

Behold  the Lamb
Publications

The Mystery of Sanctification

by Leroy Surface

The Mystery of Sanctification

“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. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

The favorite scripture of many “Christians” seems to be “...*there is none righteousness, no not one*” Romans 3:10. If this is true, we have a great problem. The problem is this, if a person is not righteous, they are lost. They have no inheritance in heaven. So, what is the answer? Paul gave the answer to the believers at Corinth; “...*but you are washed, you are sanctified, but you are justified...*” 1 Corinthians 6:11. The words “there is none righteous” Romans 3:10 are explained in verse 19; “*Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law...*” Romans 3:19. “*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight...*” Romans 3:20. The Law of Moses could not justify (make the people righteous) because it could not sanctify (make the people holy). It was for this purpose that God sent Christ into the world. I have titled this message “***The Mystery of Sanctification***” only because there are so few people who understand it. Most teachers believe sanctification to be a lifetime process of struggling against sin. But the

truth about sanctification is clearly recorded in the book of Hebrews, and confirmed in every gospel epistle. Paul said to the believers among the Hebrews, “...*we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*” Hebrews 10:10 KJV. Strong’s Greek Dictionary gives the definition of “sanctified” as “made holy.” It cannot be a lifetime process, because

Christ finished it “*through the offering of His body*” on the cross. Those who are sanctified are also justified, which means “*to render just.*” They are in fact “*made righteous*” by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.

“For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” Romans 5:19



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The Mystery of Sanctification; Once for All

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Introduction

Disobedience to God is the root cause of all the hurt and pain that is in the world today. Adam's disobedience in the Garden of Eden brought the entrance of sin into the world, and man was driven out of the paradise of God forever to have his existence in an earth which was cursed because of sin. The Apostle Paul addressed this issue to the Romans; *"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. That "one man" was the first man Adam. The apostle expands on this in verse 19: *"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so **by the obedience of one** shall many be **made righteous**"* Romans 5:19. Notice there is a second "one man" in this verse. Paul said to the Ephesians, *"The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven"* I Corinthians 15:47. Paul continues to say in the next verse, *"As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly"* I Corinthians 15:48. The first man Adam was disobedient, and was capable of disobedience even before he disobeyed God. The second man was the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was *"obedient...even to the death of the cross"* Philippians 2:8.

The best of men, being disobedient by nature, seek to elevate themselves to the level of obedience. Christ is the eternal

“Word,” who was *“in the beginning with God”* and who *“was God”* John 1:1. The scripture says, *“...all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made”* John 1:3. He was the creator of all things who had to come down to the level of obedience. In fact, He humbled Himself two times before He could be obedient to the will of the Father who sent Him.

First, He *“...made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men”* Philippians 2:7. This is what was spoken of in the scriptures as *“His humiliation”* Acts 8:33. He was *“the Lord from Heaven”* I Corinthians 15:47, who came to us in *“the likeness of sinful flesh”* Romans 8:3. There was no sin in Him, but His humiliation was to bear the likeness of sinful flesh. A very poor example would be an emperor who exercised power over the kings and rulers of nations, who would abdicate his throne and adorn himself with the stinking rags of a beggar to live among the beggars under a bridge. To what purpose could such an event be, yet Christ did so much more in the incarnation, which was His first humiliation.

Second, *“...being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”* Philippians 2:8. Christ did not “rise to the level” of obedience; instead He “came down” to obey. The *“things which He suffered”* Hebrews 5:8 did not teach Him obedience; instead, they were the result of His obedience. Imagine once again the humiliation of *“The Lord from heaven”* I Corinthians 15:47 who gave Himself into the hands of those who hated Him, and *“opened not His mouth”* Isaiah 53:7 as they beat Him beyond recognition and nailed Him to a cross. Isaiah said, *“His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle many nations”* Isaiah 52:14-15.

Adam

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” Genesis 1:26

When God created Adam in His image and after His likeness, He gave him a “free will,” which means Adam could choose which course of life to take. As a test for man, God placed two trees in the midst of the Garden of Eden; the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Only one commandment was given to Adam, and that was to not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, *“for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”* Genesis 2:17. We know the record, that Adam disobeyed God, with the result that through his disobedience, sin entered into the world, *“and death by sin”* Romans 5:12. It was through Adam’s disobedience that *“many were made sinners”* Romans 5:19. Exercising his freedom of choice, Adam disobeyed God and ate the fruit of the forbidden tree. In this we clearly see that Adam was capable of disobedience even before he disobeyed. The ability to disobey God is included in man’s free will. I believe if Adam had obeyed God and eaten from the tree of life, the tree of knowledge of good and evil would have been removed from the Garden and the serpent would have been banished forever. The one commandment would have been fulfilled forever, and the entire earth today would be as the Garden of Eden, inhabited by obedient sons and daughters of God, all in the image and likeness of God. This is what would have been, and it is what shall be in the new heavens and earth.

*“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, **wherein dwelleth righteousness.**”* II Peter 3:13

The prophet Isaiah saw in his visions a “*new heavens,*” a “*new earth,*” and a “*new Jerusalem*” Isaiah 65:17-18. He described the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem, “*Thy people shall be **all righteous***” Isaiah 60:21. Of such will be the inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth. The entire population will consist of “*obedient children*” I Peter 1:14. In fact, they will not be capable of disobedience. Some would think such an existence would be miserable; that we would be nothing more than robots. Consider this, however; a person can sin only if sin remains in their heart and nature. Jesus Christ died as “*the Lamb of God*” to “*take away the sin of the world*” John 1:29. The Apostle John said, “***And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins...***” I John 3:5. Did Christ do what the Father sent Him into the world to do? Or did He fail, as Adam before Him failed. If the sacrifice of the Son of God at Calvary did not take sin out of the heart and nature of those who believe and trust in Him, Christ absolutely failed in His mission, but He did not fail. John continued to say, “***...and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not...***” I John 3:5-6. The secret to “*righteousness, peace, and joy*” Romans 14:17 and to have “*freedom from sin*” Romans 6:22 is to “*abide in Christ*” where there is no sin.

The Apostle Paul wrote clearly in his epistle to the Hebrews, “*...we are sanctified **through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all***” Hebrews 10:10. Compare this verse to the words of Paul just four verses later; “*For by **one offering** he hath perfected for ever **them that are sanctified***” Hebrews 10:14. What Christ accomplished through His death on the cross was “perfect” (complete), and those whom He has sanctified are “*perfected forever*” (complete in Christ Colossians 2:10). It is at this point we must define “*sanctification*” more clearly.

What is Sanctification?

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

In order to fully understand the power of this single verse, we must break it down into four independent phrases as follows:

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

“By the which will...” speaks of the will of God when He send Christ into the world. Almost fifteen hundred years of offering millions of animal sacrifices had proven the blood of animals cannot take away sin Hebrews 10:4. Based upon that understanding, Paul wrote, *“Wherefore when he (Christ) cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but **a body hast thou prepared me: 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 10:5-7.

