

What the **DURCE** has to say about

Ray Brubaker

SUN

FAITH

TRUTH

JUSTICE

PEACE

LOVE

HOPE

GRACE

MERCY

FAITHFULNESS

GOODNESS

BEAUTY

WISDOM

STRENGTH

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What the BIBLE has to say about



SIN



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Introduction

Some don't like messages on sin and judgment. But the evidence from Scripture would verify the fact that a Holy Ghost-anointed ministry must contain the essential convicting graces dealing with sin, righteousness and judgment. (John 16)

John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his youth and he was a preacher of sin, righteousness and judgment.

The Word of God is as a two-edged sword cutting away sin. Hidden in the heart, the Word is a restraining influence to keep one from sin.

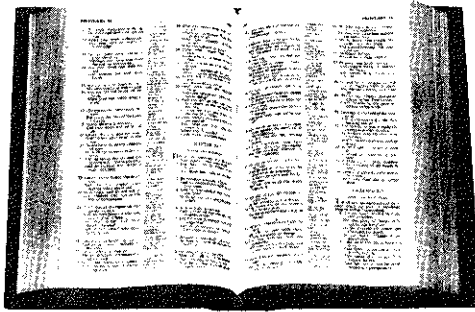
The time will come (Scripture says) when men will not endure sound doctrine. Nevertheless, those of us who are sincerely desirous of knowing the truth of God's Word have no objection to hearing about that which is offensive to God—SIN.

The time is coming that men will believe a lie—that they can go on in the "pleasures of unrighteousness," yet thinking they are doing the will of God. The Bible declares, however, they will be "damned." How sobering!

Today, may we keep our hearts open to the truth. Let us not shun to hear the Word of the Lord preached without fear or favor on sin. For sin will keep us out of heaven. Sin will rob us of fellowship with God. Sin will ultimately destroy us unless it is forgiven, put under the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

May we confess and forsake our sin, finding forgiveness in Christ. May we walk worthy of the holy calling of God, living daily for Him.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT SIN . . .



The world's Roman Catholic Bishops met recently to discuss the moral blight in the world we call "sin." A 49-page study document states, "The fundamental cause of all divisions in men's souls and their societies is sin, or the evil that man does freely before God."

George Cornell, an Associated Press religious newswriter, calls attention to all the trouble existing in the world. He writes, "In classical Christian thought, the woes of the world and of the people in it stem from a single, pervasive and underlying condition — an ailment called "sin."

Today we are seeing rebellion against authority in the home and in government. Some question the role of the person seen disobeying the laws of God as to whether or not that one is a "sinner." For to call him a sinner degrades and demoralizes.

At least, that may be the thinking of Dr. Robert Schuller, pastor of the famous glass Cathedral in Garden Grove, California. Schuller has written a book, **SELF ESTEEM: THE NEW REFORMATION**. He states: "Classical theology defines sin as 'rebellion against God.'" He comments: "The answer is not incorrect as much as it is shallow and insulting to the human being. Every person deserves to be treated with dignity even if he or she is a "rebellious sinner."

The **GOOD NEWS BROADCASTER** says, "in **SELF ESTEEM: THE NEW REFORMATION**, Schuller as much as says that he is deviating from classical Christian theology. It is pointed out, "Throughout the book and Schuller's personal ministry, it is obvious that he forfeits faithfulness to the Word of God for a blank anti-scriptural message 'the world is waiting to hear.'"

In Biblical theology it is common to point out the scriptural argument which states, first, all men are sinners. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Then, we're reminded that we cannot save ourselves but that Christ died to save us. A text used is 1 Tim 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners . . ." Finally, apart from accepting this truth about man's sinfulness and need of salvation, it is impossible for man to be saved. He must recognize these facts of Scripture and then humbly, and in a spirit of repentance, he must accept Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Lord.

We're reminded of the illustration of the old Methodist preacher who didn't beat around the bush in preaching on "sin." He called it the abominable thing that God hates. Later one of his members came to him, saying, "We don't like for you to talk so plainly about sin. Our children will more easily be called sinners!"

Whereupon the preacher picked up a bottle of strychnine clearly marked with the skull and crossbones. Said he, "Suppose I take off the label of Poison and put on some mild label such as Essence of Peppermint. Don't you see what happens?" asked the preacher. "The milder you make the label, the more dangerous you make the poison!"

Dr. Schuler defines sin as "any human condition or act that robs God of glory by stripping one of his children of their right to divine dignity." There is a lesson for all of us to learn — never to trifle with sin, no matter how small, nor how alluring. For the Bible says: "Sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren." (James 1:15-16)

A giant oak may withstand severe storms, lightning and drought. But a fly can come along, deposit its eggs on the bark of the tree, and soon this tree succumbs to the silent, unobserved beetle.

So it is with sin.

A cancer victim never dreamed the little cigarette would eventually bring about his death. The alcoholic never thought that first glass of wine would ultimately make him a hopeless drunkard. The gambler never suspected the game of innocent-looking cards would stir up emotions that would bring him to a suicide's grave. The young girl, now shunned by her lover and shamed by society, never anticipated disgrace as the result of just one night of illicit love.

Ah friends, the wages of sin is death! The soul that sinneth it shall die! Not only eternal death in the lake of fire where torments never cease, but physical death is often the result of sin as Satan would clutch his victims by the throat.

Be not deceived! Sin promises pleasure but gives pain. Sin offers life but brings death! In every sin there is the seed of another sin; it is self propagating. Sin corrupts man's nature, perverts his tastes, weakens his will, and sears his conscience. With each evil deed inclinations toward evil become stronger and stronger until as the Scripture says: "He cannot cease from sin."

A Symposium which included high-ranking clergymen met for the purpose of discussing the relation of the concept of sin to mental health. The discussion resulted in a statement being issued to the effect that the concept of sin is highly "pernicious," and that "no human being should ever be blamed for anything he does."

It may not be popular to preach on sin.

As a physician does not prescribe an aspirin for cancer but orders immediate surgery to get to the very cause of the trouble, so a faithful minister must preach on sin. Sugar-coated, sweet-sounding messages only serve as soothing medicine to comfort men in their sin, whereas a spiritual operation is necessary to arrest the disease and save the patient.

Sin in the life will bring physical and eternal death unless it is washed away in the precious cleansing blood of Christ. "For the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Hallelujah!

In our newspapers was an account of a minister in England who declared the Ten Commandments are not for today — that they have no application in our present world, so he has ordered their discontinuance in his services.

My Bible says: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom 3:20)

We're living in a day when people don't like to be reminded of the commandments of God which forbid adultery and command the Lord's Day be kept holy.

Because this nation, or any nation, refuses to keep the laws of God, the inevitable result is soon-coming judgment. "For if God spared not the angels that sinned . . . and spared not the old world . . . and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes . . . making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly" . . . How can we expect God will spare us, except we repent of our sin?

Today, when many voices are heard crying out against Communism, and every other ism, there needs be a clarion call to cry out against SIN!

Israel was warned time and again that she would be destroyed by her enemies if she failed to keep the Commandments of God, whereas, if she heeded his laws and precepts, her enemies would be routed and defeated.

