

TRUTHS EVERY
CHRISTIAN
NEEDS TO KNOW



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TRUTHS EVERY CHRISTIAN NEEDS TO KNOW

CLARENCE SEXTON

SECOND EDITION

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Second Edition

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DEDICATION

PASTOR DILLARD HAGAN

This book is affectionately dedicated to Pastor Dillard Hagan. When I was eighteen years old, God called me into the ministry. Pastor Hagan lovingly guided me, reproved me, corrected me, and instructed me in righteousness. He gave me my first opportunity to preach. He became my Paul, and I his Timothy. Because he taught me, I feel an accountability to God to “*teach others also.*”

Clarence A. Sexton
Feb 5:12

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PREFACE

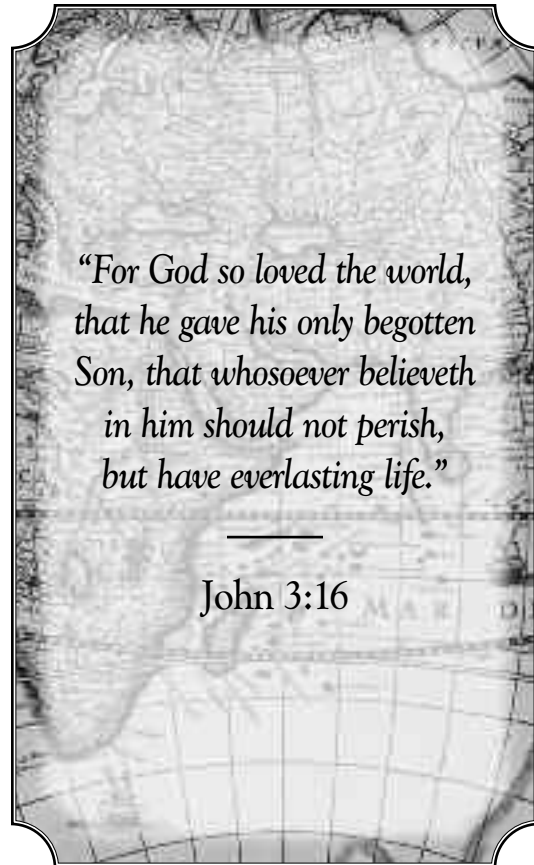
“ABLE TO TEACH OTHERS ALSO”

The Word of God says in II Timothy 2:2, *“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”* Many men and women have been used of God to teach me how to live for the Lord Jesus Christ. Because I *have*, I *owe* what has been given to me. God has designed His work to be done this way. Those who know the truth must commit it to others, and those who receive the truth must *“teach others also.”* This is *the* principle to be followed in the work of the Lord.

Trusting the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior is not an ending; it is only the beginning of all that God has for you. May God use this book to help you to be the Christian that He has saved you to be. As you receive the truth, you are responsible to *“teach others also.”* Use what you find in this book to do just that!

Clarence Austin
Acts 5:42

CHRIST DIED FOR US



The Bible says in Psalm 89:47, *“Remember how short my time is.”* In James 4:14, God’s Word says that your life *“is even a vapour.”* No matter how long we live, the Bible says that life *“is of few days”* (Job 14:1). After death, we go into eternity. The Lord has made a way for us to be with Him forever. This is why the Bible says in John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

A REAL HEAVEN

Heaven is a real place. The Lord Jesus said on one occasion,

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house

are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (John 14:1-3).

One of Christ's disciples said, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" The Lord Jesus answered, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:5-6).

A REAL HELL

If you believe what Christ said about heaven, you must realize that the Lord Jesus also said that there is a real hell. He spoke of a man who died and went to hell in Luke 16:23-24,

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

If we are going to believe what Christ said about heaven, we should also believe what He said about hell. We were created for eternity, and every human being is going to live as long as God lives. Beyond the door of death, after our last breath here on earth, we are going to live forever somewhere. We will live either with God or without God.

ETERNITY WHERE?

Every human being has an appointment with death. After death, will you be in heaven or in hell? There is no question in

life that deserves as much attention as this question. It is the one issue that must be settled. This is why, in John chapter three, the Lord Jesus said to a man who came to Him under the cover of darkness, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3:7).

Nicodemus was a very religious man, but he said to the Lord, "What do You mean? Must I go the second time into my mother's womb and come out again?" The Lord Jesus explained to him that men must have a spiritual birth.

