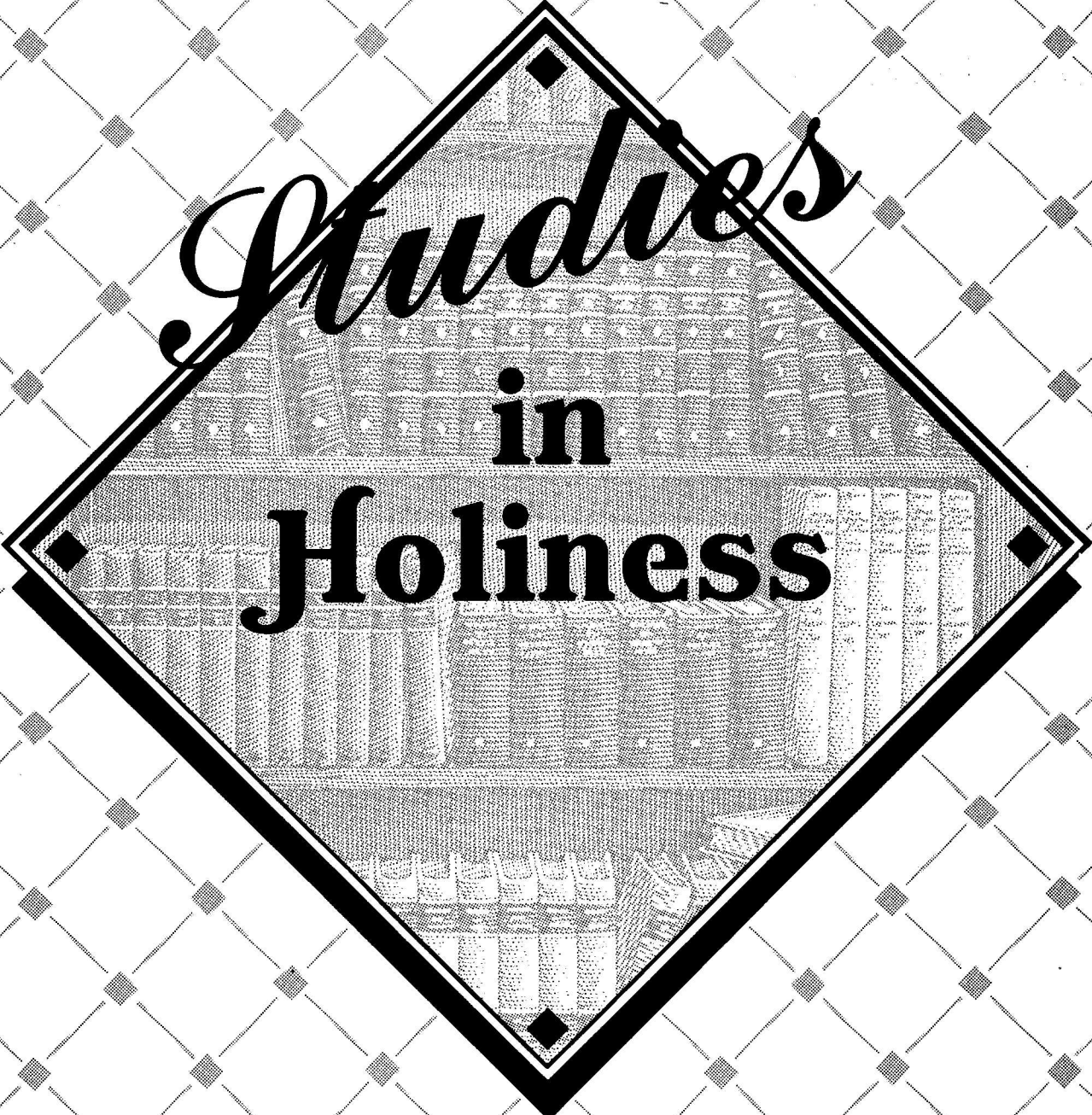


# GOOD NEWS

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## *Studies* in Holiness

September 1987

# Word to the Wise

**T**HE KID'S ONLY 17. Car crazy, of course, though in an informed and practical sort of way. Spends every penny he can get on his gold and matt-black '67 Olds Cutlass, and its ear-ringing sound system. After Communion at the **Good News Unlimited** Fellowship in Auburn, CA, recently, he was helping put chairs away. In walked Lee, looking for the pastor. Lee was on the road (he'd hitchhiked from Placerville that morning) and his boots and backpack proved it. He was as strange as his green-plaid shirt. He would talk, think for awhile staring ahead, then talk again. "I need clothes . . . I need a sleeping bag . . . I'm willing to W-O-R-K."

Distracted, the pastor went off on a fruitless search of the church premises. The Fellowship rents from First Baptist, and has no Dorcas supplies of its own. Perhaps someone was still around who would take Lee off his hands. Deserted.

A few phone calls revealed First Baptist had a special understanding with the Salvation Army. "I'm not sure where the Army store is," the GNU pastor said, looking up from the phonebook. He saw his son carrying half-a-dozen chairs. He was tall, strong, able to look after himself. "Would you mind driving Lee in the Buick? 510 High Street can't be far."

When everything was finally tidied up, the church supplies awaiting transport at the door, the pastor and his wife suddenly realized that Jon had been gone a long time. "Where is he?" asked the agitated father. "He's been gone far too long."