Similarly, my friends, the need is for men of God to arise and cry out against the sins of our day — sins which are bringing corruption within, and soon may bring destruction from without.

The Lord told Israel: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and will give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I AM THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE." (Ex 15-26)

I hope I'm not misunderstood. I'm opposed to Communism, and I believe God has given certain of his servants a ministry of ministering to the physical needs of the people, but SIN is often the cause of both physical and national maladies, and except we repent, greater judgments and calamities will fall upon us!



Perhaps some of our confusion lies in our inability to discern just what sin is. Here are some Scriptural definitions.

(1) Proverbs 24:9, "The thought of foolishness is sin." What about the off-color jesting of clowning comedians on radio and television? Paul, writing to the Ephesian Christians, reminds them that on account of "foolish talking" and "jesting," the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.

Certainly we're not to be long-faced, but, on the other hand, we must guard against such frivolity. For the Bible says: "The thought of foolishness is sin." God help us!

(2) James would remind us: "If ye have respect of persons ye commit sin." (2:9) How many of us love our neighbor as ourselves? Would we want them to share the same comforts and conveniences we enjoy?

The Gospel knows no color boundaries, no race distinctions, no denominational lines. If truly born again, we are one in Christ.

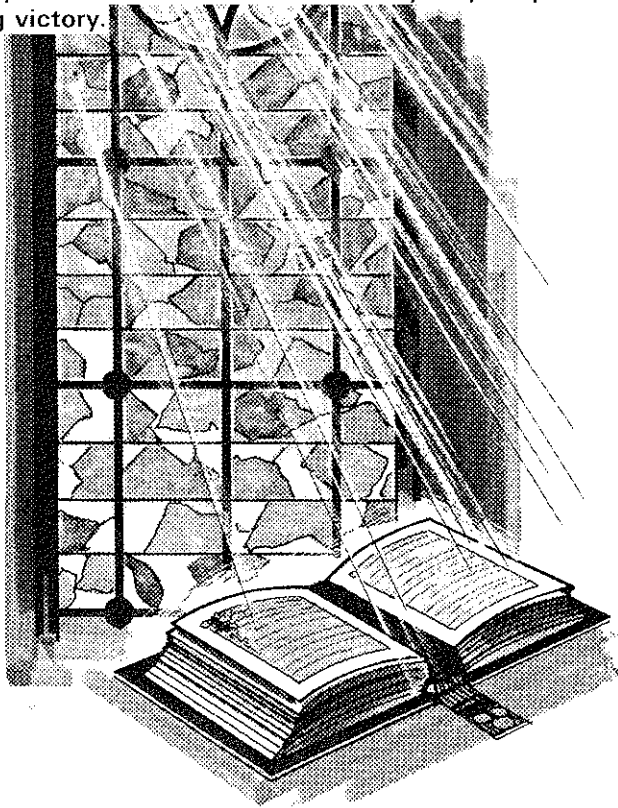
(3) Again, James declares: "Therefore, to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

To fail to take time to read our Bible and pray is SIN; To fail to visit the sick and shut-in and provide for the needs of others if we are able to offer assistance is SIN! To be able to give to the needs of missionaries, or for the propagation of the Gospel by radio if we have the means to do so — is SIN!

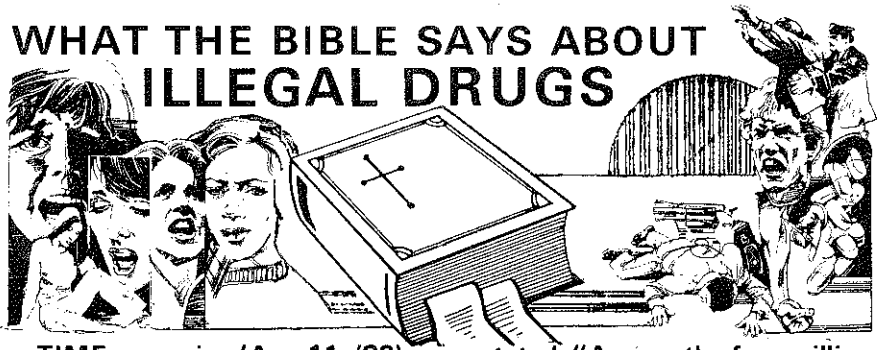
Spurgeon once ran into a man who kept boasting how he didn't do certain things until finally the great Spurgeon could stand it no longer: "Why man . . . you don't gamble, you don't drink, you don't swear. What in the name of goodness do you do?"

You see, sin is not only doing wrong things . . . "to know to do good and do it not" also is sin!

(4) Then, the Apostle John would remind us — "All unrighteousness is sin." We know murder and stealing are wrong, but so is anger, unkind words, an unforgiving spirit, impure thoughts, worry! These latter sins may be little sins. Nevertheless, they may keep the believer from enjoying victory.



WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT ILLEGAL DRUGS



TIME magazine (Apr. 11, '83) once stated: "Among the four million to five million Americans who regularly (at least monthly) use cocaine, drug counsellors estimate that 5%-20% - at least 200,000, perhaps one million - are now profoundly dependent on cocaine."

Thomas B. Kirkpatrick, executive director of the Illinois dangerous drugs commission, predicts "the use of cocaine will double in the U.S. before we see any decline in its popularity."

Another issue of **TIME** has indicated the drug culture is a contributing factor to the unrest in Iran today.

Notes **TIME**: "The Iranian heroin problem has assumed runaway proportions. According to government figures, there are now three million addicts, nearly one in every 12 Iranians." (June 30, 1980)

The Bible uses the word "sorceries" which is the Greek word **PHARMAKEIA**, from which we get our word "pharmacy."

In Revelation 9:21 we read of those who are engaged in the drug traffic who refuse to recognize that what they are doing is wrong and justify their involvement. During the tribulation we will find it to be true, "Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornications, nor of their thefts."

And in Rev. 18:23 we're told, "for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived." This is a reference to ecclesiastical Babylon that has "drugged" the world into believing it can dispense the wine of salvation whereas it holds the cup of abominations with which the inhabitants of earth are made drunk. May no one be deceived by apostate religion that is exhibited as a "form of godliness, denying the power thereof, from such turn away."

That, too, is a form of sorcery from which no one need to be addicted. We can have the true wine of the Holy Spirit. As we turn to Christ and yield our all to Him, we can be filled with His fullness. Thus the admonition, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph. 5:18)

It is observed that Iran, Pakistan and the rest of Southwest Asia are fast becoming the world's leading producer of the drug, heroin. However, attempts are being made to halt this production.

We might ask, is it not remarkable that the Bible should predict for the endtime the use of drugs?

U.S. drug experts estimate that Pakistan produces around 700 tons of illicit opium a year. They also estimate that some 40 per cent of all drugs smuggled into America come from this area.

To escape the authorities, the smugglers find many ways to hide their illegal cargo. In this case, it was hollowed out of stones. The inside of the stone was carved out and stuffed with bags of drugs. This method is a common way to smuggle drugs, but it's not always successful. The stones were very carefully glued back together to avoid detection. But this time it did not work. It's a reminder of what we read in Numbers 32:23, "And be sure your sin will find you out."