ALL PEOPLE HAVE SINNED

We have all sinned, and we are dead in our sins. We must have a spiritual birth. In Romans 3:10 the Bible says, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one."

In this chapter of the Bible, God lists what is wrong with humanity. He says,

There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. 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 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 (Romans 3:11-22).

The Lord speaks about Jews and Gentiles. He says, “*There is no difference.*” When we come to verse twenty-three of Romans chapter three, He says, “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*” This means I am a sinner and you are a sinner. We are all sinners.

My wife grew up in the home of a Baptist preacher. Her father was killed in an automobile accident when she was only five years old. He was returning from a funeral home where he had gone to comfort a family that had suffered a death in their home. My wife, her brother, and her mother were at home in the kitchen making a cake to surprise him, but he never arrived.

My wife grew up in a fine Christian home. Her mother took her to church every Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night. She talked to her about the Lord and salvation in Christ. My wife and I grew up very differently. My father was a professional gambler. No matter what our background is or what has happened in our lives, all of us have the same problem.

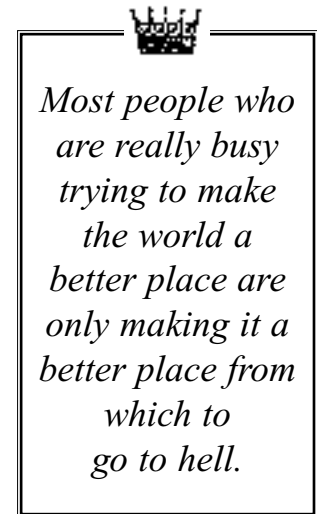
The problem with the world is not lying; it is what causes lying. The problem with the world is not immorality; it is what

causes immorality. Each day five thousand people in America start using cocaine, but the problem is not drugs.

Terrible things are happening, and there is something behind it all. The thing behind it all is sin. We are all sinners. Our sin brings a high price. You may say, “I’m not a sinner.” The Bible is true and it says, “*For all have sinned.*” You may not think that you are as bad as someone you know personally, but we are all sinners.

The Bible says in Romans 6:23, “*For the wages of sin is death.*” The payment or wages of our sin is death. This means death and hell. It means separation from God forever. We are born with a sin nature. In one sense, every human being is “still born” spiritually. We are spiritually dead.

You may be trying to make the world a better place. I hope you are, but most people who are really busy trying to make the world a better place are only making it a better place from which to go to hell. We are going to live and die. Today, would it be heaven or hell for you?



Most people who are really busy trying to make the world a better place are only making it a better place from which to go to hell.

CHRIST DIED FOR ALL PEOPLE

Let us remember that Christ died for our sins. All people are sinners in need of a Savior. Christ died for all, not just a few, but for all. In other words, I can go anywhere in the world and tell anyone I meet, “Jesus Christ died for you.”

On every island of the sea, on every continent of the world, among every race, among every nationality, among every language group; people need to hear the Good News. The Good News is the gospel.

The apostle Paul wrote to the church in Corinth in I Corinthians 15:1-4,

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

We say this is the Good News. This is the gospel. All are sinners, but Christ died for our sins. This is good news, but only if one hears it before he dies. Let us thank God that we have heard it.

In Hebrews 2:9 the Bible says,

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.


I can look you in the face and say, "I have something very important to tell you. There is nothing more important to talk about. It is the only vital thing in life. Christ died for you. He died for all."

The most wonderful story anyone has ever heard is the story of Calvary and what Christ came to do on the cross. Most people can quote John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God loves you and loves me so much that He sent His Son to die on the cross for us.

Jesus Christ lived a sinless life. He was born of a virgin. He went about in His earthly ministry doing nothing but good. One night in a garden He was praying. He was not praying with His hands neatly clasped, kneeling at a stone as some artist might paint; but the Bible says He was on His face in the dirt, and great sweat drops of blood broke through the pores of His flesh.

He prayed under the agony of our sin, not His own, as He was about to go to the cross to bleed and die for us. From the hillside, coming down across the Kedron brook with torches and lanterns, a band of men came to take Christ. They brought lanterns and torches because they thought they would have to chase Him into some cave or some place where He would go to hide. But when they came to Him, He stepped out to meet them.

I have stood in that garden in the land of the Bible many times, thinking how He could have seen them coming. If He had wanted to run, He could have; but He did not run. The Bible says that He stepped forth. When they inquired about who He was, He spoke, "I am." When He said those words, the men who came to take Him fell to the ground.