Father strode down to the traffic light at the corner of High, anxiously squinting in all directions in the bright sun. "What could I have been thinking of? How in the world did I allow some total stranger in the same car as Jon? He's too young. Only yesterday he returned books to the library, but included my Bible commentary in the book drop. He's not experienced enough to go off with a stranger. Had the man pulled a gun? A knife? Had he forced Jon to drive him who-knows-where? Was Jon even now lying assaulted—even dead—beside the abandoned Buick?"

The pastor hurried back to the church. There was no rational explanation for the young man's being gone so long. "I must call the police." But first, he would call the Salvation Army store.

"Your son is fine," said the cheerful woman who answered the phone. "He was here with the older man, Lee, but had to go to our second store. He's safe, don't worry. I'll give you the number."

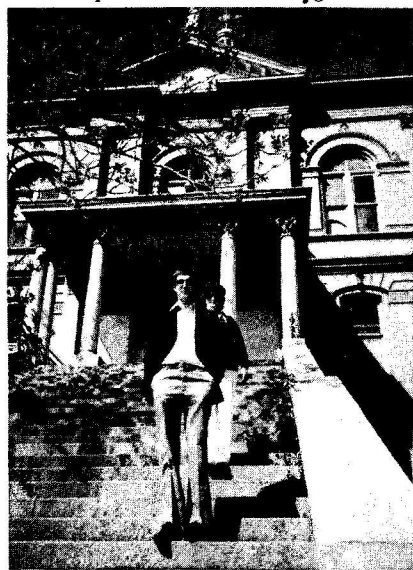
The second call brought relief. "No problem," said the young man, as unconcerned as young men often are. "There was some red tape and I had to bring Lee here. I'm making sure he gets something to eat, then I'm dropping him off at the freeway entrance. Am I keeping you waiting?"

Driving home in the loaded car, Jon related his adventure. "They wanted to give him only one blanket, but he's heading north into the mountains and snow. When I asked for more, they called the other store. I gave them a good talking to, so they said come over. I made sure he ate, then tried for a second blanket. I offered to pay for it. The lady said she would. I gave my last \$5 to Lee. He said he was 46, and seemed really touched by what I did."

"When I meet people like Lee, I think of a story you used to tell, about the shop-keeper who had a dream Jesus would visit that day. He kept looking, but only poor, needy people came. But Jesus had sent them—they *were* Jesus. I also remember what Jesus said. I don't know the words exactly, but something about doing good to the least of his."

I looked away. A father's tears are private. Jon is our son.

As the sun retreats down the sky from its summer ascendancy, evenings draw in, schools open. This month's magazine brings you two important studies. Dr. Desmond



Jon Gee—a.k.a Joe Cool—with his mother on the steps of the vacated Placer County Courthouse.

Ford and Brad McIntyre wrestle with the profound topics of holiness, sinlessness, and perfection. The little episode I relate above with filial pride prodded me to think about holiness. I tend to think of my preaching, praying, and perusing of Scripture as the holiest things I do. But I must admit Jon's care for Lee—just a vagrant nuisance to me—strikes me as being far holier than my pious practices.

True holiness—however we might define it—is available to us only through the gospel. As we look by faith to the person and work of Jesus, his perfect virtues are credited to us. Still, we cannot forget what those virtues consist of in light of Jesus' self-definition. When Jesus spoke in Nazareth, he described his Messianic work in terms of helping people (Lk 4:14-30); when he reassured imprisoned John Baptist, Jesus defined himself in terms of helping people (Mt 11:2-6); when Jesus described the judgment, he defined the standard as helping people (Mt 25:1-46).

It's time for some practical piety. "Hey, Jon, maybe your buddy Brian can stay for supper after all . . ."

by Roy Gee

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Paul Porter

Robert Cooper

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THIS ARTICLE WAS prepared for presentation at a departmental retreat of college religion professors. This explains the technical nature of the material—material that will reward your earnest study. The three basic questions treated are: 1) Anthropology—the nature of Christ and mankind in

members are asked what is the heart of the New Testament, only a minority acknowledge with the apostles and prophets that it is "the everlasting gospel," justification by faith alone. Those who endeavor to muffle discussion or allege the issue to be merely one of semantics show

# RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH

PART I

by Desmond Ford

terms of sinful nature and Original Sin; 2) Soteriology—the definition of justification and sanctification in terms of the cross and the believer's faith; 3) Eschatology—the status of the believer in preadvent times in terms of perfection and the perseverance of the saints. This first part covers only 1) Anthropology. You can understand it. Take a deep breath, and start reading . . . NOW!— Ed.

" . . . the question will be put to me: 'Hast thou uttered the definite message quite definitely?' And if I have not done so, what then?" (Soren Kierkegaard, *Journals*, p. 493)

At every period in the history of the Church the greatest sin of the Church, and the one which causes the greatest distress, is that she withholds the Gospel from the world and from herself . . . The weakness of the Church lies in

the fact that she lacks this 'living Word'—that she does not know the reason for her own existence—and consequently has no real message for the present situation. (E. Bruner, *The Divine Imperative*, p. 565)

The great mass of professing Christians has failed to utter the definite message and indeed knows not what it is.

Beholders conclude this church has no real message for the present situation. When

their culpable ignorance. They come under the curse of Galatians 1:8, and separate themselves from the church invisible which has ever been prepared to die rather than compromise here. The free gift of imputed (credited, accounted, reckoned) righteousness, available through faith in the merits of Christ's cross is the one subject that should swallow up every other, the sweetest melody from human lips, the foundation of Christianity, the light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory, transcending all other issues in importance. Failure to affirm this, once understood, is declared to be treason and cowardice.