We know that Christ is as eternal as God. As *“the Word”* He was *“in the beginning with God,”* and He *“was God”* John 1:1. We also understand that Jesus, the Son of God, was born to Mary. Paul said, *“...when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, **made of a woman, made under the law...**”* Galatians 4:4. It was the eternal Spirit of Christ who said to the Father, *“**A body hast thou prepared me...I come to do thy will, O God.**”* His *“body,”* which was prepared in the womb of Mary, was prepared by God to be the perfect sacrifice which alone could take away sin. This sacrifice for sin was the sole purpose of His coming into the world. Paul said *“but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself”* Hebrews 9:26. This was the will of God who sent Him.

“...we are sanctified...” Sanctification is not and cannot be a lifetime process. Paul said *“We are sanctified.”* The word “sanctify” was translated from the Greek word “hagiazō,” which means “to make holy” (Strong’s Greek Dictionary), but when translated as “sanctified,” it indicates a finished work. When the apostle says *“we are sanctified,”* he speaks of our state of being. We are not sinners because He has made us holy. The sanctified ones are called “saints” (sacred; holy ones) I Corinthians 1:1-2. It is by the will of God that we are sanctified. The only question for the believer is not whether we are sanctified, but how our sanctification was accomplished.

“...through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ...” This phrase alone proves sanctification cannot be a lifetime process for a believer. It is finished at the cross of Christ. The Apostle Paul gave several comparisons between the body and blood of animals which were offered for sin, and the body and blood of Jesus Christ. One of these is in the last chapter of Hebrews;

“For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.”

Hebrews 13:11-12

Many years ago, while in a desperate struggle with uncleanness in my heart, I discovered Hebrews 13:12. I noticed that in only seventeen words the apostle answered almost every question a news reporter is required to ask; *“who, what, when, where, why, and how.”*

Who? “...Jesus...” **What?** “...suffered...” **When?** This is the only question not answered, but we know when. **Where?**

“...without (outside) the gates...” Why? “...that He might sanctify the people...” How? “...with His own blood...”

If Jesus suffered and died on the cross at Calvary for the sole purpose of shedding His blood to sanctify the people, those who believe the truth must be sanctified. The fact that they still struggle with uncleanness wars against their mind to prove the scripture is not true and they are not sanctified. Many fall into the trap of letting their experience determine what the truth is, rather than letting the truth determine their experience. The scripture says to the believer, *“We are sanctified,”* but not through religious law, lifetime process, or will power; we are sanctified *“through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.”* It is a fact, finished at Calvary, but effectual only to those who believe it.

“...once...” The word *“once”* has been used several times, beginning in the seventh chapter, to show the difference between the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ and that of animal sacrifices. Millions of animal sacrifices were offered by the Levitical priesthood during a period of almost fifteen hundred years, but Jesus Christ ***“offered one sacrifice for sins forever”*** and *“sat down of the right hand of God”* ^{Hebrews 10:12}. The Apostle uses the word *“once”* seven times to illustrate this difference.

The priests under the Law had to sacrifice two lambs every day in the “morning” and the “evening” sacrifice ^{Exodus 29:38-39}. According to Paul, this *“daily sacrifice”* was offered by the priest *“first for his sins, then for the people’s”* ^{Hebrews 7:27}. The fact that this offering had to be repeated two times every day for fifteen hundred years only served to prove, *“...it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”* ^{Hebrews 10:4}. The scripture says our great high priest is, *“holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who*

needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice...for this he did ONCE, when he offered up himself” Hebrews 7:27.

For fifteen hundred years under the Law of Moses, the high priest had to enter once a year behind the veil into “*the holiest of all*” with the blood of a goat and a bullock. The scripture says he offered these “*...for himself, and for the errors of the people*” Hebrews 9:7. How incredibly sinful must have been the hearts, if not the actions, of this people, that two sin offerings must be offered every day, and once every year the high priest must go behind the veil into the presence of God to sprinkle the blood of goats and bullocks. Notice the words of the Apostle Paul concerning this; “*...in those sacrifices there is **a remembrance again made of sins every year**. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins*” Hebrews 10:3:4.

Due to the fact that the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin, and the daily sacrifices only covered them for a season, once every year all the sins the nation came up before God in remembrance. This is the reason the high priest, the highest of all priests, had to enter the holiest of all places to present himself before God. What a fearful thing this was, because the high priest was also a sinner among sinners, “*Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.*” The high priest had to offer for his own sins before he could offer for the people.

*“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

*“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 foundation of the world” speaks not of creation, but of the entrance of sin. Paul said spoke of Jesus Christ to the Galatians, *“Who gave himself for our sins, **that he might deliver us from this present evil world,** according to the will of God and our Father”* Galatians 1:4. The words *“He appeared”* speak of the incarnation of Christ. The word *“appeared”* was translated from the Greek word *“phaneoo,”* which was translated as *“manifested”* in I John 3:5. The Apostle John said, *“And ye know that **he was manifested** to take away our sins...,”* which is another way of saying *“He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”* Christ’s destiny, from the day Adam disobeyed God and brought sin into the world, was to become a man (the seed of the woman; Genesis 3:15) and suffer the death of the cross to make an end of sins Daniel 9:24-25 in the hearts of those who believe and trust in Him. This *“end of sins”* explains *“the end of the world”* in verse 26.

*And **as** (according as) it is appointed unto **men once to die,** but after this the judgment: **So** (in this way) **Christ was once offered** to bear the sins of many...”* Hebrews 9:27-28

In the incarnation the eternal Spirit of Christ became both the Son of God and the son of man. As a man He was “appointed to die.” The word *“as”* in verse 27 and the word *“so”* in verse 28 makes the connection. The Apostle Paul said of Christ, *“...being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”* Philippians 2:8. He was

appointed to die, but He chose the death of the cross, thus He *“offered Himself* Hebrews 9:14 *to bear the sins of many.”*

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

Jesus promised His disciples in the night before His death on the cross, *“I will not leave you comfortless: **I will come to you.** Yet a little while, and **the world seeth me no more; but ye see me:** because I live, ye shall live also”* John 14:18-19. This verse 28 does not speak of the second coming of Christ to earth, but of His coming to those who believe, to dwell in them forever. Jesus concluded by saying, *“because I live, ye shall live also.”* Paul said *“...I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”* Literally translated from the Greek text, we understand verse 28 to say, *“...Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and those that expect Him shall see Him again without sin unto salvation.* We see Him bearing the sins of the world on the cross, but when He comes to us in salvation, we see Him without sin, to live in those who believe. Christ is our life Colossians 3:4. Because He lives in us, we also live in Him.

“...for all.” Christ died *“...once for all,”* which means He died to take away the sins I John 3:5 of everyone who will believe and trust in Him. The scripture does not allow for a “limited atonement” as some teach. **“Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish”** John 3:16. His sacrifice, however, was not only for every person, but for all time and eternity. *“We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**”* says it all for those who know the truth and trust in Christ.

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

This verse refers to the daily sacrifice, which consisted to two lambs offered every day for almost fifteen hundred years. Over a million of these lambs were offered by the priests of Israel, and not one could take away the sins of the people

“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;” Hebrews 10:12

“This man” refers to Jesus Christ, who offered His own body and blood to take away sin forever. The prophet Isaiah said, *“He (God, the Father of Jesus Christ) shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied”* Isaiah 53:11. If the offering of the body of Jesus Christ had not satisfied God, He would never have received Jesus to sit at His right hand. At the right hand of God, 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. *“Saved to the uttermost”* speaks of the perfection (completion) that is ours through faith in Christ.

