

What Saith the Scripture?

<http://www.WhatSaithTheScripture.com/>

He Will Subdue Our Iniquities Or, How God Makes Normal Christians to Walk Without Sinning Or, How Anyone Can Be Ready to Meet God at Any Time

"He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea"
(Micah 7:19).

by Tom Stewart
3-22-98

Preface

How can anyone speak of walking without sinning, without being completely out of touch with the human condition? The Son of Man, the LORD Jesus Christ, did exactly that. He said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). No one can truthfully say that the Sinless Son of God was out of touch with humanity. "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

But, it may be said, Jesus lived a sinless life on earth because He was the Son of God, "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1Peter 2:22). That is certainly true; however, could we be neglecting the fact that what He accomplished by becoming a man was to prove that a human being-- by the power of God-- could actually walk **without** sinning? "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17).

Jesus came as the "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). By living a sinless life, the LORD Jesus vindicated the Creator's Wisdom in designing man as a free moral agent. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33). Our Wonderful LORD left us THE example of how to walk without sinning. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps" (1Peter 2:21).

Sin: The Sad Truth About So Many Professing Christians

Unfortunately, self-deception and hypocrisy are easy to find in the professed Church. "And why call ye me, LORD, LORD, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). It should be said to these, Look into the Mirror of the Word of God and repent of your hypocrisy. "For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was" (James 1:23-24).

However, most who read this probably understand that the Spirit testifies of our sonship by our

obedience. "He that hath My Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21). How often have we all fallen into sin? "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief" (Proverbs 24:16). If we did not know that the LORD Jesus made a special point about how often He was willing to forgive us when we truly repent, we would despair of ever repenting. "Then came Peter to Him, and said, LORD, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22).

Our beloved brother Paul testified in Romans 7 of the so-often-defeated condition of those of us who name the name of Christ. Remember, this is not how it should be, but how it so often is. This is how a Backslider approaches Christianity. Notice the frustration and the complete lack of victory. "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:15-24).

Like the Apostle Paul, I "thank God through Jesus Christ our LORD" (Romans 7:25) that Jesus has not only "delivered us from the wrath to come" (1Thessalonians 1:10), but has also assured us that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1). Romans 8 is the exact opposite of Romans 7. Victory belongs only to those who walk after the Spirit. If walking without sinning is the same as walking after the Spirit, then I am sure that there is hope for any who see walking without sinning as humanly impossible. "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God" (Luke 18:27).

The Foundation of Moral Obligation: Everyone Ought to Be Like Jesus

Everyone ought to be like the LORD Jesus Christ. What a wonderful world this would be, if everyone truly followed the example of the LORD Jesus Christ! "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1Peter 2:21). However, only the children of God will actually follow the example of the LORD Jesus. "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15).

The very Foundation of Moral Obligation for all mankind is tied to Who and What God is. For example, why should we be holy? Because **God is** holy. "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" (1Peter 1:15-16). Why should we be perfect (i.e., walk with a perfect heart)? Because **God is** perfect. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

Like mindedness to our LORD Jesus Christ is the argument of the Apostle Paul for why we ought to

walk humbly. In other words, we ought to walk humbly because the LORD Jesus walked humbly. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:3-8).

To discover to our hearts the very nature of God is the purpose of the Indwelling Holy Spirit. "But when the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me" (John 15:26). We, the Body of Christ, should **not** look at these necessities to be like the LORD Jesus as an overwhelming, crushing burden, **but as an opportunity to enter into His joy**. "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11).