The most wonderful story anyone has ever heard is the story of Calvary and what Christ came to do on the cross.

Think of how hardened people's hearts can become. Can you imagine this mob coming to take Christ? After hearing the sound of His voice, they actually fell to the ground. Yet they got up and continued toward Him.

No doubt they thought as they bound His hands that Christ would be unwilling. He was not unwilling. He freely offered Himself. He gave His life. The Lord Jesus said, *"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself"* (John 10:18).

The Lord Jesus and His disciples had a discussion earlier about carrying swords. The Bible says they had two swords. I do not know exactly why this is mentioned in the Bible, but they had two swords among them. Peter had one of them.



"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself."

The high priest's servant, a man by the name of Malchus, started to bind the hands of the Lord Jesus. Peter could not stand it any longer. He drew his sword and went for the man's head. He missed his head and cut off the man's ear. His ear fell to the ground.

If you have ever had a wound on your face, you know that it bleeds profusely. No doubt, blood was pouring. Christ took Malchus' ear and reattached it to his head in the presence of all the witnesses, but they still took Him. Christ went through a mockery trial that night and was delivered the next morning to Pilate. From Pilate, He was taken to Herod, and then back to Pilate.

Someone said, "He's a king," so they crowned Him with thorns and pressed them deep into His brow. They said, "He's a king, let's anoint Him." So they spat on His face until His face

was covered with spittle. They said, "He's a king, let's put a robe on Him," and they placed a robe of mockery on His shoulders after they had beaten His back until it was broken and bleeding. Eventually they brought Him before a mob of angry people, and the mob cried out, "Release Barabbas and crucify Christ."

Christ bore the cross to Calvary. When He came to the place of crucifixion, they took spikes and drove them into His hands and feet, lifting Him up on a cross between heaven and hell; and there He hung.

If you see Him in your mind's eye, you ask, "Why? He never sinned. Why? He never did anything wrong. Why? They lied about Him. False witnesses came to testify against Him. He was the only innocent One who ever walked the earth, yet He hung there and bled and died."



The billows of God's wrath rolled over the Lord Jesus as He became sin for us.

The people heard Him cry out, *"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"* The billows of God's wrath rolled over the Lord Jesus as He became sin for us. God's Word says in II Corinthians 5:21, *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."*

Christ bled and died for the sin debt of the whole world. We do not get the picture when we say "the whole world." We do not quite understand when we think about the billions of people alive today and the millions who have lived before us. We might, however, get the picture when we say, "He died for me."

What do you think about what Christ did for you? How are you going to respond to what Christ did for you? I am God's

messenger to tell you that Jesus Christ loves you and that He died for you. He was buried and rose from the dead. He came bodily out of the grave. The stone that covered the tomb where His body was placed was rolled away; not so Christ could get out, but so others could go in and identify that the tomb was empty. Because of His resurrection, we have hope.

Christ said, *“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die”* (John 11:25-26).

Christ asked the sister of Lazarus, *“Believest thou this?”* She said, *“Yea, Lord.”* I want to stand beside her and shout, *“Yes, Lord, I believe also!”* Do you believe?

ALL PEOPLE ARE SAVED THE SAME WAY

Everyone comes to God the same way. I am not going to heaven because I am a minister. I am not going to heaven because someone felt sorry for me. My wife is not going to heaven because her daddy was a preacher. All people are saved the same way.

Let us consider an interesting verse that most people do not understand, but it explains the whole matter. In Romans 3:26 the Bible says, *“To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”* God is just, and He is the Justifier.

How can a holy God allow sinful creatures into heaven and still say that He is a just God? He is just, and He is the Justifier. The Bible teaches that when we come to Christ and trust Him as our Savior, God declares that we are justified. Some think that being justified means *“just as if we had never sinned.”* I

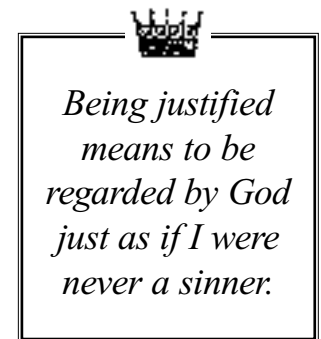
appreciate that thought, but it means so much more than that. It means more than being regarded just as if I had never sinned. It means to be regarded by God just as if I were never a sinner. There is a great difference.

