

Their minds will no longer be set on the things of the flesh, but on things of the Spirit. And God's presence will be in their midst (abiding in them), to protect them, to deliver them, and to defeat their enemies.

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## Let's Pray

*Dear LORD Jesus, I confess that You are the Son of God and I submit to You and Make You LORD of my life. I confess that I have sinned against You and I repent of my lying, stealing, hatred, deceit, bitterness, adultery, being critical, grumbling, lust, murder, blasphemy, drunkenness, sexual immorality, anger, gossip, and slander that went out of my mouth, which exposed that my heart was full of evil. LORD, I repent of these sins and any other the Holy Spirit has convicted me of. I plead the Blood and the finished work of Calvary over my life. LORD, I choose with my will to forgive those who have hurt me, and please empower me to make restitution to those I have hurt and offended. LORD Jesus, I submit to a new law, the Law of Love, and faith in Christ Jesus. Amen!*

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## REPENT OR PERISH

**We have developed a system** of evangelistic preaching which is unbiblical. Our message and manner of preaching the gospel cannot be traced back to the Reformers and their creeds. They are much more recent innovations. Worse, they cannot be traced to the Scriptures. They have clearly arisen from a careless mixture of twentieth century reason and God's revelation.

**Present day preaching only pays lip service** to the concept that a man must recognize himself to be a sinner, before he can genuinely embrace the Savior. The average

witnessing booklet insists on the question, "Do you believe that all men are sinners?" If there is any hesitation in the response, you establish the point with, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) But no definition of sin is included.

**After all, what is sin?** The Bible's answer is found in I John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." How can today's sinners, who are totally ignorant of God's holy law and its demands upon them, look at themselves as condemned sinners? The idea of sin is strange because God's law is foreign to their minds.

When the law is mentioned, too many people think only of the rituals which were done away with when Jesus came to fulfill the law. The rituals did pass away, but the law still stands today. Jesus said, "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law . . . I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill." (Matthew 5:17 NAS)

**It is God's law that convicts of sin.** Until its condemnation of particular evils is forcefully pressed upon a sinner he will not flee to Christ for mercy. The man who understands the law clearly knows that only God's grace can help him. What the sinner must do is beg for mercy. The present moment of history finds more ignorance of God's law than in many previous generations. The pulpit ignores God's commandments in Exodus 20.

Satan has effectively used a very clever device to silence the law, which is needed as an instrument to bring perishing men to Christ.

He has suggested that the law and love are enemies. But God's Law is love. Jesus plainly taught that the law was urging men to nothing but love. Love cannot be expressed without the guidelines of the law, and the law cannot be kept in a manner pleasing to God except with the motivation of love.

John very clearly said, "***This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous***" (I John 5:3). Love makes the law enjoyable. Anyone who loves God delights in keeping His precepts. To the natural man, God's laws are chains; the law reveals in him, an absence of love for God and men. Were his heart loving, he would not find the law grievous.

**Romans 13:8-10: "Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.'"**

Law and love have no quarrel. The conflict arises between law and grace as a way of salvation. Law provides no pathway to life for the sinner. It slays him and drives him to God's grace as his only hope for justification. Salvation is by grace through faith only. (Ephesians 2:8)

**It is essential to declare the commandment** in order to show the sinner his heart of hatred toward God and enmity toward men. Only then will he flee to the grace of God in Christ Jesus to be provided with righteousness and love.

**Men are not turning to Christ** because they have no sense of sinning against the Lord. They have no concept of sin because the law of God is not being preached. In dealing with the rich young ruler in Mark 10, Jesus said, “Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor.” He was preaching the tenth commandment. Christ was using God’s Word. “Thou shall not covet”. Like a dart, the law of God pierced the conscience of this youth for the first time.

Jesus translated the tenth of God’s commands into a practical test by demanding that he abandon his riches. The youth loved his riches more than he loved God and His Son, and he turned away. He was deficient in love for God, upon which all the law was hanging.

