

Life in the Son

A Journal of Grace and the In-Christ Message



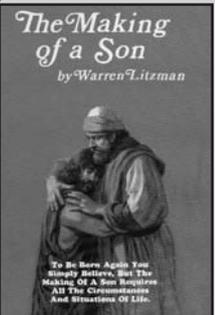
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The Making of a Son

By Warren Litzman



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Life in the Son

OUR 46TH YEAR OF
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Christ in you, the Hope of Glory*

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EDITORIAL

TRUE SPIRITUALITY

By Warren Litzman

One of the most important Scriptures Paul gives us in his epistles is Hebrews 4:12. To paraphrase the verse for my use here, it says that the Word of God is so powerful it will separate soul and spirit. Usually, believers ignore a verse like this because modern religion knows little or nothing concerning the difference between soul and spirit. The two terms are used interchangeably by most teachers today. Some say, *our mission is to get souls saved, or, our church is a soul-winning church.*

The Apostle Paul, when receiving the final revelation from Jesus, based his understanding of the gospel on the fact that humans were tripartite beings, made up of three parts—body, soul and spirit (1 Thess. 5:23). In the first line of 2 Corinthians 1:10 Paul refers to the human's distinctive spirit part when he says that we are saved from death, the sin that separated us from God; this is eternal salvation and the only salvation for the here and now. This salvation takes place immediately in the human spirit when they accept Christ as

their Savior (1 Cor. 6:17). Notice at this point there is no soul or body salvation. There may be some wonderful changes in body and soul, but no eternal life salvation. This simply means that true salvation is a spirit thing and has nothing to do with anything the believer does or can do; it is a finished work from the Cross and no human can add to it. Spirit salvation is a God-work that is inward in the believer; God simply places His seed, Christ's spirit, in the human and births another person in him. The new life in the believer is not the believer as a new person, but Christ as the new life in the believer. The new life is Christ in you working out of you as Christ. This is Spiritual salvation and defines what a Christian is.

The second line of 2 Corinthians 1:10 simply says, "*doth deliver.*" This speaks of the second phase of salvation, soul salvation. Soul salvation does not offer eternal life on this side of the Cross. Soul salvation is a part of the plan of God before Christ died on the cross, it was the way God saved Old Testament saints.



How then could they be saved without the shed blood of Christ at Calvary? They were saved by their own works through self-effort. They were saved by keeping Moses' Law. This is the emphasis the Scripture places on the words *doth deliver*. The word *doth* is an action word and implies doing something. When Paul speaks of a deliverance that will take place, he is talking about the saving of the soul. In 1 Peter 1:22, Peter says the believer purifies his soul by his self-effort. In grace, the saving of the soul means a progressive change in his intellect, his will and emotions, the learning of Christ within. Also, love is manifested by the believer through his soul. The progressiveness of soul salvation and the believer's self-effort is also seen in Hebrews 10:39 and James 1:21. To put it simply, we are perfectly saved in our spirit, and we are being saved in soul through our daily walk. The soul is where the Holy Spirit does His work as Teacher and Revealer of Christ.

However, these three parts of the soul—intellect,

will and emotions—have become the sources and means of modern religion. Just as works are amplified by the word *doth* in the text, so does religion depend upon what the human does for his own betterment. Many teach that the human doing good things for himself and others constitutes his salvation. This idea is promoted by the New Age religion. Their humanistic ideas are written in the radical book, *A Course in Miracles*, by Helen Schucman, Ph.D. It says you don't need a cross, you don't need a savior, you become you own god. The leading exponent of this crossless religion is the so-called "world's most powerful woman," Oprah Winfrey. This is the world-class religion that offers no spirit salvation, no internal life change, no eternal life.

Then there are other New Age teachers and ministers who downplay the Cross as the means of salvation, such as Rick Warren and Robert Schuller, both of California. They both offer a new kind of salvation based on self-effort, a *doth* salvation based on human head knowledge. Sadly, both of these preachers had somewhat of an evangelical background. It also seems that many of the very successful preachers today are looking to tie a group of people to themselves, without the Jesus who said you must be born again. This is soulish salvation, without the Cross, and it is often very

deceiving because many scriptural terms are used. They have forsaken spirit salvation altogether.

For years, many re-birthed believers emphasizing outer things—like the way you dress, where you go, what you see on TV, what you listen to and how you treat others—entered into a form of soulish salvation, literally aborting their spirit salvation. Their outward religious dogmas became so powerful that, in their minds, accepting them made you saved person. Many of these things were worldly and spiritual hindrances, but keeping dogmas cannot, within themselves, match the inward grace a re-birthed person already has.

Then there is a multitude of soulish worshippers who are already saved by grace but worship the outer things of life out of ignorance of the Christ living in them. They miss or ignore Paul's basic message of how a person is born again. Ignorant of Christ living in them, they turn to the soulish part of their being to *feel* blessed as a believer. Ignorant of Christ in them, they give great amounts of money to their religion. Ignorant of Christ in them, they show their faith by building multi-million dollar church buildings, often to their own glory. Ignorant of Christ in them, they soulishly depend on their own intellect and ignore the Word of God. Ignorant of Christ in them, their personal desires and

prophecies overwhelm Christ as the truth. Ignorant of Christ in them, they turn their bodies into objects that squeal and holler, that jump up and down, that fall out on the floor, that dance and wiggle as though all of this brings honor and glory to God. This is soulish religion at its very best. I wonder what Christ in them thinks of all this.

The text in 2 Corinthians 1:10 speaks of salvation that is finished, salvation that is being finished and salvation that will be finished.

The third phase of salvation is the believer's resurrection. All born-again believers will be delivered, either out of the grave or out of this world via the Rapture. There is little to be said about this third deliverance. Resurrection and the Rapture of the saints is automatic; no one controls either by anything they do. If you have experienced spirit salvation, you are ready for anything. If you daily love God more than yourself, you are being saved in your soul. The salvation of your soul will continue until the Rapture. Put your trust in the Christ in you, and look for His appearing.

Christianity is very simple. Spirit salvation is Christ living in you and you living in Christ. Soul salvation is you allowing the Holy Spirit to teach you Christ and the things you must bring under subjection as a part of your love affair with Christ in your spirit. †

Genuine growth is where Christ becomes everything in your thinking.

FATHER OF GLORY

By Don Byrd

“And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one” (John 17:22).

