) perfect as pertaining to the conscience.*” The “*divers washings and carnal ordinances*” could cleanse him outwardly, in his flesh body, but it could not cleanse his heart and nature from indwelling sin. The scripture says he “*stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances,*” things which were “*imposed on them until the time of reformation,*” which would not come until Christ offered His “*one sacrifice for sins for ever*” Hebrews 10:12, to “*take away our sin*” John 1:29, 1 John 3:5. Not even the High Priest could stand complete before God with the “*weak and beggarly elements*” Galatians 4:9 of the Law of Moses.

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” Hebrews 9:11-12.

Christ was made “*a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec*” Psalms 110:4 by the oath of God, given a thousand years before Jesus was born to Mary. The baby Jesus in the manger, however, was announced by the angel Gabriel to be “*a savior, which is Christ, the Lord*” Luke 2:11. He was also our “*high priest forever*” with “*the power of an endless life*” Hebrews 7:16. The baby Jesus was our “*savior,*” but He did not “*save us from our sins*” Matthew 1:21 until thirty three year later when He “*put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*” Hebrews 9:26. According to that same pattern, the baby Jesus in the manger was our great high priest, but He did not enter His priestly ministry until He offered His one and only sacrifice, which not only “*made an end of sins*” Daniel 9:24 in those who believe, but also “*caused sacrifice and oblation to cease*” Daniel 9:27. By His one sacrifice, He “*destroyed the body of sin*” Romans 6:6, and “*abolished the Law of Moses*” Ephesians 2:15 for those who believe the truth John 8:32. Jesus Christ, our great high priest, would not have been allowed in the “*holy places*” of the temple made by man; instead, He entered

into the “holiest of all” in heaven with His own blood, and obtained eternal redemption for all who will believe.

*“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 blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer,” which were prescribed by the Law of Moses to ceremonially sanctify the flesh of the high priest before he entered the holiest place behind the veil, were such that “...could not make him that did the service perfect, **as pertaining to the conscience**” Hebrews 9:9. The contrast between the blood of animals which could not “take away sins” Hebrews 10:4, and the blood of Christ is given in these verses; *“How much more shall the blood of Christ ...purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”*

Every child of God is “born again” with a “pure heart” and “no conscience of sin” Hebrews 10:2. They have by new birth that which even the High Priest under the Old Covenant could never attain. The Greek word which was translated “conscience” is defined by “Strong’s Greek Dictionary” as “moral consciousness,” which is rightly understood to be “the innermost thoughts and feelings of man” (American College Dictionary). The blood of bulls and goats was sufficient for ceremonial cleansings, but could not reach further than the outward man. Only the blood of Christ is of such nature to wash the inside of man where we could never wash ourselves. Christ, our great high priest, has “washed our sins away” with His own precious blood.

The Sacrifice Presented to God

*“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; **but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us**”* Hebrews 9:24.

The events described in these verses all took place in the same day as His resurrection, before He was touched by the hands of mortal

man. He fulfilled every “type” and “shadow” of that which Moses had seen in the pattern of heavenly things shown to him by God. The high priest under the Law was sanctified to slay the Passover Lamb, and could not come in contact with any unclean thing until the time he entered the holiest and sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat, and returned again. When Jesus was resurrected early on the first day on the week, the only person to see Him was Mary. He told Mary, *“Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father”* John 20:17. On the evening of that same day, Jesus appeared to His disciples, and they were afraid because they thought He was a spirit (ghost). Jesus said to them, *“Handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have”* Luke 24:59. Sometime that day, between *“touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father,”* and *“handle me and see,”* Jesus had ascended into the holiest of all in heaven, and presented Himself, the perfect sacrifice, before His Father. The sacrifice was accepted by God in the holiest of all in heaven, and Jesus returned again to be with His disciples for another forty days.

One Sacrifice, Once for All, Forever

*“Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: **but now once** in the end of the world **hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself**”*

Hebrews 9:25-26

The key in these verses is the word “once;” Christ offered one sacrifice, once forever, and *“once for all”* Hebrews 10:10. The high priest under the Law of Moses was required to sacrifice another Passover lamb each year for the sin that continued to reign in the hearts of men. The *“sin problem”* was such that two lambs had to be slain on the altar *“day by day continually”* Exodus 29:38-43. This was called *“the daily sacrifice,”* which consisted of one lamb in the morning and the other in the evening.

