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## Beliefs of Our Fathers: Sin and Salvation

## Chapter 8

This continues a study on the beliefs of our forefathers, based largely on the 1632 Dordrecht Confession of Faith. This section tells about Soteriology, or the study of Sin and Salvation. This has been edited for space.

### Sin and Salvation

#### Soteriology

*For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.* (1 Corinthians 15:21)

#### Introduction

If you look forward to eternity in heaven, then it is critical to know and understand who Jesus Christ is and what He has done. In the Gospel of John, we find the longest recorded prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Scriptures. A portion of this prayer is, *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth* (John 17:17). In the Greek, the word “sanctify” means to set them apart for God and His purposes. In this chapter, we will look at what sin is and how we are saved from the consequences of sin, based on truth found in the Gospel of John. Let’s take a look at what the Amish teach.

#### What the Amish Teach

##### From Article 2 of the Dordrecht Confession of Faith

“We believe and confess, according to the holy Scriptures, that these our first parents, Adam and Eve, did not continue long in this glorious state in which they were created, but that they, seduced by the subtlety and deceit of the serpent, and the envy of the devil, transgressed the high commandment of God and became disobedient to their Creator; through which disobedience sin has come into the world, and death by sin, which has thus passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, and hence, brought upon themselves the wrath of God and condemnation; for which reason they were of God driven out of Paradise, or the pleasure garden, to till the earth, in sorrow to eat of it, and to eat their bread in the sweat of their face, till they should return to the earth from which they were taken; and that they, therefore, through this one sin, became so ruined, separated, and estranged from God, that they, neither through themselves, nor through any of their descendants, nor through angels, nor men, nor any other creature in

heaven or on earth, could be raised up, redeemed, or reconciled to God, but would have had to be eternally lost, had not God, in compassion for His creatures, made provision for it and interposed with His love and mercy.”

##### Article 3

With God “there was yet a means of reconciliation, namely, the immaculate [spotless] Lamb, the Son of God, who had been foreordained thereto before the foundation of the world, and . . . that He by His coming, would redeem, liberate, and raise the fallen race of man from their sin, guilt, and unrighteousness.”

##### Article 4

Jesus was “yielded up as a sacrifice and offering, for a sweet savor unto God, yea, for the consolation, redemption, and salvation of all mankind. . . . He is the Son of the living God, in whom alone consist all our hope, consolation, redemption, and salvation, which we neither may nor must seek in any other. . . . [Jesus] was crucified, dead, was buried, and on the third day, rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven; and that He sits on the right hand of God the Majesty on high, whence He will

come again to judge the quick and the dead.”

## Article 6

“For neither baptism, supper, church [membership], nor any other outward ceremony, can without faith, regeneration, change or renewing of life, avail anything to please God or to obtain of Him any consolation or promise of salvation; but we must go to God with an upright heart, and in perfect faith, and believe in Jesus Christ, as the Scripture says, and testifies of Him; through which faith we obtain forgiveness of sins, are sanctified, justified, and made children of God, yea, partake of His mind, nature, and image, as being born again of God from above, through incorruptible seed.”

### *Martyrs Mirror*, First Confession

“For although the blessed Lord Jesus Christ is the only meritorious [worthy] cause of the justification of man, their adoption by God as His children, and the foundation of their eternal salvation, God the heavenly Father . . . has nevertheless been pleased to impute the merits of His Son Jesus Christ to man, and make him partaker of the same, through the means of faith in His only, and only-begotten Son . . . according to the testimony of John, who says: He [Christ] came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:11–13).”

The statements regarding salvation found in the Dordrecht Confession of Faith and

*Martyrs Mirror* are accurate, but not particularly clear. Sometimes there is a disconnect between what we say we believe and what we practice.

The Dordrecht Confession of Faith and *Martyrs Mirror* use the phrases “Son of the living God, in whom alone” and “Jesus Christ is the only meritorious cause,” which tell us we can do nothing to earn our way to heaven. It is only through Jesus Christ, His sacrifice, and His shed blood that we are adopted as children of God. This then begs the questions: Do we really believe what we say we believe? Do we truly know, in a personal way, what Jesus Christ has accomplished on our behalf?

Be sure to . . . pray that God would open your heart to the truth of His Word.

## What the Scriptures Teach

### What Is Sin?

It became obvious in the Old Testament that man could neither keep the law of God nor do anything to earn salvation. The law was really given to man to show that we could never obey on our own. *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith* (Galatians 3:24).

Consider what the apostle Paul wrote in the New Testament to the church at Rome:

*Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall be no flesh be justified in his sight:*

*for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus* (Romans 3:19–24).

Later, Paul tells the Romans that *whatsoever is not of faith is sin* (Romans 14:23). James says, *To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin* (James 4:17).

### The Entrance of Sin into the World

God’s plan for us to live in perfection forever with Him came to an abrupt end in the garden. God gave them just one restriction to exercise their will, and they chose wrongly. Eve was deceived into disobedience, but Adam chose to disobey. *Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression* (1 Timothy 2:14).

Satan doesn’t usually come face-to-face when tempting us to do wrong. He is the great deceiver, at times even hiding behind those we trust. *Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light* (2 Corinthians 11:14). That is how he came to Eve. He hid within the snake and talked her into believing the same lie that brought him down. Revelation 12:9 calls him *the great dragon, . . . that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world*. Satan said they could be as gods, deciding for themselves what was right or wrong

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(Genesis 3:5). He continues, even to this day, to carry out his goal of destroying as much of God's creation as possible, for he was a murderer from the beginning and the father of [lies] (John 8:44). *He walks about as a roaring lion . . . seeking whom he may devour* (1 Peter 5:8). We were not made to operate under our own power. We can only function properly according to the Creator's direction—in accord with His Word.

