

The Know-So Christian

by

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"I know whom I have believed"

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Chapter Four -

HOW WE KNOW Or, Absolute Assurance

The Bible is the Word of GOD, and does not need any defense. Its problems have all been fairly met and explained by some of the greatest minds in the world. If in your study you chance upon some seeming error or contradiction, remember that someone, somewhere, has met this same difficulty and found a solution. Inquiry from some reliable Bible school will bring you a satisfactory answer.

To the reader of these pages who takes a belligerent attitude toward the Word and who scorns authority in Christianity, I have only this to say, "When you know JESUS CHRIST as your Saviour, you will bow in glad submission to His Word and stand in amazement as you think how foolish you once were in your unbelief." In the words of another, "You will have no difficulty intellectually with the third chapter of Genesis when you understand experientially the third chapter of John." You will not say with H.G. Wells that "the Bible needs to be rewritten," but you will say with Bryan, "The Bible needs to be re-read.

I have discovered that most of the destructive criticism of the Book comes either from ignorance of its teaching or from fanciful interpretations.

If the Bible is not true, then Christianity is a religion rather than the religion, and merely one among many, rather than the **only** one; then CHRIST was a good man and a great teacher only; of the hereafter there is no certainty and the whole world is free to do as it pleases, with no one to say authoritatively what is right or wrong. If the Bible is not true, man never fell into sin and therefore needs no Saviour; all believers in CHRIST are a deluded lot and to be pitied rather than commended.

But to those of you who already know Him but are in some doubt as to your security in Him, let me urge you to pay careful attention to what I have to say in the following paragraphs, and especially to those Scripture passages herein quoted. For the HOLY SPIRIT will always bless the Word, and will, I am sure, use it to bring the witness to your heart that you are a child of GOD (if you are) so that you can say, without wavering, "It is well with my soul." You have a right to know. It is your privilege as a believer on the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

All Believers Are Justified

Justification is an act of GOD whereby the believing sinner is pronounced righteous. CHRIST as our Substitute has taken the penalty for our sin. Isaiah 53:6. Having died in our stead, He has set us free. It is as though "the believer has been in court only to learn that there is nothing laid to his charge" (C.I. Scofield). In Acts 13:39 we read of JESUS, "**By Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.**"

Because we have broken the law we have stood condemned by it. But such a marvelous redemption has been wrought out for us through our loving Saviour that complete vindication and absolution from the guilt is ours simply by believing on the One who took what we deserved by way of punishment for sin. A speaker once said this, "Justified is really **just-as-if-I'd** never sinned!"

The Sin Question Is Settled

The past sins of Christians are all cancelled and remembered no more against them. "**Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more**" (Hebrews 8:12). The moment we confess our sins to Him, that moment they are forgiven and need never to be confessed again.

I once met a businessman in a western state who was deeply troubled about his sins, and could find no peace. Upon questioning him I learned that each night he had prayed again and again for forgiveness of sins that he had committed; and, seeming to get no answer, had continued for months and years naming over all the same old sins.

But such confession is of no avail. The Christian who is truly sorry for his sins may expect forgiveness at the very moment of confession regardless of whether or not he "feels" forgiven. "**If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**" (I John 1:9).

We are not to practice sin, and if we are fully surrendered to CHRIST we will not willingly do so. But "**if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world**" (I John 2:1-2). It is as though CHRIST presents us to the Father at the moment we confess our sin and says, "Father, here is one for whom I shed My blood at Calvary. He has come to Me with his wrongdoing, knowing that We have made provision for his sin through My sacrificial death, and even as I shall do in that great day to come, I even now present him faultless before the presence of Thy glory." See Jude 24.

Do you see it, dear reader? Do not fail here! For if you grasp this glorious truth, it will surely cause you to know that you are safe in Him.

The following words are used to describe GOD's dealing with sin: "**forgiveness,**" "**blotted out,**" "**cleanse,**" "**remember no more,**" "**bore our sin in His own body,**" "**in the depths of the sea,**" "**purged,**" "**made Him to be sin for us,**" "**died for our sins,**" "**washed us from our sins in His own blood,**" "**My blood . . . is shed for many for the remission of sins,**" etc. etc.

Concerning the Judgment of the Christian

The Scriptures reveal two judgments for the Christian. The notion of a general judgment at which both Christian and non-Christians are called to account is nowhere to be found in the Bible. The Great White Throne Judgment spoken in Revelation 20 is for the unsaved only, who are judged for their works and are cast out into eternal night.

In II Corinthians 5:10 we read "**We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.**" The **judgment seat**, Dr. Pettingill has pointed out, is the believer's "**Bema**," a place where rewards are meted out. The participants in Olympic games came before the Bema to receive the prize or prizes which they had won. The context of this verse reveals the fact that Paul here is addressing Christians only; and it is they who shall appear before the Bema for reward for service done in the great Olympics of life.

Their rewards will depend upon the character of their works. Some will, of course, have greater rewards than others, while to some there may be little or no reward.

Here let me emphasize that there is a difference between salvation and rewards. Salvation is ours only through the finished work of CHRIST at Calvary; and our acceptance of it determines our entrance into Heaven. While rewards are given to us after we get into Heaven for the works which we as Christians have performed on earth. In other words, our faith in CHRIST brings us salvation, while our Christian work brings us our reward.

