On 1 John 1:7 (Forgiveness)

By H. A. (Buster) Dobbs
Vol. 106, No. 11

There is considerable misunderstanding about automatic forgiveness of sin. Some seem to have the mistaken idea that Jehovah God, by the sheer exercise of his unqualified grace, will wipe out "secret sins."

The notion that the Creator ignores innocent-looking wickedness by the operation of his unlimited mercy takes various twists. A few say that all men walk under the protection of boundless grace and therefore no one will be lost—not even Adolph Hitler and Charles Manson.

Others claim that it is impossible for any man to know and do all that God requires of him. Hairsplitting arguments attempt to show that if a person does not fully understand niceties of divine injunctions, his ignorance or transgression or omission will be spontaneously dismissed.

Advocates of the idea of grace dispensing with some law are unwilling or unable to name specific sins that God "winks at" in our age. Still, they cannot bring themselves to believe that God will enforce his laws absolutely. They fear lest some tender soul might be tortured with nameless guilt and beset with nightmares and look for some basis to say to the transgressor that God will impulsively forgive, and grant the sinner peace and rest.

The one verse to which all advocates of automatic forgiveness appeal is this:

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

Though we had a lengthy discussion on this around the first of this year, I will again consider the question because a few dear brothers are still having trouble grasping John's teaching—they don't seem to catch his drift, as the dudes say. Certain nervous-nelly types wring their hands and clutch their chests and bemoan the poor soul that violates some obscure and petty rule in the divine lawbook.

Shall such a one go down to eternal perdition simply because he/she was caught on some technicality? Thinking about someone floundering forever in flames of fire because of being entrapped on the hook of some minor point of doctrine is more than they can bear. Surely, they think, we can stretch the strait gate just a little—just enough to take care of insignificant violations.

There are several things amiss in this wrong-headed thinking. In the first place, it casts doubt on God's love and goodness and suggests that the Lord makes loopholes in his law and plays games with us (it does seem God is wise enough to speak to us in our language so we can understand him). The laws of God are not all that complicated. Any person who wants to do the will of God can understand his will (John 7:17).

In the second place, it denies God's holiness and purity and suggests that, after all, God ought to tolerate some sins —*teeny-weeny ones* —(mortal sins deserve hell, but venial sins should be purged in some temporary confinement, or entirely overlooked, according to this view).

In the third place, it does not take into account the justice of God. God is love, but he is also just. His mercy tempers judgment, but according to rule and not by whim. "Behold then the goodness and severity of God: toward them that fell, severity; but toward thee, God's goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off' (Rom. 11:22).

In the fourth place, it assumes superior knowledge about what is minor and unimportant and about what is major and necessary. If you keep the whole law but offend in one point—even if you think it is a tacky point—you have violated the whole law (James 2:10). The essence of sin—even so-called small sins—is rebellion. If we rebel in one point, we will rebel in another because we have an indisposition to respect the law. There may be large and small consequences of law-breaking, but all infractions are equally serious. Otherwise God is a respecter of persons. We must understand what it means to walk in the light. The condition upon which the blood of the lamb is cleansing us from all sin is walking in the light, according to 1 John 1:7. Please don't forget the condition—the passage begins with an "if'—"if' we walk in the light, then—and only then—does the blood of Jesus keep us clean from all sin. If we do not walk in the light, then the cleansing does not follow.

Walking in darkness is the opposite of walking in light. Either we walk in darkness or we walk in light, and we cannot do both simultaneously.

Note: "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (1 John 1:6).

Note: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:3).

He who walks in darkness and says he knows God lies (1 John 1:6).

He who keeps not God's commandments and says he knows God lies (1 John 2:4).

Therefore walking in darkness is the same as not keeping God's commandments.

If the negative is true, the positive is also true. Walking in

darkness is not to keep his commandments. Walking in light is keeping his commandments. Therefore, John is saying if we keep the commandments of God the blood of Jesus keeps us clean from all sin.