In a crowded courtroom in Tehran a judge faces five men accused of trafficking in drugs.

Without permitting a word to be spoken in their defense, he shouts: "Those two – execution." "This one – life imprisonment." "The other two – 100 lashes each."

As the last two men are led away to be whipped, the judge calls out after them, "Remember, every lash must draw blood."

Although this is the sentence imposed in some lands, we find in Pakistan a long tradition in growing opium. Smuggling is almost an honorable occupation in these parts.

The stark landscape of the Khyber mountains makes it easy to smuggle anything from guns to drugs. And the no-man's land along the Afghan border is impossible to control. But there are other reasons to explain the growing of opium and the manufacture of heroin in Pakistan.

Heroin manufacture was common in Turkey and Iran. In Turkey, the military regime has clamped down on drugs, thus almost completely destroying the heroin trade. In Iran, much the same has been attempted.

Iran banned the use of drugs in the late 60's during the Shah's regime. All opium vends were closed. But this didn't put an end to trafficking. Instead, the market went underground.

The Ayatollah Khomeini continued the Shah's anti-drug policies that once found three million addicts, nearly one in every 12 Iranians.

Although the execution of drug peddlers is widespread, with 120 convicted opium and heroin dealers executed in just six weeks, there are still half a million drug addicts in Iran, and the demand is as high as ever.

As Art Linkletter, whose daughter jumped through a window while under drugs, has testified: "Faith in Christ is the only sure-fire cure. Every other way is only a temporary cure."

As a result of Iran's anti-drug policies, heroin manufacturing centers were forced to move to Afghanistan. But heroin was not manufactured there for very long.

When the Soviet Union moved in, the heroin manufacturers fled as did much of the populace.

As Soviet troops increased in numbers and the war dragged on, the heroin trade was further disrupted.

The traditional trade routes through Afghanistan into Iran were broken. Because of this, Pakistani-manufactured heroin, which could no longer follow the old routes, had to find new routes and markets. This is why Pakistan's opium and heroin now increasingly find its way to Western Europe and the United States. However, some of it still ends in Iran.

One hundred and fifty miles from the Afghan capital, the town of Landikotal has become the center of this drug trade. The fiercely independent Pathan tribesmen who live here run the smuggling operations.

As in Bible times we read of those who did what was right in their own eyes, so these men live by their own code of honour. They resent any government interference in their affairs.

Is this not typical, however, of mankind? As we read in Isa. 53:6, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."

While for millions of Pakistanis opium is a part of their daily lives, the government has sought to clamp down on the sale and the manufacture of heroin. But whether there is the addiction from drugs, or drinking, or other habit-forming substances, only Christ is the sure cure to make one pure and to endure temptation.

The Bible reminds us, "But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (Jas. 1:14-15)

If somehow we could only awaken anyone who is tempted to turn to drugs or alcohol to let them know the hell they face if they become addicted.

As addicts become addicted, they introduce the drug to others so that one makes four, and four makes sixteen, a frightening progression. As in the case of any habit-forming drug, the secret is – not only to refuse to get started in the use of drugs—but to come to Christ who will truly satisfy the longings of the heart.

Dave Wilkerson writes, "There has never been a generation as deeply in trouble as ours. It is corrupted by drugs, crazed by sex, plagued by rebellion and violence." This is not only true of Americans; it is true of other countries as well.

Pakistan is an example of attempts to control the drug traffic but in vain.

Opium is smelly and bulky, whereas heroin is easy to conceal: ten kilos of opium can be turned into one kilo of heroin—a white powder that will bring a much higher price than opium in western markets.

Heroin is made in crude laboratories with very basic equipment. All that is needed is water, a Bunsen burner, a press and some chemicals. These laboratories are so easy to build they are not hard to remove and relocate if spotted by government investigators. They can be dismantled and hidden almost anywhere.

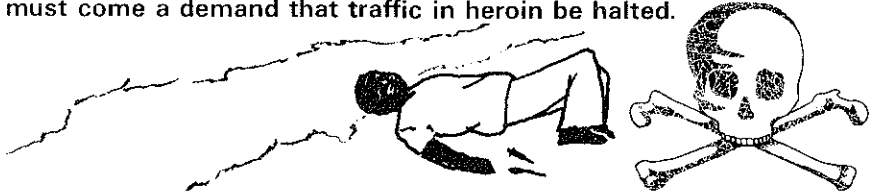
The main problem for government forces is that whenever they destroy one laboratory, another one pops up almost instantly somewhere else.

It is no wonder that the government is seeking to direct or control the consumption of opium. The government has restricted production to around seven tons a year and has reluctantly licensed some 33 shops where opium can be sold.

We would ask, why sell it at all?

The customer can buy a small lump of opium much in the same way he would buy a pack of cigarettes. The opium sold in the shape of a black tablet ready to chew or smoke bears the official government stamp. But nine out of ten do not, because they are sold illegally.

In this country, according to one report the dope traffic is blamed for 90% of crimes in the 43 largest cities, for once addicted, the users will steal and even kill to get the stuff. When we think of the amount of money spent for hard drugs, and the violence associated with it, there must come a demand that traffic in heroin be halted.



Dave Wilkerson relates the story of a heroin addict named George. He had to mug, break into apartments, steal, hold up taxi cabs—all for money to get drugs. He mysteriously disappeared and when found, he had been dead for three days. His body turned as black as 'cork.' An autopsy revealed George had died of "O.D."

Wilkerson says the funeral will long be remembered. George was buried in two caskets. His body was wrapped in asbestos with only his face showing. One of the sealed caskets enabled narcotics to view the remains.

Young addicts who filed past the caskets were told, "This is how it ends." Ladies fainted, strong men were shaken, but the drug addicts were unmoved.

Says Wilkerson, "The drug-pushers are invading the land. They want their drugs in every high school, in every city, town and village. For some this message is already too late—they're hooked."

Warns Wilkerson, "At the end of every sensual pleasure is a casket." In other words, the "wages of sin is death!" (Rom. 6:23)

However, says Wilkerson, "Confess your sins to the Lord Jesus with your mouth—repent and be sorry for all your sins—forsake your wicked way of living—call on Him and ask Him to come and live in your heart."

That is the way to be saved and delivered through the atoning death of Jesus Christ.

Once a person is addicted to drugs, he is hooked for life. Only through Jesus Christ can there come forgiveness and the power of the Holy Spirit to control the appetite and free one from the enslavement of Satan.

A 19-year-old, rebelling against the status quo, demanded the right to use drugs or make love or anything else . . . in the guise of freedom.

If only young people who try smoking pot, or cigarettes, or alcohol would realize that they are only making themselves slaves to lusts and cravings that are never satisfied.

The Apostle Peter writes, "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage." (2 Pet. 2:19)

Did you hear it?

Participation in drug use only brings a person into bondage resulting in at least five evils.

First, it makes us a slave; lust is never satisfied but is always intensified.

Second, participation leads to greater experimentation. From smoking pot there often follows more harmful drugs such as cocaine or heroin.

Three, drug use causes crime. In New York, 80% of all shoplifting was traced to the use of drugs. To support their habits heroin addicts steal billions of dollars worth of goods annually.