Contained within this verse are some of the most exhilarating truths the believer will ever know. *“The glory which thou gavest me I have given them”* is a tremendous truth. What is the glory of which Jesus speaks in this verse? This glory was given to His Son before the foundation of the world (John 17:5). The glory in this verse pertains to the fact that His Son was able to call Him “Abba, Father” because of a birthing! What an honor, what a glory to be able to call Him Father! No other creature in time or eternity has had the honor and glory of speaking these precious words, “Abba, Father,” except God’s offspring. What greater honor could you want than this? My friend, this is the glory that excels all glory both now and forever more! Abba, Father!

Our Father gave this honor to His Son before the foundation of the world, and now that same glory is given to every born-again believer through Christ in you! Christ Jesus our Lord gave

believers the honor of having a face-to-face relationship and fellowship with our Father, with no go-between. Just a one-on-one time of fellowship such as the world has never known or will ever know. This glory is given every moment the believer spends calling Him Abba, Father. This glory belongs to the believer simply because he is a son and for no other reason.

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father” (Gal. 4:6).

It is an honor for the born-again believer to be able to call Him Abba, Father, and it is also an honor for the Father to call the believer His son.

“For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:43).

“But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God” (Rom. 2:29).

These two verses confirm the fact that our Father gives praise and glory to His birthed children. You, with Christ in you, are His glory! Christ Jesus our Lord gave

the believer this glory. I could have no greater glory than to be able to call Him Abba, Father and to hear Him say to me “my son.” He wants to be my a Father, and I want to be His a son.

“I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me” (John 17:23).

The last line of this verse is part of the glory that excels all glory. For most of my walk in the Lord, I felt like our Father loved me from a distance because I was woe-fully lacking in my relationship with God. He was totally perfect, but I was a mess with many troubles and flaws. Why would He want to even have a relationship with me at all? I did not know I had Christ in me. I could not love Him like I wanted to because of my problems and failures toward Him. In this verse, Jesus asks His Father to include believers in their Father-Son relationship. I gather this from *“I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one,”* which is a union brought about by the birthing. The born-again

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 17.)

AGREEING WITH THE HEAT

By Patsy Lovejoy



It is a place of refuge for me to recall my Father's thoughts regarding His faithful, persistent love for our grown sons and their families.

My husband and I believed on the Lord Jesus Christ when our sons were eight, six and two years old. Prior to this, we were well established in the ways of the world, even though in the back of our minds we assumed we were Christians. Our lives were encumbered with many complications from divorce, a quick second marriage and the self-centered living that seemed acceptable and justified by what we saw happening around us. Still, there was this inner tug to purchase our first Bible and start going to church, thinking that was the thing to do for the boys' sake. This was a huge step that led to pouring over the Scriptures.

I was raised in a legalistic religious system that had no personal reality for me. I was ready and yearning to know the truth, so I asked God to show me. At first I was very concerned to know if God would take

care of our boys' emotional needs. We had been through so much turmoil and uncertainty due to domestic violence and school changes that it was hard to give them a sense of order and routine. It became clear to me that I was to leave them to God as their Father and focus on getting to know Him for myself. Actually, in the end, this is the best thing we can do for our children.

I realized the Apostle Paul was very much like us in that he never actually knew Jesus when He was on the Earth. I began to see that Paul's epistles were written to believers, and that I could take them as if they were written to me and my family. I would write my name in the epistles that showed me who I was in Him and who He was to me. I really had an advantage here since I came from a religion that didn't encourage us to read the Bible. The only Bible I ever saw was enclosed in a glass-protected stand that was off limits. Instead, I took 1 John 2:27, which states:

"But the anointing which ye have received of him

abideth in you and ye need not any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth and is no lie and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in him."

This Scripture experientially came into play, and I realized I could know the Christ that Paul knew by revelation knowledge.

I started out wanting to be a better wife and mother and found that the Scripture said that when I was in Christ, I was a new (not better) creature; with old things passing away. I had to depend on the Holy Spirit to bring understanding because I wasn't used to going by what God said about me. Sin-consciousness and sense knowledge tried to choke out God's Word until I allowed my mind to be renewed. I had come across a picture of a man in a business suit hanging on a cross with Galatians 2:20 written beneath it. I was curious about what the Bible had to say about this Scripture and strange picture and found Paul's testimony in Galatians chapters 1 and 2.

I found that until the revelation knowledge of Jesus Christ is experientially worked out in us, there is no personal understanding. We can encourage and share with each other in the Lord, but each one of us is responsible to receive the revelation of Jesus Christ as our life for ourselves as in Colossians 3:1 through 4. God's personal dealings with my husband and I brought us to trusting Him with our sons.

In hindsight, we can see that there were negative situations that frustrated or eliminated grace when our boys were growing up in Christian school and were involved in a traditional church setting. This made them cautious as adults, sometimes putting spiritual things on the back burner. Even though they believed in Jesus Christ and influenced their own children in that direction, at times they remained at arms length when it came to acknowledging God as Father, connected and in charge of every single situation.

We have talked to the Lord about our family and would on occasion share with them something God was showing us. It would be graciously received but pondered in measure. It took a while to realize that we were the Church; the Church is not the building, the denomination or the ministry. Time passed and we settled into an assurance that God, as their Father, had set in

motion a perpetual drawing of them to Himself beyond any mistakes we had made, the pressures to submit to the law instead of grace and any disinterest on their part.

We have come to rest as we watch God turn up the heat in their lives, being sure of Him by simply "agreeing with the heat"! Over the years we have purposed to put our "Please, God, help our kids" prayers aside and focus on the accomplished finished work of the Cross becoming practical and necessary in their lives, causing them to hunger for Him alone. This brings a sigh of relief as we trust the fact that God as our Father has done all that He can by the death of His Son. We relax in worship and praise as we watch His intended plan unfold.

As God continues to reveal Himself as our Father, my husband and I find ourselves seeing Him as all and in all, all things being for our sakes as in 2 Corinthians 4:15 and all things being of Him in 2 Corinthians 5:18. We have learned not to be surprised when God uses Satan, His defeated foe, as His convenient tool to bring forth His plan for us, when necessary. It has given us opportunity to acknowledge the provision of the Cross that spoiled and triumphed over all principalities and powers, trusting the Father, no matter how it looks by sight.

