



PREPARING TO STAND

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“In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.” SW 3-21-05

How to Live Without Sinning

by Jim Buller

Based on our own experience, many of us have concluded that it is not possible for us to live without sinning. But, this is just what Satan wants us to think. Notice the following quotations from *The Great Controversy* pages 488 and 489, (emphasis is supplied).

“Satan invents unnumbered schemes to occupy our minds, that they may not dwell upon the very work with which we ought to be best acquainted. The archdeceiver hates the great truths that bring to view an atoning sacrifice and an all-powerful mediator. He knows that with him *everything depends on his diverting minds from Jesus and His truth.* ...

“‘He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.’ Proverbs 28:13. If those who hide and excuse their faults could see how Satan exults over them, how he taunts Christ and holy angels with their course, they would make haste to confess their sins and to put them away. Through defects in the character, Satan works to gain control of the whole mind, and he knows that if these defects are cherished, he will succeed. *Therefore he is constantly seeking to deceive the followers of Christ with his fatal sophistry that it is impossible for them to overcome.*”

Notice that last sentence again. Satan “is constantly seeking to *deceive* the followers of Christ with *his fatal sophistry that it is impossible for them to overcome.*” If Satan is trying to *deceive* us with the idea that *it is impossible* to keep from sinning, then it must actually *be possible* to live without sinning.

Left to ourselves, we are easily overpowered by Satan and his temptations. This is exactly why *we need a Saviour.* We cannot save ourselves. But “with God, *all things are possible.*” He “*is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault.*” (Matthew 19:26, Jude 24 emphasis supplied.)

The reason we have been unsuccessful in our attempts to keep from sinning is because we have been trying to do it on our own. We need to let God “keep [us] from

falling” But how can we do this? How does it work? To answer these questions, let’s look at the experience of Jesus’ disciples just before, during, and after the Last Supper.

The disciples had already been with Jesus for several years, yet they still had not learned an important lesson —that the kingdom of God is all about service. On the way to the upper room, they were arguing about who was the greatest. Jesus’ recent “triumphal entry” only added to their desire for importance, as they expected Him to set up His kingdom soon. Like a bunch of little children crying “me first!” they continued the debate even during the supper. (See Luke 22:24.) There never was a question that Jesus was “*the* greatest.” Their argument was about, who would be “*second* greatest.”

But then, Jesus washes their feet. The Master does the job of the lowest servant! The very job none of them would *think* of doing —especially since they had just been fighting over who was the greatest. As Jesus washes their feet, they are convicted of their pride and feelings of self-importance, their selfishness, and their unworthiness, (see John 13:6-8). Their hearts soften. As Jesus tells them why He washed their feet, they realize in a new way that God’s kingdom is not at all about being the greatest or the most important, instead it is about unselfish service. And so, except for Judas who still had his own agenda, they all surrendered themselves anew to God’s way.

Because they had responded to the moving of the Holy Spirit, surrendering to Him, and allowing His grace to change their hearts, Jesus was able to say at this point in time, “you are clean, but not all of you.” John 13:10. Except for Judas, they are “clean” —that is, without sin. Then, a little later, after Judas leaves the group, (John 13:30), while Jesus and the rest of the disciples, are on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was able to say, “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.” John 14:3. At this point in time they were all without sin.

This is amazing, because Jesus knew they had been selfishly arguing just a short while before. He also knew they would all betray Him in just a few hours, (see Mark 14:27). But, because they were all surrendered to God at this point in time, He was able to say that they were “clean” —at that point in time they were without sin.

But Jesus doesn’t stop there. In His very next statement, He gives us the secret of living without sinning. He says, “Abide in Me,” or as some translations say, “Remain in Me,” or “Stay in Me.” John 14:4.

Think about it. If we have surrendered ourselves to the Holy Spirit and are allowing Him to control our lives, will He have us do anything sinful? —of course not. So, at the point in time when we are surrendered to God, we are not sinning. Please note that this is not to imply that we have not sinned in the past, or that we will no longer sin in the future. All I’m saying is that whenever we are completely surrendered to the Holy Spirit, we are not sinning. In order for us to sin we must take the control of our lives away from the Holy Spirit. This is why Satan does everything he can to distract us, so we will let go of God, and go off to play with what he is offering us; because whenever we let go of God he can easily overpower us. This is when we sin. Notice this quotation from *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 79. “*Satan takes the control of every mind that is not decidedly under the control of the Spirit of God.*” These are

her italics, not mine! So either we choose to surrender to the Holy Spirit, or by default, we are under Satan's control.

But Jesus says, "Abide in Me." He knows that for us to overcome, we must *stay in Him*, and rely on *His* leading and *His* keeping power. He knows that, like the disciples, we may let go of Him, to go our own way, and end up sinning again. But He knows that it is not best for us to be controlled by Satan. So Jesus says, "Abide in Me." He wants us to choose to remain in the state of being surrendered to Him, so He can keep us from sin.