I love to talk about my grandchildren. I want my grandchildren to go to heaven. I want to be there with them some day. I love them. I am enjoying them here, but I want to be in heaven with them. I do not want to go to heaven without my family.

Some people have grandchildren who are going to heaven, but they are not going to heaven with their grandchildren. Let us get the entire family to Christ for salvation.

When my sons did something wrong while growing up, I forgave them. I forgave them just as they had forgiven me of things, but I could not erase what they did.

For the child of God, our heavenly Father not only forgives us; He erases any record of what we have done. There is no record that we were ever sinners. When one asks God to forgive his sin and places his faith in Christ as his Savior, God declares his sin paid for on the cross. He imputes or puts Christ's record on the Christian's account. He sees His children as He sees Christ.



*Being justified
means to be
regarded by God
just as if I were
never a sinner.*

Christ was never a sinner. It is more than the fact that He never sinned. He was never a sinner. When God looks at our record, He sees Christ's record on our account just as if we had never been sinners.

The Devil is doing a terrible work. But the work that God does through Christ is a greater work than what the Devil does through his evil efforts. God's work is greater than the Devil's. The Devil's work can be undone. Christ's work can never be undone. We are all children of the Devil by nature. We have all sinned *"and come short of the glory of God."*

Every human being is already under a death sentence. God has held court and declared, "The whole world is guilty. The world is sentenced to go to hell forever without God and without hope."

Our lovely Savior, Jesus Christ, came to this earth, bled and died on the cross, and paid our sin debt so we would not have to go to hell without God and without hope. He was buried and He rose from the dead that first Easter morning. When we ask the Lord to forgive our sin and by faith trust Christ as Savior, He hears our prayer, forgives our sin, and saves us.

You may say, "I believe all of this." Do you? The Bible says, *"For 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).

There are many people who believe that they are sinners and that Christ died for their sin, but they have never trusted Christ and Christ alone for their soul's salvation. Many people believe in Christ plus baptism, Christ plus good works, Christ plus first communion, or Christ plus the Lord's Supper. The Bible teaches that salvation is not by any work that we have done. It is by Christ and Christ alone. No man can earn his way into heaven.

Charles Spurgeon, a preacher of a century ago, said, "If I got to heaven because of my good works; when I walked into heaven through a gate of pearl, onto a street of gold, and saw

mansions of glory, I would say, 'Oh Lord, I don't deserve to be here!' But if I get there because of what Jesus Christ has done, I am going to walk through that gate of pearl and say, 'Oh, how wonderful is this place, and I expected such a work that only Christ could do.'"

You ask, "What must I do?"

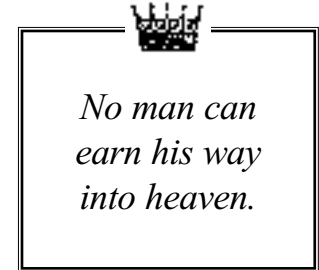
Allow me to tell you my story. When I was a teenage boy, I went to a youth choir practice at my local church. The choir director said to me, "I would like for you to stay behind because I want to talk to you." He asked, "Clarence, are you a Christian?" He knew a bit about my home life, and he was troubled about some of those things.

I said, "I guess I am. I'm not a heathen. I go to Sunday School and church. I have a Bible."

He understood what I was missing. He explained to me what I have written to you. He took me down the hallway from the choir room into the pastor's office, and he and the pastor sat across from me. They asked me if I would pray from my heart and trust Christ and Christ alone, ask God to forgive my sin, acknowledge to God that I was sinner, and invite the Lord Jesus into my life as my Savior.

I did not know how to pray, but these men led me in a prayer. I knew prayers like,

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.



TRUTHS EVERY CHRISTIAN NEEDS TO KNOW

But I did not know how to pray to become a Christian. They led me in a prayer to God for salvation.

That day, I did not trust myself or trust them. I trusted in Christ alone, because all are saved the same way. I asked God to forgive my sin, and I received Jesus Christ as my Savior. Bells did not ring. Lights did not flash. I did not feel funny all over. I knew that I had taken God at His Word and trusted the Lord Jesus as my Savior.

For example, a chair will support my weight; but it will not actually support me until I trust it to do so. You can say what you will about God, about Christ, about His saving power, but He is not your personal Savior until you trust Christ and Christ alone to save you.