The Scripture has convinced us that God doesn't change His mind in respect to whosoever has been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, no matter what! Resting in Him is a safe place as we trust and agree with His plan for our adult children's lives, even when many distractions pull at them, though sometimes good and honorable instead of evil. We see that we can easily be deceived when we shift our focus from God's pleasure and plan to being overly occupied with the good responsibilities of financial, emotionally and even spiritually supporting our families that we miss what He really thinks. We find that our needs are met as an overflow of our relationship with Him, as we operate out of His rest, confident of His attention to them. We know to stay away from obvious evil, yet our perceived "tree of the knowledge of what is good" robs us of the pure one-and-only will of God. It's nothing new since Adam and Eve ate from that tree, just the twenty-first century version of accepting something that appears good instead of God's best. Reading the Bible, going to church, being good financial stewards, setting aside time to pray were things that seemed mandatory to keep in good favor with God. Now those supposed obligations turn into a love relationship where Jesus is all and in all where there is an

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automatic response that comes from Him through us. What now happens is you love Him so much that you can't stay away from reading the Scripture, consulting Him about everything and realizing everything you have is His anyway.

A few years ago, our only granddaughter was in a near fatal car crash with a dump truck. She had major complications that kept her in the ICU until she was released, yet she came away steady in trusting Him with exhilarated thanksgiving from all who knew and loved her. Shortly after, all of our sons came up against some intense, stressful circumstances, one right after the other! Work-related problems, court hearings, strife between family members; we were getting hit on every side! Isaiah 59:19 came to mind:

"When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

Also Colossians 2:10, which says, *"Ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power."* By faith, we began to *"give thanks in everything"* as in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 because the standard is Christ Himself, the only power in the universe made available in us by the finished work of the Cross in this present dispensation of grace. So as parents, in quietness and confidence, we step back and surrender

to His plan, His sovereignty, and His way. The temptation would be to try to help, by taking matters into our own hands, enabling our children to wallow in their resistance to trust God's ultimate control by our efforts to become amateur providences, trying to fix things in a temporal way. Instead, we see each one as complete in Him because of what Jesus has already done by His death and their opportunity to identify with Galatians 2:20.

This was perfect timing to recall that nothing happens that doesn't go through the Father's heart and hands before it reaches us. We take comfort that our Father knows everything before it happens by foreknowledge and has already made a provision for the need to be met. This echoes of a Father who is timely and precise in caring for His offspring, intimately acquainted with all that concerns us. We are kept by Him as He uses our circumstances to bring us to the end of ourselves, revealing that we have been crucified with Christ and made alive unto God. This gives us opportunity to acknowledge the treasure in our earthen vessel who will spontaneously cause us to have His thoughts and desires toward our children (Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 4:7; Phil. 2:5; 1 Cor. 2:16).

Our foremost desire is to please the Father in intercession for those we love. We realize we have to

know who we are in Him, praying from His thoughts that are found in the Scripture and allowing the Holy Spirit to make intercession for us according to His will. Having a knowing that all things work for the good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose brings us to a place of restful trust with thanksgiving.

We are watching this happen before our eyes as our oldest son is exploring who he is in Christ for the first time since he believed on the Lord Jesus when he was 12 years old. God, as His Father, has lovingly pressed our son by his circumstances to bear about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ so that Jesus' life may be made manifest in his mortal flesh as in 2 Corinthians 4:10. We are seeing our son being transformed by the renewing of his mind (Rom. 12:2), as he thinks God's thoughts that are found in the Scripture and applies them by faith in regard to his circumstances and his interactions with others. We see him willingly receive Galatians 2:20. His self-life/old nature that was driving him crazy has permanently lost its illusionary false power (Rom. 6:3-11) and folks are saying to him, "Who are you?" Our son has exchanged his life for the Colossians 3:3-4 and Philippians 1:20-21 life.

He has been brought to a contrite and broken spirit through marital strife and

divorce, yet he realizes as he sees through the pain to God alone that he finally is in the best spot he has ever been. He has taken the person of Christ as his contentment and patience, receiving mercy and forgiveness as God's customized plan and purpose unfolds. He has taken on the responsibilities of his family led by the Christ within and desires Christ to be all, not just first or a priority. We see him not wanting to waste his sorrows and by faith believe that God will use them for the good.

He has always loved his children, but now they are experiencing a fathering and nurturing that trickles down to the smallest details that before would have possibly been accompanied by gritted teeth and a hurried, self-absorbed response. Knowing he is the Father's offspring and newly discovering what it means to be in Christ has enabled him to stand fast on a daily basis, telling himself the truth from God's point of view and relying on the grace that is more than sufficient. We see him allowing God to come in the back door of "who he is" as a new creature in Christ and restore and enrich his interactions with his brothers, nephews and other family members putting aside what he wants for his life and waiting on the Father alone.

We are watching people, who are hurting or hunger-

ing for solutions, become attracted to the living Christ who is expressing Himself through our son. This is thrilling for us to watch even when all hell breaks loose, seeing him look to the Father who delights in expressing Himself through him. Years have gone by quickly, and our son is now married a second time.

You might be thinking that sounds awesome, but what if you mess up? We all do, but we can look to Jesus within, who is our advocate to the Father. We can ask forgiveness for our sins of unbelief because, in the moment, we have forgotten who we really are in Him. If you live out of knowing who God says you are, you don't sin; and if you do sin, we can quickly rebound into that amazing grace provided by the Cross!

Our middle son is living out a similar journey raising our three grandsons as a single parent, desiring to hear God's direction on the decisions that face him on a daily basis. Our youngest son has recently experienced a career change that is teaching him that God's timing can be an unexpected path to where the Father wants him to be and the provisions He wants to give him. Recently, he has been privileged with a marriage partner and the opportunity to parent a family of three children. This is an adventure to be sure and a heart's desire come true.

Our family circumstances and situations have been stepping stones to answered prayer that has enriched my own relationship with God as my Father, seeing and trusting His care for the sons He has given us. As my husband and I look forward to planning for retirement, we see that our focus is more toward watching God do His work in our sons' lives, being mindful to give Him the praise and recognizing His plans are far above all we could possibly ask or think. We are thankful for the Holy Spirit who is steady in pressing them to discover His workings in their minds, wills and emotions, giving them opportunity to grow up in Him. This is the same for us as we expect to face new challenges that come in the form of temptations, trials and hard places.

Finally, we identify with Oswald Chamber's thoughts on being able to "be certain in all our uncertainties" seeing through every situation to Him alone, purposing to "agree with God's heat" for each precious one.

Boldly, rejoicing with thanksgiving, we pray, "Father, turn up the heat, whatever it takes for them to be secure in who they are in you!" †

(Patsy and her husband, Don, live in Boone, North Carolina, and have been a blessing to Christ-life Fellowship for many years.)

