



SECURITY IN CHRIST:
OR KEPT BY THE INDWELLING CHRIST

JOHN R. CHURCH

Security In Christ

“Kept By The Indwelling Christ”

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REV. JOHN R. CHURCH DD
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
1899 -1984

Dr. Church, an approved evangelist of the United Methodist church, and a member of the Western North Carolina Conference since 1920, was one of the truly outstanding itinerant evangelists of 20th century Methodism.

In 40 years of evangelism, Dr. Church traveled over one million miles; preached in 31 colleges and universities; conducted over 1,000 series of meetings with some 40,000 seekers at the altar; and witnessed over 800 men and women answering the call to full-time Christian service under his ministry.

He has ministered in many of the largest camp meetings in America, including: Hollow Rock, Sychar, and Circleville in Ohio; Lakeland, Avon Park, and Brooksville in Florida; Wilmore in Kentucky; Bentleyville in Pennsylvania; and Indian Springs in Georgia. In his early ministry he shared the camp meeting platform with such noted evangelists as: Henry Clay Morrison, Joseph H. Smith, "Uncle Bud" Robinson, John L. Brasher, Samuel Logan Brengle, and C.W. Butler.

He received the Doctor of Divinity degree from Asbury College in 1942 and was on its Board of Trustees for many years: He was co-founder of John Wesley College, Greensboro, North Carolina, and served as Chairman of its Board for 28 years.

The dynamic power and success of his ministry, spanning more than half a century, is expressed by Dr. Church's own words: "It is still true that this is the will of God, even your sanctification...Men may quibble and question, but I choose to take my stand with the Word of God. I cannot do otherwise and still be a faithful minister of the gospel. Other men may feel that this is an elective course that can either be taken or left alone, but with the light and convictions I have on the subject, I could not be true to my own soul and fail to preach it...Every man must answer to God for his own ministry, but I would tremble for my own soul, if I should go into His presence without having preached this glorious truth."

In preparing and publishing this message on "Security in Christ," or "Kept by the Indwelling Christ" the author has rendered a distinct service to all lovers of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. The spirit and manner in which he treats his subject are exemplary. With candor yet with kindness he shows by logical reasoning and scriptural proof the falsity of the position that if one is ever saved he can never be lost. Then, as a proper complement to this truth, he sets forth the provision of God's grace for the believer's safe keeping in this world and his eternal salvation in the world to come. He leaves his reader with the feeling of personal responsibility, but also assured that God is able to keep him from falling.

There is real profit for all who read this message. It will enlighten the understanding and will strengthen their faith.

I take pleasure in commending the author and his work to the reading public.

G. B. WILLIAMSON.

President of Eastern Nazarene College
Wollaston, Mass.

In sending this message forth, I want to say that I firmly believe it to be the truth that is taught in God's Word. I feel that if God ever gave me a message He gave me this one. For a number of years I have carefully and prayerfully studied both sides of this subject, Eternal Security. I have tried to consider it with an open heart and mind, and have sought to know the mind of Christ on the subject. Many years ago I became convinced that those who taught unconditional security, or "once in grace, always in grace," were unsound in their position. My years of study have but confirmed me in the belief that their position is not only unscriptural but a very dangerous teaching. I have had ample opportunity to see the blighting effect of this teaching on many of those who accept it and apply it to their lives.

I have tried to deal with this teaching in a plain, frank manner and have gone to considerable lengths to prove it false. However, in doing this I have striven earnestly to manifest a true spirit of Christian charity. I have many very dear friends who hold to this theory. I love them and would not willingly hurt their feelings for anything. I have very blessed fellowship with them and appreciate their zeal and sincerity in contending for this theory. I only wish that they might be as zealous in contending for some truths that are so clearly taught in the Word. I admire their zeal, but I realize that a person may be very zealous and sincere and still be mistaken. I believe that to be the case with reference to this teaching.

For a number of years I asked God to give me a message on this theme. I was not content just to deny the teaching of those who taught the unsound theory. I have never been content to deliver a negative message. I have always wanted my message to be positive rather than negative. While I could not accept the teaching of unconditional security, I saw clearly that the Bible did teach some kind of security for the child of God. I wanted a message that would not only refute the false teaching, but also set forth the true one.

While I was at Camp Sychar last year the Lord gave me this message. It flooded my soul with peace and joy and has become more precious to me as the months have slipped by. I have tried to share it with other people from time to time, and they have testified that it blessed and helped them. I am now sending it forth in printed form with the earnest prayer that it will not only fortify some soul against false teaching, but that it will also bring peace and assurance to all fearful hearts who may chance to read it. If this is accomplished, then I shall be happy and be glad to as- scribe all the praise and glory unto Christ our Lord.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

JOHN R. CHURCH.

I John 4:4. "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."

In this beautiful text we have a striking contrast given, and a comparison made between two mighty forces that are at work in this world. This contrast is given, and this comparison is made, for our encouragement and for the strengthening of our faith. Surely we ought to be encouraged and have our faith strengthened by this wonderful truth.

There are many people today who need the inspiration that may be received from the truth of this text. We are living in a day when people's hearts are failing them for fear. There are many Christian people who are living in an almost constant state of fear and dread that they will not be able to hold out in their faith, and they are fearful that they may slip and fall into the hands of Satan. Then, too, there are no doubt many people who would like to become Christians and live for Christ, but they are afraid to make the venture for fear they will not be able to hold out. There are some who once tried it and have slipped and fallen, and Satan has almost convinced them that it is no use to try again.

To all such fearful and timid souls this text ought to come as a life line that will draw them out of the depths of fear and despair, and bring them into a safe haven of security, where they will be able to abide in peace. I trust that this message may fall into the hands of some such persons, and that it will be the means of giving them courage and strength to renew the battle of faith and gain the victory over every foe. Just remember that you do not fight alone, neither do you have to depend upon your own puny powers to combat the powers of evil that beset you on every hand. You have a mighty Christ, who is more than able to conquer.

FALSE TEACHING ON SECURITY REFUTED

Now I am aware of the fact that there is a great group of people abroad in the land, who are preaching a shallow, cheap, and unscriptural security; a security that is not only unscriptural but it is one of the most dangerous doctrines that could possibly be preached by anyone.

The people to whom I refer are those who preach and teach that, if a person is once really born of the Spirit of God and becomes a child of God, it is impossible for him ever to fall from grace and be lost. They teach that after a person has once been born again, no matter what sins that person may commit, he cannot possibly be lost, for he is God's child and he can never become anything else. Some of them even go so far as to teach that a person may be guilty of murder or any other sin and still he is saved if he has once been a child of God. I have heard them contend that a person might die in the grossest sort of sin, and yet be saved just because he at some time or other in his past life believed on Christ and accepted Him as his Lord.