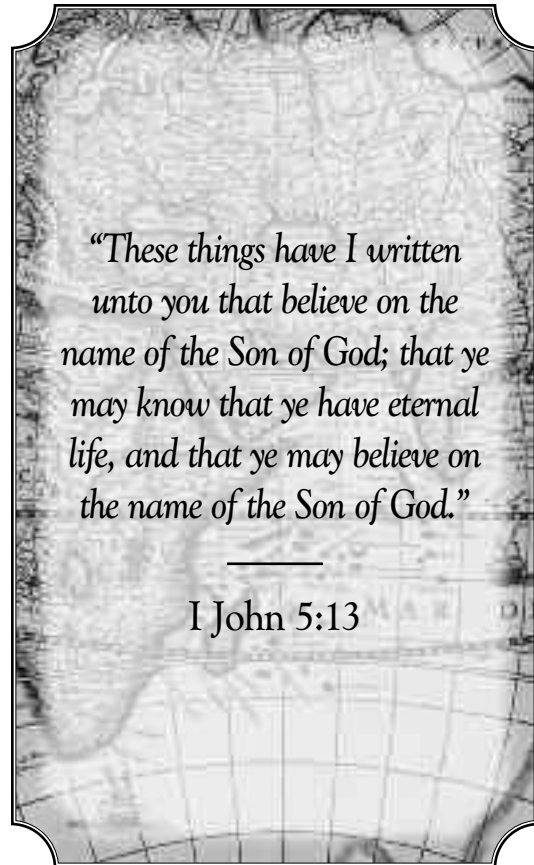
Some day, I know I will be in heaven with God. What a wonderful thing it would be if you were there also. The only way you will be there is if you personally trust Christ for your soul's salvation.

Let us review what God says in His Word about salvation. All have sinned. Christ died for all people. All are saved the same way. If you have not already trusted Christ to be your Savior, pray and receive Christ as your Savior today. You may pray from your heart this prayer to God:

Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner. I know that You died for my sins and that You rose from the dead. Forgive my sin and come into my life. I trust You as my personal Savior. Now help me live for You from this day forward. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Please write me and let me know if you have prayed and received the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior as a result of reading this. I pray that the things you read in the remainder of this book will help you in your new life as a Christian.

THE BIRTHMARKS OF A BELIEVER



*“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.”*

I John 5:13



The Bible says in I John 5:13, *“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.”*

What a tragic thing it is to go through this life uncertain of where you will be for all eternity. If you know the Lord and believe the Bible, you can know for sure that heaven is your home.

Once you have eternal life, it is a present possession never to be taken away. If it were not eternal life, if it were not everlasting life, it would be called something else. But God says that we can know that we have *eternal* life.

All sixty-six books of the Bible have a specific purpose. The purpose of each book complements the purpose of the entire Book. If you had a puzzle with sixty-six pieces in it and you

removed one of the pieces of the puzzle, you would have an incomplete puzzle. If you remove one of the sixty-six books in

the Bible, you have an incomplete Book. We need to know the message of each of the sixty-six books and allow God to use the message of each book to speak to our hearts and complete us in Christ, to make us the people that God intends for us to be.

John the apostle, the beloved disciple of our Lord, was the human penman for five books of the

Bible—the Gospel according to John, I John, II John, III John, and the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

In John 20:31 the Bible says, *“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”*

This verse of Scripture in John 20:31 leaves no room for doubt about why the Gospel record of John is given. It is written so that people *“might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing they might have life through his name.”* This record of our Lord Jesus Christ is written so that people might believe on Him.

When we look back at I John 5:13, this book of the Bible says of itself, *“These things have I written unto you that believe.”* John is writing to those who already believe.

John 20:31 says that the Gospel according to John was written *“that ye might believe.”* But I John 5:13 is written to those who already believe that they may know that they have eternal life. Each book has its purpose.



This record of our Lord Jesus Christ is written so that people might believe on Him.

Let us work our way from the beginning of the book of I John to see the purpose of this book.

TO PROMOTE JOY IN OUR LIVES

In I John 1:4, God says that He gives us this book to promote joy in our lives. *“And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.”* Do you have that joy?

TO PREVENT SIN

The Word of God says that God has given us this book of the Bible to prevent sin. I John 2:1 says, *“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.”* Christians are not sinless, but they should sin less.



If one is a believer, there should be certain birthmarks in his life.