Question: How can a person sin who is walking in the light—keeping God's commandments? *Answer:* One who attempts to hear and do the words of Jesus can fail—he may omit to do something the Lord requires of him or do something the Lord forbids. If he should sin, he repents and confesses; that constitutes walking in the light—keeping God's commands—and the blood of the lamb is cleansing him from all sin. If a blood-bought child of God sins but excuses his wrong and will not confess and repent, he is not walking in the light and the blood will not cleanse his transgressions. The key is walking in the light. Walking in the light is a continuous action. Cleansing therefore is a continuous action because walking in the light involves keeping the commands of God, which involves confessing sin and repenting of sin. All of this—walking in the light, confessing, repenting, and cleansing—is continuous action.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). This passage, by the way, is in the immediate context of 1 John 1:7.

Yet some would have us believe in spite of this that somehow, someway, sometime, God will forgive his child of a slight infraction of sacred precepts, that walking in the light magically forgives casual sins—whatever that is!

That won't wash! The verse under study says, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." We are continuously cleansed not from some sin, nor from haphazard sin, nor from unknown sin, but from all sin—all sin!

If walking in the light is something other than keeping all the commands of God, if it is approximate obedience and just getting close, then all sin—all sin!—adultery, murder, stealing, lying, idolatry—all sin—is automatically forgiven. The verse says "all sin," just as verse 9 says "all unrighteousness."

If the liberalizing view that grace dispenses with complete obedience to every requirement of heaven is true, then "all sin" is washed away in the blood of the cross unconditionally and all will be saved—Adolph Hitler and Charles Manson included. Simply put— Calvary was a mistake.

Some say "the light" is God, because verse *5* says, "God is light." So, the passage would read, under this understanding, "if we walk in God, as Jesus walked in God. . .." The question comes: How did Jesus walk in God—in the light?

Question: Did Jesus obey his heavenly Father incompletely and only when it was handy, or did he obey Jehovah always and in all things? The passage requires us to walk in the light as Jesus is in the light, if his blood is to keep on cleansing us from all sin. Jesus claimed sinless perfection and challenged his contemporaries to convict him of wrong (John 8:46-47). None did! He always pleased Jehovah (John 8:29). Keeping divine law gladdens the heart of God (1 John 3:22). Therefore Jesus always kept the commands of Jehovah, and that pleased his holy, heavenly Father. "Then said I, Lo, I am come (In the roll of the book it is written of me) To do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7). The unbending rule of the life of Jesus is "not my will, but thine be done."

Jesus walked in the light, and so must we if his precious blood is to keep us clean from all sin. He never failed. We may fail, but provision is made for forgiveness, if we walk in the light as he is in the light.

It is tragic for a professing teacher of righteousness to

encourage people to think that any rule of God can be disregarded with impunity. Instead of trying to comfort the guilty by offering false hope, let us console them by rebuking sin and calling for repentance. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

“For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need” (Heb. 4:15-16).

Now, that gives some real help and lasting relief! “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Holy Spirit in the New Testament

By H. A. (Buster) Dobbs
Vol. 107, No. 02

- I. Introduction
  - A. The writers of the Old Testament looked for a time when the Holy Spirit would do a greater work than was done in their day.
  - B. They stressed the importance of words that would be spoken and written because of the work of the Holy Spirit. Consider the importance of the words of revelation.

- 1. “The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the year of Jehovah’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified” (Isa. 61:1-3).
- 2. The context of this passage shows these words were spoken to Judah before the Babylonian captivity and refer to the restoration and rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple but have a second and ultimate fulfillment in Jesus (See Luke 4:16-21). The message was from “the Spirit of the Lord Jehovah.”

- C. The power and importance of the revealed word is emphasized. The word heard, revealed, preached, believed and obeyed is dominant.
  - 1. Matthew 4:12-17 and Isaiah 9:1-2– Jesus began to preach.
  - 2. Matthew 11:2-6; Isaiah 35:5-10–gospel is preached.
  - 3. Matthew 12:15-21 and Isaiah 42:1 -4–Jehovah’s servant shall declare judgment.
  - 4. Matthew 13:14-17 and Isaiah 6:9-10– see, hear, believe.
  - 5. Matthew 13:35 and Psalms 78:1-3– teach and reveal.