SECURITY IN CHRIST

It seems strange that any intelligent person could ever accept such an unscriptural idea as this, and yet it is true that there are many good, sincere people who hold to it as if it were one of the precious truths of God's Word. There is nothing farther from the truth than this. It is not only unscriptural and dangerous, but it is one of the oldest deceptions of the devil. According to the Bible the first deception that the devil ever put over on the human race was the idea that a child of God could sin and not die as the result of it. God said to the first pair, who were His children, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." However, the devil came along and said, "Ye shall not surely die." Eve believed the devil instead of God's plain words, and the human race fell through unbelief. In spite of the fact that the Bible plainly teaches that the soul that sinneth, it shall die, there are still many people who will do their best to explain away the clear Word of God and try to make it appear that a person can live wrong and die right. However, the Word of God denies this in over one hundred and fifty places, in such plain language that the wayfaring man ought to be able to understand.

Not only does the Word of God fail to teach any such doctrine as this but, as already stated, it clearly denies it in over one hundred and fifty places. Our Lord Jesus Christ clearly and plainly taught that a person who had once been saved could fall and be lost. In Luke 8:11-14, we find Him explaining to His disciples the meaning of the Parable of the Sower. He tells them that the seed is the Word of God. He tells how the devil comes and takes the Word out of the heart of some people, lest they should believe and be saved. (Note that He makes the condition of being saved, to believe. The person who believes is saved, according to the words of our Lord). Then He tells about the second group (13th verse): "They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy: and these have no root, which for a while believe, (and of course are saved, for Jesus says that is the way to get saved) and in time of temptation FALL AWAY" Now, if language means anything, then Jesus means to teach that it is possible for a person to fall from grace. In this same parable He tells of another group that receive the Word, and yet the cares and riches of this world choke it out and it never brings forth fruit to

perfection. Perfection here means final salvation.

Jesus also said to His disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

In John 15:1, 2, Jesus plainly says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me (note the words, branch and in me) that beareth not fruit he taketh away." Jesus also tells us in this same chapter, John 15:6: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, (He is no longer considered a branch in Christ. He once was a branch in Christ, but he failed to comply with the conditions and forfeited his rights and claims to be a branch in Christ) and is withered; (or, in other words, dies) and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." Now, if language means anything, then this chapter teaches that there is a condition to keep saved just as there is a condition to be saved. (Note the number of times the word "if" is used in John, the 15th chapter). If we fail to meet the conditions that are laid down to be saved, then we have no claim upon God. The same is true of keeping saved. God has placed certain conditions that must be met to keep saved, and if we fail to comply with them, we forfeit our claims upon Christ.

In Matt. 24:12, 13, Jesus tells us that because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. Then He adds, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." In these two passages we have it clearly brought out by our Lord that the conditions we must meet are these: we must constantly abide in Christ and bear fruit, and we must also endure unto the end. There is no promise of eternal life to any others. In fact, in every place where it speaks of people who have eternal life, we are told that it is on the condition of constantly believing on Christ, for that is what the word "believeth" means. It is in the present tense. That means that it is not a thing that is done once and for all and is never to be repeated, but rather it is a continuous act that must be constantly going on. When we cease to believe we cease to have eternal life abiding in us. In fact, there can be no eternal life separate and apart from Christ. He is the life. When we break our contract with Him by sin, we are as devoid of eternal life as a house is devoid of light when it is cut loose from the power line. Eternal life is not something that can be possessed separate and apart from Christ. We have it only as we live in constant touch with Christ, who is the source of life. To be dead spiritually is to be cut off from Christ, and sin will surely break the contact with life. It will do it today just as surely as it did with Eve, and to teach otherwise is but to revive the doctrine that Satan put forth in the Garden when he said, "Ye shall not surely die."

Not only does our Lord Jesus Christ deny and refute this dangerous doctrine of unconditional security, but Paul, Peter, James, and John also deny it time after time. All through the New Testament we find warnings and exhortations urging us to beware lest we fall away.

Our good friends who teach unconditional security like to quote the words of the great Apostle Paul in Romans 8:1. He speaks of there being no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, and they try to make it appear that once a person is in Jesus Christ he can never come into condemnation again. However, they fail to quote that part of the verse which says, "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit They leave that out, for it does not fit in with their doctrine. It clearly implies that the condition of remaining in a state of not being condemned is to walk not after the flesh, but after the

Spirit. This same thing is reaffirmed in the 4th verse. They also fail to note that he says in the 12th and 13th verses of this same chapter, "Therefore, brethren, (that means Christians) we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye (brethren or Christians) live after the flesh, ye shall die." (Paul refuses to go along with those who would say, "Ye shall not surely die.") These same people make a great deal of the last part of the 8th chapter of Romans, where Paul speaks in such glowing terms about no creature (or created thing) being able to separate us from the love of Christ. I praise God that this is true. However, I would remind you that Paul does not one time say that we cannot separate ourselves from Christ. Neither does he say that sin cannot separate us from Christ. If Paul had said any such thing as that, he would have contradicted himself and would be an unreliable teacher ; for in this same letter to the Romans he clearly says that it is possible for us to separate ourselves from Christ and be lost or cut off. In Romans 11:20-23, we find these plain words, "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standeth by faith. Be NOT HIGH-MINDED, (or overconfident) but fear: (How different this language is from that of our good friends who teach unconditional security!) for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and the severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." To me, it is a strange thing that our good friends, who make so much of taking all the Bible as the inspired Word of God and are ready to label all as Modernists who teach otherwise, should fail to take such statements as these at their face value. If they mean anything then they mean what they say; and if they mean what they say, then they mean that it is possible for a person to be cut off from Christ and be lost.

We also find this same great Apostle Paul writing to the Church at Corinth (I Corinthians 10:1-12) and reminding them of the fact that their fathers were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. He tells them that they did all eat of that same spiritual meat, and they did all drink of that same spiritual drink; "for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. Then he goes on to tell us that with many of them God was not well pleased and they were overthrown in the wilderness. He reminds us that they are to be our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they lusted. He reminds us that we are not to tempt Christ, as they tempted and were destroyed of God. Then he adds this significant word, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. WHEREFORE LET HIM THAT THINKETH HE STANDETH TAKE HEED LEST HE FALL."

This is the plain teaching of the great Apostle Paul, but how different it is from much of the teaching that we hear today on every hand! I wonder why our good friends, who contend so earnestly for unconditional security, and who make so much of the Bible being the inspired Word of God, do not preach on this text and many others of a similar nature and tone. Is this not a part of the Word? Does God intend that this should be explained away? Are we, who sound out to people the word of warning along this line, not preaching the Word also? Is it not far better to give this note of warning and admonition than to lull people to sleep in a false security? Is it not better to follow the example of Christ and Paul than some of our leaders today?

Since these people, who teach unconditional security, or in other words teach that it

is impossible for a person who has once been born again ever to fall away and be lost, are so dogmatic in their contentions and are so ready to cry down anyone who may be inclined to point out the other side of the question, I feel that it will be worth while to go into this subject a little more thoroughly and present some more evidence to prove that their position is unscriptural and dangerous. I am presenting to you some of the strongest passages of Scripture, that clearly teach that it is possible for a person who has once been saved to fall away and be lost. This is the plain teaching of the Bible, and should be accepted by all who believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God. The following are some of the most direct passages of Scripture on the subject, and I trust that you will ponder them and let them bring their message to your heart and mind.