TO PROTECT THE SAINTS

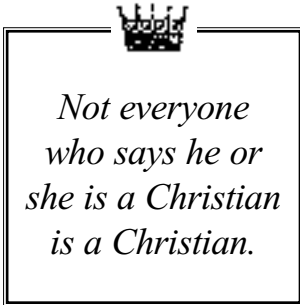
This little book of the Bible is given to us to protect the saints. I John 2:26 says, *“These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.”*

TO PROVIDE ASSURANCE

I John 5:13 tells us that this book of the Bible is given to provide assurance. The Bible says, *“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.”*

Let us consider *“The Birthmarks of a Believer.”* If one is a believer, there should be certain birthmarks in his life.

There are certain evidences of children that cause them to be identified with their parents. I was in the store with my oldest son recently and a lady said, “I see the resemblance.” I knew, of course, what she was talking about. She thought my son favored his father.



Not everyone who says he or she is a Christian is a Christian.

If you are a child of God, there are certain birthmarks that should be easy to find in your life. These birthmarks should identify you with your heavenly Father. This does not mean

you must have those marks in order to become a Christian, but rather that they give evidence that you are a Christian.

Not everyone who says he or she is a Christian is a Christian. Let us see what the Bible says about this. In I John 2:19 the Bible says,

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

There are many people who identify with Jesus Christ as Christians. Some are very winsome, like Judas. Judas was the man who carried the money bag. Only the best guy would have been chosen to do that.

Can you imagine the most trustworthy of the disciples, the fellow who at least appeared to be the most trustworthy, turned out to be the one who was not really a believer at all?

Allow God’s Word to speak to your heart and see if these birthmarks of a believer are evident in your life.

THE BIRTHMARK OF OBEDIENCE

The first birthmark is the birthmark of obedience. Do you have it? Do you have an obedient heart? Obedience is not simply doing the will of God; it is delighting in doing the will of God. Obedience is a wonderful birthmark.

There are many people who say they are Christians but have no desire to obey the Lord. They lack evidence in their Christian lives. Do you have the birthmark of obedience in your life?

I John 2:3-6 says,

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Do you ever stop to think how many people are counting on some religious experience to get them to heaven but have no real steadfast assurance? They are holding to some fragment of religion. May the Spirit of God speak to each of us and reveal whether or not we have this birthmark of a believer—the birthmark of obedience to God.

THE BIRTHMARK OF LOVE

The second birthmark is the birthmark of love. I John 3:14-19 says,

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever

hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

Some people are kinder than other people. Some people have more winsome personalities than other people. Some people are more approachable than other people. But here God talks about loving others with the love of Christ.



Have you come to realize that all we have is not ours to keep but ours for God to use at His bidding?

If you are thinking, "I'm a very caring, loving person," do you love those who do not love you? How do you speak about those who do not love you? Do you use the means God has placed at your disposal to be a blessing to others? Have you come to realize that all we have is not ours to keep but ours for God to use at His bidding?

Love is not a word; love is a deed. It is a commitment. It is one of the identifying birthmarks of a believer.

THE BIRTHMARK OF TRUTH

The third birthmark is the birthmark of truth. I John 4:1-6 says,

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

If there has ever been a day when people want to talk about God without talking about the Lord Jesus Christ being God, this is the day. Almost everyone talks about God. They say, "We need to trust God. We need God in our lives. We need to pray to God."

If you are a Christian, do not express yourself this way. Use the title, "The Lord Jesus Christ." Express your faith in Christ. Pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

No doubt there are many people who are Christians, but are timid and disobedient to God. Many write books, offer prayers, and speak in public meetings; they talk about God, but they are afraid of offending someone and avoid saying, "The Lord Jesus Christ."

Are these people saved? Let the Spirit of God work on their hearts. But let us be clearly identified by the birthmark of the truth concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some of us do not deny Him in word, but we deny Him in deed. Some of us do not deny Him with our lips, but we deny Him with our lives. Our behavior betrays the fact that we are Christians. This is not the way Christ would respond. This is not the way Christ would behave or speak. Do you and I have the birthmark of truth in our lives?

THE BIRTHMARK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The fourth birthmark is the birthmark of the Holy Spirit. In I John 4:13 the Bible says, *“Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”*

Let us not make more or less of this than what God says here. The Holy Spirit is a Person. Just like you know people in your life and you can call them by name and you can get well acquainted with some of them, we need to be acquainted with the Person of the Holy Spirit.