### The Result of Man's Sin

God said Adam and Eve would surely die for their disobedience (Genesis 2:17). To die is to be separated from God. *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God* (Isaiah 59:2). First, their fellowship with God was severed. They were now under the wrath of God (Ephesians 5:6; Romans 1:18). They would eventually be separated from their bodies to die and return to their dust (Psalm 104:29). The devil that deceived them would be cast into the lake of fire . . . and *whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire* (Revelation 20:10, 15).

Adam and Eve were dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1), just like a branch separated from a tree. A tree branch doesn't show its death immediately. It looks green and healthy for quite a while before it shrivels and decays back into the ground. Adam and Eve didn't look dead immediately, but they were. They were separated from their Source of Life, left to their own resources, blinded in unbelief by Satan, the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Was God justified in allowing this? Of course! He was their Creator, their owner, their highest authority. His holiness demanded righteousness. All sin results in death, as the Lord said: *When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die* (Ezekiel 18:26). This helps us

understand why James wrote, *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all* (James 2:10).

God's only recourse was to cast Adam and Eve out of His presence, for His law says that the *wages of sin is death* (Romans 6:23).

Sadly, Adam's *death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned* (Romans 5:12). Adam lost the holiness of God for the whole human race. God's original plan for them to prosper in perfection died. Romans 1:18–2:1 describes our human nature in strikingly clear detail and declares us all without excuse.

Genesis 3:7 tells us *the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons*. What a weak, human attempt to make themselves acceptable to God. Like Adam, we tend to hide our wrongdoings with outward measures. Whether by our behavior, words, or the way we dress, we cannot hide our sinful nature from God and expect to be accepted by Him.

It was the inner man—the part made in God's likeness—that needed to be cleansed. God gave Adam and Eve their chance to confess their sin and receive forgiveness when He *called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?* (Genesis 3:9). Sadly, they clung to their pride and cast their blame on one another, on the serpent, and on God. As a result, the whole world was cursed and they remained in their sin, absolutely helpless against the powers of evil (Genesis 3:14–19). Adam and Eve were kicked out of the garden of Eden (Genesis 3:23–24).



### The Atonement

God is first of all holy, but He is also a very gracious and loving God. In spite of the fairness of His judgment, He mercifully provided a way of escape from the condemnation of their sin, for God is *not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance* (2 Peter 3:9). At that moment, God killed an animal in order to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness so they could properly stand in His presence. Innocent blood was shed in order to cover them.

Even from the foundation of the world, God planned to provide a substitute, an acceptable Savior, who would give His life in exchange for all mankind, freeing them from the power of Satan, sin, and death. This redemption (buying back) was accomplished with the precious blood of Christ, *as of a lamb without blemish and without spot* (1 Peter 1:19). The innocent substitute would willingly shed His blood in order to clothe us in His righteousness (Romans 4:3–5) so we could be brought back into the family of God. *He gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father* (Galatians 1:4).

*The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul* (Leviticus 17:11). God instructed them to continue killing animals on an altar as a

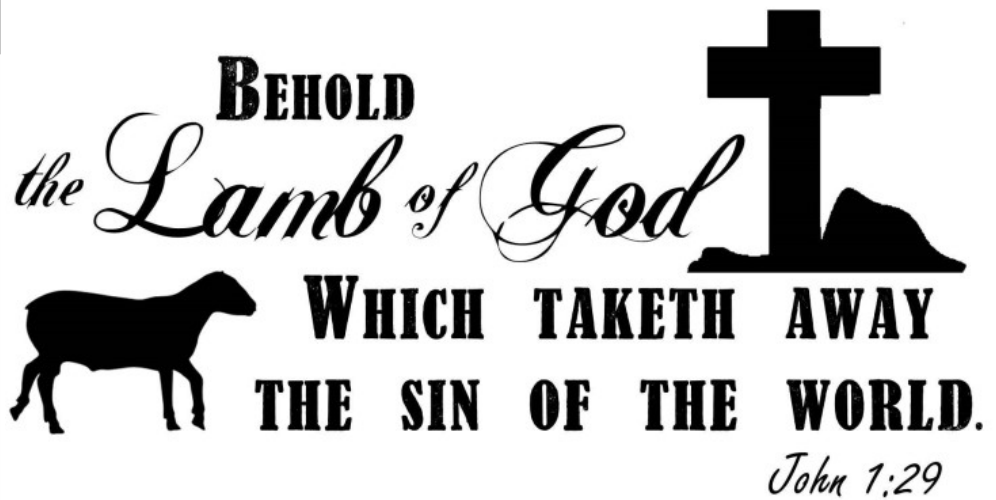
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covering over their sin until the day when the woman's seed, the Savior, would come to deliver them by offering His own life's blood in exchange for theirs.

The blood of animals was only a picture of what was to come. They still carried guilt. It was a temporary cleansing they had to repeat year after year to delay God's judgment until the true and final Day of Atonement; but God did take into account their faith in the future Lamb of God, who would spill His blood in exchange for theirs (Romans 4:3; John 1:29). God will not tolerate man's effort to make himself acceptable to Him. Man can only come to God by God's way, for Jesus said, *I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me* (John 14:6).

Adam's offspring, Cain and Abel, had to decide for themselves whether or not to believe God's promise of redemption. As we see in Genesis chapter 4, Abel came to God with a lamb, the firstling of his flock, and shed its blood on the altar. Abel demonstrated his faith by offering a more excellent sacrifice than Cain (Hebrews 11:4). On the other hand, Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, but the Lord had not respect for Cain's offering (Genesis 4:3, 5). He obviously came to God with his own idea of an offering and was rejected. Cain's pride led to an unrepentant attitude, jealousy, and the murder of his brother (Genesis 4:8).