Gen. 2:17. "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Exod. 32:33. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book "

Judges 16:20. "And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him "

I Sam. 16:14. "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." (So we see that the Spirit of God will depart from a person who at one time had a new heart For the Bible says that God gave Saul a new heart. I Sam. 10:9).

Ps. 51:11. "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." (Undoubtedly David believed that God would cast one of His children away and take His Holy Spirit from him).

Ezek. 18:20. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die Ezek. 18:24-26. "But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die"

Ezek. 33:12, 13. "Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression; as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth. When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness (or his past experience), and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it."

This is the standard of the Old Testament, and in Malachi 3:6 God reminds us, "For I am the Lord, I change not." In Heb. 13:8 we are told that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. The same God that spoke in the Old Testament and said that His ways were equal is the God who speaks in the pages of the New Testament and demands faithfulness unto the end, of all who would be saved.

Matt. 3:10. "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bring- eth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

Matt. 24:1, 13. "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." (And certainly Jesus

means to say that only those who endure unto the end shall be saved. He is not under obligation to save those who fail to endure, for they have forfeited their claims upon Him).

Luke 8:13. "They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away "

Luke 9:62. "And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom ."

John 6:66. "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

John 15:2, 6. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

Acts 14:22. "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God ."

Acts 13:43. "Who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God."

Rom. 2:7, 8. "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath." (Here we find Paul teaching the same truth that Ezekiel taught in the Old Testament; and no wonder that he should, for both were inspired by the same Spirit).

Rom. 8:12, 13. "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

Rom. 11:20-22. "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not the@" (For He is the God who hath declared that His ways are equal). "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." (It seems to me that language could not be any plainer than this).

I Cor. 3:17. "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

I Cor. 9:27. "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.* (Paul believed his own doctrine and practiced it. He is not speaking of his works here, but says, /, myself.)

I Cor. 10:12. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall⁹⁹

II Cor. 11:3. "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, (he told her that she would not surely die, just as some are saying today) so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (Paul would certainly get into hot water if he were here today and should preach like this in some sections.)

Gal. 5:4. "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace⁹⁹

Gal. 6:7, 8. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that

shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." (This warning was to Christian people.)

Col. 1:21-23. "And you, that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel."

II Thess. 2:3. "Let no man deceive you by any means: (even though he make a great ado about being orthodox and contending for the faith) for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

I Tim. 1:19, 20. "Holding faith, and a good conscience ; which same having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymenseus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."

I Tim. 4:1. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils."

I Tim. 5:12-15. "Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith . . . For some are already turned aside after Satan."

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we find the little word "if" used twenty-four (24) times, and each time it appears in this epistle it implies the possibility of falling away from the faith and being lost. In fact, this great epistle was written for the very purpose of trying to help the Hebrews, who had been converted to Christianity, and keep them from falling from grace and going back to Judaism. This letter is filled with words of encouragement and words of warning to help people at this very point. It might be of interest for you to run through this epistle and pick out the passages where the word "if" occurs and study them. I will give a few of the outstanding ones.

Heb. 2:1-3. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. (The marginal reading is, let them leak out) For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we (Christians) escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Heb. 3:6. "But Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Heb. 3:12-14. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end"

Heb. 4:11. "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

Heb. 5:9. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

Heb. 6:4-6. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, (Jesus tells us what this heavenly gift is in John 6:50, 51. "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven,") and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, (Now if this is not the description of a real child of God, then I would

not know how to find the language to describe such a one), if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

Heb. 10:35. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

Heb. 10:38. "Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

Heb. 12:14, 15. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God."

James 5:19, 20. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death" (In this passage James clearly teaches that it is possible for one of the brethren to err from the truth, and need to be converted again. He also plainly teaches that unless he is brought back he will die in his sins).

II Peter 1:10. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall (This passage clearly implies that, if the brethren do not give diligence, they will fall. It also implies that we have something to do with our election; and if we fail to do it, we will fail to be elected to salvation).

II Peter 2:15. "Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness."

II Peter 2:18. "They allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error."

II Peter 2:20-22. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them," etc.

II Peter 3:17. "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing that ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." (Undoubtedly Peter believed that it was possible for people to be led away and fall).

I John 2:24. "Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father."

II John 9, 10. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. (Now this is a clear statement that, if you cease to abide, you do not have God. You have had Him but you lost Him by failing to meet the conditions). If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, (What doctrine? The doctrine that Christ has come in the flesh and the doctrine that you have to abide in Christ in order to have God) receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

Our good friends who teach unconditional security often quote this tenth verse in speaking of the Modernists, and claim that we ought not to receive them and bid them God speed. But I wonder if they have ever stopped to ponder the thought that John is saying, "If any come teaching that you can have Christ without constantly abiding in Him

and living above sin, they too are to be rejected " That is just what he is saying in these two verses.

Jude 5. "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (The reason why Jude mentions this is that he is urging these people to earnestly contend for the faith. He is aware that there are false teachers who will come and perhaps lead them away, and they too will be lost, through the same spirit of unbelief).

Rev. 2:4, 5. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

Rev. 3:2. "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die."

Rev. 3:5. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." (It is possible to have your name blotted out of the book of life).

Rev. 22:19. "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (This is almost the last word in the New Testament, and yet it is a clear warning that we can have our names taken from the book of life and lose our inheritance with God).

Now, I am frank to confess that I don't see how any person who claims to accept the Bible as the Word of God can, in the face of these plain statements from His Word, and many others that might be given, teach unconditional security, and claim that it is impossible for a person to fall from grace and be lost.

Not only do these people deny the plain teaching of these passages, but they also overlook several other great basic truths that are clearly taught in God's Word.

In the first place, they overlook the fact that the Bible teaches that man is a free moral agent and has the power of choice. Not only has he the power to choose to be saved, but he also has the power to choose to continue in salvation. His power of choice is never taken from him, and there never comes a time when he cannot take himself out of the hands of Christ. Certainly nothing else can take us out of the hands of Christ. All this we believe and teach, and rejoice in the comfort of it. However, the time will never come when we will not have the power to choose, and if we make the choice of sin we take ourselves out of the hands of Christ and may be lost. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," is still the Word of God and will always be.

In the second place, they overlook the great truth that, so long as this life shall last, we are on probation. Our probation does not end with the work of regeneration, it ends with death. The promise is, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." The promise is to the overcomer. It is not to the one who just begins well, but to him who remains faithful. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Those who are faithful unto death are the only ones who are promised the crown.