The Unity of Moral Action: No Man Can Serve Two Masters

If we would conduct our Christian walk with our iniquities subdued, we need to more intelligently understand the anatomy of the Christian walk. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Romans 14:5). The LORD Jesus clearly defined the Unity of Moral Action, that we could not serve two masters at the same time. Yes, there is something as clear as black and white, when it comes to whom we really serve. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon [literally, treasure or riches]" (Matthew 6:24). [Please read "[Unity of Moral Action](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Unity.of.Moral.Action.html)" -- http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Unity.of.Moral.Action.html -- by Charles G. Finney]

Whom we choose to serve, colors everything else about us. "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (Matthew 6:22). We are either good or evil, light or darkness; but, not both at the same time. "But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6:23). Why so strong a warning against serving mammon (treasure)? Because "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21). God is not satisfied with anything less than our whole heart. "Blessed are they that keep His Testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart" (Psalm 119:2).

Gray is the color of **ungodly compromise**. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity [literally, hatred or hostility] with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). Gray areas are the breeding ground for sinful doubt. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23). Gray is the tone that questions the commands of God. "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Genesis 3:1). Gray permeates the Church of Laodecia. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth" (Revelation 3:15-16).

Separation from the wrong and cleaving to the right is the only preservation for the Righteous. "Be ye

not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?... Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, **saith the LORD**, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:14,17).

Toward the End of the Tribulation Week, God will reaffirm the need of His people to separate themselves from the Harlot Religion of the False Prophet. "And I heard another Voice from Heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4). This is the final call for the last train out to the Pre-Wrath Rapture. Separation from sin is not just a good idea, but it is **essential** to participate in this Second and Final Rapture event. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

Remember that God's name is Jealous. "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is **Jealous**, is a jealous God" (Exodus 34:14). Consequently, He will not tolerate any attempt to make Himself simply another God on the shelf of the human heart. "Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and His redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God" (Isaiah 44:6).

He designed man's heart with only a single function-at-a-time capability. For this reason, we say that there is a Unity of Moral Action, or singleness of supreme choice for the human heart. If the inward heart is clean, then the outward life will be clean also. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also" (Matthew 23:25-26). Likewise, if the inward is unclean and impure, then no amount of cosmetic effect on the outward life will hide from God the spiritual dirt.

Abiding in Christ: The Secret of the Christian Walk

He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (1John 2:6). Unquestionably, we who profess the LORD Jesus Christ to be our LORD and Saviour, ought to walk as Jesus walked. But, what does it mean to Abide in Christ? The Greek word for "abide" is meno. It has been translated as "abide", "continue", and "endure".

The Gospel of John, Chapters 14 and 15 are a feast for God's children to read, understand, and savor. The LORD Jesus is giving His last instructions to His disciples the evening before His crucifixion. "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). He mentions the concept of "mansions" in His Father's house. These "mansions" are literally dwellings or abodes. Here, He begins a discourse on abiding-- the secret of the Christian walk.

Our LORD masterfully answered Thomas' query about how the disciples would know the way to those heavenly mansions. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). Confused about Jesus' reference to the fact that they "have seen" the Father (14:7), Philip asks to be shown the Father. The Master responds that the works that

the disciples see Him do are accomplished because "the Father dwelleth in" Himself (14:10).

Again, the Greek word *meno* is used. This time, it is translated "dwelleth" (14:10). The LORD Jesus shared the secret of His walk. The Father dwells in the Son; likewise, the Son dwells "in the Father" (14:10). Jesus set the example for the Christians' abiding. When the Saints abide in their LORD, it is God that performs the works. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the Words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works" (John 14:10).

Jesus proceeded to teach the disciples about the Holy Spirit. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever" (John 14:16). We can never abide in Christ without the continual help of the Holy Spirit. But, what is the condition of this continual help? Jesus said, "If ye love Me, keep My Commandments" (14:15) immediately before promising to pray for the Holy Spirit's abiding. Obedience to God is the condition for the Spirit's abiding. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My Words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him" (John 14:23).

Jesus commanded us to abide in Him. "Abide in Me, and I in you" (John 15:4). That we could abide in Christ is critically important, but that He would in turn abide in us is monumentally of the greatest importance! "But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the Heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less" (2Chronicles 6:18) are we to be the place of Christ's abiding? "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1Corinthians 3:16-17).