Please note that when we abide in Jesus, we won't "feel" that we are without sin. Instead, we will have a strong sense of our weakness —because we know how easy it is for us to let go of Jesus. In fact, the more we are with Jesus, the weaker we will know ourselves to be! (See *Step to Christ*, page 64.)

Our goal therefore, should be to spend more and more time surrendered to, and abiding in Jesus; and less and less time away from Him. We need to do everything we can to encourage ourselves to *stay* in Him. As we go through our everyday lives, we would be wise to notice what things draw us away from Him, and ask Him to help us guard ourselves from these things.

Sometimes we let go of Jesus with out even knowing it, and we don't realize we have slipped away until after we have already done something sinful. Other times Satan gets us to choose to let go of Him. Then, he tries to get us to think that it really doesn't work, that it is impossible to *stay* 100% of the time in Jesus. But don't listen to him. Remember the experiences of Judas and Peter. Both of them sinned terribly, Judas in betraying Jesus, and Peter in denying Him. The difference —the eternal difference— between them, was that Peter came back to Jesus, while Judas stayed away. So, whenever you find you have wandered away from Jesus, re-surrender, and re-connect your life to Him. (See *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 332 below.) The question is: *Where do we really want to be?* Do we want to be in sin? Or do we want to be in Jesus?

As we spend longer and longer lengths of time abiding in Jesus, we will spend less and less time in sin, until eventually we leave, and return to Him, for the last time. We probably will not recognize this has even happened, because we know how easy it has been for us to wander away. But from that point on, we simply *stay* in Him. If we continue to cooperate with what God is doing in our lives, He has promised that we will reach this point before Jesus comes. "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." Jude 24. Then we will continue to abide in Him throughout the rest of eternity.

Christ's Object Lessons page 159

No outward observances can take the place of simple faith and entire renunciation of self. But no man can empty himself of self. We can only consent for Christ to accomplish the work. Then the language of the soul will be, Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul.

Christ's Object Lessons, page 332

Do not disappoint Him who so loved you that He gave His own life to cancel your sins. He says, "Without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. Remember this. If you have made mistakes, you certainly gain a victory if you see these mistakes and regard them as beacons of warning. Thus you turn defeat into victory, disappointing the enemy and honoring your Redeemer.

The Desire of Ages, page 324

When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end.

Simple Wilderness Remedies

It would be a good idea to learn simple natural and herbal remedies that can be made and used in the wilderness. Below are four examples:

“Astringent Skin Wash”

This skin wash is useful for many skin rashes and irritations such as those caused by Poison Oak/Ivy, bacterial and fungus infections. Make a strong "tea" from the leaves, twigs, bark, or roots of any of the many plants that contain tannic acid, (such as oaks,) and apply this tea as hot as possible, without burning, to the skin area affected by the rash or infection.

“Antiseptic” or “Hand Sanitizer”

Crush the leaves or needles of Pines, Cedars, Junipers, and Sage Brush and rub them between your hands for a natural “hand sanitizer.” Or, make a strong “tea” from these leaves or needles and use it as an antiseptic wash.

Charcoal

Basically, charcoal works by “soaking up” poisons. Use it for:

- Any digestive problems — mix about 1 teaspoon of powdered charcoal with about ¼ cup of water and swallow this “slurry.”
- Poisoning —swallow a lot of charcoal as above.
- Infections —apply a “paste” (poultice) made from powdered charcoal and a little water to the infected area. Change the paste every few hours. This paste can be wrapped in a piece of wet cloth to cut down on the mess.

One simple way to make "medicinal charcoal"

- (1) Burn wood until there is no more smoke coming from the coals.
- (2) Take the coals out of the fire and cool them, if possible in the absence of air. For example place them on a rock and cover them with a cook pot.
- (3) Grind the charcoal as finely as possible.

Alternating Hot and Cold Treatments

These treatments basically work by increasing circulation to the affected area. This promotes healing by bringing in body defenses and nutrients, and washing away harmful wastes. Hot and cold treatments are useful for most infections and injuries.

Prepare:

- A container with hot water —as hot as possible, but not so hot that it would burn the skin.
- A container with cold water —as cold as possible, (add ice or snow if available).
- Two pieces of cloth —soak one in the hot water and one in the cold. Wool works best, but other fabrics, or even bundles of moss, will work.

Take the cloth out of the hot water and squeeze it so it isn't "drippy." Leave as much water in it as you can so it will stay hot for as long as possible. Fold it appropriately and place it over the affected area for about 3 minutes —it should be at least ½ inch thick and completely cover the affected area. Toward the end of the 3 minutes, prepare the cloth soaked with cold water in the same way. As you remove the hot cloth, immediately replace it with the cold cloth. Leave the cold cloth on for about 30 seconds, while you re-soak the hot cloth. At the end of the 30 seconds replace the cold cloth with the hot one for another 3 minutes, while you re-soak the cold one. Keep alternating between hot and cold for about 20 minutes or more, ending with cold. Repeat this treatment every couple hours.

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