In the third place, they overlook the teaching of the Bible on the conditions of being saved and keeping saved. The promise of salvation is to the one that believeth. That is

a continuous thing that must go on all the time. We are not only saved by faith, but we also live by faith. We are "kept by the power of God through faith "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith " There can be no life apart from Christ, and we can abide in Christ only by faith. I am aware of the fact that the Bible teaches that we cannot be saved by good works, but we are saved by faith. Neither do we keep saved by good works, but we live moment by moment through faith in Christ. We are not supposed to keep ourselves any more than we are to save ourselves. However, we do need to see that constant faith in Christ is just as essential to our being kept as it is to our being saved in the first place. We also need to remember that our life and conduct is the real proof to Christ and the world that we have saving faith. We are not saved by good works, but if we are saved we will do good works. We will do good works not in order to be saved, but rather because we are saved. Just as surely as the Bible teaches that works without faith is dead, so it teaches that faith without works is also dead. James 2:17, 18, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." Verse 26, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Paul also insists on this same great truth when he reminds the Ephesian Christians that they are saved by grace through faith. He tells them, in Eph. 2:8-10, "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. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Faith makes a person a Christian.
Life proves a person to be a Christian.
Trials confirm a person to be a Christian.
Death crowns the overcomer as a Christian.

I do not believe in the kind of security that some people are teaching today. In fact, I know that the Bible teaches that it is possible for a person to give up his faith and take himself out of the hands of Christ and be eternally lost. Judas did this very thing, for Jesus says so. John 17:12, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." Jesus wanted to keep Judas also, but He could not keep him against his will. He by transgression fell and went to his own place. Neither can He keep you or me against our will. We have it in our hands to take ourselves out of His hands and be lost.

However, we do need to remember that so long as we will to be kept, and plead the merits of Christ's blood for our sins, and trust Him to keep us, we are safe and secure. Nothing can take us out of His hands so long as we will to be kept and meet the conditions that He has laid down!

"The soul that on Jesus doth lean for repose: I will not, I will not, desert to his foes; That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I will never, no never, no never forsake."

Now, I am aware of the fact that those people who teach and contend for unconditional security, and claim that it is impossible for a person who has once been a

child of God to ever fall and be finally lost, argue that if you are once a child you are always a child. I just want to say that I am thankful that God does not follow the same process of reasoning that these people follow, for if He did we would be in a bad fix. The Bible teaches that we were once the children of the devil. If God believed as some people, He would argue once a child of the devil, always a child, and leave us in our sins. However, God does not reason that way. He says to us that we may change our relationship by our own choice. We do not have to remain children of the devil. Just as surely as we have the power to change our relationship one way, we have the power to change it the other way. "He that committeth sin is of the devil." Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." In other words, we have the power to choose our father or our master.

This is just where our good friends go astray when they contend for once a child, always a child. They try to put the new birth on the same plane as natural birth, and Jesus never intended that it should be on that plane at all. In fact, He points out to Nicodemus that He is just using an earthly figure to illustrate a spiritual truth. He says to him in John 3:12, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" In other words, He is saying to this man, "If I have used earthly things to teach you a spiritual truth and you could not understand, how would you understand if I used heavenly language?" The new birth is not on the same basis as natural birth, and anyone ought to be able to see this. In the first place, we have no choice in natural birth, but we do have a choice in the Second Birth. We have the privilege of coming into the family of God, and we have the power to take ourselves out again. The Second Birth is a privilege that God grants to those who meet the conditions. John 1:12 says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power (privilege or authority) to become the sons of God." This is the way we get into the family, and by reversing the process we may take ourselves out of the family. Then, too, we need to remember that we are brought into the family by adoption. Of course, if we break the conditions, we have forfeited our claims upon God and He has a perfect right to disown us and cast us off. He says that He will do that very thing, if we fail to abide and endure. See John 15:2-6.

A failure through weakness or lack of knowledge does not make us children of the devil; but a deliberate turning away from God into sin and walking after the flesh does make us once more the children of the devil.

In I John 2:1, we are told that it is not God's will for us to sin: "My little children, these things write I unto you. that ye sin not." God has made ample provision for us to live above sin. However, He recognizes that we are weak and surrounded by temptation and are liable to fall into sin in some unguarded moment, and so He has made ample provision for such an event. "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father. Jesus Christ the righteous." This word means there is one to plead your cause. Therefore, if you should happen to fall into sin, don't give up, but call on your Advocate and get them to settle your case for you. It will be best to get it settled out of court if possible, and at once.

It is just as easy to be "unborn" as it is to be "born of God," because it is simply a reversal of the same process. Every one is bound to admit that even a son can be disinherited by the father. God has declared that He cannot own us if we walk in sin and

die in sin.

Another argument that these people use in trying to prove that it is impossible for a person to fall from grace is that the Bible teaches that he who believes on Christ has eternal life, or everlasting life, and they argue that if he has everlasting life he can never be lost. They say, "If he has everlasting life now, how can he be lost?" The answer is, "By losing eternal life" The terms "eternal" and "everlasting" are used to describe the kind of life that he has, but that does not necessarily guarantee that he will always possess it. In John 3:36, Jesus says, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." That word "believeth" is in the present tense, and that means that it is something that is now going on. He does not say, "He that once believed on the Son hath everlasting life," but he that believeth right now and goes right on believing will have everlasting life so long as he believes. In this same verse Jesus also says, "And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Here He is saying that so long as anyone remains an unbeliever, then the wrath of God will abide on him. However, any of us know that the person can change his attitude from an unbeliever to a believer and God's wrath will cease to abide on him. Now certainly we know that if one person has the power to change his attitude and thereby change his condition, so does the other also.

A person may have everlasting life and lose it just as any person may have protection in a Life Insurance Company and lose it by failing to comply with the conditions laid down. I may take out a Twenty Year Pay Life Policy with the best company in the land, but if I fail to pay the premium, then I will lose my claims on the company. You may have a policy with the Lord, but if you fail to comply with His conditions you will find when it may be too late that your policy has lapsed through your failure to keep in touch with Christ.

The principal passage of Scripture used to support the doctrine of unconditional security is the tenth chapter of John, where we read concerning Christ's sheep: "And I will give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." In verse 27, He says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."¹ So we see that Christ's sheep are those who hear His voice and follow Him. That is the condition of being a sheep; and so long as we hear His voice and follow Him, we will never perish and no one will be able to pluck us out of His hand. Then, John 10:28 really means this, "Those who hear my voice and follow me shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." The obvious meaning is simply this: So long as we hear His voice and follow Him, we are safe and secure. I praise God that this is true!

However, we need to see that there is no promise here for those who cease to hear His voice and follow Him. It is true that He may go out over the mountain to seek the lost sheep, but until He does find them, they are lost sheep. (Luke 15:6).

The entire tenth chapter of John is designed to teach that we are safe only while we abide in Christ's fold, and under His protecting care. He shows how the thieves and robbers and wolves come to steal the sheep and prey on them; but assures us that if we hear His voice and follow Him, He and His Father will protect us and no thieves or wolves can pluck us out of His hand. In other words, this chapter is designed to teach a lesson just opposite from what is inferred by those who teach "once in grace, always in grace."

Now, it may seem to you that I have completely forgotten my text and the objective that I announced in the beginning of this message, but I assure you that this is not the case. It is my purpose to come back and show by the Word of God that there is a security for the child of God that is both scriptural and wonderful; and I trust that as we see it, our hearts may be encouraged and our faith made strong in Christ. I thank God that we do have such a mighty Christ and that we do not have to stand in our own strength.