All through the Old Testament, God graciously gave mankind shadows, or pictures, to remind them to put their faith in the coming Savior (Hebrews 10:1)—shadows like God's provision of escape for Noah and his family (Genesis 6–9), Abraham sacrificing his son (Genesis 22:1–19), the serpent on the brass pole (Num. 21:6–9), manna (Exodus 16:11–36), the law, the tabernacle (Exodus 25–27), and the Passover lamb (Exodus 12:1–13:10), to name a few. These shadows



could never have saved them from their sin. They only pointed forward to the day when the true Messiah would come. The Messiah, Jesus Christ, would become the second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:20–24, 45–48; Romans 5:14–15). He would be the true image of God, replacing the first Adam and showing us what we were created to be.

Christ is the only one qualified to give back to mankind that which the first Adam lost. By allowing His own innocent Son to die as the ultimate sacrifice for sin, God is able to clothe us in His righteousness (Romans 3:22–26).

#### What Is Salvation?

We read in John 15:16 that God takes the first step concerning our salvation: *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.* Luke 19:10 tells us that the *Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* God takes the first step because He knows we will not (Romans 3:11). God's purpose for every man, woman, and child is that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. He prearranged for our adoption by Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4–5; Romans 8:28–30), yet He makes us responsible to respond to Him with repentance and faith. The jailer in Acts 16:30–31 cried, *What must I do to be saved?* The answer from the apostles was, *Believe on the Lord*

*Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*

Salvation is the change from our natural life to a spiritual life which God meant for us to have on this earth and for eternity, not something we might have in the hereafter (Romans 8:12–16). Jesus calls us to know Him deeply, love Him with all our hearts, walk closely with Him, and make Him the central focus of our lives. One of the religious leaders of the day asked Jesus a question: *Master, which is the great commandment in the law?* Jesus said unto him, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment* (Matthew 22:36–38). This is the difference between knowing about Jesus and entering into a personal relationship with our living Savior. Knowing about Jesus is only knowing the facts that we learn, but this does not always impact our lives. Knowing Jesus by faith moves Him from our head to our hearts and dramatically changes our lives. *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things become new* (2 Corinthians 5:17).

John 1:29 states that Jesus Christ is the perfect Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. He met the demands of the law for the atoning sacrifice—a

male without blemish, offered voluntarily, and killed by the pouring out of his blood (Leviticus 1:3–5; Hebrews 12:24). He is the only person without sin, worthy to die in our place.

Why was a better sacrifice necessary? Because *it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins* (Hebrews 10:4). That was the condition of the old covenant, which did not satisfy God’s law. A perfect sacrifice and a new covenant were found in the person of Jesus Christ—the only one who could satisfy God’s wrath and justice. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit* (Romans 8:3–4).

On the evening before Jesus was crucified, while eating with his disciples, He lifted a cup, saying: *This cup is the new testament [covenant] in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me* (1 Corinthians 11:25). The shed blood of Jesus on the cross cleanses us of our sins once for all. *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved* (Romans 10:9). Just as the Israelites were delivered from the hand of the death angel by the blood of a lamb (Exodus 12:21–51), so are we delivered from the hand of Satan, sin, and

death through the blood of the Lamb of God (Hebrews 9:14). Speaking of Jesus, the apostle Peter said: *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved* (Acts 4:12). Jesus is our perfect Savior!

Why do we need a savior? When we are dead, we are unable to bring ourselves to life spiritually. Our destiny is hell. Only the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ is able to accomplish the miracle of giving everlasting life. We who *were dead in trespasses and sins* were made alive by Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:1). *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour* (Titus 3:5–6).

Right from the beginning of the church, we see the apostles preaching that we should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). “Repent” simply means to turn and go in the opposite direction. When we come to the realization that we cannot possibly make ourselves acceptable to God, we turn from what we’ve always believed in order to turn to what God says is true about Jesus Christ. We say to God, “You’re right, and I’m wrong. I’m going to obey Your instructions from now on.”

One of your first acts of obedience should be baptism, which identifies you with

Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus should be at the center of your life. Knowing Him should fuel a hunger within you to love God, love His Word, love His people, and love sharing the gospel with the lost. Seek Him in the Scriptures with all your heart. He alone is our only hope of salvation. Are you a child of God?

I would not work my soul to save,  
For this my Lord hath done;  
But I would work like any slave  
For love of His dear Son.

*He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God* (1 John 5:12–13).

#### Prayer

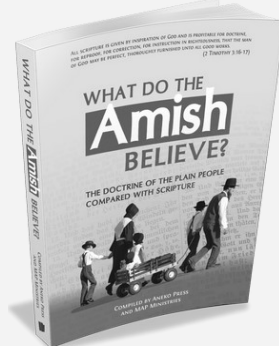
Thank You, Father, for giving us truth in Your Word. We do not even understand how sinful we are, and Your Word teaches us that we can’t do anything of ourselves to be cleansed. We are lost, but You have provided a way for us through the blood of Your Son. Thank You for loving us enough to send Jesus to suffer and die on our behalf. Our hearts bow down before You in love and admiration for Your goodness and Your righteousness. Thank You for saving us through Your Son, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

**End**

## Amish Beliefs

Do your beliefs line up with those of our Anabaptist forefathers? In this 160-page book, *What Do the Amish Believe?*, nine authors took the time to go back and study the original beliefs of our forefathers and compare what they believed to what many of us believe today. A \$5 donation covers the cost of printing and postage.



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# Feedback and Response Section

1

*Amish Voice*,

Here is my donation of \$20.00. I would like for you to send me the *Amish Voice* every month. I read my parents' *Amish Voice* and I believe it got me closer to God and helps me to better understand the Bible.