But, you say, "What about the Christian sin? Is there no judgment for his sin?" Yes indeed! But while his judgment for works is still **future**, his judgment for sin is in the **past**. The former will come to pass at CHRIST's second coming, while the latter has already taken place at His first coming. At the Cross of Calvary GOD the Father judged His Son and laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6; I Peter 2:24. He, CHRIST, was made to be **sin for us**. II Corinthians 5:21. He died for us. Romans 5:8. "**For us**," means, "**in our stead**." Hence our judgment took place in Him; and the sin question has therefore become the "Son" question. It is no longer what shall we do with sin? But what has He done with it, and what shall we do with Him? The true Christian shall never come into judgment for sin. For by faith he has accepted his punishment in the PERSON of his Substitute.

The words of CHRIST in John 5:24 are perhaps the strongest words of assurance that the believer may find in the Bible: "**Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.**" These three truths stand out plainly and to one who has actually believed on "Him that sent Me" there can be no mistaking their meaning: "hath everlasting life," "shall not come into condemnation," "is passed from death unto life."

Think of it! We shall not come into condemnation! And wonders of wonders, this means that we shall not come into **judgment**. For the word here, "**condemnation**" is the word "**krisis**" which is the identical word that is used in Hebrews 9:27 where it says, "**It is appointed unto men once to die but after this the judgment (krisis).**" This verse -- Hebrews 9:27 -- is speaking of the **unsaved** and the **judgment of sinners!**

Dear fellow Christian! Law hold of this truth. CHRIST says we **shall never come into *krisis***; and His Word never fails. If you can grasp this overwhelming truth and see that for you there is no "*krisis*," that you have already passed from death unto life, you will surely be able to cast all doubts to the wind and with a thankful heart lift your eyes to Him who has saved you, and say, "Thank you, O CHRIST; **I believe! I know!**"

The Believer Has Eternal Life Now

Eternal existence and eternal life are not one and the same thing. The soul of man will exist forever regardless of whether that man is a Christian. (While there are those that teach annihilation at death for all non-Christians, and are able to wrest the Scriptures to suit this fanciful and subtle conjecture; yet I have failed to see any interpretation of the Bible that proves their point of view to be correct, without such an interpretation having done violence to the laws of language.) The unsaved will spend eternity forever separated from the presence of GOD in Hell; while the saved will spend eternity "forever with the Lord." The unsaved would not enjoy Heaven if they went there, because their unregenerate natures would be in constant rebellion against the will of GOD, even as it is so in this present life. Heaven would be worse than Hell for them; and for GOD to permit them to go to Hell in their sin would be more merciful than for Him to force them to go to Heaven.

But we (Christians) do not have to wait till we get to Heaven to get eternal life. We **have** eternal life **now**. "**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 John 5:13). "**He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life**" (John 5:24). "**God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life**" (I John 5:11-12). If therefore we have CHRIST we have eternal life, for the two are inseparable. And we are united to Him -- members of His body, the church, of which He is the HEAD.

Eternal life, my friends, is **eternal**. We shall not need to fear lest we be saved today and lost tomorrow. As someone has so strikingly said, "We can never drown as long as our HEAD is above water."

The Keeping Power of CHRIST

Our dependence is not upon ourselves but upon an all-powerful CHRIST who is able to keep us from falling (Jude 24). F.E. Marsh said, near the close of a long and fruitful life, "I have kept the faith because **He has kept me in it.**"

In the passage in I Peter 1:3-5 we have these assuring words, "**an inheritance . . . reserved in Heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**" Not only is our inheritance in Heaven reserved and kept for us, but we are kept for it. The same GOD who prepares Heaven for us, also prepares us for Heaven. We have opened our hearts to Him here and He will open His Heaven to us there. **Though we may at times fall on the ROCK, by His Grace we shall fall off it.**

The Sealing of the HOLY SPIRIT

Ephesians 4:30, "**And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.**" The "day of redemption" is the day of the coming again of CHRIST for His own. On that day we are to be caught up to meet Him in the air. "**So shall we ever be with the Lord.**" (I Thessalonians 4:17).

If then we are sealed (mark of ownership and guarantee of safety) until the day of redemption or the second coming of CHRIST, and from then on are to be with the Lord forever, surely we may hold the profession of our faith without wavering and rest implicitly in the power of Him who will surely keep His word. For in keeping His word to us His own honor is at stake.

We would have no fear for a priceless gem which we entrusted to the keeping of a reliable banker, if he were to give his word of assurance, "We shall keep your treasure in our safety vault until this time next month, when our new and larger vault will be ready. Then we shall transfer it into this new vault." Even so we are sealed by the HOLY SPIRIT until CHRIST's return; and **then** are caught up into that Great Eternal Safety Vault where we shall be with Him forever.

In the face of all these tremendous truths and these never-failing promises of a never-failing GOD, how can we do other than believe that we are safe and secure in Him?

Justified in the sight of GOD; all sins forgiven and forgotten; no condemnation or judgment for sin awaiting us; eternal life our eternal possession; an all-powerful CHRIST from whose hand we can never be plucked; sealed by the HOLY SPIRIT -- oh, these great assuring facts stand before us in such majesty and magnitude that in their presence our doubts begin to dwindle and melt away like blocks of ice in the presence of a glowing fire.

And we lift our hearts with glad thankfulness to the Heavens above and our paean of praise bursts uninhibited from our lips:

"Blessed assurance, JESUS is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of GOD,
Born of His SPIRIT, washed in His blood."

~ end of chapter 4 ~