However, we must recognize the fact that sometimes before you can set forth the truth, you must first deal with error; and that is just what I have been trying to do. I have been trying to show you that the Word does not teach the kind of security that some people claim it does. I have taken a great deal of time and space in doing this, but I do not feel that it is in vain. I feel justified in doing this because the people who teach this kind of security are so militant and dogmatic in their teaching. I wanted to show beyond the shadow of a doubt that they are wrong in their teaching. I feel that every fair-minded person, who is unbiased in his thinking, will have to agree that the Bible does not teach unconditional security. The Bible does teach that a person who has once been born again can take himself out of the hands of Christ and be lost.

I do not and cannot accept the idea of unconditional security or "once in grace, always in grace," for I am firmly convinced that it is not only unscriptural but I also believe it is one of the most dangerous doctrines that is preached today. I have met people who were living in open, known sin, and yet when you try to deal with them, they tell you that they are safe because they have once been born again and, therefore, it is impossible for them to be lost. They contend that they are still children, although "disobedient children," and therefore they cannot possibly be lost. Not only do these people believe this, but they are encouraged to believe it by some preachers and teachers who ought to know better.

Some years ago a preacher in the community where I lived preached the funeral of a man who died drunk, and this preacher said publicly that this man was saved and in Heaven, for he had once been a child of God and could never be anything else. He said this in the face of the plain Word of God, which says that no drunkard "shall inherit the kingdom of God." (I Cor. 6:10. These words are given as a warning to Christians).

Now, to my mind, such teaching as this is more dangerous than the practice of selling indulgences, that is carried on by the Catholic Church. The reason it is more dangerous is this: It is virtually giving people a license to sin with the assurance that they will not suffer the consequences of their sin. It is that old deception of Satan, "Thou shalt not surely die." The Catholic Church sells indulgence, but those who preach this kind of thing give it away.

Any doctrine inconsistent with the first principles of morals must be false, no matter how plausible the arguments used in its favor. A correct mode of reasoning is bound to refute such a doctrine, showing its inconsistency with moral truth. Jesus came to save us from our sins, and not in them or with them. "He that committeth sin is of the devil." "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." This is the plain teaching of the Word of God, and to teach otherwise is to lull people to sleep with deception. May God save us from such error.

While I cannot accept the kind of security that some people teach, I do want to say I

believe with all my heart that the Bible does teach that there is security for the child of God in Christ. There can be no security elsewhere, but if we are in Him, we are secure. I also want to say that it is not enough for us to just show the error of those who preach a false security. We need not only to point out the error of this teaching, but to go on and find out just what the Word of God does teach about security. I fear that, too many times, those of us who deny this false doctrine of unconditional security have stopped short of the goal. We have been content to refute the false and have failed to preach the true. I also fear that sometimes in our zeal to try to prove that it is possible for people to fall from grace, we have unconsciously felt that we had to practice it to prove our point. I have been convinced in my own mind for some time that the Bible not only teaches security for the person in Christ, but I believe we need to proclaim this truth to the people. The fact that there is a false teaching on this doctrine should not deter us from preaching the true. There are many people who are living in a state of fear and dread, when they should be living in peace and resting by faith in Christ. We need to bring to them the comfort and assurance that God has for them in His Word. They must be brought to see that they do not stand in their own strength, but rather in the strength of Christ, the Lord. They need to see that they do not fight alone, but that Christ fights for them, and that all the powers of Heaven are on their side. They need to be brought to see that there is power sufficient to make them more than conquerors through Christ. I trust that I may be used of the Spirit to lead them to see that they can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth them, and lead them to that rest of faith that comes to the child of God who rests in Christ by faith.

"HE THAT IS IN THE WORLD"—THE POWER OF SIN AND SATAN

"Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

In this beautiful text, John gives to us the assurance that there is adequate power for a life of constant victory, and that we may live the life of an overcomer by the power of Christ in us. These are the words of a man who not only spoke by divine inspiration, but also spoke out of his own glorious experience. When John wrote this glowing testimony, he was an old man and had tried and proven it to be a fact. He had met the enemy on many a battlefield and had come out more than conqueror by the power of the indwelling Christ. He assures us that this same power is at our disposal. Surely this ought to encourage our hearts and give us faith to endure unto the end.

The words of this text are not meant to teach a cheap and shallow kind of security that gives us license to live in sin and still hope to be children of God. The truth of the matter is that this epistle was written for the very purpose of refuting this dangerous, teaching. At the time John wrote this epistle, there was a group of people in the church known as Gnostics, who were teaching some very dangerous errors. Among the many errors they taught was this one: they taught that you could be right with God in spirit and in fellowship with Him, and at the same time be living in sin in the body. They taught that the body was sinful and would always be sinful. They taught that so long as you lived in the body, you would have to live in sin, but at the same time you could be right with God in soul and in fellowship with Him. One of their favorite illustrations was that of a pearl encrusted in filth. They contended that it was a pearl, and was pure even though it was encrusted in filth. It is strange how error does persist, even though it has been refuted by the Holy Spirit. There are many people who believe and teach the same thing today. In fact, some of the very people who contend so earnestly for the idea of unconditional security, or "once in grace, always in grace," also contend that a person cannot live above sin in this life, but that we must sin every day in word, deed, and thought.

Now, John wrote this epistle for the express purpose of refuting this dangerous teaching. He tells us, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." In other words, He is pure or holy and in Him is no impurity or sin. Then he goes on to say, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness (sin), we lie, and do not the truth." He points out to us that the only way to have fellowship with Him is by walking in the light. He tells us that if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, the blood cleanseth us from all sin. The plain implication of this is that, if we fail to walk in the light, the blood will cease to cleanse. He then goes on to point out to us that, if we are to be in fellowship with God, we must keep His commandments. He says, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." He continues on and clearly shows to us that the love of the world is not compatible with fellowship with God. He tells us, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." He also tells us, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not," and "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

Of course, John is not saying that a person ever gets to the place where it is impossible for him to sin. We never get to the place where it is impossible to sin if we want to. We will never get to the place in this life where we are not liable to sin if we do

not watch and pray. We never get to the place where we are not tempted to sin. Neither is John saying that we can get to the place where we can do wrong and it will not be counted as sin against us. There are some people who contend that they are under the blood and are God's children, and therefore their acts are not counted as sins against them. John is not teaching any such foolishness as this. What John is saying is that, if you are now, present tense, abiding in Christ and have a present tense experience, you have something in you that will not let you give the consent of your heart and mind to commit wilful sin. He says, "Whosoever is born"; that means now. He is not talking about people who may have been born of God, but are not now children of God. There are too many people who have the wrong conception of what it means to be born of God. They seem to feel about it like the old fellow expressed himself about getting married. He said he believed he would just get married and be done with it. Now anyone knows that you don't get married and be done with it. When you get married, you have just begun with it. The same thing is true of being born of God. You can't just get religion and be done with it. It must be a present tense thing. There is no life apart from Christ.