When we abide in Him, we can be certain that He abides in us (John 15:4). But, what happens if we do not abide in Christ? "If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (15:6). It is certain that the LORD Jesus designed this statement to offer no eternal comfort to those desiring to shirk the command to abide.

When we do not abide in Christ, we lose the Source and Power of the Christian walk. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me" (John 15:4). Not only do we lose the fruit that could have been produced, but we lose the Spirit's testimony of our sonship. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (1John 2:4).

What else is the Word of God than the voice of the Holy Spirit? "For the Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2Peter 1:21). We may intellectually remember the event in our spiritual history that we recall as the time of our Born Again spiritual experience, but only the testimony of the Spirit establishes the reality of that experience. "And he that keepeth His Commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us" (1John 3:24).

Church members and others professing Christ, who have never been converted to the LORD Jesus,

may intellectually remember events in their religious history that correspond to what they feel is a Born Again spiritual experience. They may have responded to an Invitation at the end of an evangelistic message at a church service, been baptized, received the ordinance of the LORD's Supper, have attended Sunday School, attended weekly Prayer Meetings, have brought the unchurched to special Revival Meetings, etc. and still NOT have the testimony of the Spirit. "Many will say to Me in that day, LORD, LORD, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" (Matthew 7:22). Yet, one thing they lack-- the testimony of the Spirit of God, that they have been received as a child of God. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:14-16).

But, some may object that requiring the testimony of the Spirit to our sonship, would cause many, who have been truly converted but are now stumbling in sin, to doubt their salvation. Further, they would feel themselves to be rejected by God. "Yet ye say, The way of the LORD is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not My Way equal? are not your ways unequal?" (Ezekiel 18:25). If the testimony of the Spirit is only "given to them that **obey** Him" (Acts 5:32), why should God comfort and assure disobedient rebels-- the Backsliders-- for their prodigal walk?

There has been a great mistake in the Church to give the comfort of Heaven to those who walk in disobedience-- the never saved as well as the deceived backslider. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). The Good Shepherd assures us of the Security of the Abiding Saint. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand" (John 10:28). Likewise, the Judge of All the Earth (Genesis 18:25) also assures us of the Insecurity of the Sinner-- the Lost as well as the Backslidden. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in Him" (1John 2:4). "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and ALL LIARS [not just lost liars, but **all** liars], shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

There is a difference between a Non-Abiding Backslider and a Never-Been-Saved Sinner. "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a Good Work in you **will** perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6) applies to the Saints and not to the Sinners. The Backslider can have no assurance of this promise from the Holy Spirit, but God will justify His Word by performing it nonetheless. Though the Backslider has lost all right to the Spirit's testimony of his sonship, God still remembers the Good Work which He has begun, and finishes it. "If his children forsake My Law, and walk not in My Judgments; If they break My Statutes, and keep not My Commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless My lovingkindness will I **not** utterly take from him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips" (Psalm 89:30-34).

Backsliders always and ultimately repent before dying. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" (Hebrews 12:7). Only a Lost Sinner can die in his sins. "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go My way, and ye shall seek Me, and

shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye **cannot** come" (John 8:21). If they die in their sins, they never were a Backslider-- only another deceived, future occupant of the Lake of Fire. "And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

With this understanding of abiding, we can read and understand a passage such as Hebrews 6:4-6: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the Good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; **seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame**" (Hebrews 6:4-6).

The impossibility of Hebrews 6:4-6 is to renew to repentance those who are **not abiding** in Christ. It is impossible to be crucifying (present tense) the Son of God afresh and putting (present tense) Him to an open shame, **while** repenting at the same time-- consistent with the Unity of Moral Action. Those "who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the Good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come" are easily describing someone who has been truly converted.