Four, drugs lead to death. It is well known that dissipation of the body breeds disease and leads to death. The choice is clear. As we read in Galatians 6:7-8, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Finally, the end result of an eternal separation from God should cause all of us to make sure where we will spend eternity.

Far worse than suffering the pains of addiction is to die unprepared to meet God. And whether or not one wants to believe in a burning hell, it is described as the fate of all who reject Christ as their Saviour and Lord.

The government of Pakistan has been successful, to some extent, in cracking down on smuggling. But with several hundred tons of opium produced, much of it is bound to get through.

It's the stuff that gets through that concerns western governments. The administration in Washington has been pressuring Pakistan to crack down even further to halt the drug traffic.

Mr. Khan, the acting commissioner for customs in Peshawar, declared, "By the Grace of God," efforts could succeed in reducing the drug trade in the future.

U.S. experts fear the drug smuggling will continue, and even increase, even though it is known that harm will come through the use of these drugs.

If through broadcasts like this one we can put the fear of God in people's hearts, then we will have succeeded, not only in rescuing potential drug-users from painful addiction but from eternal death.

The LONDON TIMES has noted: "Rightly or wrongly, men are not afraid of God as they used to be, and have cast off the restraints which fear imposed."

A great theologian, while calling "hell" a blasphemy, nevertheless declared, "There never was a time when the fear of God played so small a part in men's and women's real religion as it does now. We are not afraid as earlier generations were afraid of God's judgment," he noted.

The Apostle Paul writes, "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

If we can persuade you by the power of God's Holy Spirit to turn from sin to trust the Saviour, then we will have the blessing of knowing we have not only kept you from a life of sin but rescued you from hell.

But even that is only a small part of our message.



As Dr. Dana McLean Greely, writing some years ago in LIFE magazine, spoke of youth who turn to drugs as "searching for something more beautiful or more real than the society that appears to be." Said Greely: "I'm sure their search is primarily a religious one."

Hear me. Your search will end when you invite Christ into your life.

In Psalms 16:11 we read: "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore"

That is reality to discover Jesus Christ is a person who will come and live in your heart by His Spirit, if you will only let Him.

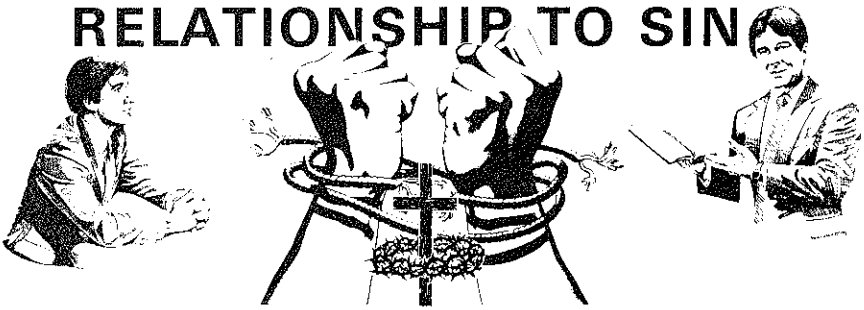
He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20)

Is this not what you want? Do you not want peace? Are you longing for forgiveness? Do you want the slate of your past life of sin washed clean?

Then invite Christ into your heart and life. Pray this prayer: "Lord Jesus, I believe you died on the cross for my sins. I do here and now receive you as my Saviour and Lord to live for you and serve you 'til you come."

Pray that prayer and mean it. And, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

RELATIONSHIP TO SIN



AND SUFFERING

Dr. Karl Menninger, an outstanding psychiatrist and prison reformer, once lamented, "Whatever became of sin?" Then he adds, "Almost no one talks about it (sin) any more. We don't talk about sin on weekdays, and we hear about it only a few minutes on Sunday, if at all."

Phyllis Schlafly writes, "Indeed, the whole concept of sin has faded out of American public life. In a misguided attempt to protect freedom of religion, the Supreme Court has outlawed any teaching in the public schools that smacks of religion, morality, God, or an afterlife." She notes, "THE WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA does not even list an entry for sin. The result of sin's fall from fashion has been a shift of blame for misdeeds away from the individual to the entire society." Says Schlafly, "Let us hope that, in spite of the Supreme Court's banning of prayer and moral training in the public schools, the American people will once again recognize the existence of sin and the power it gives us to shape our destinies through free will and individual responsibility."

The Bible says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) Thus, all are sinners and in need of salvation.

The next verse reads, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past." (Rom. 3:24-25a)

We might ask, what about future sins?

The verdict of Holy Scripture is that once we are converted to Jesus Christ, we will not want to continue the practice of sin.

In Romans 6:1 we read, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"

In the Greek there is an emphatic "no." God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

However, there is provision for those who truly repent and no longer want to sin. If peradventure one falls into sin, we come to God for forgiveness and cleansing and with His help we seek to be free from the entanglement of sin.

As we read, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

The illustration is used of a pig falling into the mud. He stays there because it is his nature to enjoy the slime and muck. But were a lamb to fall into a ditch, he would immediately want out. So, a believer in Jesus Christ wants out of his sin.

If a person who professes to be a Christian continues to sin, there is a question of that one having experienced the "new birth." For we read in 1 John 3:7-9, "Let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous even as He is righteous. 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."

Did you hear it?

The reason many are having difficulty with their Christian lives is that they have not repented of their sins. They try to live as though nothing has happened in their past instead of getting it cleansed away, forgotten and forgiven.

In Proverbs 28:13 we read, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

Dr. Harry A. Ironsides, who pastored the famous Moody Church in Chicago, writes, "Hidden sin, unjudged and unconfessed, will be our undoing when we attempt to meet the enemy. A bad conscience will nullify all our holy weapons and result in utter defeat. But if we deal unsparingly with the evil, we can count on God to work in us and to fight for us."

How many have come to a place of desperation in their lives over their sin and God has allowed suffering and affliction to come to perfect holiness within us.

The Psalmist who declares, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now I have kept thy word."

Again David writes, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." (Psa. 119:67 & 71)

Another verse that relates suffering to our personal holiness is found in 1 Pet. 4:1 where we're reminded, "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."

Are you going through a time of suffering? Has it not drawn you closer to the Lord? It can and it should.

Continues Peter, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Pet. 4:12-13)

We need to see this purpose of suffering in our lives but only to perfect holiness within us.

Look at Hebrews 12 where we read, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: For what son is he whom the father chaseth not?"

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Verse 10 reminds us that the Lord chastens us "that we might be partakers of his holiness." And we read how God's purpose is carried out in the midst of chastening: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Then here is what we believe is God's ultimate desire – not that we go through life crippled but whole. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, and we can best serve the Lord when we are well.

Listen to it, "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; . . . but let is rather be healed." (Heb. 12:11-13)

To the woman bowed down with an infirmity our Lord said, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity." And he later testified that Satan had bound her lo, these eighteen years."

I don't want Satan to bind me, not when there is deliverance through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Some do not see this in the Scriptures simply because they have overlooked the fact that our oppressions are of the enemy. Luke, a doctor, wrote that when Jesus was on earth, He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

Now the devil doesn't want you to know that he is oppressing you. He wants you to bear it and believe it is for the glory of God. Well, as we have already related, suffering and affliction should draw us closer to our Blessed Lord. But God's ultimate desire, we believe, is expressed in Hebrews where He wants us to have the use of our hands and knees, saying, "Let it rather be healed."