Do you know the Holy Spirit? This is a birthmark of the believer. His indwelling presence is a birthmark of the true believer.

There are other religions and other people who talk about God and talk about religious experiences. But they do not talk about the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit to enable them to live the Christian life. They do not talk about being filled with the Holy Spirit. They know nothing of being baptized by the Spirit of God into the body of Christ at the moment of salvation. They know nothing of a spiritual anointing by the Holy Spirit to

do the work of God. They do not talk about the earnest of the Holy Spirit as He comes to abide in the believer forever.

This birthmark can be witnessed by others who are believers. Have you spoken to people at times and talked about the things of God, and you have not only met that person, but you have met the Holy Spirit in that person? Have there been times you have met people and talked with them and they talked about religion, but there was no meeting of the Holy Spirit in them?

I have met people thousands of miles from home on different continents of the world and have begun to talk to them about Jesus Christ, and I have sensed the witness of the Holy Spirit. I did not know them, but I knew the Holy Spirit. I had never met them before, but I surely knew the Holy Spirit. I had never seen them before in my life, but I surely knew the Holy Spirit when I met Him.

There are other spirits, but there is only one Holy Spirit who is coequal, coexistent, eternally existent with God the Father and God the Son. This is the Holy Spirit, who is God. We should know Him. This is a birthmark of a believer. I John 4:13 says, *“Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”*

THE BIRTHMARK OF THE WITNESS WITHIN

The fifth birthmark is the birthmark of the witness within. Consider I John 5:9-13,

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in

himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his 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.

When we trust the Lord Jesus as our personal Savior, the Holy Spirit comes to abide in us. He becomes our witness within. The Bible says, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). The Lord lives in each believer and provides assurance that we are His through this divine witness.

When dealing with people about what we refer to as the “assurance of their salvation,” many of us take them immediately to I John 5:13 and say to them, “You can know for sure.”

Is this not what the Bible says? Sure, it is. It says, “*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.*”

Yes, we can know, but we are taking the verse completely out of context. Notice the expression, “*these things.*” What are “*these things*”?

It does not say, “This verse is written.” The Bible does not say, “This verse is written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know...” But this is the way we read it.

We read it and try to use it as if it says, “This verse is written.” But it does not say, “This verse is written.” It says, “*These things have I written...*” It summarizes the entire book.

You may have a profession of faith. You may know the Lord as your Savior. But you are not going to live in the joy of assurance of the present possession you have in Christ Jesus unless these things, these birthmarks, are found in your life.

Let us review. The birthmark of obedience is found in I John 2:3-6. The birthmark of love is found in I John 3:14-19. The birthmark of truth is found in I John 4:1-6. The birthmark of the Holy Spirit is found in I John 4:13. The birthmark of the witness within is found in I John 5:9-13. If these five things God clearly points out in His Word are in your life, then God says, “*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.*”

I have answers to prayer and many things other than the day I trusted Christ as my Savior to be able to testify about the assurance I have in Christ.

You may say, “There was a time when I asked God to forgive my sin and by faith I trusted Christ as my Savior.” This is wonderful. Salvation is instantaneous. The Lord comes to live in your life. He quickens you from the dead. That moment, you are regenerated as you trust Christ as Savior, repenting of your sin, and by faith trusting Christ and Christ alone. God makes Himself known to you. He reveals His Son to you and He comes to live in your life.