“From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.” Hebrews 10:13

David prophesied of this in his 110th Psalm; *“The LORD (Jehovah) said unto my Lord (Christ), Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool”* Psalms 110:1. Verses 5 and 6 of this same Psalm speak of the day His enemies are made His footstool; *“The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries”* Psalms 110:5-6. These verses speak of His second coming to earth *“to execute judgment upon all...”* Jude 1:15. His righteous judgment will reward the godly and pour out His wrath upon the ungodly. Paul described this very well to the Thessalonians; *“Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense **tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who***

are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints ...” II Thessalonians 1:6-10.

Perfected Forever

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

The word “*perfected*” in this verse was translated from the Greek word “*teleioo*,” which means “*to complete*” or “*to accomplish*.” The record of this is given in the Gospel of John, where John wrote, “***...Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost***”

John 19:28-30.

The word “*accomplished*” and the word “*finished*” in this text were both translated from the Greek word “*teleo*,” which means “*to complete*” or “*to accomplish*.” When Paul wrote to the Hebrews, “***...by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified,***” he confirmed the last words of Jesus when He died on the cross. He also explained sanctification a little further; “***...we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.***” Those whom Christ has sanctified are complete; they are “*perfected forever*.”

The idea of perfection (completion) is introduced in the book of Hebrews in the first verse of chapter six; *“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto **PERFECTION** (completion)”* Hebrews 6:1. In the next four chapters Paul will prove that perfection (completion) can only be received by faith in Christ and what He had accomplished on the cross when He said *“It is finished”* John 19:30. It is *“by one offering”* that Christ has sanctified the believer and made them complete (perfected). Paul confirmed this to the Colossians when he said to them, *“And ye are complete in him (Christ)...”* Colossians 2:10. Nothing more can be done than that which Christ has finished.

*“If therefore **PERFECTION** (completion) were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?”* Hebrews 7:11

This verse responds to the admonition given previously, *“...let us go on to perfection”* Hebrews 6:1. Perfection (completion) cannot be achieved by the deeds of the law Romans 3:20. Notice, *“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 take away sin; Christ *“...was manifested (incarnated) to take away our sins”* I John 3:5. He suffered as *“the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”* John 1:29. *“...we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”* Hebrews 10:10.

We should understand that the Law of Moses was never the will of God for His people. Paul explained this to the Galatians; *“Wherefore then serveth the law (of Moses)? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made...”* Galatians 3:19. The transgression that brought

the curse of the Law Galatians 3:10 upon the children of Israel was their refusal to hear the voice of God at Sinai. They said to Moses, *“Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die”* Exodus 20:19. We must understand, the Law of Moses is “the speaking of Moses.” Had they received the words of God at Sinai, they would have received the completion which the Law could never give. They would have been a *“kingdom of priests and a holy nation”* Exodus 19:5-6. Contrary to the belief of many, the children of Israel never received this promise, but instead they received a Levitical priesthood, whose purpose was to offer animal sacrifices every day for the next fifteen hundred years until *“the seed (Christ) should come to whom the promise was made”* Galatians 3:19.

“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...” Jeremiah 7:22-23.

Contrary to popular opinion, God hated their animal sacrifices Amos 5:21-22. They were a constant reminder that these were the people who refused to obey His voice at Sinai. He expressed His contempt in the first chapter of Isaiah:

“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.” Isaiah 1:11

After sixty years of Isaiah’s prophetic ministry, God’s attitude toward burnt offerings had only worsened:

“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

Now back to the question in Hebrews 7:11: If perfection (completion) could be achieved by the Levitical priesthood, why did we need another high priest of a different order? And why did God swear a thousand years before Jesus was born to Mary that Christ would be "*a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec*" Psalms 110:4. We needed a high priest who is "*holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens*" Hebrews 7:26. Such a high priest would have no need to offer daily sacrifices "*...first for his own sins, and then for the people's*" Hebrews 7:27. Before we could have such a high priest, however, there would have to be a new covenant, because the Law of Moses made no allowance for a priest "*after the order of Melchisedec.*" If the priesthood was changed, the Law would also have to be changed Hebrews 7:12.

"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." Hebrews 7:17-19

Considering the exhortation, "*...let us go on to perfection...*" Hebrews 6:1, we have discovered that perfection (completion) could not come through the Levitical priesthood, whose sole duty was to offer daily sacrifices for sin, which only served to prove, "*...it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins*" Hebrews 10:4. When God promised Christ would be a "*priest forever,*" the scripture says, "***The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek***" Psalms 110:4. Paul said "*By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament*" Hebrews 7:22. The oath which God swore to Christ, actually placed God at odds with the Law of

Moses, and guaranteed it would be abolished. The Law allowed for only a Levite to offer sacrifices, but Jesus was born to the tribe of Judah. When Jesus offered His body and blood a sacrifice for sin, He broke the Law. This was His first act as our great high priest, and His only sacrifice for sin, thus was the Law of Moses abolished once for all, and the “*better hope*” was brought in, which alone can bring salvation to completion.

“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 (complete), 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 9:9-10

The Tabernacle was divided and separated by a vail between “*the holy place*” and “*the most holy place.*” The priests went every day into the holy place with the blood of lambs to sprinkle for the sins of the people. The high priest went behind the vail into the holiest place once a year with the blood of a goat and a bull. The “*holy place*” was designated as a “*worldly sanctuary*” Hebrews 9:1. This was the place Paul said “*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...*” Hebrews 9:9. As a “*figure,*” the tabernacle was only a symbol of the true tabernacle in Heaven, which Jesus, our great high priest entered with His own blood to present before God Hebrews 9:24.

Those sacrifices which were offered by the Levitical priesthood “*could not make him that did the service perfect (complete), as pertaining to the conscience...*” Hebrews 9:9. This is explained in detail in a comparison between the blood of animals and the blood of Christ just four verses later in this same chapter;

“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:” Hebrews 9:13

“The blood of bulls and of goats” refers to the blood which the high priest sprinkled on the mercy seat in the *“holiest of all”* once every year on the Day of Atonement. This blood of animals could cover the sins of the people for a period of one year, until the sins of the nation came up in remembrance before God again. The *“ashes of an heifer (red heifer)”* when mixed with running water, became the *“waters of purification,”* which was to be sprinkled on all the vessels and instruments of the tabernacle, as well as upon the priests themselves. These things could ceremonially purify the flesh of the outer man, but they could do nothing for the inner man. Not even the priests who offered that sacrifices could be cleansed inwardly, *“as pertaining to the conscience,”* by the sacrifices they offered. The priests were sinners also, just as the congregation, and they *“stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.”*

“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 9:14

While it is admitted that the Law could do much to cleanse the outside of man, only the blood of Christ can wash us within, and purify our conscience (our innermost thoughts and feelings, including our imaginations) *“from dead works to serve the living God.”*

*“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** (complete). 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 10:1-2

Verse one speaks of “*the comers*,” and in verse two calls them “*the worshippers*.” The sacrifices which were offered under the Law could not make them perfect (complete). This speaks of the congregation of Israel. Perhaps this is the first verse to tell us exactly what perfection (completion) truly is. “*The worshippers **once purged** (cleansed) should have had no more conscience of sins.*” The word “*purged*” was translated from the Greek word “*kathairō*,” which means “*to cleanse*.” The words “*should have had*” are a weak translation. They were translated from the Greek word “*echō*,” which means “*to hold*.” The words “*conscience of sins*” speaks of the “*innermost thought and feelings of man, including the imaginations.*” Understand this verse to say, “*The worshippers once cleansed have no more sin in their heart.*” If the blood of animals could have cleansed the heart of man, there would have been no need for another sacrifice to be offered.