- 6. Luke 4:16-2 1 and Isaiah 61:1-3—preach good tidings.
- 7. John 12:37-41 and Isaiah 53:1; Isaiah 6:9-10—a message is to be believed.

- D. The Bible deals with the message more than the messenger. The real messenger was the Holy Spirit, and, being God, he is deep, inscrutable, and incomprehensible, but we can grasp the words the Holy Spirit revealed.

- II. The Holy Spirit and the Word in the New Testament
  - A. John the Baptist was a forerunner.
    - 1. He was filled with the Holy Spirit from birth (Luke 1:15).
    - 2. He was to prepare the way for Messiah (Isaiah 40:3).
    - 3. He would turn the hearts of the people to God (Malachi 4:5-6).
    - 4. He did his work by exhortation and preaching (Luke 3:18)
  - B. The work of Jesus was planned by God.
    - 1. “He that hath received his witness hath set his seal to this, that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for he giveth not the Spirit by measure. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:34-36).
      - a) Note: Jesus is the one God sent. Jesus spoke the words of God: for (the reason is) he (God) giveth not the Spirit by measure. Obviously, the one who spoke the words of God, is the one who received the Spirit without measure—Jesus received the spirit

without measure.
    - b) Others must have received the Spirit by measure; otherwise it does not make sense to say Jesus had an immeasurable measure of the Spirit.
- 2. Emphasis was put on the teaching (the words) of Jesus: “Never man so spake” (John 7:46).
    - a) “The multitudes were astonished at his teaching” (Matt. 7:28).
    - b) “Hear ye him” (Matt. 17:5).
    - c) “Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46).
    - d) “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that y, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock” (Matt. 7:21-24).
    - e) “It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).
    - f) “No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last

day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he that is from God, he hath seen the Father" (John 6:44-46).

- g) "Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and standeth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof. But because I say the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convicteth me of sin? If I say truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth the words of God: for this cause ye hear them not, because ye are not of God" (John 8:42-47)
- h) "If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show

us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works" (John 14:7-10; Amos 1:1). Daniel said, ' 'heard I the voice of his words" (Dan. 10:9). Balaam said, ' 'The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak" (Num. 22:38).

Comments on the Outline

God instructs the people of earth through the medium of words. The Holy Spirit used words in instructing chosen leaders who repeated the words to the public. The words would sometimes come to the receiver through the eye, at other times through the ear, and occasionally the words were put in the mouth, but the message always came in the signs and symbols of ideas and was communicated to the people in words.

"The words of Amos, who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel…." (Amos 1:1). Daniel said, "heard I the voice of his words" (Dan.lO:9). Balaam said, "The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak" (Num. 22:3 8).

The Bible stresses the importance of inspired writings. The New Testament says the Holy Spirit influences human minds through a medium, except in some miracles—*miracles confined to the first century.*

God made the world by the creative power of his spoken word. God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters." God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together unto one place." God said, "Let the earth put forth grass, herbs yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit after their

kind, wherein is the seed thereof, upon the earth: and it was so." God spoke, and it was done. "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3).

"… It is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). Paul's argument is that the same God who called light out of darkness in the beginning, de- monstrated how weighty and mighty his word is, by giving the revelation of his gospel of salvation. We dare not ignore nor belittle it.

The force of God's word is well documented in the Bible. The gospel is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16). Still, some misguided souls call it "the mere word" and "the dead letter." Those who faithfully follow the teaching of the Bible are called strict constructionists and legalists. These terms are used in derision and are not unlike the Jews' calling Jesus a Samaritan to disgrace him. Jesus set the proper response pattern for us when he discounted their slap by saying they dishonored him and pointed out that he was doing his Father's will, but they were not so disposed. The apostle argues we do not handle the word of God deceitfully. ..The gods of this world blind the minds of the unbelieving to prevent them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ…We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God" (2 Cor. 4:1-7). He calls the scriptures "the word of God…the gospel of the glory of Christ…a treasure…an exceeding great power."

We do not war according to the flesh, but "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; and being in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience shall be made full" (2 Cor. 10:5-6).