Now, if you have that present tense experience, you have something in you that will not let you choose wilful, known sin. You will have to get rid of your "born of God" relationship before you can go out into wilful, known sin. May I illustrate it this way? I love my wife with all the passion of my heart. Since I do love her, I can't whip her or abuse her as some men do their wives. That does not mean that I haven't the physical power to do it, but it does mean that I have something in my heart that will not let me do it. I will have to crucify that love for my wife before I can ever get the consent of my mind to abuse her. That is just what John is saying here. He is saying that if we are really born of God, then we have something in our hearts that will not let us give the consent of our mind to do that which we know is displeasing to our Lord. We will have to crucify that love for Christ before we can go out and live in wilful sin. It is possible to crucify that thing and go out into actual sin. There have been people who did it, but it is not possible to live in wilful sin and be born of God at the same time. This is what John is telling us.

John is also trying to tell us in this verse that we cannot deliberately choose wilful sin and keep our "born of God" relationship. I may illustrate it in this way. Suppose I am walking down the street and see some fruit on display. The voice of the tempter might whisper to me and suggest that I take some of that fruit while no one is looking. Now, that is temptation to sin. It is not sin, but temptation. We may have a thousand such temptations a day and dismiss them without ever transgressing. However, there would no doubt be another voice that would warn me not to do that thing, and point out that it was sin, that I was a child of God and was not supposed to be in the stealing business. Now, in such a case as that I would be faced with an actual temptation to sin, and I must make some kind of decision. It may take me but one minute to walk by that fruit, but in that minute of time I will have to decide which one of those voices I am going to listen to. If I decide that I am going to listen to the voice of the tempter and follow out his suggestion, then I have chosen sin. The very minute I reach that decision and start to carry it out there will be something happen in my heart. My fellowship with God will be broken, for God cannot have fellowship with sin. This is what John is trying to get us to see in this verse. He is saying to us that God is holy and that He cannot and will not have fellowship with sin. He is telling us that if we choose sin, we will have to forfeit our

relationship with God, for God is holy and cannot fellowship with sin. This is a truth that is badly needed in this day and age of laxness and looseness, and may God help us to see it. If this truth were proclaimed from every pulpit of America and insisted upon Sunday after Sunday, it would not be long until there would be a turning back to God. May God help us to see it and believe it!

May I also remind you that when John puts forth this glorious truth found in the text, and assures us that we may be overcomers in Christ, he is not dealing in blind, wild optimism that refuses to recognize the full strength of the enemy. This is not blind optimism. It is open-eyed faith that looks the enemy clearly in the eye and recognizes his full strength, and then looks up to Christ and shouts, because he knows that Christ is more powerful than Satan and sin.

There is a tendency on the part of some people to minimize the awfulness of sin and to underestimate the power of Satan. In fact, there is too much loose thinking today on these two great topics. Too many people are inclined to whitewash sin and try to pass it by with a wave of the hand. The teaching of the theory of evolution has had a great deal to do with this. Those who hold to this theory deny the fact of the fall and look upon sin as just some of the animal that is left in us, and they seem to think that it is nothing to worry about. However, we need to come back to the idea that sin is awful in the sight of God, and that it is a mighty force in this world today. Then, too, some of these same people deny the very existence of Satan and laugh at people who hold to such a conception. However, we need to see that the Bible teaches that there is such a person, and need to recognize that he is a personality of power and cunning. There is no greater mistake that we can make than to minimize the exceeding sinfulness of sin and overlook the power of Satan. There is nothing that would please him better than for us to do this, for by doing it we are playing right into his hands. We need to come to a clear understanding of just what the Bible teaches about sin and Satan. Whenever you underrate the power of either, you are doing a foolish thing and may suffer as the result of it.

John clearly recognizes the presence of sin and Satan in the world, and he is under no delusion about their power and subtle force. But, in spite of the presence of these two things, he shouts, "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." He, who is in the world, is mighty; but, thanks be unto God, our Christ is mightier than he.

Sin is an awful reality today and we see the effects of it on every hand. There is enough sin abroad in the world and enough people who are in bondage to it that, if the devil should take a vacation this world could be wrecked by the power of sin that is already at work. The presence of carnality in the human heart is enough to wreck any life, if one should give it full control and give full sway to all the evil passions of the flesh. Satan is a fallen being, but he has not lost all of his cunning and power. He is still a powerful adversary, and we ought never to lose sight of his treacherous nature. Paul reminds us that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places. Therefore we ought to have on the whole armor of God, and we need to say:

My soul, be on thy guard. Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard. To draw thee from the skies.

Oh watch, and fight, and pray; The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day. And help divine Implore.
Ne'er think the victory won. Nor lay thine armor down;
The work of faith will not be done. Till thou obtain the crown.
Fight on, my soul, till death Shall bring thee to thy God;
He'll take thee at thy parting breath To His divine abode.

Sin and Satan are no respecter of persons. They will lay their blighting power upon a noble king like Saul and rob him of his peace and send him out of life by his own hand, crying, "God is departed from me, and answereth me no more." They will steal into the throne room of David the king, the sweet singer of Israel, and cause lust to burn in his heart until he will commit the awful sin of adultery and then the sin of murder to cover up his first offense. It will cause him to hang up his harp and shut off the sweet songs of praise, and send him to the ash heap of grief. Sin and Satan will even steal into the very presence of our Lord and steal from His side one of His chosen disciples, and will kill the love and loyalty of that man and turn him into a traitor. They will go into the palace or the hovel and wreck and blight the soul of any person who is not kept moment by moment by the power of Christ. They will steal into the pulpit or pew and will do their deadly work upon the soul, until the trumpet of truth is dashed from the minister's hand and he walks through the world in disgrace, and his mouth is hushed from preaching the glorious Gospel of full and free salvation. He that is in the world is a powerful foe and will resort to any tactics to accomplish his purpose. He never gives up on anyone. The higher we rise, the harder he will try to get us. He will never admit final defeat in the case of any soul until that one is swept into the presence of Christ. If you do not believe that this is true, then ask any old saint who has had dealings with him. The only safe and sure retreat is found beneath the blood-bought mercy seat. The blood is the only thing that can keep us safe from his power; but, thanks be to God, there is a place of security and rest. There is a power that is mightier than sin and Satan. We can live a life of complete victory in spite of all the powers of evil, and can be kept by Christ. From every stormy wind that blows, From every swelling tide of woes, There is a calm, a sure retreat: 'Tis found beneath the mercy seat.

There is a place where Jesus sheds The oil of gladness on our heads; A place than all besides more sweet: It is the blood-bought mercy seat. Ah I whither could we flee for aid. When tempted, desolate, dismayed? Or how the hosts of hell defeat. Had suffering saints no mercy seat.

There, there, on eagle wings we soar. And sin and sense molest no more: And heaven comes down our souls to greet, While glory crowns the mercy seat.