Thank you.

—N. D., OH

Dear N. D.,

Thank you for your generous donation. We will use it to continue to help get the truth of God's Word to others. We are very glad that you are learning from the *Amish Voice* and are growing closer to God and His Word. That is our desire—to encourage our readers to seek and follow God and know and learn His Word.

Many people believe what they are told to believe, but have no idea what the Bible actually says. Many people have committed themselves to a church, but not to Jesus.

Please pray with us that God will open many eyes and change many hearts as they seek and find the truth and love of Jesus. The only way to heaven is through Jesus! —Paul Miller

2

This is D. S. from Michigan. I certainly appreciated this message. It really touched my heart. Thanks for making this available. May God bless you.

Thank you.

—D. S., MI

Dear D. S.,

Thank you for your message. We are glad to hear that you and many others are listening to the audio sermons that are on the Sermon Line each month. We hope that you will keep listening and appreciating the many truths from God's

Word that can help us know God and grow in our Christian lives.

As you did, we hope that many readers and leave us a message at the end of the sermon so we can hear your ideas, thoughts, and any others comments. (See page 9 for more.) —Paul Miller

## John Bunyan on Prayer

John Bunyan (1628–1688), author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, offered these insights regarding prayer:

- In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart.
- Prayer will make a person cease from sin, or sin will entice a person to cease from prayer.
- In all your prayers, forget not to thank the Lord for His mercies.
- Pray often, for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

—Romans 8:26

- The spirit of prayer is more precious than treasures of gold and silver.
- To pray rightly, you must make God your hope, stay, and all.
- The truths that I know best I have learned on my knees. I never know a thing well, till it is burned into my heart by prayer.

We love hearing from you, our readers. We want to hear from all of you—with your suggestions, responses, articles, disagreements, poems, letters, testimonies, ideas, lessons you have learned, or whatever you want to say. Please write to us—and we will try to publish much of what you send. We would love to hear your testimonies of how you have been changed by Jesus and how the *Amish Voice* is helping you grow closer to God.

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you! Write to us!

## Sanctified in Truth

—By Ben Girod

In His high-priestly prayer (John 17), Jesus was mindful of His followers—knowing that after His departure they would be exposed and vulnerable without His leadership. He foresaw the tests and trials that would encounter them. At the beginning of His ministry He had chosen them—a motley crew mostly from the shores of Galilee. Now they were about to be sent forth on their own, eventually taking the gospel to the far ends of the earth, even at the cost of their lives.

In preparation for this monumental mission, Jesus was moved to pray for them even as His own life hung in the balance. He thoroughly understood what the cost will be to bring the gospel to the nations in its unadulterated form. But He also knew, this weathered group of fishermen from the harsh elements of Galilee possessed an endurance not found among the cushioned ranks of the leadership in Jerusalem.

In preparation of their mission Jesus asked the Father to sanctify them in truth.

*They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth (John 17:16–19).*

This level of *truth* is not what we commonly refer to as being truthful, but a discovery of spiritual revelations that can only be found in the bosom of the Father as we submit our lives without reservations to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

The *truth* referred to here by Jesus breaks us down to the level that God measures us with. Every other tower we have built within our hearts crumbles to the earth, shattered by the piercing revelations of the Holy Spirit. It is here where *TRUTH* in its unadulterated form is found, and is why Jesus prayed for His followers to discover this mystery. Unlimited power

is granted to those who find it, for they are also surrounded by a hedge of Angels and selflessness. Again, it is the discovery of this *truth* (the pearl of great price) that sanctifies us. God is eternal, without beginning or without end, consequently *truth* continues to expand, there is no end to His *truth*.

Christ deemed this prayer so important, that, even though He Himself was the *truth*, He nevertheless sanctified Himself for them, (and us), without which the world will never believe in Him. (See John 17:20–26).

Today, you and I have perhaps met the most turbulent times in the history of mankind—many people are praying which is essential—even so, our prayers are minimized without allowing themselves to be sanctified in *truth*—allowing the *truth* to purify us from all unrighteous ways and lifestyles. And finally, in what it cost the apostles at the beginning, it will cost us in the end.

## The Root Cause of Anxiety

—By Eli Lee

What is the root cause of anxiety?

The root cause of anxiety is that we feel out of control. When everything is going the way we think it should go, there is no anxiety or stress.

We humans, both men and women, have this inner desire to say how things should be done—what our mind interprets as the best way. And when things aren't going that way, we get frustrated or anxious or angry, depending on how passionate we are about being in control. So the “desire to control” is the culprit!

Do you remember what Jesus said in John 14:27?

*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

How does that fit with what I just explained above? As long as we are still in control, we're still in charge of our life, and because we are unable to control it all, we suffer anxiety. When we take Jesus as our Lord, we surrender our life and control to Him, and we have faith that He will work things out according to His great wisdom and purpose, even if we can't make sense of it.

With that decision to hand over control to Jesus and trust Him with it, we experience the peace talked about in Philippians 4:7: *The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* But without faith and trust in Him, we will never hand over the reins.

Unfortunately, even after being born

again by the Spirit of God and receiving that peace, there are still times when we struggle with anxiety. But it's always because of the same problem of trying to control a situation ourselves instead of surrendering it to God.

Because we still live in this wretched tent of a body that desires control, it needs to be surrendered continually so we can live our lives in that inexpressible peace of Christ.

Disclaimer: I am not a medical doctor and don't claim to be. I am very aware that there are medical conditions that are said to cause anxiety. My take on all the above is that there are weaknesses (sicknesses) in some that greatly magnify the inability to deal with stress, but the root of the problem remains the same.

The Bible doesn't directly command us to vote—because people who lived in Bible times couldn't vote. They lived under kings and emperors who weren't elected by popular vote.