Our obedience is to be full, complete, perfect. It is the

Comforter—the Holy Spirit—who gives to us divine revelation. “Wherefore, even as the Holy Spirit saith, Today if ye shall hear his voice” (Heb. 3:7). “Brethren, it was needful that the scripture should be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spake before by the mouth of David concerning Judas” (Acts 1:16). “The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, And his word was upon my tongue” (2 Sam. 23:2). “But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1).

The word of truth revealed by the Holy Spirit is sufficient and adequate to make sinners acceptable to God. We are not to follow the ambiguous leadings of doubtful feelings but are to submit to the absolute standard of scripture inspired of God.

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4).

“Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth” (Matt. 6:10).

“The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul: The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple” (Psalms 19:7).

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope” (Rom. 15:4).

“And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (2 Tim. 3:15-17)

“It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, are

life” (John 6:63).

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death” (Rom. 8:2).

“But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing” (James 1:25).

“For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12).

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves” (James 1:22).

“Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (James 1:18).

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently: having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, For, all flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth: But the word of the Lord abideth for ever. And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you” (1 Peter 1:22-25).

“For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:21).

“Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is

able to save your souls” (James 1:21).

John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth finished their God-given assignments through the power of words. The overriding importance of the message is prominent in the God-given scriptures (writings). As we look at the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the apostles of Jesus, certain disciples in the first century, and all the saved, we will understand more fully the Spirit’s work of revealing, confirming, and protecting the plan of salvation as given in the new covenant.

“Now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give {you} the inheritance among all them that are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).

The Seal and Earnest of the Spirit (E. Trimble)

By Earl Trimble
Vol. 107, No. 12

In its noun form the word *earnest* appears only three times in the New Testament (2 Cor. 1:22; 2 Cor. 5:5; Eph. 1:14). In both of the Second Corinthian verses the word is used in the phrase, *earnest of the Spirit.* In the Ephesians verse it appears in the phrase, *earnest Of our inheritance.*

Thayer defines the Greek *arrabon (translated earnest* in these three passages) as “a foretaste and a pledge of future blessedness” (p. 75). Interestingly, Thayer likens *foretaste* to “tasted” as found in Hebrews 6:4 (“tasted of the heavenly gift”), in Hebrews 6:5 (“tasted the good word of God”), and I

Peter 2:3 (“tasted that the Lord is gracious”). The idea of *tasting* is “to partake of, to enjoy, to experience.”

An analysis of these three verses reveals the contextual usage of the word *earnest.*

2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 2 Corinthians 5:5
“Now he that establisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”
“Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit.”

Attention is called to three words used in these two verses as defined by Thayer:

1. Anointing *(chrisma):* “a miraculous gift”
2. Seal *(sphragidzo):* “to mark with a seal”
3. Earnest *(arrabon):* “foretaste and pledge of future blessedness”

Notice also the usage of the expression, an *anointing,* as referring to a miraculous gift in I John 2:20, I John 2:27:

“And ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things … his anointing teacheth you concerning all things.”

Brother Guy N. Woods (in his chart #20, used in his debate with Given 0. Blakely on the subject of the Holy Spirit) says (regarding the word *earnest),*

> *The word is used three times in the New Testament, but always in a figurative sense: in the first (2 Cor. 1:22) it is applied to the gifts of the Holy Spirit which God bestowed upon the apostles, and by which he might be said to have hired them to be the servants of his Son; and which were the earnest, assurance, and commencement of those far superior blessings which he would bestow on them in the life to come as the wages of their faithful services: in the two latter (2*

> *Cor. 5:5; Eph. 1:13-14), it is applied to the gifts bestowed on Christians generally upon whom, after baptism, the apostles laid their hands, and which were to them an earnest of obtaining a heavenly habitation and inheritance, upon the supposition of their fidelity.*

The contextual setting wherein the words *(anointing, seal, and earnest)* are used, show their relativity to the Holy Spirit as being the miraculous gifts that God bestowed upon the apostles and early Christians through agency of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, their primary application was to those of that age and not to us today. The word *anointing* is not applicable to us in any sense, who live in the post-miraculous era. The words *seal and earnest* could be said to apply to us today only in a secondary sense.