**There is little doubt that the ruler would** have received today’s version of the gospel joyfully. Without the requirement of repentance, he would have gladly accepted Jesus’ help to get to Heaven. Surely he would accept the free gift of eternal life ‘with no strings attached’. But he would not empty his hands of filthy lucre to receive the righteous Son of God. He was not ready to do that to get eternal life. He was willing to have Christ. He came running to Him. But he was not willing to forsake mammon (the desire for riches of the world).

**Today, people flock to “accept Jesus** as personal Savior” without selling all. They have never been told that there is a condition placed on having treasures in Heaven, that is, repentance. The converts of modern evangelism are often as worldly after their “decisions” as before; for they have made a wrong decision. The covetous still cling to their riches and pleasures.

In a panic over this phenomenon, the evangelicals have invented the idea of “*carnal Christians*”. These are said to be folks who have taken the gift of eternal life without turning from sin. They have ‘allowed’ Jesus to be their Savior, but they have not yielded their life to the Lord. **Trying to patch up a faulty evangelism, they defend the questionable experience of men and women as conversion and hold out “victorious life” as available to those who want to take a ‘second step’.**

**Jesus didn’t offer that option.** The rich young ruler would turn from earthly riches to heavenly, or he would cling to earthly riches and perish.

**Men must be confronted with Christ’s** ultimatum to the rich young ruler; repent or perish at the hands of a holy God whose perfect law you have criminally despised.

Christ knew nothing of the man-made, twentieth century suggestion that taking Jesus as Lord is optional. For Him it was no ‘second step’. The altered message of today has deceived men and women by convincing them that Jesus will gladly be a Savior even to those

who refuse to follow Him as Lord. It is simply not the truth!

**Jesus demanded that the ruler submit** to Him as Lord. Then he would be delivered from sin’s power. Faith is not the nod of a head to a series of facts. It is following Christ.

**The evidence of faith (believing God) is that we obey God. “...Faith without works (obedience) is dead.” James 2:20**

Jesus leads us by His Spirit to put to death the deeds of all fleshly rebellion so that we may fulfill the law and be holy. If we do not resist Satan and put to death the deeds of the flesh, we will continue to have a mind like Satan because the nature of Satan and the ways of the flesh are the same. Putting to death the flesh is the only way we can have a pure heart and be renewed to have the mind of Christ. This is the walk of holiness. *“Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh.” (Gal.5:16 NAS).*

**Men may be deeply affected by truth without being converted. The ruler believed and was sad, but he was still lost. The ruler went forward publicly, but was not saved. He sincerely asked Jesus for eternal life, but was not given the gift.**

But just such false peace is being given to hundreds of men, women, and children in ministries today. Giving false assurance to sinners is a scriptural sign of a false prophet.

**Few seem to appreciate the doubts** of professing Christians who question whether they have truly been born again. There is no

question that God will give eternal life to all who repent and believe. But they are discerning enough to know that walking down an aisle and muttering a verbal prayer does not constitute knowing God.

**How many souls have been led** to vain confidence by a man-made, evangelistic formula? How many are sent home from evangelistic services with a calm, who should have gone away as grieved and disturbed as the young ruler? How many unsaved children have been given assurance by the teachers of Bible classes, so that they have ceased to seek God’s salvation?

**Modern evangelism is filling the church** with Ishmaels (the result of the efforts of the flesh). Because of fleshly haste, evangelists produce “converts” whom they call sons. But God will not own them. He is looking for Isaacs (sons born by His Spirit). No illegitimate sons will enter God’s kingdom. (Romans 8:13-14)

**Unless a man is ready to give up everything** in the world and everything of the flesh, he is not ready to make Jesus Christ Lord. If he loves sin more than he loves Christ, he will harden his heart against submission to the Holy Spirit who comes to convict him of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

**But the true church, those who are truly** born again by the Spirit of God, will be led by the Spirit in obedience to the Lord and, so, will no longer be under the judgment of the law. (Galatians 5:18)