But the Bible does command us to be good citizens—and one of the ways we do this today is by voting. In fact, if we don't vote, we are failing to fulfill that God-given responsibility to be good citizens. The Bible says that Mordecai,

Esther's uncle, was honored because he worked for the good of his people (Esther 10:3). Shouldn't we also work for the good of our nation?

Some people won't take the trouble to vote because they don't believe their vote will make any difference. But that isn't true; you might be surprised to find how many elections have been determined by only a handful of votes. But more than that, what would happen if most people

felt that way? Then our future might be determined by only a small minority of people.

Don't look on voting only as a responsibility, however. Look on it also as an opportunity—an opportunity hundreds of millions of people in our world wish they had. Above all, pray for our nation during this crucial time. The Bible reminds us, *Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord* (Psalm 33:12).



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## January

### Religious but Lost

There are many people who fill the benches of churches on Sundays who are good, upstanding, and moral people, but they are lost. Charles Stanley uses the life of Nicodemus to illustrate how someone can be religious but lost.

### Made Free from the Law, Parts 3 and 4

Duane Sheriff continues his series, explaining that we have been made free from any religious law or standards that would keep us bound to guilt and shame. There is nothing we can do or not do that could earn us God's grace. Living according to rules and standards may keep us doing what is right, but it never changes the real source of the problem — the condition of the heart.

### Male and Female Communication

Emerson and Jonathan Eggerichs from Love and Respect Ministry respond to an inquiry and talk about why the key to a successful marriage is, in fact, not communication. Learn what they believe is the key to a successful marriage.

## February

### Made Free from the Law, Part 5

In the last part of this series, Duane Sheriff explains that we have been made free from any religious law or standards that would keep us bound to guilt and shame. There is no rule we can keep, nothing we can do or not do, that could earn us God's grace. Living according to rules and standards may keep us doing what is right, but it never changes the real source of the problem – the condition of the heart.

### What Your Boy Needs Most

Monica Swanson remembers how overwhelmed she felt when her four boys were young. Certain that her sons' assertiveness and risk-taking must be a sign of a deeper problem, she arrived at the doctor's office only to be told, "He's a boy." Swanson then decided to become a purposeful,

prayerful mom intent on raising future men. Swanson gives her best tips for raising boys while keeping your sanity.

### Loving God

Paul Washer as shares the importance of loving God with your whole heart. The question was asked "If I do something out of obedience, but don't feel it, should I still do it?"

### How could a Loving God...?

Ken Ham from Answers in Genesis explains what the Bible says about why we have death and suffering in our world.

## March

### Not Everything Matters

Monica Swanson, author of "Boy Mom," talks about the challenges and joys of raising boys. She reminds moms that they can simplify the pressures they feel by simplifying their parenting. Much of parenting is trial and error. Each person has to figure out what works best for their family.

### The Amazing in Amazing Grace

Duane Sheriff explains that we should never cease to be amazed by the grace of God in our lives. No matter how long we've been in relationship with God, how many miracles we've seen or answered prayers we've received, we will never reach the end of what God can do—which is exceedingly above what we can ask, think, or imagine.

### Personal Testimony

Corrie ten Boom, Holocaust survivor and follower of Jesus, tells of her experience through all her difficulties and how she learned to rest in the love of God.

### Peter Orasuk: Drug Addict's Salvation Testimony

Peter Orasuk was a heroin addict and drug kingpin in Canada until Christ reached down and saved him. This is his testimony that was preached in the Ballymena Gospel Hall in N. Ireland. This is a 'must hear', not only for people who are doing drugs, but for anyone who wants to hear of the power of Christ to save the most hopeless of sinners.

As I sobbed to my friend on the phone, I shared with her that I just wanted a good life. I wanted everything to be okay. I wanted to be successful—but it felt like everyone was fighting me. I cried and told her I was a perfectionist and that I tried to do everything just right. I used to be able to do it, but it was getting harder and harder, and I was getting more and more overwhelmed.

Overwhelmed! That was a big word, and I certainly knew what it meant! Life was becoming so very hard and I was so bone weary. Even my body was utterly weeping from the strain. It had succumbed in a weary heap and could no longer carry the load I had placed upon it.

But how did I get to this place? How do I get out? Well, I have to tell you it took more than two more years for me to wake up and realize what was really going on, and it was a very gradual awakening. In fact, I had to find quite a bit of healing and revelation before I realized I had been rescued from a sure death, not only emotionally, but also physically.

Now, regarding how I got into this predicament: well, that, my friends, is a very long story, but I will shorten it drastically for you—and for me.

I love much about my upbringing, home, family, and community; but as we all are very aware, life often doesn't go as we would choose, and sometimes deep disappointments and devastation occur. There were several such factors in my life as I grew up, one of them being that my dear mother, whom I love so very much, developed a mental condition called bipolar disorder (my mother has since gone to be with Jesus). This is not something you ever want to deal with, and it is difficult to understand what it is like to not only live with someone like

this, but the horror and emotional agony these dear people experience.

This situation and other surrounding factors played into a deep-seated insecurity and fear in my heart. Through the years I developed a security blanket, which was performance. I thought if I did everything just right, everyone would be pleased with me and life would be perfect. And if it wasn't perfect, I believed it was somehow my fault.

When you are on the outside looking in, it is easy to see the tremendous load this puts on someone. But when you are caught in the web of confusion as I was, you don't see it at all; you only feel its devastating and suffocating effects as you get sucked deeper and deeper into the web of lies the enemy entrenched into your brain. I figured if I try harder and always do what is right, eventually everyone else would as well, and we would have our perfect world.