THE PRODIGAL'S FATHER

By Ed Gardner

A call to all believers to learn the difference
between almighty God and a loving heavenly Father.

The parable of the Prodigal Son is really a parable of our Father's love. Everything comes together here—time and eternity intersect; sin and forgiveness embrace; the human and the divine become one. These divine realities emanate from the father: infinite compassion, unconditional love and everlasting forgiveness.

The heart of the father burns with an immense desire to bring his children home. His love is too great to warn them against the many dangers they may face, or to try to convince them that at home can be found everything they have left home in search of. His love cannot force, constrain, push or pull. It only offers the freedom to reject his love or to love in return. Our heavenly Father wants his children to be free to love. That freedom includes the possibility of their leaving home, going to a "far country" and losing everything. The father's heart knows all the pain that can come from those choices, but his love makes him powerless to prevent it.

Here is our heavenly Father who, from the beginning of Creation, has stretched out His arms in merciful blessing, never forcing Himself on anyone, but always waiting, always hoping that His children will return so He can speak words of love to them. His only desire is to bless. The Father has no desire to punish them, as they have already been punished excessively by their own choices and waywardness. The Father wants them to always know that, *You are my beloved, on you my favor and my love rests.*

The elder son's dilemma is to accept or reject his father's love in coming to the party. The father knows the choice must be the son's, even while he waits with outstretched hands. Will the elder son be willing to come and be touched by the same hands that touched his younger prodigal brother? Will he be willing to be forgiven and to experience the healing presence of the father who also loves him beyond compare? Not only does the father run out to welcome the younger

wayward son, but he comes out to meet the elder, dutiful son as he returns from the fields wondering what the music and dancing are all about and urges him to come in.

The father's joy is so intense that he couldn't wait to start the celebration, but as soon as he became aware of the elder son's arrival, he left the party, went out to him, and pleaded with him to join them.

The father's heart is not divided into more or less. The father does not compare one son to the other. All of God's children are His favorites. God loves with a divine love, a love that flows to all men and women in their uniqueness without ever comparing. The prodigal's father has God's vision, as an all-giving and all-forgiving father who does not measure out his love to his children according to how well they behave, but loves them because they are his birthed children. He hopes to see them together as brothers and sisters around the same table; he wants them to experience

that, different as they are, they belong to the same household and are children of the same father.

This father's attitude is the same as God's: *I have found my sheep that was lost. Rejoice with Me!* God does not want to keep His joy to Himself. He wants everyone to share in it. His joy is the joy of all who belong to the Body of Christ. God rejoices when one repentant sinner returns. Statistically, that is not very interesting, but for God, numbers never seem to matter. From

God's perspective, one hidden act of repentance, one little gesture of selfless love, one moment of true forgiveness is all that is needed to bring Him from His throne to run to His returning sons and fill the heavens with sounds of divine joy.

A child cannot remain a child. A child must grow into an adult. An adult then becomes a father or mother. When the prodigal returns home, he returns not to remain a child, but to claim his sonship and ultimately become a father

himself. This is the call for each of us who come home. Having claimed our sonship, each of us must now grow up and claim our heritage. I now see that the hands that forgive, console, heal and offer a festive meal must become my own. These hands of mine have been given to me to stretch out toward all who suffer, to rest upon the shoulders of all who come, and to offer the blessings that emerge from the immensity of God's love. Fatherhood is the ultimate progression of sonship. †

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THE JOY OF THE LORD

By Louis Downy

Chara: Greek word for joy meaning cheerfulness, calm delight, gladness, fullness.

When studying the Word of God, it was revealed to me that there were certain things that ended at the Cross. Such as death, the grave, the law, self-centeredness, the world's influence and the sin that separated man from God. Satan lost his power over the believer, who is in Christ and has Christ in him. The world is the Father's school for teaching us Christ. But there are certain attributes of God that never change. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb. 13:8).

First of all, His nature, His love, His faith, His purpose and plan, which were in His nature before the foundations of the world, did not change. "For I am the Lord God, I change not" (Mal. 3:6). The ministry of the Holy Spirit never changed, except after the Day of Pentecost when He began revealing the fullness of the Son of God to the

Church. He would also reveal the resurrected Christ living in the believer's life, in all situations and circum-

stance of the believer's life. The "joy" the unbeliever has is based upon his life manifested to him through outer things. His life is revealed to him through the knowledge his five senses project to his mind. If circumstances are not favorable to his flesh, he interprets it as life is not what God wants him to have. If situations are fine, where the flesh is not challenged, he thinks God is good!

This is the kind of life Jesus said "is not in things!" Things are the object of thoughts, which are attached to man's word and reason. That is why Paul says in 2 Corinthians. 10:5-7:

"Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. Do ye look on things after

the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's."

Depression, fear and failure rob us of experiencing the life that Christ is in us. The joy of Jesus who is in us is His nature revealed through us, the same joy that was in Him when He went to the Cross.

"Looking unto Jesus the author [The Word] and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

In John 15:11 Jesus says, "These things have I spoken to you, that my joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full." John 16:22 and 24 says:

"And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you....Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

This Jesus said to the Jews before He was crucified. In John 17:13 and 15, Jesus prayed to the Father, know-

ing that His time on Earth was short:

“And now come I to thee: and these things I speak in the world that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves....I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.”

Evil things in the world can only be resisted by knowing Christ in you as you. The world is desperately trying to adapt the believer’s mind to the world’s spirit, but when the spirit of joy is revealed in the believer’s mind, Christ’s strength is revealed because *“the joy of the Lord is your strength.”* The peace of God which passes all understanding, will keep you (Greek: *phrov pro*—to be a watcher in advance, to mount guard as a sentinel). God’s peace will watch over you in advance because Christ Jesus lives in you. When we praise God in all things and for all things, the peace of God, which is Christ’s joy to our minds, is released by the Holy Spirit. He will keep a watch in advance over the situation we are facing so that we, at that moment, will enter His rest and peace. It is then that we will be able to know the Father’s purpose and plan for us in that situation.

In my 45 years of knowing our Lord, by grace, I have come to realize that many of God’s people react in life towards outer things, just like people who are not born again. Even born-

again believers sometimes find it extremely difficult to praise God in their situations. It would seem that their reactions are the same as the reactions of those who do not know our Lord. What is the reason? Are we not new creatures in Christ? Have we not the nature of God in us? Why is it that we are not different in our actions and reactions? Simply because we have not realized the joy of the Lord, which is in us and is our strength. Thanksgiving is the life of the Son expressing His oneness of the Father’s will and purpose in the believer. It is a knowing that our relationship with the Father will always be heard and is always heard as we pray.