Ephesians 1:13-14
". . . ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's. own possession. . . ."
In commenting on Ephesians 1:13, J. W. Shepherd says, "They [the Ephesians] received the gift of the Spirit in its miraculous manifestation. We do not; but we receive it in our hearts and bring them in subjection to it" *(Gospel Advocate Commentary, p.* 27). Commenting on verse 14 (p. 28), he uses the meaning of Romans 8:16-17 to illustrate the meaning of the *earnest of our inheritance.* He says, "It is rather the very work of the Spirit himself." Then he explains how the Christian's godly life, as the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), is the assurance of God's approval. David Lipscomb adds: "So much of real spiritual blessings as he enjoys is heaven already in his heart; what he has in the work and fruits of the Spirit is for him alike pledge and foretaste."

Is it reasonable that the Spirit, himself, given to Christians as a seal and earnest for confirming God's approval and guarantee (as some contend) would himself be dependent upon

“outside evidence” (i.e., God’s word) to confirm his indwelling? It is the result of the indwelling, and not the indwelling itself, that serves as the seal and earnest. Testimony and confirmation by the Spirit is dependent upon action and not passivity on his part unless there was an effect, the cause would serve no purpose. Some, in contending for a direct, personal indwelling, are ready to admit to direct operations (miraculous manifestations) of the Spirit in the Christian’s life today.

Actually the Spirit proves his indirect indwelling, not in being passive, but rather by being active in producing fruit iii the Christian as the result of his teaching. This work performed by the Spirit in today’s Christian is accomplished indirectly through the medium of the all-sufficient, Spirit-empowered word (John 6:63, John 6:68; Acts 20:32; 1 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 4:12, et al).

Has Man Outgrown the Gospel?

By Allen Webster
Vol. 107, No. 11

Time is changing. The new soon becomes old; the modern becomes ancient; the technological breakthrough becomes yesterday’s news; the popular becomes lost in the latest; and the up-to-date is soon out-of-date.

Eternal truth never changes. It reads the same today as yesterday and as it will tomorrow. It is “once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 1:3). Those who would change it become “accursed” (Gal. 1:6-9) and find that it will meet them in judgment unchanged (Rev. 20:12).

Modem man feels he has outgrown the ancient gospel. He thinks an absolute standard is obsolete. Exaltation of self and sensuality replace the idea of sin and spiritual death. He ridicules blood and the need for forgiveness. He scoffs at the virgin birth, sinless life, sacrificial death, and miraculous resurrection of Christ. He regards these as myths of a bygone era.

Has Man Outgrown the Gospel?
Never! The only way man can outgrow the gospel is to conquer sin. He has not. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" was true in Paul's day and is true today. Sin is still the transgression of the law of God (I John 3:4), which can include violating one's conscience (Rom. 14:23), omitting a duty (James 4:17), and lawlessness (I John 3:4).
Never! God, not man, determines what is sinful; sin will not change. Men may call sin by another name, but that will not alter what it really is. Forgiveness is still the most basic spiritual need that man has (Rom. 3:23; Rom. 6:23). The only way a person can be forgiven is through the gospel (Rom. 1:16).

Never! The gospel is the power to overcome temptation (Eph. 6:17), and man needs its power because temptation is still with us. Mankind has not conquered carnal desires. He still gives in to the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (I John 2:15-17). He cannot overcome without the power of the written word (Heb. 4:12).

Never! The devil is still "as a roaring lion" walking about "seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8). Man is still in danger; therefore he needs the unchanged gospel, for it is God's great power to save. When humans can defeat Satan without the truth, then they will no longer need the truth. They cannot. No one is strong enough to conquer the Evil One without an "it is written" (Matt. 4:1-11).

Never! The soul of man needs food. If man could invent a

substitute for “soul food,” he would not need the gospel, but he has not. Peter stated that the soul feeds on the “sincere milk of the word” (I Pet. 2:2), and Paul wrote that he could progress to eat “strong meat” from the hand of God (Heb. 5:12-14). The gospel fills those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness” (Matt. 5:6).