## Scripture Contains a Definite Gospel

Where is the definitive word on the gospel to be found? Certainly not outside Scripture. And where in Scripture? Not even in the Gospels which were written as supplementary to the Epistles. The cross had to be endured before it could be explained. Christ's own reticence is just what he declared we should find in his words when he announced their incompleteness and promised the enlightening Spirit. It was Pentecost which made Calvary luminous, and the chief product of the Pentecostal early rain was Paul, God's "chosen instrument." It was Paul, "the greatest of human teachers" who, by inspiration, minted most of the key terms of Christian thought such as "righteousness by faith," "in Christ," "justification," "imputation," "reconciliation," "adoption," etc. Apart from the Crucifixion account, Paul is the only N.T. writer to speak about



...we  
should keep  
in mind  
that the  
law of  
God, the  
foundation,  
pillar, and  
bulwark of  
the universe  
is a reflec-  
tion of  
what God  
is, not just  
what he  
does...

'the cross.' References to the death of Christ (i.e., actual usages of the term "death") are rare outside of Paul. He uses the word "gospel" nearly four times as often as the rest of the N.T. writers combined, and grace about twice as often.

To define the gospel without Paul's insights would be like presenting Christianity apart from Calvary. Every revival in church history has been sparked by the renewed study of Paul's Romans. It is in this, the sole semisystematic theological treatise of Scripture, that Paul affirms the gospel to be a revelation of the righteousness available to those who have faith, a righteousness imputed at the beginning and every subsequent step of the Christian life despite the believer's imperfections and "unavoidable deficiencies." Thus the gospel and righteousness by faith include each other, and to understand either is to understand both, but to err regarding either is to err concerning both.

Paul summed up his message thus—"we preach Christ crucified"; "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified"; "Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified" (1 Cor 1:23; 1 Cor 2:2; Gal 3:1). He refused to glory in anything save the cross (Gal 6:14). Preaching the gospel and preaching Christ crucified are the same thing. (Compare 1 Cor 15:1,2 and Php 1:5,7, 12,15,16,27.) Galatians 1 declares that the gospel is the news of God's gift of his son for the sins of the world, and that if any man preach otherwise let him be anathema. Wrote Luther:

... he dare curse all teachers throughout the whole world and in heaven, which pervert his Gospel and teach any other; for all men must either believe that Gospel that Paul preached, or else they must be accursed and condemned. (Martin Luther, *Galatians*, p. 69)

At the beginning and throughout his presentation of RBF, Paul alluded to the Incarnation. What merits there be in Christ's life and death depend upon who and what he was. It is this which distinguishes Christ's sacrifice from a martyrdom. Therefore, we address ourselves in detail first to this area of Christology and anthropology. As we do so, we should keep in mind that the law of God, the foundation,

pillar, and bulwark of the universe is a reflection of what God is, not just what he does, and therefore the sinlessness it demands is first one of nature, then only secondarily character and performance.

## ANTHROPOLOGY

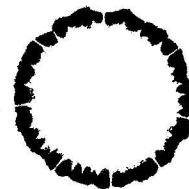
### Controversies over Christ's Nature

All the controversies of the centuries over the nature of Christ have revolved around one of the following three cruxes: 1. The reality of his human nature; 2. Its integrity (completeness and perfection); 3. The nature of its union with the divine nature.

Did Christ have a perfectly sinless nature, one that had no desire for evil and every desire for good? We answer that he began as regards sinlessness where the first Adam began. This is obvious not only when we read such Scriptures as Mark 1:24; Luke 1:35; John 3:34; 7:18; 14:30; Acts 3:14; Romans 8:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26; 9:14; 10:5; 1 Peter 1:19; 3:18; 1 John 3:5,7, but from the fact that any "lack of conformity with the will of God whether in act, disposition or state" is sin.

### Sinless Behavior Requires a Sinless Nature

Perfectly sinless behavior is possible only to a perfectly sinless nature. The divine law is infinite and requires that people be ever permeated by the Spirit as completely as Adam before the Fall, "having no part dark" but "full of light," loving the Lord without reserve with all their faculties, and their neighbor to the extent that Christ has loved. Perfect inherent righteousness means that every thought is brought into captivity to God, being the best possible thought for that moment, God's glory being uppermost, and the well-being of our neighbors given preeminence over our own as we esteem them better than ourselves—and all this without any other feelings than perfect love, joy, and humility. Perfect lawkeeping means never to waste a thought, a cent, or a moment, never to worry or to forget what we



*The divine law is infinite and requires that people be ever permeated by the Spirit as completely as Adam before the Fall, "having no part dark" but "full of light."*



should remember, never to experience the slightest sickness induced by personal error, to praise God as wholeheartedly and continuously as the sinless angels and never to miss one opportunity of doing not merely good but the best.

Scripture sets forth both sin and righteousness as states. The words translated "sin," or used as synonyms for it, apply to dispositions and states as certainly as to acts. Thus *chattah* and *hamartia*, for example, both mean "a falling short." *Anomia* in 1 John 3:4 means not so much "transgression of the law" as "lawlessness." Thus Scripture can speak of the "evil heart" (Heb 3:12), and the condition of the heart which gives rise to wrong desires and acts is expressly called "sin" (Rom 7:8, 11,13,14,17,20). There is sin in the desire of sin, and the law requires that we not only hate evil enough to refrain from overtly doing it, but that we should hate it with all our being and repudiate immediately its slightest approach in temptation.