The Spirit of God in us prays the mind and will of the Father through us in whatever circumstance and situation we find ourselves.

Paul says: *“Pray in the Spirit, sing in the Spirit”* (1 Cor. 14:15). *“Rejoice evermore!”* (1 Thess. 5:16). I cannot rejoice in something that I believe is contrary to God’s will. Very often, God’s will to me is reckoned that all things must be good to the comfort zone and to the flesh! In the meantime, whatever situation we are in, He is in us, as us, waiting to reveal His peace which is in us, by having put a “guard in advance” over our mind. Paul says, that in knowing the revelation of Christ in Him as his only life, *“In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of*

God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1 Thess. 5:18). This is his victory. Why everything? Why, when I am suffering? Struggling? No money? Sick? How can I give thanks in that situation? By giving thanks for the peace of God which is in you, for it is Christ, your life, who is giving thanks as you.

It is then that the work of the Cross and resurrection of His Son, which is a finished work, manifests the work and will of God in your life. It is then that our minds enter into His rest. Paul, many times, uses the words “all things.” The “all things” Paul says simply means all things because we are in Christ and Christ is in us. It is Christ in us who has given each of us a new identity, which is in oneness with the Godhead, and in Him dwelleth the Godhead bodily. When I live, it is Christ living as me, and therefore I do not have to try to live on my own. We are now led; we live and walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16), whose purpose in us is to live Christ and all that He is before the Father.

Therefore, we are able to praise and thank God in, and for, all things knowing *“that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose”* (Rom. 8:28). Why? Because the Spirit also *“helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. [We do not know the mind of God*

in His purpose in our situation] *but the Spirit* [Holy Spirit] *itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints*" (Rom. 8:26–27, author's words added). This is the work of the Spirit in the believer.

The reason we can praise and thank God in and for all things is because the Holy Spirit reflects the life of Christ in us and through us in whatever situation we are in, to bring about God's peace in our hearts and minds. Paul says, "*God has called us to peace*" (1 Cor. 7:15). Thus, the Father's purpose for His children is to enjoy His peace in our being, regardless of where we find ourselves, knowing that what we are in is very often allowed by our Father's love for us to get our attention, to drive us to His love for us.

Isaiah 45:7 says, "*God creates evil and darkness.*" Why does God create evil? Evil is not sin; it is based upon outer situations which surround our lives. These are organized by God's love for us to get our attention, to show us how inadequate, hopeless and useless we are in "trying" to live life before God our Father. The only way we can enjoy Him who is our real peace is to allow the Holy Spirit in us to reveal the Father's will to our understanding. After having my understanding

opened to the truth of my salvation in life, I began to realize the spontaneous joy that was in my spirit which was Christ living His fruit of joy in and through me in "all things" of my life. Whenever someone came to me for counseling, there was a tendency to untangle their past by putting the burden on them for what they did or allowed in their lives. I realized there were "reasons" and then there was the real reason. The "reasons" basically came about by what they were doing. Although, that was part of the problem, the real reason was that there was something they did not know: what God had already done and is doing in their lives because He loved them so much. The Word of God says, "*He that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin*" (James 4:17).

It is when the Spirit of God lives Christ through us at a specific moment and we disobey. It is the Father showing us how to live, walk and be led by His Spirit, and we do not listen. Sin is knowing what Calvary has done for us and letting our un-renewed minds remain in control. To know is the greatest power a believer has. The Holy Spirit in us wants us to know what He knows. That is why our thoughts and imaginations must be cast down and be brought into captivity and every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). This is a spontaneous renewing of our mind, done

on a moment by moment basis of growth in the knowledge of Christ's love through His Word. The Holy Spirit's purpose is to let our understanding—which has been so corrupted by the issues of life in this world—know that the only life we have is Christ in us as us. This life of Christ is the same in our lives whether we have or do not have, give or do not give, suffer or do not suffer. Sick or healthy, persecuted or not persecuted, liked or disliked, regardless of all outer influences of life that we face, nothing can separate us from the love that is in Christ. It is the eternal versus the temporal. Why?

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look [where is our focus] not at the things [outer] which are seen [faith of the senses], but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal [spirit]" (2 Cor. 4:17–18, author's words added).

So the focus we have is the Christ Jesus in us touching the invisible for us. That is why we can praise and have His joy reflected through us in the salvation of life we find ourselves. It is then that we become strong in Him. Paul prayed three times when he had a thorn in his flesh. The flesh, which is the senses' realm, will always have a



Temptation
presents
opportunity
for
choice.

“thorn” in its understanding. We will always be led to pray to our Lord to remove, soften or stop the pressure on our minds so that we can know that He cares. Little do we realize that He is with and in us and we are not alone. We cannot be separated from Him because He is in us and was also touched by our weaknesses but has made a way of escape, which is in Him. Therefore, we need to praise Him, knowing that He has, in advance, set a guard before us to prevent even the Devil from taking you. When Paul prayed three times, the Lord answered him. Paul said that God gave him a messenger of Satan to buffet him (work him over) lest he exalt himself above measure. (2 Cor. 12:7).

Why did God allow Satan to work him over? Satan was defeated on Calvary.

“For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise look part of the same; that through death [Satan designed death for termination - God designed it for transition] he might destroy [bring to nought] him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14, author’s words added).

“He that committeth sin [Adam’s sin] is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. [beginning being in Heaven] For this purpose the Son of God was manifest, that he

might destroy [Greek: *luo*, meaning melt] *the works of the devil”* (1 John 3:8, author’s words added).

One day, a young married woman, whose name was Mara, said she had good news and bad news. I said, “Give me the good news.” She told me that she had accepted Christ at the previous Sunday night service. I looked at her eyes and could see that this was a new creature in Christ. Her eyes were soft and clear. Before I heard the bad news, I opened the Scriptures to her to read aloud who Christ was in her and she in Christ. I got her to realize how important her confession of Christ as her Savior was; it would bring about her possession of His life. After her eyes had lit up from hearing the good news of who she was in Christ, I now asked her to tell me the bad news.

She opened her heart and told me that she loved her husband, but he wanted to divorce her, and they were now in court. I said okay!

When she went home to tell her husband what God had done for her the previous night, at that moment he was drinking. He began to cry and asked her to pray for him. Which she did as prayer became a reality to her. But she said the next morning he was even worse than the night before! I said okay! She also said that she had three children and she was not getting money from him. She had to find another

work position to receive more money. I said okay!