Possibly you think I have painted the picture too dark and have overestimated the power of sin and Satan, and have magnified the dangers that confront our souls, but I assure you that I have not. I have carefully followed the teaching of the Bible and have followed the example of the inspired writers of the New Testament. They, too, have followed the same line of thought and have told us, "The devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," and they have also reminded us that he comes as an angel of light, trying to deceive the very elect if possible. They have cried out and have told us that we are to beware; "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." They have said, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." They have

urged us to fight the good fight of faith, and we need that same note of solemn warning today. The minister or the teacher of the Bible who leaves that note out of his message is leaving out a very vital part of the teaching of God's Word.

The wise soldier is not the one who scoffs at the power of his foe and underestimates his strength; but he is rather the one who looks with clear eyes and an understanding mind and takes into account the power of his adversary, and then makes plans to combat him. He who is forewarned and forearmed is the one who comes out victorious. There are adequate resources for our needs, and Christ is mightier than sin and Satan. He can give us victory in every battle.

THE MIGHTY CHRIST IN YOU

John stands clear-eyed and takes into account the powers of evil. He is aware of the fact that the spirit of antichrist is abroad in the world, and that many people are going down under the onslaught of these subtle foes. However, in the face of this, he stands and shouts to the child of God, "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." He is not unmindful of the power of sin and Satan, but he knows that Christ is mightier than all and that so long as he is in us, we are safe. We could never stand in our own strength, but we can stand by His power. He is the one who will fight for us, and give the victory.

In this message, I have tried in my feeble way to give you a true picture of the power of the one whom John refers to as "He that is in the world." Now I come to that part where I shall try to give you some conception of the power of "he that is in us." I am aware of the fact that I can only try to do this, for I do not have the ability to do it. Human tongue fails us when we try to tell the glories of our God and King.

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing: Our helper He,
amid the flood Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great.
And armed with cruel hate.
On earth is not his equal.
Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing.
Were not the right Man on our side.
The man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth is His name.
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.
And tho' this world with devils filled
Should threaten to undo us;
We will not fear;
for God hath willed His truth to triumph thro' us.
The prince of darkness grim.
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lol his doom is sure,
Our blessed Lord shall fell him.
Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious,
See the Man of Sorrow now;
From the fight returned victorious.

Every knee to him shall bow;
Our Lord victorious.

John gives us this assurance, that our Christ is greater than he that is in the world, for he knows that Jesus has already met the devil and conquered him. It is not the idle boast of one who knows not whereof he speaks, but it is the statement of the truth that has already been established. Jesus has already come down into this world and has grappled with this powerful foe. He met him in the wilderness and was tempted of the devil for forty days and forty nights. The first Adam met the foe in a beautiful garden and fell. He fell because he believed the devil's lie when he said, "Thou shalt not surely die." Jesus met the tempter and came out victorious because each time the devil came at Him, He said, "It is written."* He came out from that first encounter in the power of the Holy Spirit. He walked through this old world, where sin and the devil had wrought such havoc, and on every hand He met with the fruits of sin. However, instead of being dismayed by the power of sin, He broke its power. He opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the ears of the deaf, and caused the lame to leap for joy. He healed the lepers of their loathsome disease, and all who were brought unto Him. There was not one single result of sin He ever met that He did not undo. There were no cases too hard for Him. He could stand in the face of the raging storm and command it to be still, and the waves lay down at His feet as whipped curs lie down at their master's feet. He stopped the funeral processions and stood at the mouth of the grave and called back the dead to life. He walked as Lord through this old world and none dared to dispute His claims and power. Legions of demons fled at His word.

It is rather interesting to note that the devil tried the argument of unconditional security on Christ. In Matt. 4:6, he said, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written. He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Here the devil is trying to argue to our Lord that if He is really the Son of God, then God will keep Him. However, the Lord refused to accept this suggestion of the devil. He came back with some more of the Word and said. "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." The devil used Scripture to prove his point, but Jesus reminded him that there was Scripture on the other side of the question too. We need to see that same truth today. It takes two halves to make a whole truth.

This Christ that John is talking about went to Calvary and there met sin and Satan in one great final struggle. All the forces of evil were loosed against Him. There on that barren hill the greatest battle that was ever fought went on for hours. The earth reeled under the mighty impact of the struggle, and even the sun was made to hide her face. In that terrific struggle all the forces of evil were turned on the Son of God. In the awful battle the Seed of the woman had His heel bruised; but, thanks be unto God, the devil had his head crushed and his power broken. Before the sun sank beyond the western hills, there rang out from that hill the shout of triumph, "It is finished." It was there that He made a show of Satan and triumphed over him openly. It was there that the power of sin and Satan was broken and our Christ proved Himself to be the Lord of might. It is only a question of time until it will all be over and Satan will be banished to the regions of darkness, and sin will be forever done away with. Our Lord has broken the power of darkness. Glory to His name!

He even went down into the grave, and there in the regions of the dead He wrung from the hands of Satan and death their power, and came back with the keys of the grave at His side. Death has been robbed of its sting and the grave of her victory by the power of the Risen Lord. He led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. He is now exalted at the right hand of God, where He ever liveth to make intercession for us; and because of that He is able to save us unto the uttermost, if we come to God by Him. Glory to His name! Thank God for the mighty, conquering Christ!

This Christ who is in us is mightier than Satan and his forces because He is the Lord Almighty. He is the "I AM" of eternity. He is the Creator and Maker of all things. John tells us, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Paul tells us, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him."

How wonderful these statements are when we stop to think of all the astronomers are telling us about the vastness of this universe. They tell us that there are over 350,000,000 stars, planets, and asteroids that are known to man today, and still there are vast regions that have never been explored by the telescope. Some of these stars are a million times larger than this little planet upon which we live. Just recently they discovered one that is so large you could put the sun in the center of it and let the moon swing around the sun at the same distance that it now swings, and still there would be room enough around the edge of this star for a highway 20,000 miles wide. Some one has said that if you should buy a ticket to one of the nearest stars at the rate of 1 cent per 100 miles, it would cost you \$2,780,000. They also tell us it would take 48,000,- 000 years, going at the rate of 60 miles per hour, to make the trip to one of the nearest stars. They tell us that some of these stars are so far away from this earth that it takes a million light years for the light to reach us. What they mean by a light year is this: light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles per second; that is about seven and one-half times around this earth in one second of time; and yet with light traveling at that terrific rate, and with no time out for rest, it takes one million years for it to reach us.

Now, I am frank to confess that if you can comprehend these stupendous figures, you have a greater mind than I have. They are far beyond my comprehension. However, they are the figures that the men of science give us, and of course we are not supposed to question them!

In the light of these stupendous figures it is very interesting to note a statement from the Psalmist. He refers to the heavens as the handiwork of God (or in other words, His hand work). Now, most anyone knows what hand-work is. It is the little light work that women do when they want to relax, such as knitting or something of that nature. It is interesting to think of the Psalmist speaking of such stupendous things in this vein. Yet this fits in with what we are told in Heb. 11:3, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." In other words, it was no great task for our mighty Lord to swing the stars into space and kindle the fire in the sun. He is Almighty and there is no limit to His power. This is the Christ that is in us. He is able to keep us.