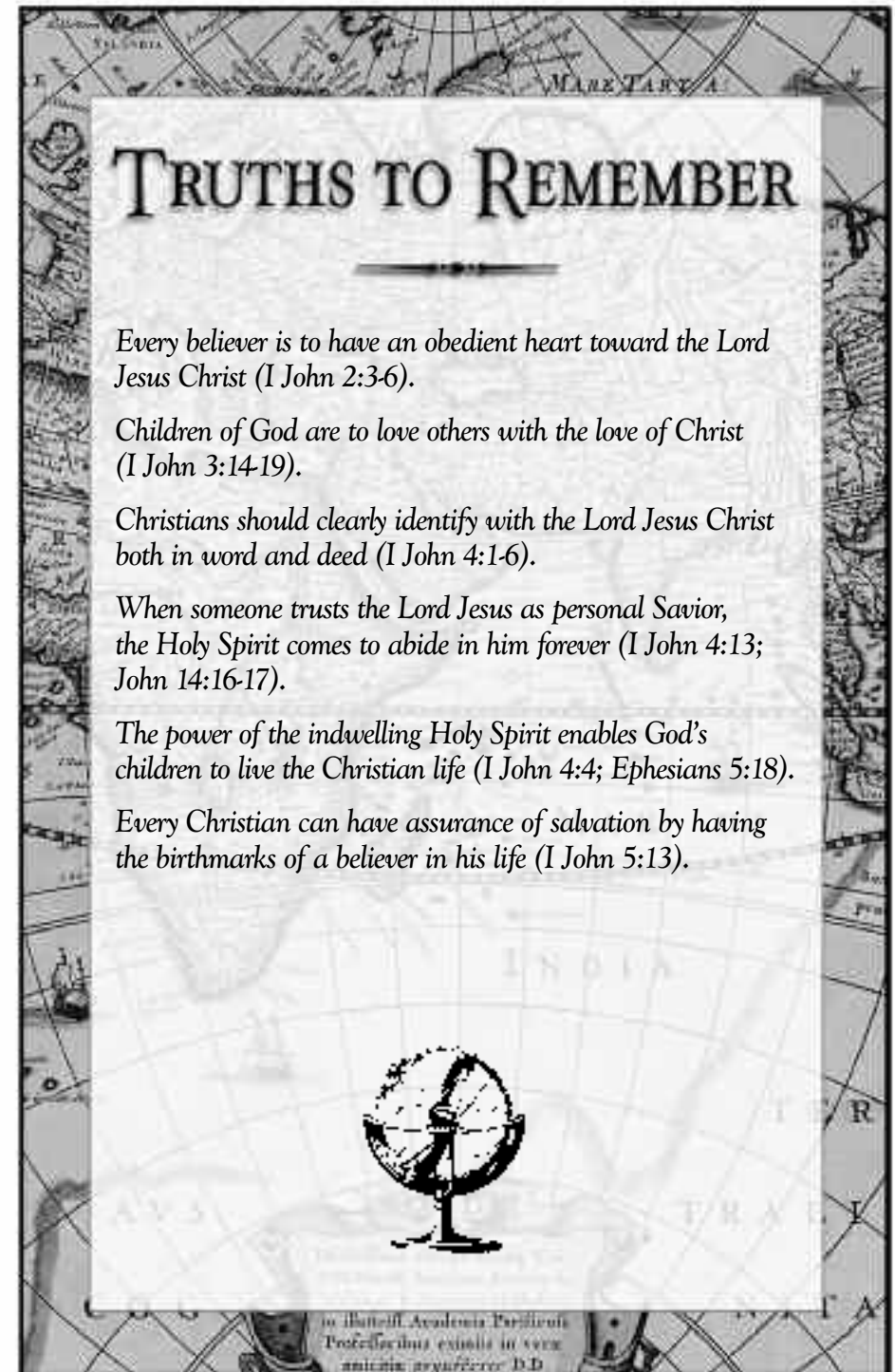


You are not going to live in the joy of assurance of the present possession you have in Christ Jesus unless these things, these birthmarks, are found in your life.

TRUTHS EVERY CHRISTIAN NEEDS TO KNOW

When the Samaritan woman in John chapter four wanted to know the Messiah, the Lord Jesus said, *“I that speak unto thee am he”* (John 4:26). At that moment, He made Himself known to her.

There was a moment when you desired to know Christ. You asked God to forgive your sin. Your heart was convicted and drawn by the Spirit of God. At that moment, you wanted to know the Lord. He made Himself known to you. But how do you have this assurance? You can have this assurance by having these birthmarks in your life—the birthmarks of obedience, love, truth, the Holy Spirit, and the witness within.



TRUTHS TO REMEMBER

- Every believer is to have an obedient heart toward the Lord Jesus Christ (I John 2:3-6).*
- Children of God are to love others with the love of Christ (I John 3:14-19).*
- Christians should clearly identify with the Lord Jesus Christ both in word and deed (I John 4:1-6).*
- When someone trusts the Lord Jesus as personal Savior, the Holy Spirit comes to abide in him forever (I John 4:13; John 14:16-17).*
- The power of the indwelling Holy Spirit enables God's children to live the Christian life (I John 4:4; Ephesians 5:18).*
- Every Christian can have assurance of salvation by having the birthmarks of a believer in his life (I John 5:13).*

In Institut. Academiae Parisiensis Professoribus existit in vixi amicis assuetudine D.D.