Without question we can bring glory to God by learning virtues of love and patience in the midst of suffering. But it is faith that pleases God, and if you want to please God, then believe Him for your healing.

What are we going to do when the rapture takes place? If we can't believe God for our healing now, how can we believe for the transformation that will take place when these bodies take on a glorified state?

One of the signs given to let us know our Lord is soon to come is found in Malachi 4:2 where we read, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

With so many claiming healing today through the power of Jesus Christ and the energizing of the Holy Spirit, it causes us to believe our Lord's return is near.

The verse that has become meaningful to many of God's choice saints is found in Rom. 8:11, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

These are mortal, dying bodies. But the Bible tells us we can be quickened by the Spirit in these mortal bodies.

Hallelujah.

Think of it. The power that brought Jesus from the grave can give life to our weak and dying bodies. Do you believe it?

We need to return to these Bible-based principles which would indicate our Lord wants to save us, keep us from sin, and then fill us with His Holy Spirit so that we might be preserved until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have proof of that in 1 Thes. 5:23-24 where we read, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Did you hear it?

Our Lord's coming is near. And Paul prays that our spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless until that event. That event has not happened as yet, so the promise is still in effect.

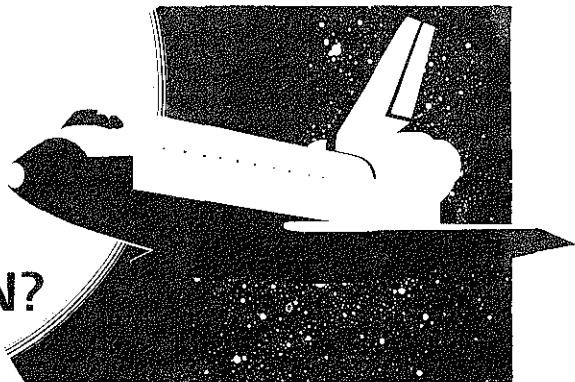
The next verse implies that God would not require something of us without making the necessary provision. For we read, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

If God wants to sanctify us holy and preserve us in our spirit, soul and body, then let Him do it. He promises that He will do it.

"And, be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."



DOES THE BIBLE TEACH SINLESS PERFECTION?



When COLUMBIA blasted off Launch Pad 39, a NASA press notice related it was 454 ten thousandths of a second late.

What space-age precision!

However, launch director Alfred D. O'Hara told reporters, "It was just a perfect launch as far as we were concerned."

When another reporter suggested NASA has new superlatives for every launch, O'Hara laughed and remarked, "When it gets off the ground successfully, we call it perfect."

Has it ever bothered you that God's standard is one of perfection?

It bothers some Christians who would rather enjoy a mediocre kind of spiritual existence. "Don't ask for perfection," is what you might hear them say.

Yet, when you read our Lord's words in His Sermon on the Mount, you hear Him say, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48)

Why not strive for perfection?

If in the worldly scientific sense we split the atom and aim at perfection in our space program, why not desire perfection in our quest for eternal accomplishments?

After all, as Paul says, "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:18) So why not strive for eternal accomplishments? Why not seek perfection in this life?

The SCOFIELD BIBLE notes point out that when our Lord demanded perfection, He was not speaking of "sinless perfection." This implies "full development, growth into maturity of godliness."

This does not mean that we should not seek to live godly lives. Rather, it reflects the purpose of God to conform us more perfectly to His image and likeness in all of His attributes.

In Ephesians we read, "And he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

Do you characterize your life as being "up and down," mostly down? Are you tossed to and fro in your beliefs?

At one time this was the testimony of the Apostle Paul. He wrote, "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."

His analysis of that kind of existence was this, for he writes, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then he seems to answer his own question by saying, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Beloved, there is victory. There is no need for continual defeat if you will surrender to the Lordship of Christ. If Jesus is on the throne of your life, you need not be subject to sin. For Paul writes, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." (Rom. 7:17)

Does the Bible teach "sinless perfection"? you ask.

Perhaps John Wesley could best answer that question. In the year 1779, Wesley turned his attention to the Bible as the sole standard of truth, and it became the foundation of all of his beliefs.

When he was accused of teaching a doctrine of "Wesley's" perfection, he replied: "This is not his doctrine any more than it is yours, or anyone else's that is a minister of Christ. For it is Christ's doctrine . . . it is the doctrine of St. Paul, the doctrine of St. James and St. John. . ."

Other books by noted authors that fell into his hands had a profound influence on his thinking. "These convinced me more than ever," wrote Wesley, "of the absolute impossibility of being half a Christian; and I determined through His grace, (the absolute necessity of which I was deeply sensible) to be all devoted to God, to give Him all my soul, my body, and my substance."

However, from the Bible, too, he believed the fact that God promised to deliver His people from all sin was an indication that such a deliverance was possible. A few of these promises are: "He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." (Psa. 130:8) And in Titus 2:14, referring to our Lord's work of redemption, we read, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity."

It is to be noted that whereas Wesley often spoke of perfection, he called it "Christian perfection." On one occasion he said, "Sinless perfection is a phrase I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself."

Count Zinzendorf wrote that "all true believers are not only saved from the dominion of sin, but from the being of inward sin, as well as outward sin, so that it no longer remains in them." Wesley disagreed, saying this was a strange, new doctrine.

Wesley did speak, however, of being perfect so as not to commit sin, but he went on to make a distinction between what he called sin (that is a voluntary transgression of a known law) and sin, improperly so called (that is, an involuntary transgression of a Divine law, known or unknown.)

John Fletcher, one of Wesley's associates, similarly sought to show a difference between what he called "infirmities," weaknesses in judgment, errors of discernment, etc., and "willful sins." Fletcher is quoted as saying, "An infirmity has its foundation in an involuntary want of power; and a sin is a willful use of the present light and power we have."

Dr. Samuel Chadwick, president of Cliff College, explains, "Christian perfection is not infallibility." He added, "A clean heart does not imply a perfect head. As long as we are in this world, there will be unavoidable errors and imperfections in judgment. The mistake is in regarding such errors and imperfections as sins."

On the other hand, there may be failures that are sins in the biblical definition. For example, as we read in James 4:17, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Or, as he says in James 2:9, "But if ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin." These may be things we do not call sin, and yet they all fit the scriptural definition of sin.

Wesley calls attention, with approval, to article nine of the Anglican church: "Original sin is the corruption of the nature of every man, whereby man is in his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth contrary to the Spirit. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated. So Wesley asserted that "sin did still remain, though not reign, in him that is born of God." This was in harmony with such scriptures as 1 John 3:9 which declares a born-again person will not practice sin. For we read, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

Defining sin that still may remain in the justified, Wesley wrote, "By sin, I here understand inward sin; any sinful temper, passion, or affection; such as pride, self-will, love of the world, in any kind or degree; such as lust, anger, peevishness; any disposition contrary to the mind which was in Christ."