Concerning the exhortation given by the apostle to “*...go on to perfection (completion),*” it is clearly shown there is no completion in the Law of Moses.

1. The Levitical priesthood could not bring completion. Hebrews 7:11
2. The Law made nothing complete. Hebrews 7:19
3. Animal sacrifices could not make him that did the service perfect (complete). Hebrews 9:9-10
4. The sacrifices which were offered under the Law could not bring completion to those who came to worship. Hebrews 10:1

It was to the Hebrews, the Jews in Jerusalem that this epistle was written less than a decade before Jerusalem was destroyed. Many of the Jews were drawing back from Jesus Hebrews 10:38-39, while at the same time Paul exhorted them to “*draw near*” Hebrews 10:22. If

they are to “...go on to perfection,” where will they find it? Thousands of these Jews in Jerusalem who believed in Jesus were still “zealous of the law” Acts 21:20. The Law of Moses commanded the people to be perfect Deuteronomy 18:13, which was impossible for the people to do from their heart. Only two verses later Deuteronomy 18:15 Moses gave the promise of Jesus Christ who was yet to come. He was the “better hope” Hebrews 7:19; perfection (completion) would be in and through Him for all who will believe.

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

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.” I Peter 1:1-2

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father...” The word “elect” was translated from the Greek word “*eklektos*,” which means “select,” and is commonly translated as “chosen.” In the Old Testament, the children of Israel were God’s “elect” because He had “chosen them” in Abraham.

*“The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor **choose you**, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers...”* Deuteronomy 7:7-8

The children of Israel were chosen because of God’s promise to Abraham (“In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be

blessed... ”), and because of Abraham’s obedience to God (“...because thou hast obeyed my voice” Genesis 22:18). Sadly, much of Israel’s history was in backsliding and idol worship, but they were still known as God’s elect, because they were “the chosen people.” In fact, the scriptures tell us God was “married” to backsliding Israel Jeremiah 3:14. In the New Covenant, however, election is totally different. Peter addressed his epistle to those believers, whether Jew or Gentile, who lived in the Gentile nations. Notice they were “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God...” I Peter 1:2. The Apostle Paul wrote something in his epistle to the Romans which gives understanding to “the foreknowledge of God” in this verse.

*“For **whom he did foreknow**, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Romans 8:29*

Before God made man, He “foreknew” and “predestined” what man would be when He said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” Genesis 1:26. When Adam failed through disobedience, in that same day God gave the first promise of redemption to come through “the seed of the woman” Genesis 3:15. The revelation of the redeemer would increase for centuries to come, but from the beginning, God’s purpose in redemption was to have the people which He foreknew. These would be “new creatures in Christ” II Corinthians 5:17, and they would be “conformed to the image of His Son” (Jesus Christ). Only these are “the elect according to the foreknowledge of God” I Peter 1:2.

*“...through (in) **sanctification of the Spirit...**” The word “through” in this verse was mistranslated from the Greek word “en,” and should have been translated as “in.” This verse explains that we are God’s elect “**in sanctification of the spirit unto obedience.**” We are not in a lifetime process of being*

sanctified as many believe. Instead, the scripture clearly says “...*we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*” Hebrews 10:10. This verse establishes as a fact, “*We are sanctified.*” The issue is not whether we are sanctified, but “how” we are sanctified. We are sanctified, which means we are holy, but not by our efforts or will power. We were made holy (sanctified) “*through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*” Hebrews 10:10, and according to the Apostle Peter, we are God’s elect “*in sanctification of the spirit unto obedience.*” Peter did not explain how we became the elect, but rather who are the elect.

The Apostle Paul said God also “*predestined*” what He “*foreknew*” Romans 8:29. Exactly as Adam was “*predestined*” to be in the image and likeness of God before God created him, so is the redemption of man which Christ made at Calvary. In redemption, however, the redeemed are “*conformed to the image*” of Jesus Christ. Romans 8:29. Some believe we are restored to what Adam was before his fall, but this is not so. The one flaw in Adam was that he was capable of disobedience even before he disobeyed. This capability was not sin, but it provided the possibility of sin. That possibility will not exist in the new heavens and new earth, but as Isaiah said, the people will be “*all righteous*” Isaiah 60:21, eliminating the slightest possibility of any unrighteousness whatsoever. This is only possible “*in sanctification of the spirit **unto obedience***” 1 Peter 1:2, which can only be accomplished “***through** the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*” Hebrews 10:10. It is only through sanctification of our spirit that we are “*conformed to the image of the Son of God.*”

“*...unto obedience...*” Adam was disobedient to God and brought sin into the world. The proper definition of “*sanctified*” in the New Testament is “*made holy.*” We who know the truth

understand we are “*made free from sin*” Romans 6:7, verse 18, and verse 22, but the absence of sin does not constitute holiness. There are those in religion who are empty vessels, who have so disciplined themselves that they have no outward sin. Such were the scribes of Pharisees in Jesus’ day. Jesus said of them, “*If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin*” John 15:22. Saul of Tarsus, even when he persecuted the church, “*as touching the righteousness which is in the law,*” he was “*blameless*” Philippians 3:6, yet he was not “*holy*” because he was not “*sanctified.*” He obeyed the Law of Moses blamelessly, even while he was filled with hatred for Jesus and His disciples Acts 9:1.

Paul wrote to the Hebrews, “*...we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*” Hebrews 10:10. Four verses later he wrote “*For by one offering, He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified*” Hebrews 10:14. Perfected forever is not in addition to our sanctification, but rather defines sanctification. It is the same offering that made us holy, that made us complete (perfect). According to the Apostle Peter, that same “*one offering*” also made us to be “*obedient children.*”

Obedient Children

“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance...” I Peter 1:14

With this verse, Peter picks up once again, the theme of his epistle, which he established in the first verse; “***Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ***” I Peter 1:2. These whom he now calls “*obedient children*” are “*the elect*” of God in the New Testament church.

“...not fashioning yourselves...” Obedient children do not “*fashion themselves*” to conform to a certain pattern as they had previously done in either their heathen religions or under the Law of Moses. In fact, “*obedient children*” need not “*fashion themselves,*” period. As obedient children, we are not subject to religious laws written on stone or in books. Obedience is the nature of those who are “*born of God.*” God’s laws are written in our hearts and inward parts Jeremiah 31:33.

*“And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for **they shall all know me**, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD:”* Jeremiah 31:24.

“...according to the former lusts in your ignorance...”

