

Simply Christ
Gospel Newsletter
Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

October 21, 2025

He Forgot

In 1971, my dad, Leroy Surface, was preaching a Tent Revival in Houston, Texas. One night as the service closed, a man, who had been standing outside during the service, walked in and asked loudly, "Can anybody help me?". Someone brought him to my dad, who asked him who he was. "I am just an old drunk who needs to be saved," the man responded. My dad told him Jesus would save him if he would repent and call on the Lord. The man began to repent and call on God for salvation, but every time dad started to pray with the man, the Spirit of God would lift off of dad. Finally, dad asked God why this was. The Spirit spoke these words to my dad: "This man has told more people how to be saved than you have." Dad spoke sternly to the man, saying, "Sir, you are lying to me. You have told more people how to be saved than I have. You will receive nothing from God if you do not tell me the truth."

The man told dad that he was pastor of the First Baptist Church of a city in east Texas. He had been an alcoholic before coming to Jesus Christ, but God delivered him instantly the day he was saved. After a time, God called him into the ministry and later he became pastor of this church. Several months before this night, he was out of town and

went to eat at a restaurant. The waiter came by and asked if he wanted a glass of wine with his meal. This got the man thinking about what it would taste like and he decided one glass of wine would do no harm. "From that first glass," the man said, "I have been hopelessly addicted to alcohol. It is destroying my marriage, and if the church finds out I will lose the church." He told dad he had been going from revival meeting to revival meeting trying to get "saved" again, but no one could help him.

Dad told the man that God would deliver him, but first he needed to repent for taking that first glass of wine. "Everything that has happened since is a result of you taking that first glass," Dad said. When the man repented for taking that first glass, the Spirit of God fell upon them both and he was delivered from the bondage that had gripped him these many months.

This pastor had been very foolish. I'm sure some would argue that the glass of wine was not a sin. This was probably the justification he made in his own heart when ordered it. What cannot be denied, however, is that he opened a door to Satan which he could not close. Peter spoke of such a person who is "*...blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*" II Peter 1:9. This man had forgotten that it was the saving power of Christ which had delivered him from alcohol's bondage. In his blindness he chose a course that would carry him back to heartbreak and shame. This man was not overcome with temptation. That would come later. That first glass of wine was a blatant

disregard for preciousness of his salvation. He was like Esau, who sold his birthright for a morsel of meat. Hebrews 12:16. This pastor had sold his freedom in Christ for a single glass of wine.

James spoke about a man who beheld his natural face in a mirror but went away and *“forgot what manner of man he was.”* James 1:24. True salvation delivers us from the old life, and old man, of sin. Romans 6:6. Paul assures us that anyone who is *“in Christ, is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”* II Corinthians 5:17. There are times in our walk when things from our old life are set before us. In times such as this, you must not forget that Christ has made you to be a new creature. The things of the old life belong to the person you left behind on the cross. Paul reminds us, *“For you were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.”* Ephesians 5:8.

The Apostle Paul tells us clearly to ***“...reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*** Romans 6:11. This is your reality as a child of God. Recognize it! Embrace it! Walk in it!

Much of the church today is in complete disagreement with the Apostle Paul. Their message is, “We are all sinners, and sin every day.” You are told to “accept it, confess it, and embrace it.” This gospel denying view of God’s people is the equivalent to taking a natural child and continuously telling them they are ugly, stupid, and worthless. Even though they will most likely become what the lies you have filled their

mind with have said they are, it is still a lie. The church's message of universal sinfulness in God's people produces the same result.

It was Jesus who promised to make you free from sin. [John 8:32-36](#). He did not lie to you! Just as that beaten down child needs to stand up and realize, "I'm not ugly, nor stupid, nor worthless," the child of God needs to stand up on God's word, knowing, "You're not a sinner; you don't sin every day; and you will not live your life in sin! Jesus Christ has made you free!" Don't ever forget what manner of person Christ has made you to be.