I asked her if that was all that was on her heart. “Yes,” she said. I then said to her, “Mara, listen to what I am going to tell you! Being born again was the greatest miracle. God made you a new person and you have a new beginning in life, knowing that Christ is your life and only life.” I could see that she understood it, but did not grasp it at that moment. Now I dropped a bombshell to her understanding. “Mara, do you really realize why your life is in such a turmoil?” Any question to be asked can only mean that the reason is they are doing something wrong, such as not going to church, no faith, not tithing, everything that relates to them not “being good.” Is it because I am drinking too much? Going to places where I shouldn’t? The onus is always on the one who is being counseled, although that may be the fruit of a wrong life.

I said: “Mara, your life is in such a mess is because of one basic reason! You do not know how much God loves you by sending Jesus to die in your place!” She seemed to enjoy that statement. “Did you also know that what you are going through now is because God is loving you?” That she really did not understand. “Also, did you not know that all things you are in now are working for you for good because you love God and are called according to his purpose?”

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Gal. 3:24-25).

(Rom 8:28). "Did you also know that you should praise God for everything that you are experiencing?" Now she was baffled.

First Thessalonians 5:18 says: "*In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you!*"

Ephesians 5:20 says, "*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Why? God is our Father and His love for us in His Son works to and for us in our lives regardless of what we endured. "Is it not of the Devil?" she asked. I showed her the Devil was a defeated foe on Calvary and that he is in the hands of God allowing him to help bring about the glory in his children by tempting and challenging the Christ that is in the believer.

I let Satan buffet you, Paul. Why? Because inside of you is me and my grace and power that need to be released and revealed through you so that people might believe in me.

Paul got the revelation! What did he do? He took pleasure in, and was happy in his weaknesses and his reproaches, persecution and distresses by thanking God for them. He realized that if he did not enter into His rest, he would worry!

So, with thanksgiving, he praised God for and in his situations of life, whether he understood it or not! Why? Because God says, "*Lean not unto your own understand-*

ing but trust me with all your heart" (Prov. 3:5). The trust in Paul was Christ in him, trusting his life before the Father. The thanksgiving in him was the same thanksgiving that was in Jesus of Nazareth when faced with Lazarus' death. He looked to the Father and said, *Father, I thank you that you heard me and that you always hear me* (John 11:42).

"And this is the confidence [His confidence in us] that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him" (1 John 5:14-15, author's words added).

What Paul needed, and what believers need today, was/is His peace in us reflected to our hearts and minds in the situations of life. The Word says:

"And the peace of God, which passeth all our understanding, shall keep [Greek: phrov pro meaning to mount a guard as a sentinel, to be a watch in advance.] your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7).

After opening the Scriptures to her understanding, Mara suddenly got so excited that she wanted to thank the Lord. "Lord," she said, "I want to thank you for my husband who wants to divorce me. I do not understand what I am saying, but I thank you that I do not understand what I am saying! I want to

thank and praise you for my husband who is still drinking and that he does not give me any money!" She stood up and said, "I have such wonderful peace in my heart!" I instructed her to go home and phone me every day for a week. All I wanted to know was if she is praising God. This she did and could not help sharing the peace of God in her life. She kept on praising God for all her things she did not understand. Later she shared her testimony with me. She went to a company for work. "Sorry, we took on someone last month," they said. "Lord, thank you, they took on a girl!" She went to another company, and they said, "Sorry, we don't need anyone!" She said, "Thank you, Lord. They don't need anyone." Why was the Holy Spirit in her doing that? God's peace kept her mind from allowing the disappointment to influence her thinking. A friend phoned her and said, "Mara, I believe you are looking for work." "Yes," she said. "Go and see these people." Which she did. Sitting in front of the employer, he said to her, "Lady, I will employ you, but I have two problems. I can only offer you so much money!" It was R3000 more than she was getting. "What is the other problem," she asked. "This work is in Meyerton," a town away from the interviewer. "Sir," she said, "I stay in Meyerton." Her house was 100 metres from her new work.

Later, I visited her grandfather, checking up on her. He had a beard and a gruff voice and He said they were divorced. To which I replied, "Praise God!" I praised God only because I knew that all things were working together for her because she loved

God. Then he said, "Her husband got to know Jesus as his personal Savior, and he re-proposed to Mara, and they got married in the Lord! Praise God!" You see, God knows how to arrange situations in our lives to push us to his love.

(Louis Downy is a minister who has been in the South African Christ-life Fellowship from its inception almost 14 years ago. He has written many things concerning the Christ-life message and has passed them on to many people). †

(FATHER—CONT. FROM P. 5)

believer is perfect in his or her union with the Lord Jesus Christ. "*But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit*" (1 Cor. 6:17).

That within itself is enough to cause the believer to never want to fail our Father again and to cause the believer to love our Father and His Son with a love that excels all love. It is possible for the believer to love in this manner.

"*And hast loved them, as thou hast loved me*" is an incomprehensible statement made by our Father's only begotten Son! I once felt like our Father loved His Son one way, and He loved me another way. I knew I could never measure up to being the Son Jesus is to Him. I thought He loved His Son more than He loved me. Jesus wants us to know that His Father loves the born-again believer with the same love whereby He loves His only begotten Son, and to the same degree of love. This is a "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son" love that is given to each believer through Christ in you, which is what the Son wanted for us! Thanks

be to His Son for the Spirit of Christ, for His acceptance toward us! The Son wanted His Father to love us just as He loves His only begotten Son and no less!

Did you know that Jesus did not want to be better than us? He wanted us to be everything He is in His Sonship. He wanted us to have the same Father as does He, and He wanted His Father to have many sons. He gave us His Father to be our very own personal Father. He wanted us to have a face-to-face relationship with His Father just as He does, without an intercessor or go-between. He is not ashamed of us no matter how many problems we have and how many failures we have.

"*For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren*" (Heb. 2:11).

This line, "*are all of one,*" means that they are all of the same Father. Born-again believers have the same Father as does Jesus Christ our Lord, and this is the reason He is not ashamed to call us brethren! †

Jesus gave us His Father to be our very own Father. What excelling glory and honor there is for the believer to know this! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! My heart cries out "Abba, Father," "Abba, Father," "Abba, Father!" He is not ashamed of me. He is not ashamed of me. He is not ashamed of me! This needs to be firmly fixed in the believer's mind. The exact same measure of love exists between the Father and all of His sons, through Jesus Christ our Lord birthed in the born-again believer. Spirit love does not change and will not fail, as stated in 1 Corinthians 13.