Never! Man still needs a map to heaven. Men try to invent a roadway to heaven, but these maps will only get one lost. If we follow the road of “faith only” or the lane of “direct operation of the Holy Spirit” or the path of “once saved always saved,” we are traveling a broad way that leads to destruction (Matt. 7:13-14). Only Christ and his gospel can lead one to heaven (John 14:6). “I must needs go home by the way of the cross; there’s no other way but this.”

Jesus plainly stated the conditions by which men can reach much needed salvation. A sinner must believe in Christ (Mark 16:16), decide to change his sinful life (repent) (Luke 13:5), confess the sweet name of Christ (Rom. 10:9-10), and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:4). We can choose to heed these scriptures or harass them, to read them or reject them, to respect them or ridicule them. Still, the same ancient gospel is the cure for all the spiritual ills of men! Why not obey today?

The Blood of Christ (Outline)

By Victor M. Eskew
Vol. 111, No. 03

I. Introduction.

A. Jesus shed blood at Gethsemane, in the halls of Pilate,

and at Calvary.

B. Christians remember his blood each Lord's Day.

C. Peter called it "precious" blood (1 Pet. 1:19).

1. The word precious means "dear, valuable, costly."

2. The blood of Jesus is invaluable.

II. The Precious Blood of the Lamb.

A. The blood was real.

1. While on earth, Jesus had a human body of flesh, blood, and bones (John 1:14; Phil. 2:5-8; Luke 24:39).

2. Jesus' blood, like ours, was composed of red cells, white cells, platelets, and plasma. It was real blood.

B. The blood was royal.

1. He was of the house and lineage of David, whose dynasty continues to the end of time (Isa. 9:7; Luke 1:32-33).

2. His kingship was mocked during his crucifixion (Mark 15:16-20).

3. Jesus was raised from the dead to sit on his eternal

throne (Dan. 7:13-14; Acts 2:32-36).

4. Jesus is "King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15).

C. The blood was innocent.

1. Jesus did nothing wrong (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22).

a. Judas said, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood" (Matt. 27:4).

b. The wife of Pilate said, "Have nothing to do with this just man" (Matt. 27:19).

c. Pilate said, "I find no fault in this man" (Luke 23:4).

d. Pilate also said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person" (Matt. 27:24).

2. The people who knew Jesus best could not convict him of sin (John 8:46).

3. If the enemies of Jesus could not convict him of sin, who can?

D. The blood was substitutionary.

1. Jesus gave himself for us (Titus 2:14).

2. Jesus "bare our sins in his own body" (1 Pet. 2:24).

3. Jesus "washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5).

4. Jesus' stripes heal us (Isa. 53:5).

E. The blood is satisfying.

1. God is holy (holiness is a general term for moral excellence).

a. "The Lord our God is holy" (Psa. 99:9).

b. "Holy and reverend is his name" (Psa. 111:9).

c. His pure eyes cannot behold evil (Hab. 1:13).

d. Men fear God because he is holy (Rev. 15:4).

2. The holiness of God demands that sin be punished.

a. God is just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:26).

b. God cannot tolerate evil.

c. God must judge and condemn sin.

d. God can justify sin only by the merit of a substitutionary sacrifice.

e. God can only be just if he forgives by a blood sacrifice, because "the blood of it is for the life thereof" (Lev. 17:14).

3. Jesus' blood satisfied the demands of divine justice.

a. Jesus was made a sin-sacrifice for us, though he knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21).

b. Jesus became an "offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour" (Eph. 5:2).

F. The blood of Jesus was effective.

1. It cleanses from sin (Matt. 26:28; 1 John 1:7).

2. It redeems from sin (Eph. 1:7).

3. It gives life to the dead (Eph. 2:4-5; 1 John 5:11).

4. It purchased the church (Acts. 20:28).

5. It was shed once, never to be shed again (Heb. 10:11-12).

III. Conclusion.

A. The blood of Jesus is precious.

B. His blood is real, royal, innocent, substitutionary, satisfying, and effective.

C. We remember his blood each Lord's Day.