Sin is declared to exist in the being prior to our own consciousness of it, and as that which is discovered and awakened by the law (Rom 7:9,10). It is set forth as a permanent power and reigning principle (see Rom 5:21 and 6:12). Thus the Beatitudes are pronounced not upon acts but upon states of mind, heart, and character, while the curses of the law are pronounced not so much against single acts of evil, as against the evil dispositions from which they spring.

In both "the works of the flesh" (Gal 5:19) and "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5:22), dispositions rather than actions predominate. For the same reason we distinguish between murder and manslaughter. Not the outward result but the motive differs, and motive has to do with our condition of heart. Scripture clearly teaches in Romans 7 that there is guilt in evil desires, even when resisted by the will. Temptation is not sin, but the failure to repudiate temptation immediately and wholeheartedly is sin, and the very presence of depraved desires reveals the existence of a nature which is sinful. Man's state, and not merely his behavior, is naturally sinful.

### Christ and Sinful Nature

Some believers have wished to have a Christ who experienced evil propensities in his flesh but not in his mind. The biblical teaching of the unity of man forbids any such dualism. *Propensities are realized only in the mind, and it is not possible for one part of man's nature to be depraved and another not.* Any such dichotomy of nature as proposed by these theorists is completely unbiblical. Thus the necessity for the perfect health that Christ possessed, and the perfect harmony of faculties.

*Others confuse infirmities with propensities, but there is a world of difference between weakness and badness.* Christ accepted the results of being shut away from the Tree of Life insofar as he had a lessened capacity in every way than Adam, but that does not imply a single evil proclivity. When some theologians refer to Christ's "sinful nature," they mean only that he was affected by sin but not infected.

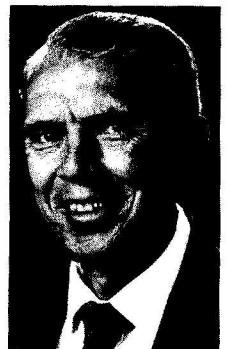
For Christ to be the second or last Adam, he, the Divine One, must possess a sinless human nature, otherwise he could never have met the law's demands for such, and neither could he have been an acceptable Representative, or Substitute, to provide infinite merits for imputation to the guilty.

To teach that Christ was possessed of sinful propensities is to teach that he himself was a sinner in need of a Savior. It makes his ministry not one of substitution but of example only. His victory is not that of the last Adam representing the race afresh but a victory over indwelling sinfulness. Such teaching veers towards pantheism as it finds God even in sinfulness, and tends to produce the heresies of legalism and perfectionism as men strive to find acceptance by their own complete fulfilling of the law's demands. We affirm that Christ, unlike us, did not have Original Sin. To suggest that his human nature was like our converted nature denies the New Testament evidence that the converted still have evil propensities which require continual crucifixion by the will.

[Part Two will discuss: 2) Justification and Sanctification, and 3) Eschatology.]

*... the Beatitudes are pronounced not upon acts but upon states of mind, heart, and character, while the curses of the law are pronounced not so much against single acts of evil, as against the evil dispositions from which they spring.*

*...motive has to do with our condition of heart.*



DESMOND FORD

# Does Holy Mean Sinless?

by  
Brad McIntyre

"PASTOR McINTYRE," the young man asked, "do you believe in holiness?"  
"Certainly," I replied. "What are you getting at?"  
"Don't you think God is powerful enough to keep us from sinning?"

"It sounds like you're equating holiness with sinlessness," I answered. "The Bible teaches holiness, but I don't believe the Bible endorses sinless perfection. A Christian is holy but not sinless."

I'm not sure if my answer satisfied him. Nevertheless, the relationship between holiness and sinlessness is important.

Many conscientious Christians are anxious about achieving total victory over sin. To them the "victorious Christian life" implies sinless perfection. Each moral failure plunges them deeper into guilt. They might even begin to doubt their salvation. Some eventually get so discouraged they give up.

Then there are those Christians who feel they are well on their way to becoming sinless. Their piety is impeccable yet somewhat annoying to the rest of us who are struggling just to believe.

## Holiness and Sinless Perfection

What about Christian holiness and sinless perfection?

Church history records numerous holiness movements which emphasized personal piety and upright living. Often these movements arose as a reaction to complacency and worldliness within the church. Certainly modern Christians could benefit from a renewed emphasis on holiness.

*However, we must not equate holiness with sinlessness.*

Holiness, according to Scripture, means to be set apart or dedicated for

special use. It is not—in the first place—an ethical concept, although holiness can imply moral uprightness.

For example, God's holiness is his "wholly otherness." God is the "high and lofty One who lives forever, whose name is holy" (Is 57:15). As the eternal Creator who has life in himself, God is distinguished from his creatures and is thus holy or set apart. God is also sinless. Yet his holiness resides *primarily* in his unique position as Creator and Eternal God.

According to Paul, the children of mixed marriages are holy because at least one parent is a Christian (1 Cor 7:14). Obviously these children are not sinless. They are designated as special to God (set apart) because at least one of their parents is a believer.

In the same chapter, Paul says an unmarried Christian woman is concerned about the Lord's affairs "that she may be holy both in body and spirit" (1 Cor 7:34, NASB). Here again, the emphasis is not on sinlessness, as if single women are more apt to be perfect than married women! Rather, Paul is talking about total dedication to God's cause, or as the NIV translation says, "Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit."

The church itself is called a "holy temple" (Eph 2:21). Would anyone try to make a case for the sinlessness of the church as a whole? Probably not. The church of Jesus Christ has been designated as God's chosen instrument for spreading the gospel to the world. Therefore, the church is holy.