*“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ **was once offered to bear the sins of***

many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” Hebrews 9:27-28

These two verses are connected with the word “so,” which means “in this way.” It is “*appointed unto men once to die,*” and “*in this way,*” Christ, “*...by means of death*” Hebrews 9:15, bare the sin of the world to the cross to be destroyed. It is to those who “*trust in Him*” Ephesians 1:12 whose sins have been “*taken away*” I John 3:5-6, and to those who “*look for Him*” and “*love His appearing*” II Timothy 4:8 that He appears the second time “*without sin unto salvation.*” All the rest, even though being appointed “*once to die,*” will be judged and cast into “*the second death*” Revelation 21:8.

Notice the words “*once to die.*” Man’s “appointment with death” came with the entrance of sin when Adam disobeyed God. Paul wrote of this, saying, “*Wherefore, as 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. Man does not die because of his own sins, but because of the sin of Adam. When sin entered into the world, death came with it. The words, “*...so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,*” are best understood from the Greek text to say, “*...in this way death passed into all men, with the result that all have sinned.*” Fallen man sins because he is a sinner; he is a sinner because Adam sinned. Christ died to take away our sin, not only that we would “live again,” but that we would have a “*better resurrection*” Hebrews 11:35.

The Weakness of the Law

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.” Hebrews 10:1

Under the Law of Moses, there were two lambs offered every day continually, one called “the morning sacrifice,” and the other, “the evening sacrifice.” There were sacrifices offered at the new moons, the feast days, the holy days, and the Sabbaths. At the feast of Passover, there would be many thousands of lambs and bullocks

sacrificed, but the greatest of all the sacrifices was the Passover lamb, which was offered once every year by the high priest. The high priest would take the blood of the Passover lamb into the “holiest of all” which was “*behind the veil*” to sprinkle it upon the mercy seat for the sins of the people, yet for all this, in almost 1500 years of such offerings there was never found a sacrifice to “*take away sin.*” This is what is meant when the apostle says *those sacrifices “can never ...make the comers thereunto perfect.”* They could “*purify the flesh,*” but they could never “*purify the heart,*” which is what God calls “*perfected forever (complete)*” Hebrews 10:14.

“For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins” Hebrews 10:2.

If there had been any sacrifice offered under the Law that could have purified the heart of the worshippers, the sacrifices would have immediately ceased, “*because*” if the worshipper were purged from sin, they would “*have no more conscience of sins.*” The fact that every sacrifice was followed by another sacrifice for almost 1500 years only served to prove the “*weakness and unprofitableness*” Hebrews 7:18 of the Law.

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:” Hebrews 10:4-5.

Due to the fact that “*perfection (completion)*” could not come through the Levitical priesthood, the apostle has established that another high priest had to arise after the order of Melchisedec, and not of the order of Aaron Hebrews 7:11. Since Jesus was born of the tribe of Juda, and the Law prescribed that every priest of Israel must be born to the tribe of Levi, there had be a change in the Law Hebrews 7:12 if He were to be our great high priest. Since the Law could not be amended, it had to be abolished Hebrews 7:18, and a “*better covenant*” be established on “*better promises*” Hebrews 8:6. If the priesthood and the Law were changed and a “*great high priest*” has arisen with “*the power of an endless life*” Hebrews 7:16, it becomes obvious, this great

high priest must also have a “*better sacrifice*” to offer. This is the basis for what Christ said “...when He cometh into the world...”

A Body Prepared

“Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.” Hebrews 10:5

First, why would He who was “*in the beginning with God*” and “*was God*” John 1:1 say “*sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not?*” To begin with, animal sacrifices were never the will of God for the children of Israel. If they had received Him and obeyed His voice at Mount Sinai Exodus 20:18-19, the Law of Moses would never have been given. The Apostle Paul said of the Law of Moses, “*It was added because of transgressions until the seed should come to whom the promise was made*” Galatians 3:19. God had told them through Moses, “*Now therefore, 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 19:5-6.

Almost a thousand years later, God spoke to them through the prophet Jeremiah shortly before their city and temple were destroyed, saying, “*Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward*” Jeremiah 7:21-24. God concluded His rebuke of the children of Israel by saying to them, “***This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God...***” Jeremiah 7:28.