Obedient children are not in ignorance. These are those who “*know the truth*” and “*the truth has made them free*” John 8:32. This phrase refers to the religions which these were saved out of. It could equally refer to the Law of Moses as to the heathen religions of the Gentiles. Formerly, they had been in bondage to commandments and ordinances that demanded conformity of the people, but now, they were “*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience...*” I Peter 1:2. They were “*conformed to the image of the Son of God*” Romans 8:29, but not because they “*fashioned themselves.*” Paul explained this to the Ephesians; “*For we are His workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus** unto good works...*” Ephesians 2:10.

*“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.**”* I Peter 1:15-16

The verse begins with the word “*but,*” which in this place means “*contrariwise.*” He gives the contrary view to those who seek to

“fashion themselves” through self-crucifixion or self-sanctification. Notice that Peter quotes the Law, which says, *“For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore **sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy**”* *Leviticus 11:44*. Under the Law of Moses, the people were commanded to *“sanctify yourselves and ye shall be holy.”* Under the New Covenant of grace, *“...we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”* *Hebrews 10:10*. The words *“not fashioning yourselves”* could well mean *“not sanctifying yourselves”* as under the former covenant, the Law of Moses. The words *“ye shall be holy”* were a command under the Law, but under grace they are a state of being. The children of God are holy, not because they obey the laws of religion, but because they are born of God, and God is their Father.

Our Heavenly Father

“And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:” *I Peter 1:17*

“...if ye call on the Father...” Only those who are born again can call on the Father. A sinner can call on God, but to be saved, he must call on Jesus Christ, as Paul also said, *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”* *Romans 10:13*. Jesus taught us to pray to *“our Father which art in heaven...”* *Matthew 6:9*. Anyone can say the words, but only the children of God have the right to come into His presence. Peter, however, is giving another reason why the children of God are holy; **their Father is holy**. God had commanded those under Moses' law, *“Ye shall be holy for I am holy.”* He gave them an impossible task, one which millions of people professing Christianity still struggle with, and fail. When the Father of Jesus Christ says to those who trust in Jesus Christ, *“Ye shall be holy, for (because) I am holy,”* He gives

a valid reason for our holiness; we are the children of God almighty. He is our Father, and we are holy.

“For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.” Romans 11:16

This verse, which the Apostle Paul gave in the analogy of the “green olive tree,” gives us yet another reason for holiness which is beyond the ability of our works. The olive tree represented the nation of Israel in the Old Testament and the church of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. The verse is a little obscure, but easily understood in the light of the New Covenant of grace. *“If the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy...”* The “firstfruit” is Jesus Christ I Corinthians 15:23. He is *“the firstborn among many brethren,”* and each and every one of the brethren are *“conformed to the image of the Son of God”* Romans 8:29. He is the redeemer and the sanctifier of all who know the truth and come to Him. If the redeemer is the “firstfruit,” the redeemed are the “lump.” If Jesus Christ is holy, all who have trusted in Him unto salvation are also holy.

“...and if the root be holy, so are the branches.” If Jesus Christ is the “firstfruit” (and He is), God, the Father of Jesus Christ is the root. If God is holy, everyone who is born of God is also holy.

Redeemed by Precious Blood

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” I Peter 1:18-19

We are redeemed, but not with silver or gold. The price of our redemption was the “precious blood of Christ.” This verse reveals something about our redemption, however, which is very

important to understand. We know we are “*redeemed unto God*” Revelation 5:9, which means we were “*purchased to God*” by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Redemption in this verse, however, speaks of what we were redeemed **from** when Jesus shed His blood for us. This verse says we are redeemed “*from our vain conversation.*” The word “*conversation*” as used in the scriptures, does not speak of our speech, but rather our “*behavior,*” and our “*lifestyle.*” Redemption changes everything about the one redeemed. We were sinners; we belonged to Satan; our lifestyle was empty, but the redeemed are ransomed from sin, Satan, and vain behavior. Christ did not “pay a debt” that we owed to sin, Satan, or even to God. We were captives of sin and Satan, and Jesus Christ died on the cross to destroy our captors through His death Hebrews 2:14. He purchased us to Himself with His precious blood. We do not belong to sin, Satan, or the world, because we are redeemed to God “*...with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*” I Peter 1:19.

“...from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers...” The phrase “*received by tradition from your fathers*” speaks of those “behaviors” which are not the direct result of original sin, but those which we receive by environment. For example, a child raised by alcoholic or drug addicted parents will most often be addicted also. We recognize these as “*vain*” or “empty lifestyles” which were received from the parents. Consider this also. All religions of the world without Jesus Christ are also vanity. A child born in a Muslim nation will most likely be a Muslim. It is the same with the Hindu’s in India and Buddhists in China. These religions, which are often successful in modifying behavior, cannot take away sin. All these, including Christianity without Christ, are “*vain behaviors receive by tradition from your fathers.*” None of these things are the direct

result of original sin, but all of them, just as the nature of sin is, are “taken away” by faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation by grace changes everything about the one saved, from the inside out. There is no such thing as a “generational curse” on the children of God. The sin we received from Adam, and the sins we received from our parents are all “taken away,” by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God through His death on the cross John 1:29.

Born Again

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” I Peter 1:23

Many years ago, before I came to the knowledge of the truth that made me free from sin John 8:32, I had a disturbing experience one night. On this particular night, every time I fell asleep, I would hear a voice calling me by name. It said, *“Leroy! Stop trying to be something you are not. Just relax and be what you are.”* Ten years before, I had been a backslider, living in the depths of sin. God had restored my salvation and ministry, and I was not sinning, but I continued to struggle with the memories of sin. I hated the words I was hearing, because I believed if I “relaxed to be what I was,” I would be unclean and living in sin. I would actually wake myself up from sleep to stop hearing those words, yet every time I drifted into sleep, I would hear them again, *“Leroy! Stop trying to be something you are not. Just relax and be what you are.”* Finally, about five o’clock a.m. I awoke enough to utter this simple prayer; *“Jesus, I don’t know if this is you or not. If you are speaking to me, please help me understand what you are saying.”* Almost immediately I fell asleep again, and again I heard the same voice; *“Leroy! Stop trying to be something you are not. Just relax and be what you are.”* This time, however, the voice continued; *“Being born again, just*

relax and be what you are.” As I awoke out of this experience, I was hearing these words, mixed with the words of Peter in scripture; *“Being born again, just be what you are! Be ye holy...because your father is holy”* 1 Peter 1:16-17. I knew I was “born again,” a child of God, but I was guilty of believing my salvation could only be maintained by my will-power. Millions of Christians are caught in that trap, but the modern church of this generation has sought to relieve them through the erroneous belief that *“We are all sinners; we sin every day.”* **NO!** We who are born again are not sinners. Many sincere Christians need to hear the message Paul gave to the Colossians; *“And you, that were sometime **alienated and enemies in your mind** by wicked works, yet now hath he **reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight**”* Colossians 1:21-22. I was saved; I was not sinning; but I was alienated in my mind from peace with God.