It is painful to note that our lack of abiding is called crucifying "the Son of God afresh" (Hebrews 6:6). If Jesus died on the cross to redeem us from our sins, why should we think it strange that Scripture describes those, who have been truly converted but are now presently sinning, as crucifying Jesus **afresh**? If ever we had a powerful argument to learn the secret of abiding in Christ, **our revulsion at the thought of lifting a hand against our Saviour should be enough!** "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?... There is therefore now **no** condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, **who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit**" (Romans 7:25;8:1).

Abiding in Christ: What Must I Do?

Abiding in Christ is the secret of the Christian walk, but that is not supposed to make the word "abide" mystical. "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father" (1John 2:24). Abiding is continuing to do what you did in the beginning of your walk with the LORD Jesus Christ. What did you begin to do when you first met the LORD Jesus? Keep doing it.

Continue in faith. The Apostle Paul confirmed "the souls of the disciples" and exhorted "them to continue in the faith" (Acts 14:22). Continuing in faith is a condition of receiving the benefits of the reconciling work of the LORD Jesus on the cross. "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 unreprieveable in His sight: **IF YE CONTINUE IN THE FAITH** grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister" (Colossians 1:21-23). If it was necessary for us to repent and believe the Gospel (Mark 1:15) to begin the Christian walk, should it be thought strange that it is necessary to continue in faith to continue our abiding in Christ?

Continue in the grace of God. "Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God" (Acts 13:43). Again, the Apostle Paul gave us the example. Grace is literally the help of God. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). Only as the Holy Spirit persuades us of our neediness, do we cry out for the grace of God.

Continue in the Word of God. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed" (John 8:31). We are what we have been commissioned to make of the world-- disciples of the LORD Jesus (Matthew 28:19)-- if we continue in His Word. This is encouragement to not be a forgetful hearer. "But whoso looketh into the perfect Law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a **doer of the work**, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25).

Continue in prayer. "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Colossians 4:2). We know that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). If we continue in the Word, we have been given assurance of answers to our prayers. "If ye abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7). The Exceeding Great and Precious Promises connect the Word to prayer. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2Peter 1:4).

Continue in the love of God. "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love" (John 15:9). Jesus demonstrated His love of the Father by His obedience to the Father. "If ye keep My Commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's Commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:10-11). Continuing in obedience is continuing in love. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His Commandments: and His Commandments are not grievous" (1John 5:3). Again, we have the agency to choose to be kept in the love of God. "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our LORD Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).

Continue in brotherly love. "Let brotherly love continue" (Hebrews 13:1). The Church of Philadelphia (literally, brotherly love) represents the Church of the Pre-Tribulational Rapture. We not only know that we are the children of God, but that we will leave at the Pre-Tribulational Rapture because we continue in brotherly love. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (1John 3:14). Couple this with Philadelphia's promise to escape the Tribulation. "Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Revelation 3:10). Brotherly love is a further proof of our discipleship. "A new Commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35).

Endure to the end. "Endure" is the same word translated as "abide". "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13). Does our necessity to abide or endure to the end

detract from the fact that God's Almighty Power keeps the Saints unto Heaven? "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1Peter 1:5). Certainly not. Our abiding or enduring no more detracts from God's power in keeping, than did the LORD Jesus' earthly works diminish the Father's Heavenly Help. "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17). Abiding or enduring is cooperating with God.

It may seem that abiding in Christ has now become a tribute to the force of the Moral Agency of man to will it, but that would be a great mistake in understanding. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). Whenever we have a good thought to act upon, God is the Author of it. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). So complete a title does God have on all good actions that anyone could will, that Scripture authoritatively declares Him to be The Only Good. "And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but One, that is, God" (Mark 10:18).

In abiding, Jesus set the example of how to use the human will-- unconditionally submitted to God. "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 5:8); even so, we are to submit ourselves to the will of God as reasonable service. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1-2).