God revealed His attitude concerning sacrifices and offerings brought by who refused His voice through the prophet Isaiah; “*He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb,*

as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations" Isaiah 66:3.

Through the prophet Amos, God said to Israel, *"I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream"* Amos 5:21-24.

The children of Israel had deteriorated in their relationship with God to the extent they believed they could fulfill every evil desire of their heart, and it would be alright with God as long as they offered the blood of another animal. Under those conditions, God said to them, *"you might as well cut off a dog's neck as to sacrifice a lamb to me, when your heart is so far from me."* He came to "hate their feast days." He said the songs of their worship were nothing more than "noise," and refused to listen to their instruments of worship, because of their *"wicked ways"* II Chronicles 7:14. David understood these things when he repented of his great sin with Bathsheba and Uriah. He prayed to God, *"For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: **thou delightest not in burnt offering.** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise"* Psalms 51:16-17.

The phrase *"...but a body hast thou prepared me"* answers to the demands of a previous verse if Christ were to be our great high priest: *"For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: **wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer**"* Hebrews 8:3. His *"offering"* was His own flesh and blood *"body,"* which was prepared by God to be the sacrifice to *"take away the sin of the world"* John 1:29.

"In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come ...to do thy will, O God."

Hebrews 10:6-7

The “will” of God, “*the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*” was that He should offer His own body and blood to do what the blood of millions of animal sacrifices offered since the beginning of time had failed to do. He, through the sacrifice of His own body, would make “*an end of sin*” Daniel 9:24 in the heart of every man or woman who would believe the truth, and trust in Him. He would “*take their sin away*” I John 3:5.

“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” Hebrews 10:10.

According to the “Strong’s Greek dictionary,” the Greek word “*hagiazō,*” which was translated “*sanctified,*” means “*to make holy.*” The apostle Paul, writing to the church at Thessalonica, said “**For this is the will of God, even your sanctification** (purification), *that ye should abstain from fornication*” I Thessalonians 4:3. This verse reminds me of the age old riddle which says “Which came first, the chicken or the egg?” Obviously, the chicken produces the egg, and the egg produces a chicken. In the case of Paul’s admonition to the Thessalonians, there can be only one answer as to which comes first, “sanctification” or “abstinence.” Sanctification, in every case will produce abstinence from fornication, but “abstinence” can never produce sanctification. The apostle Paul was promoting sanctification above abstinence, because only sanctification which is by the blood of Jesus Christ Hebrews 13:12 can “*purify our heart*” Acts 15:9 and “*cleans us from all sin*” I John 1:7. In every case, this “*purifying*” and “*cleansing,*” which is by the shed blood of Jesus Christ, will bring an end to every sexual sin (fornication).

In Paul’s conclusion to his epistle to the Thessalonians, He wrote, “*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly (completely); and I pray God your whole (complete) spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*” I Thessalonians 5:23. The question as to how God does this is clearly delineated in our text if we can believe it: “*We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*” It was the “will of God” that it should be so.

“And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins” Hebrews 10:11.

The entire lifetime of a priest under the Law of Moses was spent sacrificing animals on the altar as prescribed by Moses, yet it was all in vain, because as Paul tells us, *“It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”* Hebrews 10:4.

“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool” Hebrews 10:12-13.

“This man” was Christ, our great high priest. His *“one sacrifice”* was His own body and blood, which He offered to *“take away the sin of the world.”* With these verses and the next, we reach the conclusion of that which began in the first verses of this epistle, speaking of the Son of God, *“...who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high”* Hebrews 1:3.

“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” Hebrews 10:14

Notice it is *“them that are sanctified”* that Christ has *“perfected forever.”* Notice also that it is by *“one offering”* that we have been *“perfected (made complete),”* and it is *“through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”* Hebrews 10:10 that we are sanctified. It is impossible that sanctification can be obtained through a lifetime process, because the full redemption of the people was wrought and finished on the cross of Christ for those who *“know the truth”* and *“trust in Christ”* Ephesians 1:12. In the concluding chapter of Hebrews, the apostle Paul tells us everything we need to know about the sufferings of Jesus Christ: *“Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate”* Hebrews 13:12. This *“sanctification”* by the blood of Jesus Christ is what God calls *“perfected forever”* (made complete).