“...not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible...” Adam was a *“corruptible seed,”* as was proven by his disobedience and the entrance of sin. Christ is the *“incorruptible seed.”* Jesus explained the meaning of “born again” to Nicodemus, saying to him, *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”* John 3:6. Everyone born into this world is born of the corruptible seed of Adam, which is the reason all are sinners. Those who are born again, however, are born of the incorruptible seed of Christ. We are a “new creation.” We have been *“sanctified unto obedience.”* God’s laws are written in our heart. We *“do by nature those things that are in the law”* Romans 2:14, because we are *“partakers of the divine nature”* 1 Peter 1:4. This is what it means, in part, to be *“born again of incorruptible seed.”*

“...by the word of God...” There are two basic Greek words in the New Testament which were translated as “word.” They are

“*rhema*” and “*logos*.” The word “*rhema*” is simply defined by “Strong’s Greek concordance” as “*an utterance (individually, collectively or specifically); by implication a matter or topic.*” Rhema is only words, whether spoken by God or by man. We know that God used “*words (rhema)*” to “*frame the worlds*” Hebrews 11:3. Jesus said “*The words (rhema) that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life*” John 6:63. The definition of “*logos*” is a little more complicated. Basically, it can be used the same as “*rhema*,” as a topic or conversation, but there are instances in the scripture where “*logos*” refers to the eternal Spirit of Christ as “**The Word.**”

“*In the beginning was **the Word**, and **the Word** was with God, and **the Word** was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*” John 1:1-3

“*And **the Word** was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*” John 1:14

In these verses, “**the Word**” refers to the eternal Spirit of Christ, who was “*in the beginning with God.*” When “*the Word was made flesh,*” this was the virgin birth of Jesus, of whom the angel Gabriel told the shepherds in the field, “*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, **which is Christ the Lord***” Luke 2:11. Now, back to our text which says, “*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, **by the word (logos) of God...***” 1 Peter 1:23. The use of the Greek word “*logos*” in this verse tells us who the incorruptible seed is. We are not born again by “*words,*” but by “*The Word,*” which is Christ, the “*incorruptible seed...which liveth and abideth for ever.*”

“*For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth*

away: ***But the word (rhema) of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.***” I Peter 1:24-25

A Chosen Generation

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” I Peter 2:9-10

With the use of the word “chosen,” which was translated from the same Greek word as “elect,” Peter returns to the theme of the second verse of this epistle; ***“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ”*** I Peter 1:2. According to the foreknowledge of God, they were ***“conformed to the image of the Son of God”*** Romans 8:29. They were God’s “elect,” or “chosen” generation. David saw this ***“chosen generation”*** as ***“the glory”*** which would follow ***“the sufferings of Christ,”*** I Peter 1:10-11 as he wrote in his 22nd Psalm;

“A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation (the chosen generation). They shall come, and shall declare His righteousness (Christ-crucified) unto a people that shall be born (born of God), that He (Christ) hath done this.” Psalms 22:30-31

“...a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people...” These were the three promises which God offered to the children of Israel if they would ***“obey His voice”*** when He spoke to them at Sinai.

*“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.

Israel refused to even hear the voice of God, and they never attained to God’s righteousness for them. When they refused to hear the voice of God Exodus 20:19, the Law of Moses was added to them. Concerning the Law, Paul said, *“It was added because of transgressions, till the seed (Christ Galatians 3:16) should come to whom the promise was made”* Galatians 3:19. Under the Law, they had a Levitical priesthood, but were never a *“kingdom of priests”* or a *“holy nation.”*

*“What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, **even the righteousness which is of faith.** But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.”* Romans 9:30-31

Peter spoke of those *“...which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God...”* This speaks to those Gentiles who believed and trusted in Christ after the Jews refused to hear the gospel from the apostles even as their forefathers refused to hear the voice of God at Sinai Exodus 20:19. They were the church of Jesus Christ, which will forever consist of both Jews and Gentiles who believe *“Jesus is the Christ”* I John 5:1. God does not have two churches, nor does He have two peoples, but He has always had a people. When the Jews rejected Christ, and the Gentiles received Christ, those who believed, whether Jew or Gentile, became *“the people of God.”* They are God’s elect.

Conclusion

“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” II Peter 3:13-14

Christ did not suffer and die to restore us to what Adam was before the fall. To do so would doom the new heavens and the new earth to the same fate as the original creation. Every person “in Christ” is a “new creation” II Corinthians 5:17. “All are new,” and “all are of God (born of God).” Those who “abide in Christ” are not sinners, and do not sin I John 3:5-6. The “new creation in Christ” exists on earth right now, but our citizenship is in the “heavenly Jerusalem” Hebrews 12:22. When John saw “the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband” Revelation 21:2, he was seeing the bride of Christ, the redeemed from all ages. These are the glorious church” Ephesians 5:27, “the holy people” Isaiah 62:12, and the “all righteous” Isaiah 60:21 citizens of the New Jerusalem. In verse 10, John saw “that great city, the holy Jerusalem,” which consisted of the mighty walls, the gates of pearl, and the streets of gold. The glory which John saw was upon the people. Peter saw a “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” There will be no sin, no serpent, and no forbidden tree, and no possibility of disobedience. All these were destroyed through the death of Jesus Christ.

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

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

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

The Apostle Paul explains freedom from sin to the Romans in these terms; “*Being then **made free from sin**, ye became the **servants of righteousness***” Romans 6:18. Paul explains this wonderful truth just two verse later; “*For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness*” Romans 6:20. As long as sin remains in the nature of a person, it sits in the throne of that person’s heart. The person may be very religious, but they may possess an “*evil heart of unbelief*” Hebrews 3:12 which cannot keep them from falling Jude 1:24. They will struggle to please God, but the scripture says of them, “*Without faith (believing God) it is impossible to please Him.*” Only the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shining into their heart will be able to destroy the evil heart of unbelief and free the person. of the heart will be unbelief of the truth. in Christ Consider the order of this verse once more; “*Elect...through sanctification of the spirit...unto obedience...*” Those who understand salvation by grace through faith understand this great salvation includes sanctification from sin. The children of God are not sinners, as clearly shown in all the scriptures (KJV). sanctification by

:Many in the modern church are horrified to hear the word “obedience.” The kneejerk reaction is to proclaim, “We’re saved by grace; we’re not under the law.” The scripture does say “Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace” Romans 6:14. The truth of the gospel is, a child of God is both “freed from sin” Romans 6:6-7, and “delivered from the law” Romans 7:6 by the grace of God. Does that “glorious liberty of the children of God” Romans 8:21 also free us from obedience to God? According to the Apostle Peter in our text, Christ did not suffer

and die on the cross to free us from obedience to God, but rather to “bring us to obedience” through what Peter called “sanctification of the spirit unto obedience.”

The lack of obedience to God is called “disobedience.” Adam disobeyed God and brought the entire world under the dominion of sin, but through the obedience of Jesus Christ, many “were made righteous” Romans 5:19. It is true we are “saved by grace, through faith...” Ephesians 2:8, but there has forever been a connection between faith and obedience. My purpose in this message, however, is not to bring any under obedience to the laws of religion, or the dictates of a man, but rather to free them from all such by the knowledge of the truth. Christ shed His precious blood make us free; from sin, from the law, and from the spirit of disobedience.