Well, as we all know, most people don't cooperate with those "amazing" plans, nor do they remotely want to. I was middle-aged and had grown children before I realized, to my horror, that this was no guarantee that others would do the right thing! In fact, it seemed the opposite was true! They all seemed to be fighting me! What was wrong with them? Couldn't they see I just wanted peace and rest and order?

No, they really probably couldn't. They probably did see me madly grasping for straws to grab on to as my life careened wildly out of control and dizzily dipped around the next bend in the road where my poor heart broke just a little more, as the axle on my crazy wagon decided to crack.

Let me shorten this story. After years of searching and crying and praying, after layers of my soggy onion were peeled, I finally came to a startling but crisp layer

of truth: the only person I could fix was me. I couldn't fix anyone else—not that they were going to let me, anyway! I had to love myself, the very person I thought was most unlovable of all. I could love the unlovely and I could help the broken. God knows that I would even let them abuse me and run all over me because I thought my needs didn't matter at all. I figured I didn't even have a right to have needs. That's how I felt treated, anyway.

How stunned I was to realize that the only reason I was being treated this way is because it was how I taught people to treat me! What? That's right—because I believed a message I picked up as a young child. Actually, let's stop and identify a few of these:

1. I wasn't good enough.
2. I was evil.
3. I wasn't lovable.
4. My needs and voice did not matter.
5. If I was perfect, my world would be safe.

Because I believed these lies and many others, I tried to help everyone else, fix everything that wasn't right, work harder, be more right, be better and more perfect. In other words, I tried to control my world to make it safe, and through this defense mechanism, I hated myself, and I taught others to also put themselves before me and to push themselves into me and control me by expecting me to meet their needs when my heart was crumbling in sadness and defeat, and my body was beyond bone weary.

One day, I couldn't do it anymore. I laid in bed at night, crushingly exhausted and unable to sleep. I knew something was terribly wrong. My mother had died, leaving me questioning my own mothering abilities. My heart rent in grief. No one seemed to be there for me

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## Perfection cont. from page 10

when I needed them most. Instead, because I found myself unable to communicate my need for support and love, they seemed to expect me to continue being the rock for them to lean on and toss their burdens upon as usual.

I found myself angry and without hope. I cried out, “Lord, You have to show me what is wrong. I can’t go on.” In my heart, I heard Him say to me, “Hope deferred makes the soul sick.” I knew that was a verse in the Bible. I said, “Lord, You need to show me where to find hope.” He pointed me back to Himself. Of course He is my hope! My eyes were on my circumstances rather than on the One who has the power to overcome all things!

The battle wasn’t over in one night. No, it took weeks and even a few months of looking to Him, the lover of my soul, each time I was afraid or confused or hurt. Whatever I went through, He was there. He was a Faithful Friend who saw

me for who I was—not for how well I was able to perform for Him.

It took many times of choosing to lay that huge, heavy burden at His feet and choosing to enter into a yoke with Him before I realized that it was not in the doing, but in the “being” in Him that made my world go round. You see, the more we know how loved and valued we are, the more we can trust Him through the difficult times and with the difficult people—and the less we need to prove anything or fix anything or control anything. We suddenly have strength to take responsibility, when before we sighed in weariness at the insinuation that we would possibly need to take the blame for one more thing. When we are free from self-inflicted burdens, no longer



does responsibility suck the life out of us. It becomes a joy.

It is my hope that in sharing a small segment of my journey to hope and joy, someone will find answers they are looking for, and they will find their way out of the web of perfectionism, performance, and pride to find healing, peace, and freedom in the One who loves them always, right where they are—imperfect, but oh, so very precious and loved!

**End**

## Does God Exist

—By Joe Keim

### Do the Holy Scriptures prove the existence of God?

The answer, of course, is no. The Bible does not prove that God exists. However, we can read in the Bible:

*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)*

*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. (Revelation 1:8)*

Neither of these passages prove the existence of God; they just assume His existence. One must choose whether to believe or disbelieve. The Scriptures also say:

*For we walk by faith, not by sight. (2 Corinthians 5:7)*

*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. (Hebrews 11:3)*

*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is. (Hebrews 11:6)*

It is by faith and faith alone that Christians believe the existence of God, and that He alone is the Creator of all.

Not only do we, by faith alone, believe that God is the one and only true God, but we believe that He alone is our highest level of authority, that He alone is the maker and ruler of the entire universe and all that is in it.

Faith is not something we can manufacture or make happen on our

own—all levels of faith are a gift from God. Are you struggling to believe? You are not alone. There was a time when the early apostles struggled to believe. The Bible tells us, *The apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith (Luke 17:5)*. Clearly, the apostles understood that faith was a gift from God. So is wisdom, and so is our salvation. All three (faith, wisdom, and salvation) are gifts that God offers to you, to me, to the world.

It is by faith and faith alone that the leper in Matthew 5 was cleansed and made whole instantly. The man, paralyzed for thirty-eight years, got up and walked, the storm and seas calmed down, the woman with a blood issue for twelve years was healed, the young girl rose from the dead and walked.

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Millions of men, women, and children throughout all generations have placed their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ and were instantly delivered from all their sins and given everlasting life—unending life—life that never stops giving. It is also by faith that we believe in the existence of God and His creation.

Romans 10:17 says, *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* Are you struggling to believe? Is your faith weak? Read the Bible. Let those everlasting supernatural living words of God settle deep within your heart. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Word of God is alive, powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword. God’s words are so powerful, so precise, and so accurate that they will divide the soul from the spirit and the joints from the marrow.

**Does the complexity of the human body and universe and all that it contains prove the existence of a creator?**

According to Romans 1:20, the creation

of the world so much points to God that mankind is left without excuse. The whole universe, its presence and its nature, declares God. In the very same passage, we are told that mankind can see the “eternal power” of God. In other words, man can look at the creation of the earth and outer space, of plants and animals, of man and woman and can clearly see the great complexity of the human body and structure, the great variety and beauty, the arrangement and the order of the universe.