Jesus Christ, the Same...

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.” Hebrews 13:8-9

The message of salvation is, and always has been, *“Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”* I Corinthians 2:2. Why did Christ die on the cross? There can be only one answer; to *“take away the sin of the world”* John 1:29, I John 3:5. Any other answer is a *“strange doctrine”* if it is not specifically spoken in the scriptures. The apostle warns us not to be established in doctrines *“...which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.”* Have you believed and defended a doctrine for most of your life, while at the same time sin continues to reign in your heart and nature? Does it satisfy you to believe we are “all sinners,” but it doesn’t matter, because “Jesus took the penalty for our sin?” Such teachings as this are the *“divers and strange doctrines”* which Paul warned against. They are “foreign” to the word of God, and cannot be found in the scriptures. The “penalty of sin” is still death; Christ died to *“take away our sin,”* and where there is no sin, there is no penalty.

The apostle Paul established an undeniable fact when he wrote, *“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”* Hebrews 10:4. Only seven verses later, the apostle presents an enigma, *“...and every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins”* Hebrews 10:11. These *“same sacrifices”* had been offered under the Law of Moses for almost fifteen hundred years. Why, after the *“Lamb of God”* has been offered to *“take away the sin of the world,”* would any priest continue to offer the same sacrifices that were proven not to accomplish anything for the worshiper, and had not been accepted by God for nearly a thousand years? Everything these priests did was merely a dead form that could not profit those who trusted in them.

We face a similar enigma today. Knowing that “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow,*” we know that “*the gospel of Christ*” is forever the same. If we preach the same gospel that Paul and Silas preached we will get the same results; they “*turned the world upside down*” Acts 17:6, preaching “*Jesus is the Christ*” Acts 17:3, who came into the world “*to make an end of sins*” Daniel 9:24-25. The modern church has followed the error of Judaism in the first century by preaching continually a message that cannot take away the sin of those who believe it. Do we know the scriptures and the power of God?” Matthew 22:29. Why do we doubt that God will take sin out of the heart and nature of those who believe the truth and trust in Him? Is it possible that the creator of heaven and earth does not have the power to make a “*new creation*” out of me? John spoke very clearly when he said, “***And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him***” I John 3:5-6. These scriptures were not written to damn any person. Instead, they are the truth that makes all who know (*and ye know*) and believe (*He was manifested to take away our sins*) free from sin (*in Him is no sin*) to serve God in righteousness, peace, and joy (*whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not*).

Sanctified unto Obedience

*“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.**”* I Peter 1:1-2

When God gave His “covenant of blessing” to Abraham, He said, “*By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; **because thou***

hast obeyed my voice” Genesis 22:16-18. When God approached the descendants of Abraham with the same “*blessing*,” He said, “***If you will obey my voice...***” Exodus 19:5. Almost a thousand years later, God spoke to the children of Israel through the prophet Jeremiah, saying, “*I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices (no Law of Moses): But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people*” Jeremiah 7:22-23. God concluded by saying, “***This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth***” Jeremiah 7:28.

It is a strange doctrine that says because we “believe in Jesus” there is no need to “obey His voice.” Obedience to the voice of God is just as essential today as it was when the children of Israel stood at the foot of Mount Sinai while God spoke from the mountain. They were brought into bondage under the Law of Moses because of their refusal to hear the voice of God. It is true that unregenerate people today are no different than that generation from so long ago, because they have no “heart” to serve God. Peter understood, however, that those who are “*born of God*” are also “*sanctified unto obedience*” 1 Peter 1:2. They have received a “*new heart*” and a “*new spirit*” Ezekiel 36:26, which is both “pure from sin” and “obedient unto God.”