Abiding in Christ: To Appropriate Christ by Faith in All His Offices, Capacities, and Relations

With the understanding that obedience to Christ's command to be "perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48), is part of abiding in Christ, we can seek after this kind of Christian perfection without stumbling over the very words. Christian perfection is to appropriate Christ by faith in all of His offices, capacities, and relations to meet our every need in life. For example, Jesus desires that we look upon Himself as our Saviour. "Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Jesus literally means Saviour. He came to save us from **not only our sins but from sinning**. Jesus told Paul His purpose in sending Paul to the Gentiles was "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me" (Acts 26:18). Jesus can only be appropriated in His office, capacity, or relation of Saviour by faith to meet our need of salvation.

The LORD Jesus Christ is Our Redeemer From All Our Iniquity. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:13-14). Jesus redeems us from all iniquity. Like the Apostle Paul, we seek to be delivered from "the body of this death" (Romans 7:24), i.e., from being in bondage to sinning. Also, like Paul, we "thank God through Jesus Christ our LORD" (7:25) for the deliverance from sin and sinning that Our Redeemer From All Our Iniquity can accomplish in us, when we trust Him to do it.

Is not the LORD Jesus the One Who Cleanses Us From All Unrighteousness? "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1John 1:9). Certainly we are talking about the confession of all known sin. God will never forgive us for any sin, until we are willing to give up all known sin. God is not so desperate as to negotiate for anything less than complete agreement with Himself about the despicableness of our sin, the justness of His anger and punishment, and the magnanimity of His mercy. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18). As the One Who Cleanses Us From All Unrighteousness, He maintains a holy people. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2Peter 3:14).

Jesus is the One Who Is Able To Subdue All Things To Himself. "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Philippians 3:21). Our wills are included in this listing of things which the LORD Jesus is able to subdue. Either man voluntarily submits to the One Who Is Able To Subdue All Things To Himself now, or the confession that Jesus is LORD will be taken later at the White Throne Judgment. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name: That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

The Subduer of Our Iniquities is an appropriate title for the LORD Jesus. "He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19). Many of these promises have been relegated to someone else at some other time. "For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 8:11). Without a confidence that the LORD Jesus came to obliterate the works of the Devil, the professed Church will be willing to wait for the next Millennium to come before we come to grips with how to walk without sinning. "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1John 3:8).

Our LORD Jesus is Our All In All. "And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1Corinthians 15:28). The goal of God is that He would be Our All In All. He knows that He already is the supply for all the needs of all who trust Him. "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). When all rebellion has been put down and all sin has been judged, then all will be subject to the KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:16). If the professed Church would only practice now what all will confess later... "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:11).

Conclusion

Charles G. Finney, an American evangelist from the 1800's, noted, "When we sin, it is because of our

ignorance of Christ." We would be more inclined to drink deeply from the Living Water, if we believed that there was anything we could do to be free from sin or sinning. There is. Believe the "Exceeding Great and Precious Promises" (2Peter 1:4) of the LORD Jesus to make us "partakers of the divine nature" (1:4). Every title, office, or capacity of the LORD Jesus is an implicit promise of what Jesus will do for us. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2Corinthians 1:20). We do not lack because God will not supply. We lack because we do not have the understanding or faith to ask. "Ye have not, because ye ask not" (James 4:2).

The Church is in its present Laodicean condition, not because of any inability on God's part to sanctify the Church with His promises, but because Laodicea sees no need of sanctification or the promises. "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17). This is inexcusable blindness. This is sin, with only one remedy-- repent. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Revelation 3:19).

But, "at this present time also there is a remnant [Praise God] according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5) that "do know their God" and who will "be strong, and do exploits" (Daniel 11:32). I especially pray for you. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our LORD Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Ephesians 3:14-19). Amen.

For further information, read

"A Tale of Ten Virgins"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/A.Tale.of.Ten.Virgins.html> --

"Exceeding Great and Precious Promises"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Promises/Exceeding.Promises.html> --

and "An Urgent Call to Christian Perfection"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/Exposition.Perfection.html> --

"He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us;
He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea"
(Micah 7:19).