The Corinthian Christians were not sinless. Yet Paul refers to them as "those sanctified [made holy] in Christ Jesus and called to be saints" (1 Cor 1:2). They were God's people despite their erratic and exasperating behavior. They were holy—still growing, still failing, but holy.

Christian holiness means complete and undisturbed consecration to the things of God. Christians belong entirely to God. This is the meaning of the word "saint." A saint is not sinless, but one who stands in a special relationship to God through Jesus Christ.

## Sin and Salvation

But what about the issue of sin and salvation? Am I lost every time I sin? If not, how many sins am I allowed



*There are those Christians... [whose] piety is irpeccable yet somewhat annoying to the rest of us who are struggling just to believe.*

**Holiness, according to Scripture, means to be set apart or dedicated for special use.**

before God finally lowers the boom?

My daughter, Gloria, sometimes disappoints me by misbehaving. Even then, she is still my daughter. Occasionally my wife and I have an argument. Even then, we are still married.

In the same way, Christians will fall short of God's ideal. We will often fail God in thought, word, and deed. But we are still God's children; we are still saved. We are not sinless, but we belong to Christ as his purchased possessions.

When we sin, God views us as wayward children on a temporary journey into a far (or not too distant) country. He does not reject us because of our sins.

The parable of the prodigal son makes this refreshingly clear (Lk 15:11-32). Jesus portrays God as the waiting father who longs for the return of his cherished son and runs to greet him with open arms when the boy finally comes home. Through it all there is no question whether or not the son is still loved and accepted. Of course he is.

I recall a low point in my Christian life after a painful and embarrassing moral failure. I felt friendless and lost—literally lost. I had betrayed God and my better self. Psychic shock and spiritual despair overwhelmed me. There seemed no way back home.

But in a vivid and moving experience of the heart, God broke through my darkness with his message, "My grace is sufficient for you." Then I knew as never before the meaning of grace. I knew that nothing—not even my sins—could separate me from God's love.

What good news! What a relief to know that God's love is greater than my sin. What a relief to know that though I may sometimes be a wayward child, I am still God's child.

### **Holiness as a Position**

Holiness is a *position* before it is an inward *condition*.

The New Testament says Christians are *already* holy (1 Cor 1:2; 6:11; Heb 10:10). This "already" aspect of holiness refers to the believer's position in Christ before God. We are already reconciled, forgiven, saved, and set apart by virtue of Christ's atoning work. This is an accomplished fact and constitutes the basis of our assurance.

Nevertheless, Christians are urged to pursue holiness, "for without holiness no one will see the Lord" (Heb 12:14). Thus, holiness can refer to moral purity. Having been sanctified, we are to cleanse ourselves from all impurity, "perfecting holiness out of reverence for God" (2 Cor 7:1).

Let's be clear on this: the new birth experience sets us free from the power of *compulsive* sinning. The Spirit indeed gives us the new option of obedience to God. And as slaves to God, the benefit we reap is holiness (Rom 6:22). "For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life" (1 Th 4:7).

John's insights are helpful. He writes, "No one who lives in him keeps on sinning" (1 Jn 3:6). Again he says, "We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin" (1 Jn 5:18). John is referring to persistent and willful acts of rebellion against God. Continual disobedience is abnormal for one who is born of God.

But John is *not* implying that Christians are sinless. In fact, he states, "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 Jn 1:8).

Christians will not persist in a course of willful disobedience, yet Christians can never claim to be sinless. Believers are holy but never sinless.

### **Talking About Sin**

Much depends on your definition of sin. Some people think sin means doing bad things. They feel if they can resist doing bad things, they will be sinless. For them, it's a matter of sanctified willpower: any Spirit-filled Christian should be able to will the good in every situation and thus achieve a sinless life.

This strikes me as a superficial view of sin. Certainly the Spirit aids us in willing the good (Php 2:13). However, sin is more complex and transcends the right use of the will. Sin is more than overeating, losing your temper, or thinking lustful thoughts. And sinlessness is more than a faithful devotional life, disciplined living, and good stewardship.

The doctrine of Original Sin asserts that our perversion cannot be resolved or compensated for by willpower

*Continued on page 10*



***A saint is not sinless, but one who stands in a special relationship to God through Jesus Christ.***

**"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 Jn 1:8).**

alone—even a sanctified will. No, there is a basic flaw in human nature since the Fall, a fundamental disposition opposed to God which corrupts even our good deeds. This flaw is not eradicated by the new birth. Sin still remains in the believer, though it does not reign (Rom 6:12).

Even our sanctified obedience needs to be purified by the blood of Christ. And what about the good we fail to do every day? Seen in this light, sinlessness is an illusion.

God gives us the power to obey, to overcome sin. But this obedience is never absolutely pure. Only the perfect obedience of Christ is acceptable to God and justifies us.

"Through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous" (Rom 5:19).

I may not be conscious of any sin, but this doesn't make me sinless or innocent. It merely demonstrates my perversity! *Conscience is not the final criterion of goodness for the Christian.* As Paul said, "My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent."

It is the Lord who judges me" (1 Cor 4:4). Regardless of our moral victories, we are to remain humble and avoid all talk of sinless perfection, for we are never as good as we think.

#### Sinlessness Now?

Will we ever be sinless? Right now we are sinless *legally* by faith in Jesus Christ. We stand before God clothed in the perfect righteousness of Christ. God counts us perfect in Christ by faith alone. All this is ours at this moment.

Meanwhile we long to be sinless *experientially*. Christians groan for the redemption of their bodies (Rom 8:23). This will occur at the Second Coming of Christ. At that time Jesus "will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body" (Php 3:21). Then we will be sinless both *legally* and *experientially*.