“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father...” 1 Peter 1:14-17

Notice the words “*not fashioning yourselves....*” Many years ago (1989), I had an experience from the Lord that gave me instant understanding of those words. In my sleep one night, I kept hearing these words; “*Leroy! Stop trying to be something you are not. Just relax, and be what you are.*” I assure you, I hated to hear those words, because I had been backslidden and deep in sin ten years before, and I believed, as I had been taught all my life, that if I

“relaxed,” and “let my guard down,” I would be morally unclean. I hated such a thought, so I rejected what I heard, yet every time I fell into sleep, I would hear the same words again, *“Leroy! Stop trying to be something you are not. Just relax, and be what you are.”* I tried not to sleep because I didn’t want to hear those words, which I believed must have been from an unclean spirit trying to deceive me. Finally, about 5 O’clock in the morning I heard the words again. This time I woke up just enough to pray, *“Jesus, I don’t know what is speaking to me. If it is not you, make it stop speaking, but if it is you, let me understand what you are saying.”* As I drifted back to sleep, I heard the same words again, *“Leroy! Stop trying to be something you are not. Just relax, and be what you are,”* but this time He continued with a voice that seem to “boom” from heaven; ***“BEING BORN AGAIN, JUST BE WHAT YOU ARE!”***

Suddenly I was wide awake, knowing I had heard from heaven. As I awoke, I was hearing these bits and pieces of scripture: *“As obedient children ...not fashioning yourselves ...be ye holy; for I am holy ...and if ye call on the Father...”* I Peter 1:14-17. When I heard the words *“the Father,”* the truth of Peter’s statement exploded within me. If God were truly my Father, I was holy by nature. I heard the voice of the Spirit bringing other scriptures to me with full understanding, for example, *“...if the firstfruit (Jesus, the firstborn) be holy, the lump (the ‘many brethren’ Romans 8:29) is also holy: and if the root (God, our Father) be holy, so are the branches (the children of God)”* Romans 8:16.

I had been struggling for years to *“fashion myself,”* not after the world, but after what I believed to be “holy.” Actually, I was not struggling to be something I was not; I was struggling to be what I was. I was *“born of God,”* but I was trying to “keep myself,” not understanding we cannot be not our own keeper.

Our Keeper

Jude, in his short epistle, tells us to *“Keep yourselves in the love of God”* Jude 1:21, and tells us how in the previous verse, *“...building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost”* Jude 1:20. He brings his conclusion only three verses later, saying, *“Now*

unto him (Christ) that is **able to keep you from falling** (into sin), and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy..." Jude 1:24. 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...*" I John 3:5-6. In the last chapter of his epistle, John reconfirms his bold statement; "*We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not*" I John 5:18. Again, just three verses later, John reveals to the "infant Christians" the secret of "keeping yourself," saying, "*Little children (infant Christians), keep yourselves from idols*" I John 5:21. He had already told them, "*believe not every spirit*" I John 4:1. Don't follow the "fads" of religion. Do not believe those who tell you the children of God are also sinners, who must "continue in sin" Romans 6:2. Avoid those who tell you your sins are forgiven "past, present, and future," even before you commit them. These are enemies of your souls, such as those whom Paul called "enemies of the cross" Philippians 3:18. He gave Timothy a sober warning against all such:

"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. and their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus." II Timothy 2:16-17

Paul's warning was given against two false teachers named "*Hymenaeus and Philetus*." He said their teachings were nothing more than "*profane and vain babblings*" which would increase into more ungodliness. Their message was like a cancer in the soul of all who followed them. The apostle was so bold as to call them out by name. If we were to be so bold today, a book this size could not even contain the names that must be named. Notice what Paul said only four verses later; "*If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work*" II Timothy 2:21. The "purging" Paul prescribed was not "from sin," but from the false teachers who bring doctrines that if believed can only "*increase unto more ungodliness*."

Speaking the Truth in Love

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ” Ephesians 4:14-15.

There is one word in this verse that if reduced to its root meaning in the Greek language, will open the door to understanding the message of the apostle. The word “*children*” was translated from the Greek word “*nepios*,” which means “*not speaking*.” It is often used in the New Testament in reference to babies that are not yet able to speak. Paul said, “*That we henceforth be no more ‘not speaking Christians,’ tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine....*” A “not speaking Christian” who follows every fad of religion is like a “kite” caught up in the wind. It darts this way, and is tossed that way. The one who holds the string has no real control over the kite, because it is at the mercy of the wind. With every change of the wind, the kite changes directions, first here, then over there, carried about with every current. The person holding the string can only hope to keep the kite in the air, and keep it from being destroyed when it crashes to the ground.