*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.* (Romans 1:20)

Someone might ask: What about those people who live in the deepest, darkest jungles of Africa, who have never had the Word of God translated into their language? Are they, too, left without excuse? Yes, according to God’s Word, they are.

*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork.* (Psalm 19:1)

*The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.* (Psalm 97:6)

Self-proclaimed atheists and unbelievers refuse to place their faith in God for following two reasons: (1) they hate authority, and (2) they, like Lucifer and Adam, want to be gods themselves.

*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.* (Psalm 14:1)

Those who reject God and refuse to believe that He exists will soon stand before Him and see just how dumb and foolish they were. On the other hand, if you are a true believer, don’t forget to give God thanks for His wonderful gift of faith to believe.

*Jesus saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* (Matthew 16:15–17)

**Prayer**

*Thank you, Heavenly Father, for revealing yourself to me and for giving me faith to believe. Today, I acknowledge the fact that all that I have and all I that know is your special gift to me. Help my unbelief. Give me a greater level of faith.*

Amen.

**End**

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I have written a good bit lately about living under the law. I know that not everyone understands what that means. Many of you do. Thankfully. I am going to copy a paper that my son wrote many years ago as a single young man. He was going through the book of Romans, and we discussed this subject a lot.

It is called:

**I am living under the law if:**

**1. If I feel condemned and worry whether I am performing well enough to satisfy God.**

This shows that I don't yet understand that Jesus is my righteousness (1 Corinthians 1:30). God said about Jesus, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* And it is only Jesus who pleases Him. My own works never please God, but when He sees His Son in me, He is well pleased. The less of me and the more of Jesus that He sees, the more pleased He is. Trying to please God by my works is a frustrating impossibility because one failure totally condemns me (Galatians 3:10; James 2:10). True faith is the starting point if I want God to be pleased with me (Romans 4:3; Hebrews 11:6).

**2. If I think it is more difficult to be a Christian than not, and I think the world has more fun than I do.**

This reveals that I am mostly concerned with externals and am missing the glorious freedom and joy of surrendering my life to God (1 Peter 1:8). Serving God may have difficulties, but it is infinitely better than the alternative (Galatians 4:9). A total surrender to God actually makes life easier because I no longer have to make my own life come out right. God will make all things work together for good and give me true rest (Romans 8:28; Matthew 11:28–30).

**3. If I cannot accept God's forgiveness**

**for my sin, and still carry condemnation.**

It is an insult to God to think that I must somehow earn my forgiveness when it is freely offered to the repentant sinner through the sacrifice of Jesus. It is my pride and unbelief that tell me I must do something to earn God's pardon for my sin instead of humbly accepting it as an unmerited gift that I can never really repay (1 John 1:9; Romans 8:1).

**4. If I am constantly defeated by the same sin.**

A pattern of failure reveals that I trust my own strength, because I am never defeated when I fully trust God for victory. Each defeat proves I don't trust God's power, but when I humbly admit my weakness, that allows God's power to supply my lack (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 2:12).

**5. If I determine to try harder when the Spirit convicts me of a need in my life.**

If I merely try harder, I still think I can sanctify myself by improving my performance. I don't yet understand that Jesus is my sanctification, I also show that my standard of holiness is much lower than God's because I think I can attain mine by sheer willpower. The new covenant's standard is impossibly high for the flesh. It takes Jesus in me (1 Corinthians 1:30; Galatians 3:3).

**6. If I check my spiritual growth by comparing myself to other people instead of to Jesus Christ.**

This reveals that I still think it's good enough just to reach a level of performance that makes me an average Christian. Looking to Jesus makes me despair of my own fleshly efforts (Romans 8:29; Romans 10:4; 2 Corinthians 10:12).

**7. If I think sin is always something I do, and I am only guilty of sin if I do**

**certain actions.**

The new standard introduced in the Sermon on the Mount and lived out by Jesus deals with the root of the problem instead of the fruit of the problem. The main issue now is the condition of the heart, and I can be guilty of gross sin even without outward action (Matthew 5:27–28; Matthew 12:33–35; Mark 7:20–23).

**8. If I am more concerned with people's opinion of me than I am about the truth.**

For example, if I tolerate rebellion in my heart as long as I yield outward obedience, I show that I am still more concerned with my performance than the real condition of my sinful heart. Admitting the truth will set me free (Matthew 23:27).

**9. If I teach and demand of others things not found in the Bible.**

This reveals a performance-oriented mentality that does not accept God's standard of inward holiness, but claims that righteousness really depends on keeping certain man-made rules. Eventually those rules will actually replace God's standard, and people will be considered righteous as long as they conform outwardly to those rules (Matthew 15:9; 2 Peter 1:3; Revelation 22:18).

**10. If I cannot accept believers who are different from me.**

This shows that my confidence is still in how I look and how I perform, and so I cannot accept someone who looks or acts different (John 7:24; Acts 10:34–35).

**11. If I serve God because I want to avoid hell.**

This shows that I want to just perform well enough to be accepted, instead of

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Continued from previous page

focusing on an inner relationship based on unconditional love for God. If I really recognize God's holiness, I will serve just because He is worthy, and then the rewards He offers are simply side benefits and not the main focus. My motive will be my love for the Lamb and not my fear of the fire (Job 13:15; Revelation 4:11 ).