Until then we rejoice in our salvation and offer ourselves to God as living sacrifices, "holy and pleasing to God" (Rom 12:1). This is true holiness, the essence of Christian living. □

**Believers are holy, but never sinless.**



BRAD McINTYRE

## Potpourri

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# A Boy and His Badger



**I**T WAS IN Winnipeg, Canada, in the year 1870 that the MacDonald family began having problems with their 6-year-old son, Ben. The youngest of their four children, he seemed to have a strange, even mystifying attraction to animals. The MacDonalds lived on a large farm, but the three elder children went to school regularly. The family attended church on Sundays and neighbors would occasionally call. So it wasn't as though they never saw people.

But Ben, the mystery child, preferred animals. He was out following a mouse the day George Burton arrived. The strange thing was that the mouse was allowing him to pursue it. As the mouse scampered on all fours, so did Ben. As it stopped and cocked its little head, sniffing, so did the boy. And as it nibbled on a grain of corn, Ben likewise nibbled, perfectly mimicking its action. Ben's father was embarrassed by this behavior. He had no patience with a boy who spent his time following horses, dogs, chickens, and any small creatures he saw. Of course the farm animals loved it. As soon as Ben came in sight, they would

come racing towards him.

George Burton was a new neighbor rumored to have been a trapper. He was a hard man who had lost favor with the local Indian tribes because of his cruelty, and who had been fired from his regular job for fraud. He had recently purchased the farm next door, hoping to settle down, but he wasn't the farming type and decided to try some trapping on the side. He'd come to the MacDonald farm to ask permission to set traps on their property. With him was his mean dog, Lobo, who'd once torn the throat of an Indian that came hunting Mr. Burton at night.

Now Mr. MacDonald hoped that Ben would turn some of the attention he paid to his animal friends to their human visitors. He feared the boy was not normal. Ben would typically hang his head and refuse to look people in the eye. His father sighed as Ben did it again. But just then Lobo saw the boy and moved towards him. Mr. Burton tried, unsuccessfully, to call the dog back, but it was too late. The dog began to snarl, but ended up whimpering. The boy sank onto all fours and moved his face up to the

dog's mouth, making the same sounds. Mr. Burton whistled in amazement. "Why," he said, "that dog's been taught to be mean. I've never seen anyone able to touch it except me." So the parents told him about Ben's strange affinity with animals. They regretted it later when they found out that Mr. Burton had regaled the nearby townsfolk with the story. The MacDonalds heard it at church and seemed to have an unusual number of visits to their farm by people wanting to see Ben in action. Meanwhile, Mr. MacDonald had given permission to Mr. Burton to put traps on his land, and he lost no time in doing so, baiting them with sardines.

One day Ben went wandering in the countryside as he often did. He noticed a hawk hovering overhead and called to it, but it took no notice, preoccupied with getting its dinner. Moments later, it swooped down and took off again with a field mouse in its beak. Ben ran over to where the mouse had been, and as he looked around he saw a nest with four baby mice in it. He felt sad as he realized that they had lost their mother and would die soon. He was so engrossed that the badger's growl took him by surprise.

His father had told him to be careful of badgers. They had been known to attack people when afraid and could take on a whole pack of dogs. This one was a new mother protecting her babies. That made her meaner than usual. Ben began to mimic her movements and her hisses and growls. He thought quickly and, deciding the baby mice were going to die anyway, gently pinched their heads and offered them to the badger. At first he had to lay the mice on the ground, but as the suspicions of the badger decreased, he was finally able to feed her by hand. He noticed she had one notched ear from a previous fight. He raced home, excited beyond words, to tell his family what had happened. They could see how exhilarated he was, and he began to tell them at the meal table what had happened. But as soon as he mentioned the

badger, his father rebuked him and warned him never to go near one because they were so dangerous. He felt crushed and withdrew into his shell again.

"Don't be so severe on the boy—he's scared of you," said Mrs. MacDonald to her husband later that night. "You'll see—he'll grow out of it as he gets older—remember, he's still very young."

Meanwhile out on the prairie, the mother badger's husband had smelled the sardines and had headed towards the trap. He nuzzled the ground with excitement, but suddenly, snap!! crunch!! His feet were caught in the cruel iron jaws. Thrash around as he might, he could not get free. It was several days before Mr. Burton came to check his traps. The badger alternately struggled and surrendered, but reasserted itself at the sight of Mr. Burton, madly fighting to get free. A swift blow on the head with a hammer brought an end to that, and Mr. Burton thought he'd head for the MacDonald's to show them what he'd caught. On the way he saw the signs of a badger nest. "Humm!" he said gleefully to himself, "two badgers for the price of one." So he reset the trap about a hundred yards away from it.

You can imagine how distressed Ben was to see Mr. Burton with the badger. He quickly looked it over to see if it was the badger he had made friends with earlier, but it lacked a notched ear like the other. It was a relief to him, but he instinctively disliked Mr. Burton and felt sorry about the badger. The family invited Mr. Burton to eat supper with them, but somehow Ben didn't feel like eating so he went to the barn. Mr. Burton suggested to Mr. MacDonald that he have a try at skinning a badger, and Ben's father agreed. But after supper, when his father came out to the badger and lifted his knife to begin skinning it, Ben suddenly rushed at him and knocked the knife out of his hand. Mr. MacDonald, angry already with Mr. Burton, whom he did not like, reacted by hitting Ben. The boy raced for the barn and would not come out

when his brother was sent to coax him back. Later his father apologized to the boy twice. He was really sorry about the whole thing. After that the relationship between the two of them was a bit better.