The honor and glory of being able to call God our very own personal Father is beyond human comprehension. Jesus Christ our Lord made it possible for believers to have and enjoy a one-to-one, face-to-face, nature-to-nature, Spirit-to-spirit relationship with His Father! The Son wanted His Father to have this intimate relationship with each of His birthed sons with absolutely nothing separating them. What a Son indeed is Christ Jesus our Lord! †

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE SIN-NATURE?

By Warren Litzman



Throughout Christian history, there have been certain schools of thought which have advocated that the sin-nature can be eradicated by human effort; thus, by acts of sanctification and even personal asceticism, many have espoused the belief that human beings can rid themselves of their sin-nature. While this was very common among certain groups, there were many others in religious activity who didn't believe in a sin-nature at all. They thought that man had just done some bad things, and when he came to God he was forgiven all the past and could go on. This is a common belief of the New Age people.

But, the fact of the matter is that every human being comes into the world with a sin-nature. Every believer should search Romans 5 again and again as a foundation for how he becomes a Christian. Romans 5 says that by one man sin and death entered into the world, which means everyone who is birthed into this world by human parents has a sin-nature. The sin-nature actu-

ally came about when Adam believed what Satan told him in the Garden of Eden; there was literally birthed in Adam a spirit of error, a spirit of Satan. So much so was this the work of Satan that Jesus, in John 8:44, said to the Jews one day, "*Ye are of your father the devil.*"

Birthed by Satan

We conclude from this that everyone who comes into the world not only has a sin-nature but is a direct product of a father, Satan, who has misused that person's creation to his own advantage. Not only did Jesus say that the Jews were children of Satan, but the Apostle Paul says in his epistles on numerous occasions that unconverted people are children of sin, children of the evil one, children of the liar, and so forth.

We might conclude from this that the sin-nature is the product of Satan in the human being and that this sin-nature can only be dealt with by God. The first Adam was given the opportunity of partaking of the Tree of Life and having eternal life. He rejected that in preference for his sin-nature. When Christ came, He offered us eternal life by a birthing. Just as the sin-nature has been birthed, so to speak, in

Adam, so is the God-nature birthed in the believer. Christ declared to Nicodemus, "*Ye must be born again.*" Thus, what we have in salvation is not an eradication of the sin-nature by human beings acting less sinful, but we have a direct exchange of natures. Because of the Cross, the heavenly Father was able, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, to do the most unbelievable thing ever done to a human being. Because of Calvary, God could take out the sin-nature and place in a believer the God-nature (1 Peter 1:23), Christ in the believer, and have the right to depend upon Christ and His sacrifice rather than the efforts of the human being to become better. This, of course, is radical to religion because until religion sees what has literally happened to the believer by the birthing, it will never properly handle the issue of the sin-nature.

Fulfilled by Christ

Consequently, we have very good believers today who advocate that the believer still has not only a sin-nature, but also a God-nature and a human nature as well. In the Christ-life, we see very clearly that the

Scriptures never speak of a human nature but only of a sin-nature, and when one is born again, he has a distinct change of natures from sin-nature to the God-nature. As a result, he now becomes acceptable to God by Christ in him, which is that new nature, and has for the first time fulfilled the human being's creation by Christ becoming his completeness (Col. 2:10). Thus, the human being is never able to eradicate sin. This is why Calvary and the Cross are so important to the theology of the believer who grows in the knowledge of Christ.

Not enough understanding has been given to us of what it means to have the God-nature in the believer. Just as the sin-nature in the sinner did not make the sinner a devil or demon-possessed, so the God-nature in the believer does not make him a god. Even Christ in the

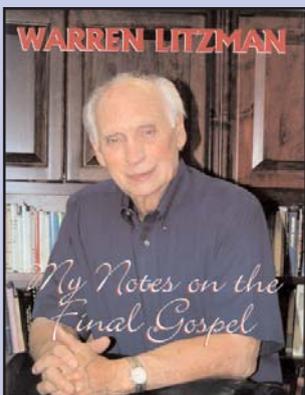
believer does make the believer Jesus of Nazareth, but does make him a Christ-person, one in whom the Christ personality and spirit live and move and operate. We must always remember that it is the work of Christ on the Cross that secures the judgment of the old nature (Rom. 6:6). It is also Christ's work that secures the judgment of the world (Gal. 6:14), the judgment of the flesh (Gal. 5:24), and the judgment of the Devil (Col. 2:15). This is the finished work of Christ. The believer, the new-creation-race believer in Christ, has overcome all of these things—the old nature, the world, the flesh and the Devil—by the finished work of Calvary. The believer in Christ never looks to himself to see if he is overcoming these things, but he goes to Calvary where he sees that he died on the cross in Christ and came alive vibrantly on

the Resurrection Morning with new eternal spiritual life in Christ.

Why Then Do We Sin?

This brings up the question, if the sin-nature is not still in the believer, why does the believer still sin? We must take a close look at John's epistle to understand this. First John 3:9 declares that whosoever is birthed of God cannot commit a sin. This is pure evidence that Christ in the believer is the operating aspect of the believer to God, and it means that God sees Christ in the believer as the operator of that life. He does not see what the believer does as the life; He sees Christ as the life. But on the other hand, in 1 John 1:8, John says that if a man says he has no sin, he lies and the truth is not in him. Here John has given us a paradox. On one hand, the believer cannot sin; on the

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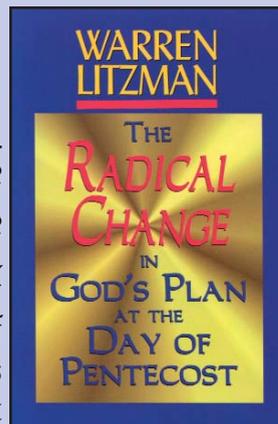


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other hand, he does sin. This literally means the true believer has Christ alive in him and the Christ-life in the believer is a non-sinning life. It means, on the other hand, that the container in which Christ lives, the human being, can be tempted to sin. These sins are sins of the flesh, which are grievous but do not separate the believer from the Father. These are sins that can be controlled by the Christ in the believer; as the believer falls deeper in love with the Christ in him, the sins of the flesh will be brought under subjection.