Quoting Gal. 5:17, we read, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other. Says Wesley: "The Apostle here directly affirms that the flesh, evil nature, opposes the Spirit, even in believers; that even in the regenerate there are two principles, 'contrary to the other,'"

How are we to deal with the flesh? Paul, in Gal. 5:24, notes, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

W.B. Godbey comments on this word, "crucified," saying, "The verb here is not the perfect . . . but the aorist, which does not denote time, but instantaneity and completion, setting forth the fact that all the elect of Christ were legally crucified with Him, which is in due time verified by grace being summarily executed and completed in a moment."

Thus, through the transformation wrought in us by the work of Christ on the cross, we are to reckon ourselves indeed as "dead unto sin, and alive unto God." (Rom. 6:11)

As Sir Edwyn Hoskyns says, "The whole New Testament rings with a sense of freedom from sin." The triumph of Calvary is Christ's victory over sin. Therefore, the believer should aspire to victory over sin.

J. Baines Atkinson writes, "There is no text in the New Testament which says that sin must remain in a believer until death." He adds, "Preparation for Christ's second coming is that believers are to be sanctified, wholly, unblamable in holiness, ready to meet Him. (Heb. 9:28; Titus 2:13-14; Phil. 1:6)

As stated earlier, we split the atom and exact perfect timing in our space program. Why not seek the same kind of understanding in the life the Lord has called us to live, a life free from the power and dominion of sin?

We do not want to confuse anyone in the belief that after conversion it is possible to live an absolutely sinless life. On the other hand, we are challenged to live a life pleasing to the Lord . . . to strive for perfection.

Kenneth Geiger points out, "Sinless perfection" can be rightly used when applied in these three directions: (1) To Adam before the Fall, (2) To Christ during His earthly life, (3) To those who have finished their earthly probation and are glorified in heaven."

In Hebrews 6:1 we are exhorted, "Let us go on to perfection." Asks Wesley, "But what is perfection?" He replies, "The word has various senses: here it means Perfect Love. It is love excluding sin; love filling the heart, taking up the whole capacity of the soul. It is love, "rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, in everything giving thanks."

Oh that we might strive for such perfection!

Of Noah we read that he "was a just man and perfect in his generations." Likewise, the Lord said of Job, "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil." (Job 1:8)

The supreme example was our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom it was said, "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. 5:9)

In conclusion we would quote the Psalmist who says, "Mark the perfect man, for the end of that man is peace." (Psa. 37:37)

If troubled, perplexed, living a divided life between constant defeat and seeming victory, why not seek to experience a relationship with Christ that will result in Christian perfection?

To the rich young man who kept all of the commandments from his youth, our Lord said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." (Matt. 19:21) But the young man didn't want that kind of perfection. He was rich, having great possessions, and was not willing to give them up for the master.

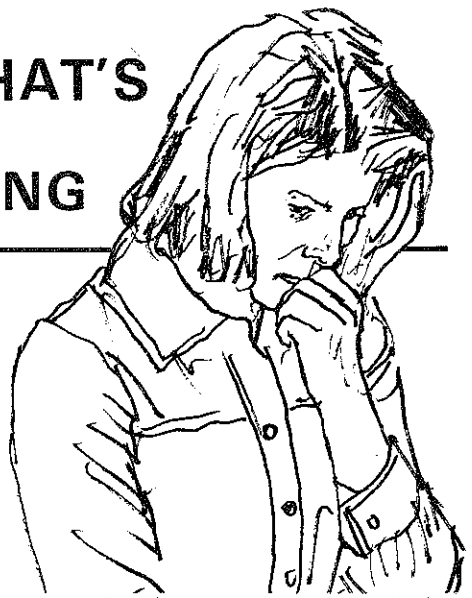
For others it is not riches that keeps them from perfection. It may be their speech. Writes James, "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man." (James 3:2)

Even of Jesus we read He was made "perfect through sufferings." (Heb. 2:10)

May we with the Apostle Paul say with renowned determination, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Writes Paul, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." (Phil. 3:14-15)

And, in this way may we "Be therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

KNOWING WHAT'S RIGHT AND WHAT'S WRONG



Ringo Starr of Beatle fame has a confession to make. Let all the young people listen.

The Beatles, who once boasted of becoming more popular than Jesus, and praised drugs while spreading the faith of psychedelia, have now admitted they were wrong.

At least, Ringo Starr has come out to advise youth to kick the pot habit, forget speed, stay off LSD and other mind-blowing drugs.

At a press conference Ringo said, "I know good from evil — what's right and wrong!"

Well, while applauding such action, we admit much harm has already been done. Once the habit is begun, it just isn't easy to quit. How sad to learn too late, after the body is dissipated, the nerves shot, the mind blown, that we embarked upon the wrong course — took the wrong road.

But for some we trust it isn't too late. Where there is life there is hope. And, perhaps we have even better news than that — where there isn't hope there is God.

Ringo Starr's confession that he now knows good from evil — what's right and what's wrong — reminds me of what we read in the book of Judges. The last verse says, "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

Today's standard of right and wrong depends on the person to whom you are speaking. Everyone seems to have a different interpretation of what is right and what is wrong. This provides for endless confusion as it did in the days of the Judges in the Bible.

As in those days there was violence, murder, bloodshed, immorality, so there is this confusion existing today. For unless we have the unchanging WORD OF GOD to go by — what's right and what's wrong changes with every generation.

In Kentucky, when both houses of the State Legislature voted to repeal the old Sunday closing law, Governor Louis B. Nunn vetoed the bill. His word to the legislature was that we should not try to repeal one of the Ten Commandments.

God has given command to "remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." Regardless of man's turning a holy day into a holiday, it must be remembered that God has never changed His commandment concerning the observance of one day a week as separate from the rest.

And although the commandments were primarily given to Israel to keep for perpetual generations, yet the message and meaning are for all who love God. Those who refuse to heed God's commandments are considered as "heathen," which makes us wonder if we aren't fast becoming pagan as a result of disobeying God's laws.

Whether or not we worship on a Saturday or Sunday is not the important factor, for time zones make it impossible to strictly observe a period of time.

I like what we read in Romans 14:5. "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it."

In other words, we should follow our own convictions governed by the Word of God. And, our highest motivations should be the desire to live every day for the Lord, rather than to keep one day as something of a ritual so we can say "I went to church today."

Irving L. Jensen, Th.D., writing in the GOSPEL HERALD, notes: "A pressing question of today, as it has been of all ages, is the question of what is right and what is wrong." He goes on to say: "The Bible labels wrong as evil or sin and identifies sin as transgression of God's law which brings divine judgment."

Of course, we don't like to hear about sin. Reminds me of the preacher who didn't beat around the bush in preaching on "sin"! He called it the abominable thing that God hates. Later, one of his members came to him saying: "We don't like you to talk so plainly about sin. Our children will more easily be called Sinners."

The minister then took a bottle of strychnine that was clearly marked with the skull and crossbones, saying: "Suppose I take off this label of Poison and put on some mild label such as essence of peppermint? Don't you see what happens? The milder you make the label, the more dangerous you make the poison."

Someone has written . . .

Men say sin is an accident, while God says it is a deliberate act.