Mrs. Badger had four hungry babies back in the nest and set out to find food for them. As she lifted her nose, she caught the scent of the sardines and headed for the trap. She dug a little into the ground, hesitantly, which probably saved her life. Suddenly the trap slammed shut and one paw was caught. Two fingers were caught in the trap, but she couldn't get free. She struggled and pulled, and as her babies wailed for food she struggled again, but her efforts were to no avail. She stayed caught by the metal teeth. After more than a day, the babies' cries had ceased, but one sudden wail from one of them gave Mrs. Badger an urge to try again. Yanking her paw backwards, she broke her fingers. She gnawed the skin and muscle away, and free, headed back to her babies. Three had died from hunger. The fourth was alive, but too weak to suck. It also died that night. Poor Mrs. Badger. She had lost her husband, her fingers, and now her babies.

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***They became good friends quite quickly. She was missing her babies and he seemed to need a mother, so the badger took charge of him.***

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Some days later, Ben set out on one of his nature trails, totally absorbed in following one little creature after another. It was several hours later that he realized he should go home and eat, but as he looked around, he couldn't recognize his bearings. Each hillock looked the same and there was no doubt of it—he was lost. Soon afterwards a heavy storm broke. The rain came down in great sheets, making it difficult to even breathe. Ben looked for some shelter. Nearby there was a hole in the ground and he headed for it, burrowing down inside, enlarging

the entrance as he went. It was quite weatherproof, and tired from his walk, Ben fell asleep.

He was awakened by Mrs. Badger as she came back from hunting for food. She was very angry to find someone in her nest and growled and snarled and tried to claw at him, but her sore paw prevented her from doing any harm. Ben talked to her in badger talk and soon she turned tail and left. He was still exhausted and fell asleep again. Later the badger came back, and when Ben woke up he was snuggled up to her. When Ben came up out of the hole the next day, he was surprised and agitated to see Mr. Burton on his horse, with Lobo the dog. He couldn't know that they were part of a search party looking for him. All he knew was that he didn't like Mr. Burton. Over the next couple of days he saw other people on horseback, but wouldn't come out for fear of Mr. Burton. So he stayed with the badger in her nest, sleeping by day and hunting by night.

They became good friends quite quickly. She was missing her babies and he seemed to need a mother, so the badger took charge of him. She went out at night and brought back food for him. I don't think you'd like it—imagine eating raw eggs, raw bird, or snake! (He refused the snake.) Every so often Ben thought of his mother and cried, but he quickly became disoriented—losing his memory about home.

Back at home, the MacDonald's neighbors had rallied to search for the missing boy, but after a thorough search of the nearby country for two days and two nights, they told Mr. MacDonald there was no use looking any further. "The boy must have gone down the river and drowned in the storm," they said. Mr. MacDonald didn't think so. The boy was usually obedient and had been told not to go by the river.

One day during the time Ben was lost, Lobo came sniffing around the nest. The badger went after him and there was a huge fight. Things weren't going too well for the badger when Ben joined in the fight and bit Lobo on

the back leg. The badger went for Lobo's throat and that was the end of Lobo. Ben dragged and hid the body in a nearby pond under the trees at the edge. He was afraid that Mr. Burton would come looking for the dog.

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***...the "animal" emerged covered with dirt. John recognized his brother's face.***

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The family continued to search, his father even following the river many miles down to Lake Winnipeg and back up the other side. Even two months later, the family hadn't given up. One afternoon, Ben's older brother, John, set out looking for the boy, his father going in the other direction, but planning to meet him later. As John was going along on his horse, he noticed a brown object some distance away. He nearly missed it, it was so like the color of the earth. It was Ben's shoe. He got a stick and marked it with his shirt. A few hundred yards away, he found the other shoe and marked that. Now he could see the direction the boy had gone, but did he go left to right or right to left? He decided he was probably going downhill and followed that way. Suddenly, out of the corner of his eye, he noticed a brown creature scurrying through the grass into a burrow. Something struck him as strange, and he followed it and got off his horse, sitting beside the hole waiting for whatever it was to come out.

An hour later, the "animal" emerged covered with dirt. John recognized his brother's face. He had to grab the boy, because Ben was afraid and reacted by snarling at John as though he were a badger. John pulled him out of the hole, but was startled by the fierceness of another inhabitant in the burrow. The badger was after him. John raced to the horse, got his whip and kept the badger at bay until he could get on the horse with Ben and ride away. When he met his father, you can imagine the tears of joy his father cried.

"Oh, thank God you've found him," his dad said.

But Ben grabbed fiercely onto John and hid his face. He wouldn't even greet his mother when they arrived back at the cabin, even though he had always been close to her before. He sat inside the house staring around, mutely and fearfully. But suddenly as he gazed at the familiar things of his home, his memory returned and he cried "mama," grabbing and hugging his mother. Soon the badger arrived, and now it became Ben's turn to look after her. She was suspicious of the family at first, but in a short time blended in and wandered in and out the house as she felt like it.

The family was worried. What would it do to Ben if he were to lose that badger. And how were they to cope with it when he went to school, since the boy was determined to take the badger to school. Their fears were soon to be faced, when George Burton came visiting one day. Mrs. Badger was lying in the sun, just outside the door. Burton raised his rifle and shot her cold-bloodedly and without thought. How angry Mr. MacDonald was. He ran and took the gun away from Burton, which in turn angered Mr. Burton who went for him with his knife. But Ben's father won and ordered him off his property and out of the district. "I'll buy your property from you tomorrow," he said, "and you don't have any choice."