Notice that the sins of the flesh are dealt with differently than the sin of a sinner who has not received the exchanged nature. First John 1:9 plainly instructs us in how to deal with the sins of the flesh. The sacrifice is already made; we simply come to the Father and ask forgiveness. He depends upon the Christ in the believer and allows the believer to get up and go on his way. How can the Father forgive so easily those sins of the flesh, though they be grievous sins? How can He forgive them so simply? It is because of the finished work of Calvary. It was on Calvary that Christ brought victory over the old nature, the world, the flesh and the Devil. It was at Calvary that God staked His entire claim in having a family. If Christ had not done the work properly, God would not have had the right to bring many children into His household, but because the captain of

our salvation waged the war at Calvary and was a perfect sacrifice without spot or blemish, God was able to depend on that finished work of Christ.

We Have Victory

Not only did Christ wage war at Calvary, but that war was waged for us, for each of us was in Christ. When He waged the war against sin and the Devil, we won the victory along with Him so that Romans chapter 6 is able to declare that we can reckon ourselves dead unto sin. Thus, the believer has no sin-nature.

What then is the source of the sins of the flesh? The source of the sins of the flesh is an un-renewed mind. Until the mind has been renewed, as Paul calls for a number of times in his writings, the believer will still have a tendency to give in to the body pulls and the old way of doing things. This is the old-man syndrome. As a result, he will commit sins of the flesh. The mind must be renewed.

The mind is being renewed as the believer listens to the Holy Spirit, his Teacher in his soul, and as he searches the Scriptures to see who and what he is by Christ in him. Thus, what we have is not a sin-nature operating in the believer, but an un-renewed mind which reverts back to the old way of doing things. This is what happened to the woman in Romans 7. Even though she was married to her new husband, Christ, her mind

reverted back to the old way of doing things with her first husband, and so she committed spiritual adultery. The cure for that is in Romans 7:25, where Paul says that the mind is the determining factor of what kind of life a believer lives. He will either have a mind given to the law of Christ or to the law of sin and death. It is up to the believer at that point to realize that in his thinking, in his soul-mind, he controls the expression of the Christ who is in him.

Flesh Is Not Controlled by Law

It must be stated that the sins of the flesh cannot be controlled by rules. It is proposed by others that they can control their flesh by rules and regulations. This is nothing but a reversion back to the law, which only identifies sin but cannot cure us of our sins. This returning to the law leaves us in a hopeless state. The law history of 1,700 years with Israel in the Old Testament is pure evidence of the failure of man's attempts to try to gain control over flesh by the law, yet it seems that this is the only way multitudes of God's children today act on the Scriptures. Oh, that liberty and blessing and freedom would come to them if they would but see that Christ in them is their hope of glory, not their own efforts at controlling sin!

Then we ask the question, are our sins of the flesh

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controlled by the Holy Spirit? According to the Scriptures, this is the divine plan for the control of the flesh in the believer's life. The Holy Spirit provides all that God desires or requires in any life and brings the believer in Christ to his greatest fellowship with God. Thus, the believer must have a constant dependence upon the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works solely in the soul of man; the soul-mind is where the Holy Spirit does His teaching. His greatest purpose is to teach the believer Christ, and victory for Christian living comes as the believer grasps that teaching and expresses it through his self—body and soul. The believer himself is but a container that contains the Holy Spirit in his soul and Christ in his spirit, and when these two are in perfect harmony together, that believer is able to bring about God's intention for living. If there is to be a greater walk in the Spirit for the believer, and he is to improve his expression of the Christ in him, what steps should this believer take?

First, the believer must recognize that God does not look on the outer; He looks within. God proposes to change the desires of the heart any time we listen to the Holy Spirit tell us what we can do, and by this the Christ in us empowers us to rule over our bodies. Remember, the Holy Spirit only teaches us the Christ who is in us. As our minds are renewed and become

the mind of Christ instead of the mind of the flesh, Christ is able to operate through us and rule over our bodies. As Paul says, by the Christ in me, I bring my body under subjection. These bodily sins, these sins of the flesh, are thus ruled over by a change in our mind, in our heart. We cannot keep the rules ourselves, but the Holy Spirit can help us know the rules and the Christ in us can give us the power and enable us to do what we must do. Galatians 5:18 says that if you are led of the Spirit, you are not under the law, and against the fruit of the Spirit there is no law. In Romans 6:14, Paul says, *"For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace [Christ]."* The sin-nature is gone forever from the believer who is born again. What is left for that believer to do is, as Paul says, renew his mind.

The Battle Is in the Mind

Someone may ask, Where is the Scripture which declares that the sin-nature is gone forever? There are numerous Scriptures which speak around the subject without directly using this term. For instance, 2 Corinthians 5:17 says that we are new creatures in Christ Jesus. The creature is the whole of man—body, soul and spirit. He is either new or he is still sinful. If his sin-nature is still there, he is not a new creature in Christ Jesus. Old things are those

things which were brought by the sin-nature. They and the sin-nature are passed away, and all things have become new—Christ in you, your hope of glory. Then, we can find another important truth in 1 Corinthians 1:30, where Paul says that Christ has been made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. I see no place in those four terms where Christ has been made certain things in the believer and God still left sin-nature there. I see that the creature is a container who contains new life, Christ in him. The container, the soul, is never to be fully saved (Heb. 10:39). There will always be body pulls and tendencies to sin in our flesh. Our soul-mind is always in the process of being saved, renewed and sanctified. It will never become perfect, but when that mind is turned to the Christ in us, that Christ operates through us in His power, not battling the sin-nature, but battling the ignorance in our mind. As the pollution in our mind flows out, Christ is able to flow through our body and overwhelm any body pulls and any flesh powers that might still be there. It is Christ who rules over man; it is Christ who rules in the container of man; it is Christ who is alive as a vine to a branch, as a Spirit to a temple, as a husband to a wife. As He rules and reigns in the believer, the believer is able to overcome all things by Christ who lives in him. †

From the Christ-life Dictionary

The Church - n. The Body of Christ made up of born-again Christians. Born-again Christians are the Church any place, any time.

church - n. A manmade religious organization and its buildings.



Christ-life 2008
South Africa Conference
Pine Lodge Resort - Port Elizabeth
3 p.m. Thurs. 30 Oct. - midday Sun. 02 Nov.
Speaker: Warren Litzman

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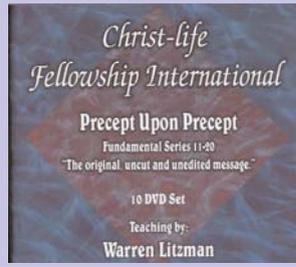
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