**12. If I constantly lack assurance of salvation.**

My salvation is insecure if I judge myself by my performance instead of by the witness of God's Spirit, because each failure on my part casts doubt on my salvation. When my trust is in Christ and the sufficiency of His sacrifice, I no longer depend on myself for assurance. This does not mean, though, that I can

continue in sin because my salvation is in Christ. In fact, when my focus is relationship with Him instead of performance for Him, I am more repentant than ever about any sin that grieves Him, and am quick to repent. My sorrow is that I grieved God instead of just being sorry about the consequences of my sin (1 John 3:9, 20, 24).

**13. If I am kept from sin only because the Bible says I shouldn't do it.**

I am only trying to get by instead of having a relationship with Jesus that makes me desire to please Him above all else. As I grow in grace and become more like Jesus, I will hate sin and desire holiness, not because I fear punishment, but because I have the mind of Christ and also have personal conviction against sin. The law of the Spirit in my heart can keep farther from sin than all those laws

that have been a burden to my flesh (Ephesians 4:20-24; 1 Peter 1:15-16; Hebrews 12:14).

**14. If I read the first thirteen points and decide that my works or lack of them don't matter so I can gratify my flesh.**

My works are really a matter of life and death, for I shall be judged by them; but they must be the genuine fruit of a transformed heart and not my own pathetic efforts at righteousness (Isaiah 64:6; Revelation 20:12).

**I am living above the law in grace when I truly understand and experience that a transformed heart naturally produces good works, but good works never produce a transformed heart. Has your heart been transformed?**

**End**



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## Work, continued from back cover

money instead of recognizing that God is our true provider.

Based on the conversations I hear, I'm afraid that many Christians like the temporary security of things. Oh, we say we don't like the things of the world, and we say that money isn't important, but a little honesty would probably reveal the truth of the matter.

*For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* (1 Timothy 6:10)

*The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich*

*toward God. And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.* (Luke 12:16–31)

### The Conclusion of the Matter

A lot more could be said about this, but

this entire magazine would not be big enough to contain all the Bible verses that tell about how God provides for His people, how He wants us to wholeheartedly love and serve Him, and how He abundantly blesses those who love Him. If there was room, I'd even add verses telling about heavenly treasure being so much better than earthly treasure (Matthew 6:19–21).

So what is the conclusion of this matter? In summary, we should work diligently and with a thankful heart, not for earthly gain, but because we desire to please God in everything we do. If your heart is right, watch and see how God will provide for you in ways you never could have imagined. This is not because He wants us to be rich, but because He is a good Father—and a good father takes care of his children. A warning for us all, however, is that we must not try to trick Him and use His good graces for our own gain, but in all things give Him the glory and honor He deserves, truly setting our hearts on treasures in heaven rather than on the treasures of this earth.

*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* (1 Corinthians 2:9)

**End**

## Works! Works!

—By R. J. Danbury

Works! Works! People say you can get to heaven by works! I'd just as easily climb to the moon on a rope of sand than get to heaven by works. —George Whitefield

George Whitefield was an evangelist who was greatly used by God during the 1700s to lead many souls to Him on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Most people who read the Bible understand that works are important in the Christian life—very important. The book of James and many other portions of Holy Scripture tell of the importance of our works.

But how are they important? A boy does

not do good works in order to become someone's child, but he works to please his father because he already is his child.

In the same way, we do not do good works in order to try to earn God's approval and acceptance, but we do good works because God has changed our hearts and we now live to please Him and to serve others.

Would we really be so presumptuous as to think that even though Jesus died for us, God accepts us based upon how good we are or what church we attend? *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord,*

*who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee* (Psalm 130:3–4).

God tells us that no one would make it to heaven if we had to earn or work our way there. But there is forgiveness with God! Do you know His forgiveness? Are you trusting in the righteousness of Jesus? Or are you still trying to earn your way to heaven, climbing a rope of sand, even after God tells us we cannot do so?

*By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast* (Ephesians 2:8–9).

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## Work, Work, Work

—By Jeremiah Zeiset

### What the Bible Says about Working and Providing for Ourselves

*If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind (Luke 12:28–29).*

Most Christians agree that the love of money is not a good thing. Yet for some reason, most of our conversation centers around work, and our worries and anxieties are often about work.

But Scripture is clear—God already cares for us, provides for us, and even clothes us. We think we clothe ourselves with the money we earn, but very little is within our own control. In one day, everything we have can be taken away.

The reality is that we're fooling ourselves if we put even an ounce of faith in our ability to do our work, or in our stockpiles of money and possessions.

It seems to me we're often guilty of looking at God in the same way we look at the neighbor who wants to borrow a thousand dollars from us. We think he's capable of paying us back, but we don't know if he'll remember. Worse, we suspect that he may forget to pay us back—on purpose. And like the neighbor, while we know that God can do what He says He'll do, we are afraid He'll forget, or worse—that God simply won't do what He promised to do in the first place.

So does God really provide for us, or are we responsible to provide for ourselves and our families? The question isn't answered with a straight yes or no, as there really are two sides to this coin: (1) why and how we do what we do, and (2) why and how God does what He does for us. Let's take a closer look at each side of this coin.

### What the Bible Says about Being Responsible and Working Hard

We should be wise, hard workers—that is clear. The reason for doing

so is simply to glorify God in everything we do—and to serve others well, whether our parents, our boss, or our customers.

*He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain persons is void of understanding. (Proverbs 12:11)*

*Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. (Ephesians 4:28)*

*Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. (Colossians 3:23)*

There is no doubt that if we work, we should work diligently, we should work so we can give to others, and we should work for God's glory. The Bible does not say that we should be sloppy, careless, or lazy. God loves a cheerful worker!

### What the Bible Says about Pursuing Money and Things

However, the Bible is clear: if we love money, we have a problem—a big problem. If we brag because our wallet is fat, we have a problem. If we feel secure because our bank account is full, we are most likely guilty of putting our trust in



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