*“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. **And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”* I Corinthians 6:9-11

This is the only verse in the bible that gives the correct order of salvation. The doctrine which is believed by millions of people says “justification” is only “in the eyes of God,” that is, “the way God sees us” when we “believe in Jesus.” The Apostle Paul, however, understood the truth, that before we are “justified,” we are first “washed” and “sanctified.” The difference between the unrighteous and the righteous is not “the way God sees us,” but rather “what Christ has done for us.” Paul said we were once the unrighteous, “...*but ye are **washed*** (made clean Revelation 1:5), *but ye are **sanctified*** (made holy Hebrews 13:12), *but ye are **justified*** (made righteous Romans 5:9).” Notice the scripture references I have given. Each of these required the shedding of the precious blood of Christ before they could be accomplished, yet they are freely given to “*whosoever believeth*” on Him who “*loved us, and gave Himself for us*” Galatians 2:20.

Jesus said, “...*and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*” John 8:32. Many years ago I searched diligently for the truth that would free me from sin in my heart and imagination. I had preached for many years without the correct understanding of the gospel. When I found the truth that made me free, it came to me in a comparison the Apostle Paul gave between the blood of animals and the blood of Christ:

Hebrews 9:13: “*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:*”

Hebrews 9:14: “*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*”

Verse thirteen speaks of the blood of bulls and goats, mixed with the ashes of the red heifer, by which everything under the Law of

Moses was ceremonially cleansed, even to the body of the priest who performed the ceremonies. Verse fourteen speaks of the blood of Christ which was shed to “purge the conscience” of the believers. I discovered while searching the scriptures that “conscience” in this verse speaks of the “innermost thoughts and feelings of man.” I cried aloud, “That’s my problem. It’s not something I am doing, but the unclean dreams and imaginations that torment me at night.” In that moment the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shined into my heart II Corinthians 4:4-6, and I lifted up my hands to the Lord, crying, “Thank you Jesus for shedding your blood to wash me inside, where I cannot wash myself.” In an instant of time I was cleansed from inward sin, never to be tormented again. It was the precious blood of Christ that made me free, but I had to come to the knowledge of the truth before it would avail for me. The Apostle Peter understood that the same offering of the body and blood of Jesus Christ which washed us from our sin also sanctified us “*unto obedience*” I Peter 1:2.

Every aspect of our redemption which is “...*through His (Christ’s) blood*” Ephesians 1:7 has both a “from” and an “unto.” For example, “*Christ hath redeemed us **from** the curse of the Law...*” Galatians 3:13, and He “...*gave himself for us, that he might redeem us **from** all iniquity...*” Titus 2:14, while at the same time the elders in heaven sing a new song of the redeemed, saying “...*for thou wast slain, and hast **redeemed us to God** by thy blood...*” Revelation 5:9. Notice, He redeemed us **from** the Law, and redeemed us **from** all iniquity, to redeem us **to** God. Our God never does anything half way. He brought the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt to bring them into the land of promise. Moses said it this

way; *“He brought thee out...”* Deuteronomy 4:37 *“...to bring thee in”* verse 38.

What is true about our redemption is also true about our sanctification; we are sanctified both “from” and “unto.” The proper definition of the word “sanctified” as used in the New Testament is “to make holy” Strong’s Greek Dictionary. The most common teaching on sanctification claims it to be a lifetime process of putting away our sins with the help of the Holy Spirit. Such teaching, however, is simply the recipe for a lifetime of struggle against something that only the blood of Jesus can free us from. Paul brought the conclusion to his epistle to the Hebrews with these words, *“Wherefore Jesus also, that he might **sanctify the people with his own blood**, suffered without the gate”* Hebrews 13:12. The Apostle John dedicated his book of Revelation *“Unto him that loved us, and **washed us from our sins in his own blood**, and hath made us kings and priests (a kingdom of priests) **unto God and his Father”*** Revelation 1:5-6. These verses show both the “from” and the “unto” of sanctification. We are washed **“from our sins,”** and the same blood of Christ that “washed us” has “made us” a kingdom of priests **unto God**. To be *“made holy (sanctified)”* requires more than the absence of sin, however. The Apostle Paul said it this way, *“Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness”* Romans 6:18. Where sin once reigned in our heart and nature, grace now reigns *“through righteousness unto eternal life”* Romans 5:21.

The Grace

*“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end (the result) of your faith, even **the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently**, who prophesied of **the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time** the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand **the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.**”* 1 Peter 1:8-11

I have placed in bold several key phrases in the text above. Hundreds of years before Christ came into the world, God began speaking to His prophets in dreams and visions of the wonderful salvation which we have in Christ. Peter said they prophesied of *“the grace that should come unto you.”* The holiness and righteousness of the people in their visions was so far beyond anything they had seen or experienced, that they enquired of God and searched diligently, *“what is this,”* and *“when shall this be?”* Those prophets who wept to see *“the sufferings of Christ”* in their visions also rejoiced to see *“the glory that followed.”* The salvation of our souls from sin is “the grace” which the prophets saw in their visions. The Apostle Paul wrote of *“the grace”* to the Romans, calling it *“**this grace** wherein we stand”* Romans 5:2, and *“by which we are saved”* Ephesians 2:8 to the Ephesians. Certainly, the sufferings of Jesus Christ on the cross is “grace” to us who believe, but no more so than “the glory that follows” for those who trust in Christ.

The Glory

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the

earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.” Isaiah 60:1-2

The prophet Isaiah, having seen in detail the sufferings of Christ chapter 53, now begins to see in his visions “the glory” that would follow the sufferings of Christ. This prophecy is of Jerusalem, but it cannot refer to “*Jerusalem that now is*” Galatians 4:25, whether in Isaiah’s day, Paul’s day, or our present day. Jerusalem has never been those things which Isaiah describes. The Apostle Paul spoke of “*Jerusalem which is above*” Galatians 4:26, and “*the heavenly Jerusalem*” Hebrews 12:22, which we understand to be the New Jerusalem. Isaiah seems bewildered as he sees Jerusalem in visions. During his lifetime Jerusalem was a backslidden and idolatrous city, worthy only of the wrath of God. In his visions, he sees a “holy city” and says of her, “*Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise*” Isaiah 60:18.

“The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous...” Isaiah 60:19-21

*“And they shall call them, **The holy people**, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.”*
Isaiah 62:12

It wasn’t until near the end of Isaiah’s prophecy that God gave clear understanding of the things Isaiah had seen in visions. God said to him, “...*behold, I create **new heavens and a new earth**: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold,*

I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy” Isaiah 65:17-18. Isaiah understood, perhaps for the first time, that the glory he saw in his visions after the sufferings of Christ were visions of a “new creation” and a “New Jerusalem,” which would not be seen in his time. Peter referred to this when he wrote, *“Unto whom (the prophets) it was revealed, that **not unto themselves, but unto us** they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into”* I Peter 1:12

The “All Righteous People”

*“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and **do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.**”* Philippians 3:7-9

Saul of Tarsus was born and trained under the Law of Moses from the time he was circumcised when he was eight days old. He was tutored by Gamaliel, the greatest teacher of the Law of that day Acts 22:3, and he *“...profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers”* Galatians 1:14. Saul claimed more reason to trust in the Law of Moses for salvation than any other person Philippians 3:4, and lays out his reasons in perfect order: He was *“...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.