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***"...it was nothing but the providence of God which kept that boy alive for two months in the wilderness."***

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Ben was very sad. He told his parents he was going to bury the badger near her nest and picked her up to carry her away. He wouldn't let his father help him. How heavy the badger was. He didn't think he could make it. After carrying her a couple of hundred yards, he felt a pulse beat and realized she was still alive! "Father," he shouted, "come help me. I think she's still alive." His

father came and took the badger from him and took her inside the house, tending to her wounds as best he could. "I'm sorry, son," he said. "I don't think she'll last the night—the bullet went right through her and she'll probably die of shock." Ben came and put his arms around his dad. "Dad, will you help me bury her if she doesn't make it through the night?" Mr. MacDonald was very happy to feel those arms around him. He could take a lot of that!

Not long after, a visiting physician and minister came through. The MacDonalds told them the story because they were worried that when the story got out, people would treat Ben as though he were a circus exhibit. The minister helped them to phrase what had happened in a way that stopped that rumor. "Why," he said, "it was nothing but the providence of God which kept that boy alive for two months in the wilderness. God used that badger to protect and keep him alive." So that was the story that circulated, and instead of making Ben look strange, it gave the glory to God.

Not only do we learn about God's protection in this story. It has another lesson. How often people laugh and gossip about people who are different in looks or behavior. Actually, Ben had a rare gift with animals that you or I would love to have. But he was made to feel he was odd. Kids at school are often the worst in this respect—they love to tease and laugh at people like Ben. But really, Ben was very special. Remember him when you're tempted to laugh at someone who seems different. Be kind instead. □



Gillian Ford

# Worth More Than a Million

## WORTH MORE THAN A MILLION

[After the big celebration in last month's issue, I'm a little shamefaced to tell you that delivery of Dr. Ford's new book *Worth More Than a Million* has been delayed. Fortunately, no one is to blame; things are at fault. The bookbinding equipment was unable to handle such a thick book (854 pages)! A new bindery will soon deliver our order. In the meantime, for those who were planning to read the book during vacation, we offer you some of the questions and answers from the last hundred pages of the book.—Ed.]

**QUESTION:** Why do you continually link health and religion?

**ANSWER:** Because only he who made the human machine can speak with absolute authority on the subject of its care and preservation. The Bible not only admonishes us "Do thyself no harm" (Acts 16:28), but it gives many clues to good health. Therefore, we urge secular minds to consider the word of God and remind professed Christians that science and nature have much to teach believers, for has not God said, "First... that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual"? (1 Cor 15:46).

**QUESTION:** Why does the church have to get in on the act as regards health? Can't we leave it to the

professionals?

**ANSWER:** Max Warren answered that a generation ago. Here are his words:

The fundamental sicknesses of men have always been sicknesses of the spirit and the mind. Never, perhaps, was this more obviously so than today. . . . Only a healing which makes a man whole and integrates him with his fellows in a true community, living in a right relationship with God and with the good earth which God has given man, only such a healing is adequate to the imperative 'go heal.' For this reason the Church must not imagine that it can relegate the responsibilities of its healing mission to a representative company of physicians and nurses, surgeons and anesthetists, pathologists and dispensers. . . .

**QUESTION:** Why don't the leaders of the country stress preventive medicine more?

**ANSWER:** Ignorance is a key factor. Former President Jimmy Carter has spoken of his own transition from emphasis on curative medicine to preventive. He also declared: "Prevention is both cheaper and simpler than cure, but we have stressed the latter and we have ignored, to an increasing degree, the

former. . . . In effect, we've made the hospital the first line of defense instead of the last."

**QUESTION:** Why is there so much more osteoporosis in Western countries than in the Third World?

**ANSWER:** Affluent countries consume diets high in fat and protein. Any diet that includes protein intake of more than 15 percent of calories is linked with mineral imbalance. Excess protein hinders calcium absorption. Those who eat heavily of animal products inevitably risk calcium deficiency, and this is the case with multitudes in the West.

**QUESTION:** Does the taking of calcium tablets help people with osteoporosis?

**ANSWER:** Probably not. An article in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, of January 22, 1987, is entitled "Does Calcium Supplementation Prevent Postmenopausal Bone Loss? A Double-Blind, Controlled Study."—The conclusion is as follows:

Our preliminary data suggest that calcium supplementation in the dosage we used is not as effective as estrogen therapy for the prevention of early postmenopausal bone loss. Calcium supplementation may have had a minor effect on the loss of cortical bone, but it

had no effect on the trabecular bone.

This is the note now being sounded by most researchers. Many of the latter stress that it is the diet in the years of youth that has most significance for bone health in late adult years. The golden remedy again is not a remedy but prevention. Those who eat mainly a vegetarian diet and who exercise regularly in the sunshine are not likely to suffer from osteoporosis.

**QUESTION:** Some people seem to take an excessive amount of individual nutrients in tablet form. Is this wise?

**ANSWER:** In most cases it is not wise. Nutrients work together, and it is rare that any single nutrient is a specific to accomplish on its own a curative task. If ten food elements are missing from the diet and one is provided in abundance, in most cases it does no good whatever because of the missing nine. Furthermore, excessive amounts of some nutrients imbalance the body's utilization of other elements. Too much zinc hinders the action of copper in the human system, and excessive vitamin C can be dangerous for a vegetarian, for it is destructive of vitamin B12.

—Desmond Ford

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