Men say sin is a blunder; God says it is blindness.

Men say sin is change, God says it is choice.

Men say sin is infirmity, God says it is iniquity.

Men say sin is weakness, God says it is wilfulness.

In Old Testament times as a person sinned, he was judged on the basis of whether it was wilful disobedience or whether it was an act of ignorance. If it was sin through ignorance, a sacrifice was offered, while if the sin was deliberate, the person was punished. For instance, we read of a man who was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. For this act of open defiance for God's laws, this man was stoned. That is how serious were sins of disobedience.

In the New Testament we are reminded, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." (Heb. 10:26-27) Today you are hearing this broadcast. Hearing the truth concerning salvation, you should repent of sin to trust the Saviour, for what this verse is saying is this — that Jesus can't go back and die on the cross every time we sin. Rather, He died once and for all that all may be saved and cease from sin who truly put their trust in Him.

God is merciful and has promised that if we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin. However, if we sin wilfully and knowingly, there is a fearful looking forward to of fiery indignation. Disease, suffering and death have often been the price paid by those who persist in sin.

The Bible does not teach that when a person is converted, he will want to continue to live a life of sin. Indeed not. Rather, as John writes: "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." (1 John 3:10).

Did you hear it?

The Bible makes it clear that one who truly comes to know Christ will not want to persist in sin.

Reminds me of the Christian who believed that once you were truly born again, you were saved forever. Someone said to this person, "If I believed your doctrine, I would take my fill of sin." Whereas, the godly Christian replied, "How much sin do you think it would take to satisfy one who has the divine nature implanted within Him?"

As we read again in 1 John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

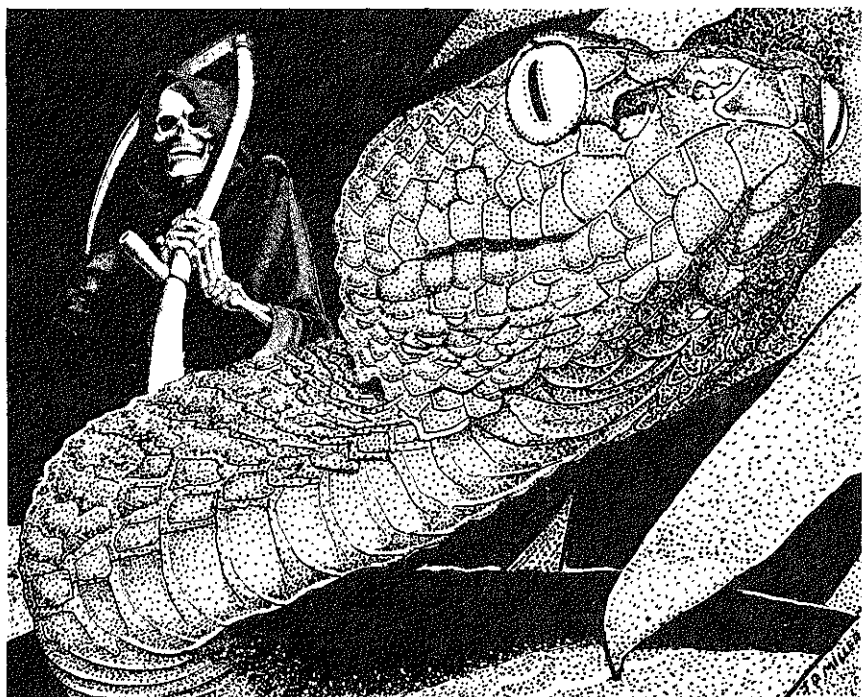
Yes, if a person is truly born of God, he will want to live for God and not serve sin. This is how we can know whether or not we are saved. We will want to live for Christ who died for us.

This does not necessarily mean we will be perfect or free from temptation. But it does mean that in our hearts is a desire to serve the Lord and not serve sin.

Of David it was said that he was a man after God's own heart. David was tempted and fell into sin. And yet, repenting of sin, he was forgiven, although God allowed tragedy to strike. Death came to David's child along with many other heartaches because of just one sin.

Oh, beloved, let us flee from sin as we would run from a rattlesnake. Years ago in Rockwood, Tennessee, a workman caught a black snake and taught it to coil itself around his neck. Then, becoming bolder, he got a rattlesnake and tamed it. He would stand on the street corner and let the snake coil itself around him while spectators shuddered.

One day when he was exhibiting the snake, it coiled around his neck rather tightly. He tried to unwind it but the snake only grew angry. Tightening its folds about his neck, it thrust its fangs into his veins. Spectators were horrified as he tore the snake away and dashed it to the earth, but it was too late. He was carried home to die in awful agony.



What a picture of those who tamper with sin. Sooner or later this serpent will sting, and death will result. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As someone has written, "Sin is deceitful. It promises pleasure but gives pain; it offers life and gives death. In every sin there is the seed of another sin, for it is self-propagating. It corrupts man's nature, perverts his tastes, weakens his will, and sears his conscience. With each evil deed inclinations towards evil become stronger and stronger, until he cannot cease from sin, and the sinner is consumed by his own lusts. Sin is a very promising employer and a terrible paymaster."

It is in view of the coming of the Lord that John writes, "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

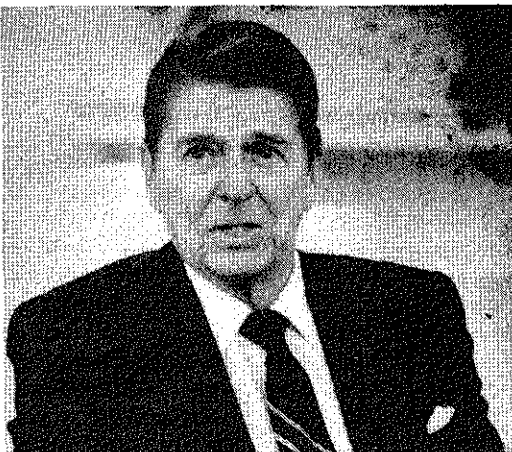
To be ready for the coming of Jesus, we are admonished to be living pure and holy lives.

As Dr. R.A. Torrey has testified: "The imminent return of our Lord is the great Bible argument for a pure, unselfish, devoted, unworldly, active Christian life."

In fact, we are admonished to "lay aside every weight as well as the besetting sins." Our Lord reminds us that even the "cares of this life" will find some so occupied as to fail to be ready for His coming. Some things we don't call sin may be weights to keep us from being ready for the rapture.

So may we heed the admonition of our Lord who urged us one and all, saying: "Be ye ready also, for in such time as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

PRESIDENT REAGAN TALKS ABOUT SIN



Addressing the National Association of Evangelicals, President Reagan shared his views on a subject of mutual concern—that of SIN. Declared the President: "We know that living in this world means dealing with what philosophers would call the phenomenology of evil or, as theologians would put it, the doctrine of sin. There is sin and evil in the world. And we are enjoined by scripture and the Lord Jesus to oppose it with all our might."

The President went on to link evil in the world to the spread of the doctrine of Marxist-Leninism.

Many places could be named where countries have become a battleground stained with the blood of conflicting ideologies. One of these is Mozambique in Southern Africa.