The apostle spoke of the “not speaking” as being easily deceived by “*the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive....*” The word “sleight” was translated from the Greek word “*kubeia*,” which actually speaks of “dice,” as used for gambling, and especially “loaded dice,” which gives the advantage to the adversary. The “not speaking” are gambling with their souls against a foe that is using loaded dice. The words “cunning craftiness” speaks of the art of a magician, who with sleight of hand and mind can do the most amazing feats, and cause the people to believe they have seen something that did not actually happen. Multitudes who claim to be the children of God will travel around the world and give everything they have to see the strange phenomena of a preacher that is using these methods of Satan to deceive, and they call it “revival.”

I know a man who came to America from India. He worked hard, lived on almost nothing, and soon had over \$40,000.00 in the bank. He was not married and was very lonely. An unscrupulous woman took advantage of him, and pretending to be in love with him, conceived a scheme to get over \$20,000.00 from him. When she disappeared out of his life, he was heartbroken, and half his money was gone. About this time, he began listening to certain television preachers who were giving a promise of a “hundred fold blessing” to anyone who would send them a thousand dollars. He believed these unscrupulous preachers, and gave two of them several thousand dollars, believing this was the way to recover his losses. When the “hundred fold” did not come in, he was convinced he had not given enough. Within several months, this man found himself in a foreign land, absolutely broke, with no one to turn to. He had been as one “tossed to and fro” like a kite in the wind, and deceived by those he placed his trust in.

The apostle Paul gave the remedy for “not speaking Christians” in the next verse: *“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ”* Ephesians 4:15. In the natural, a baby must grow before it can speak. The spiritual “not speaking baby” must begin to “speak the truth in love” before it can grow. Notice the language of the apostle, *“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up....”* It is the secret to *“growing up into Him (Christ) in all things....”* Purge yourselves from the “vain babbling” of the prosperity preachers. Wash yourselves from those who tell you the blood of Jesus Christ does not “*cleanse from all sin*” I John 1:7. He is *“the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”* John 1:29. If you believe Christ died to take away the sin that has destroyed the world, tell the world about it. Christ died to make the whole world free. Jesus said, *“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel...”* Mark 16:15. You don’t have to travel around the world to tell the world. The world is your neighbor, or the one who works in the same workspace as you. Tell them Christ died to make them free. My third son, who is now the pastor at Calvary Outreach, was in the depths of sin when God saved him. Thank God, he was never a “not speaking Christian. Even as a “new born baby” in Christ, Keith was

speaking. When his old friends would come by, he would “*speak the truth in love*” to them, and those who would have dragged him back into the pit of sin, which so often happens to new converts, would cease to “come by.” Within a year, he was baptized with the Holy Ghost, and within another year he was preaching the gospel.

A “not speaking Christian” is the prey of every spiritual predator. They are the victim of every scheme. No one knows where they stand, so they seem to stand for nothing. If you “believe the truth,” then “speak the truth!” Notice that Paul said, “*If thou shalt **confess with thy mouth** the Lord Jesus, and shalt **believe in thine heart** that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*” Romans 10:9. We must “speak with our mouth” the truth of the gospel if we “believe it in our heart;” otherwise, it will not work for us. Do not be a “secret disciple,” but “*speak the truth in love.*”

The “truth” we must speak is never about ourselves. It is about Christ; who He is, what He came into the world to do, and that He did it through death on the cross. He died to “*take our sin away.*” If you believe the truth, stop saying, “*I’m still a sinner.*” That’s not “humility,” it’s a “lie,” which you can accept to the damnation of your soul. It is not a “boast” to say “*He has taken my sin away.*” We did not save ourselves. We could not do it in a dozen lifetimes. Our initial text for this message says, “*...by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.*” If it is through His “one offering” that Christ has “perfected forever” those He sanctifies, we can know that neither “sanctification” nor “perfection” can be received through a process. “*Perfected forever*” means that our full salvation was completed when Christ died for us. His precious blood has “purified” the heart of all who believe. We are “born again of God” with a “pure heart;” with no sin in it. A child of God is not “still a sinner” who must “learn how” to overcome. We are “overcomers” by virtue of our new birth. John said, “*Whatsoever (whosoever) is born of God overcometh the world*” I John 5:4. He spoke to those who had only recently trusted in Christ, saying, “*You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world*” I John 4:4. It is Christ who is in you.

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