Notice above all other things of the Jews religion that was in his favor, Saul of Tarsus had a “perfect righteousness” according to the Law of Moses, even while he was persecuting the church of Jesus Christ. When Saul of Tarsus met Jesus on the Damascus Road, however, and understood that “Jesus,” whom he had hated, is also “the Christ” whom he loved Acts 9:3-6, everything changed in a moment of time. Everything he had trusted in for righteousness suddenly became nothing more than garbage in his sight, as he said, *“that I may will Christ...”*

“...and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” Philippians 3:9

Saul of Tarsus’ righteousness under the Law of Moses was blameless. There was absolutely nothing in that law that could condemn him, yet Saul was not “all righteous.” As a Jew, he had no comprehension of a sin nature, because in outward action, he did not sin. My question is, why would Saul of Tarsus reject his perfect righteousness under the law to seek a “righteousness which is of God by faith,” if that “righteousness” would only be seen by God. Would he trade a perfect righteousness under the law for a righteousness which permitted a sinful lifestyle? I understand that most teachers in the modern church do not believe in what the prophets of old called *“all righteousness.”* Many believe the orthodox position is to believe God only sees us as being righteous, if we believe in His Son, Jesus Christ. They believe this is what “justification by faith” actually is, that God can’t see our sin because He can only see Jesus.

The term “all righteous” Isaiah 60:21, as spoken by the prophet Isaiah, not only means that everyone in the new creation is righteous, but their righteousness is in their hearts as well as in their actions. I

am both shocked and amazed how many “Christian teachers” today believe a person could be in an act of atrocious sin in the moment of death or rapture, and be accepted by God “if they believe in Jesus,” or “if their faith is in the cross.” Why would Saul of Tarsus seek to lose a “perfect righteousness” under the Law of Moses, only to receive the “pretended righteousness” of orthodox theology? Why would he want to stand in the church service Sunday mornings and say with the modern church, “We are all sinners; we sin every day.”? The truth is, he would not, and he did not.

There was only one flaw in Saul’s righteousness under the Law of Moses, which was discovered by the Law of God (the Ten Commandments). Saul of Tarsus kept nine of these commandments perfectly. He was not an idolater, an adulterer, a thief, a murderer, or a liar. Not a single commandment of Moses, and only one commandment of God could condemn Saul of Tarsus. It was the tenth commandment that not only condemned Saul, it utterly destroyed him Romans 7:10-11 along with all the righteousness he had under the law. When Saul understood the tenth commandment, “*Thou shalt not covet,*” he understood for the first time in his life that he was a sinner, because of the condition of his heart. The seventh chapter of Romans does not describe the Apostle Paul, but rather the condition of Saul of Tarsus under the Law. It was a man yet in his sins and under condemnation of the Law that said, “*...if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*” Romans 7:20. This was not offered as an excuse for sin, but the thought processes of a man who had a perfect righteousness under the Law of Moses, but discovers for the first time that he is a sinner because sin is in his heart. The Apostle Paul’s testimony is somewhat different; “*...I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me...*” Galatians 2:20. He had gained the righteousness which Saul of Tarsus had sought for,

“...that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

The prophet Isaiah had never seen a people who were “all righteous” or truly “holy” in his day. Jerusalem of his day, according to his own words, was a harlot ^{Isaiah 1:21}. His visions of the glory which would come was of the New Jerusalem, which is “The Church of Jesus Christ,” made up of both Jews and Gentiles who have been “*washed...sanctified...and justified*” ^{I Corinthians 6:11} by that “faith” which is of Jesus Christ.

The Faith of Christ

*“We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that **a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by **the faith of Christ**, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”* ^{Galatians 2:15-16}

It is commonly believed that everyone who “believes in Jesus” is “going to heaven when they die.” Have you ever attended a funeral in which you were not told the deceased is “in a better place” today? I have preached hundreds of funerals in fifty seven years of ministry, and in almost every case, the family has explained how they know their loved one is in heaven today, regardless of their sinful lifestyle yesterday. There is something in this text we must understand. First, we are not “justified by the works of the law,” but neither are we justified by simply “believing in Jesus.” **NOTICE!** We are justified by “*the faith of Jesus Christ*.” We have “*believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ...*” In other words, we are not justified by works, nor are we justified by simply believing

something about Jesus. We are justified or condemned by what we believe about Jesus Christ.

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.”

1 John 5:1

This is “the faith of Christ” which justifies the believer. This is what it means to “*believe in Jesus Christ*,” it is to believe that “*Jesus is the Christ*.” I understand these words seem foreign and strange to many who read them, but I am speaking of the issues of life and death to the believer. Do you believe Jesus died on the cross to “cover your sins” so God can’t see them? Do you believe that “grace covers our sins?” What about “The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” John 1:29. What about the message of the Apostle John to his congregation; “***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***” 1 John 3:5-6. The words “*and ye know*” are proof that freedom from sin was the common knowledge of the first century church. Not everyone had such freedom, but those who understood what it means that “*Jesus is the Christ*” enjoyed glorious liberty from sin Romans 6:22.

“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Matthew 16:16

This was Peter’s confession of faith to Jesus when asked who he believed Jesus is. This same confession is the revelation the church of Jesus Christ is built upon Matthew 16:17-18. There was only one prophecy in the Old Testament which Peter could have referred to; it was the message God sent to Daniel by the angel Gabriel.

*“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to **finish the transgression**, and to **make an end of sins**, and to **make reconciliation for iniquity**, and to **bring in***

everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” Daniel 9:24

This verse lays out a period of 490 prophetic years. The prophecy begins by establishing six things that must be accomplished before the end of the 490 years. Foremost among these are “*an end of sins, reconciliation for iniquity, and everlasting righteousness.*” This verse does not tell how these things will be accomplished.

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

This verse introduces the subject of this entire prophecy; it is “*the Messiah the Prince.*” He is the one who will “*make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity and bring in everlasting righteousness.*” This verse does not tell how these things will be accomplished, but it does tell the exact year the Messiah would appear in ministry.

“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.” Daniel 9:26

The time periods given in this prophecy are 7 weeks (49 years), 62 weeks (434 years), and 1 week (seven years). The first seven weeks plus the sixty two weeks brings us to the last week of the prophecy. It is after the sixty two week period and during the last week of the prophecy that “*Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself.*” This speaks of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the

Messiah of Israel, in the middle of the seventieth week of this prophecy.

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” Daniel 9:27

Those who believe this verse refers to the reign of “The Antichrist” at the end of this age are mistaken and deceived, and have blinded millions of people to the ministry of Jesus Christ on the cross at Calvary. It was through His death on the cross that Jesus Christ *“made an end of sins, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness”* for all who would believe the truth and trust in Him. In “the midst of the week,” that is, after three and a half years of ministry Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel, was *“cut off, but not for Himself”* verse 26. This is *“the faith of Christ,”* which justifies everyone who believes “Jesus is the Christ” 1 John 5:1.

“But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.” Galatians 2:17

With this verse, Paul gives a clear warning to those who believe we are saved and continue to be sinners. If we believe, as Paul said, *“Christ liveth in me”* Galatians 2:20, and if we believe we are all sinners, the apostle asks the question which demands an answer, *“Is Christ therefore the minister of sin?”* Is Jesus Christ living sin in his people? **God forbid.**

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