Mozambique's white-ruled neighbors insist that the Samora Machel regime is a communist threat in Southern Africa. Where it gets its support is something of a mystery.

It is no mystery as to why there is all of this fighting. It is the result, as Pres. Reagan declared, of evil in the world.

The world's Roman Catholic Bishops met recently to discuss the moral blight in the world we call "sin." In a 49-page study document it was stated: "The fundamental cause of all divisions in men's souls and their societies is sin, or the evil that man does freely before God."

Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago has commented on what he calls "hostilities, disorders and unjust structures," saying the root cause is sinfulness. He adds; "Ultimately it is sin and its consequences which separate us from God and disorient us as individuals and as society. If we are honest with ourselves," he notes, "we know this to be true."

The truth is that no one wants to admit that their problem may be one of sinfulness. We don't call our desire to better ourselves "covetousness" or "greed" which oftentimes it may be.

Some declare a form of socialism existed at Pentecost when the disciples shared what they had with others in need. We read: "And all that believed were together, and had all things common." That's a form of communism, some will tell you.

The next verse reads, "And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."

Communism today is quite a different expression of what we have seen in the early church. There, out of love for one another they shared their possessions.

In Mozambique, and elsewhere, we often find a forced sharing of goods won through bloody conflict.

The economy is still primarily agricultural. Through years of war, along with disastrous weather conditions, the country remains poor. Few people can read or write.

Here's where the Gospel is needed to penetrate the country as it has done elsewhere in Africa. For where the Gospel of Jesus Christ has gone, it lifts people from the poverty level to one that is productive and beneficial.

Again it is sin that drains a country of its strength and vitality. And when milk replaces alcohol, you can be sure it will be for the better.

Here in Mozambique you'll find the standard of living below what it should be. A diet of meat and bread promised during the revolution just never materialized. Shelves are often empty.

After all, prosperity and the blessings of salvation are often inner-linked. As we read in Joshua 1:8 where the Lord said: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

Prosperity and success are promised to those who will make the Word of God part of their daily lives, not only meditating but doing the things that are written therein.

George Cornell, an Associated Press Religious News writer, calls attention to the trouble in the world. He writes: "In classical Christian thought, the woes of the world and of the people stem from a single, pervasive and underlying condition—an ailment called "sin."

In Mozambique we see the difference in a culture that was once prosperous but today has suffered from revolution which has resulted in chaos.

This Swedish-built sawmill was once one of Mozambique's most important development projects. Today it lies empty and abandoned. At \$46 million dollars it was Mozambique's most costly foreign aid project.

For one thing, the security of the Swedish personnel who came to teach others how to run the plant could not be guaranteed, and that was a great worry for the Maputo government. The worsening security situation has become a major obstacle to the overseas investment the country so desperately needs.

Workers at the plant formed themselves into a militia. But it was too late. The Swedish embassy said the risk of ambush or abduction had become too great. And the presence of these poorly equipped and trained men could not make them change their mind. So the plant remains closed.

Mozambique's strategic position helps and also hinders its chances of economic independence. The Indian Ocean port of Beira has now taken on a new role; it's the key to the plan by Black states in southern Africa to reduce their independence on South African transportation.

The capital city of Maputo also has an important deep natural harbor. And both cities now act as shipping and freight centers for the frontline states.

We point this out because this should benefit the economy. Ships from all over the world come here.

But the hammer and sickle are prominently displayed, a reflection on the infiltration of Russian Communism into that part of the world.

Where godless communism goes, there goes with it attempts to spread revolution. The land is often raped, and fuel is taken to keep the communist satellite nations afloat.

A prophecy in Jeremiah comes to mind when we think of the influx of communism into nearly all of the nations of the world. In Jer. 4:6, we read, "I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction!" Verse 7 reads, "The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles (nations) is on his way."

Is this an identification of the Soviet Union, a country from the north where an evil shall break forth? And, could this godless philosophy be that which brings on the destruction of the nations?"

As a result of revolutionary tactics in Mozambique, we have seen railroads and pipelines destroyed. Saboteurs blew up dockside storage tanks, and millions of gallons of oil have been destroyed which should have gone to Zimbabwe and Malawi. The government has sought to step up security around all of its transport routes. Just about any form of travel is now dangerous in many areas of the country. Armed men have been known to take potshots at cars and trucks. An anti-aircraft gun protects a reconstruction project on a bridge near Beira. It had been blown up before.

Witnessing continued devastation makes us realize the significance of endtime destruction that is forecast in the Word of God.

For instance, Jer. 4:20 says, "Destruction upon destruction is cried."

And in Verse 23 we read: "I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light."

What destruction lies ahead!

I realize many believe that it can't happen here. There could not be another Pearl Harbor.

However, the Scriptures would lead us to believe differently. In verse 25 we read: "I beheld, and lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heaven were fled." (v.25)

Has this ever happened before?

Again we read, "I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger." (v.26)

So, we see that with our Lord's return for His saints we should expect the rapture to be tied in with the destruction of certain cities. Some do not see a nuclear holocaust ahead, but we can't help but believe the third world war will be a nuclear one.

Satan is behind all of the bloodshed and violence in the world today.

As Jesus said, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)

We would yet look at Isa. 14:16 where we read of Satan who makes his appearance in the endtime. We read, "Is this not the man that made the earth to tremble; that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof?"

We had better realize that the world is fast becoming a communist camp. Destruction from the north is nothing new, although it comes as other nations have been infiltrated by the Soviet Union. Our role is to make sure that everyone hearing this message sees significance to the days in which we live. We believe these are days the Scripture calls "the Last Days," and we need to be prepared to stand ready whenever our Lord may come.

Having trusted Christ as our Saviour and living for Him, we can be ready to face the future.

In Isaiah 26:19 we seem to focus in on a scripture that is applicable to the days in which we live. For just ahead lies the day when the trumpet shall sound, the righteous dead shall be raised, and together we shall be caught up to be with our blessed Lord.

The next verse reads, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee, hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overcast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

What awful destruction lies ahead.

When I read of books that have been authored by preachers who say there will not be a nuclear holocaust, that seems more like wishful speaking than it does to what the Scriptures relate.

The Bible evidences the awful fact that great tribulation is ahead followed by the wrath of Almighty God. Days such as the world has never seen, nor ever shall see again are ahead, said Jesus.

How important to be ready for His coming.

Some see the invitation to "Come into chambers, and shut the door," as relating to the protection the saints will receive as they go through the tribulation. But there is sufficient evidence to point out that our Lord will come for His saints, and we had better be ready for that unannounced day and hour.

Our Lord is coming soon. And we are commanded to "watch and pray always that we may escape all the things that shall come to pass and stand before the Son of man." (Luke 21:34)

Again we ask, Would you be ready were our Lord to come yet today? Or, are you living in sin and have yet to ask for forgiveness? Better never to have been born than to be living when Jesus comes unprepared to meet Him.

If you've never done so, pray this prayer and mean it: "Lord Jesus, I do here and now open my heart to receive you as my Lord and Saviour. Come into my heart to live by your Holy Spirit. Change my life. Give me peace for my restlessness. Save me by your grace, I pray."

Pray that prayer and mean it.

And, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