Not only does the Bible teach that our Christ created all things by the word of His power, but the Bible teaches us that He also upholds all things by the word of His

power. Heb. 1:1-3. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Note that statement, "Upholding all things by the word of his power" Here we are plainly told that the Christ who is ours and who is in us is the Christ who upholds the universe by the word of His power. How wonderful!

Some time ago, Professor Einstein, the great German scientist, came out with the statement that there is no hitching post in this universe. I think what he meant by that was this, that there is no place or planet that the scientist can now point to and say, "That is the center and everything else revolves around that." I just want to say that there is "a hitching post" in this universe. Professor Einstein has just failed to discover Him. He is not found with the telescope of the scientist, but rather by the telescope of faith. Jesus Christ is the center of this universe and everything revolves around Him. He holds everything in its place. He speaks the word and they stand fast. He gives the command, and they march according to His will and command. It is by His word and will that the stars and planets march and pass and repass without conflict or collision.

Some great mathematician has figured out the weight of this earth and he tells us that it would take 300,000,000 miles of brand-new-one-inch steel cable to support this earth; that is, if you could find something to tie the cable to. And yet this earth continues to stay in its place. The question naturally arises, "What holds it up?" The answer that any of us would give is, "The law of gravitation holds it up." However, I feel like the little boy who asked his mother, "What holds the world up?" and she answered, "The law of gravitation." He came back with the question, "Mother, what held it up before they passed the law?" What is gravitation? It is a strange power that we know is in the world, and yet we do not know much about it. The truth of the matter is this: Our Lord Jesus Christ holds it up. He speaks the word and it is done. Back of these so-called laws is the mighty Lawgiver, who is our Lord and Keeper.

Here is a glorious thought to me. We are told that He upholds all things by the word of His power. In other words, He just speaks the word and it is done. He does not have to reach out His hands to hold the stars in their place. But, glory to God! He tells me in His Word that He will hold me in the hollow of His hands. Praise His name! I can't think about it without getting blessed! If He can speak the word and cause the universe to stay in its place, then I know I am safe so long as I am in His hands.

Now, I think we are in a position to really appreciate that wonderful statement found in John 10:27, 28. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (Of course, as has already been pointed out in this message, the conditions for being a sheep are to hear His voice and follow Him. No one has the right to lay claim to this promise who fails to meet the conditions. In fact, it is not promised to any but those who do follow).

Now, to really appreciate the meaning of this beautiful verse, it would be well to remember that just before this Jesus had healed a blind man. The leaders of the synagogue had the blind man brought before them. They tried to get this man to deny Jesus and His claims. He refused to do this, and was turned out of the synagogue.

Then Jesus met him, and in the presence of these false leaders He spoke the words of this wonderful chapter. He tells about thieves and robbers that come to steal and destroy the sheep. Then He declares that He is the door. In other words, they may shut the door of the synagogue in this man's face, but, thank God, they can't shut the real door in his face. Jesus is the real door and we may enter into the fold through Him, and no man—priest or any other—can hinder us. How comforting that is to us! Then He goes on and gives the assurance that if we are His sheep and hear His voice and follow Him, then no man can ever take us out of His hands. Man may turn us out of some earthly organization; but, thanks be unto God, it takes more than man to take us out of the hands of Christ. So long as we hear His voice and follow Him, we will be kept from all that man can do. Men may do their worst, but Christ will keep us if we will hear His voice and follow Him.

In Isaiah 40:31, we are told, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Another word that might be used in the place of the word "wait" is the word "cling." And I think it is the better word. Isaiah seems to have in mind the picture of a little tender, helpless vine. We have seen such grow up out in the fields or the forests. It seems to realize that it is helpless, and it begins to reach out and feel around for something on which to cling. It finally comes in contact with the trunk of the giant oak. It winds itself around that great oak and drives its little rootlets into the bark. Then one day the storm breaks in all its fury. The winds howl, the thunders rumble, the lightning pencils its message of terror across the face of the heavens. The storm breaks in all its fury and seems to sweep everything before it. When the storm has passed and the sun comes out once more, you may walk out and see chaos and confusion on every hand. Houses have been unroofed. The crops are beaten down to the ground, and limbs and trees are strewn all around. However, when you look out there in the distance you see that great, giant oak is still standing. It has weathered the storm and stands towering above the wreckage all about it. As you draw near, you find that the vine is also standing. As you look at it and see how weak and helpless it is, you may wonder how it ever managed to stand against the storm. There is but one answer. It clung to something that was strong, and therefore it stood. Isaiah is saying to us, if we will recognize our weakness, and refuse to rely upon our own strength, but reach out by faith and lay hold on God and cling to Him, we will be able to weather every storm of life, and come out more than conqueror over every foe.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His excellent word! What more can He say than to you He hath said, To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled? Fear not, I am with thee. Oh! be not dismayed, For I am thy God, and will give thee aid; I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand. Upheld by My gracious, omnipotent hand. When thro' the deep waters I call thee to go, The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow; For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless, And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress, Even down to old age My people shall prove My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love; And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn, Like lambs they shall still in My bosom be borne. The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose, I will not, I will not desert to his foes; That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

We have the assurance from God's Word, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,

whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee ." There are three Hebrew words that are used in the Old Testament and are translated into the English word "trust." However, there is a great difference in their meaning. One of them is the word "Hiphil." This word means to accept a thing as being true. This is a very shallow kind of trust. Many people have this kind of trust and it does not change their conduct. The second word is "Batah." This word means to look to or depend upon. This is a much stronger word than the first. It is a wonderful thing to look to God and depend upon Him to meet all our needs. The third word is the word "Hasah," and this word means to take refuge in. How blessed it is to take refuge in Christ and trust Him to keep us from all the powers of evil. This is the word that is used in this text. He will keep us in perfect peace, if we will keep our mind and heart stayed on Him and take refuge in Him. So long as we are hiding in the Rock of Ages there is no danger from any of the foes without. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

THE MEANING OF THE EXPRESSION "IN YOU"

Before bringing this message to a close, I would like to point out to you the significance of this expression used in the text, "He that is in you." To my mind this is a very suggestive expression, especially when we think of who used it. John had been with Jesus when He delivered that wonderful discourse on the coming of the Holy Spirit. He had heard Jesus say to them, "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Before the Day of Pentecost, the disciples had had the Holy Spirit with them, but on that wonderful day He came to abide in them in a new and wonderful way. I think this is what John is speaking of in the text. He is speaking of those people who are not only in Christ, but who have made a complete consecration, and have tarried until the Holy Spirit came in all of His fullness : Not only are they in Christ, but they have Christ dwelling in them in all of His fullness. All Christians are in Christ, but there are some people who have gone deeper and farther in their experience, until they are in Christ and Christ is in them in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Now, you may think that this is a distinction without a difference, but I assure you that it is not. There is a difference between being in Christ and having Christ in you in all of His fullness. We are told in Colossians 1:26, 27, "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." This word "mystery" really means a secret that is revealed only to those who are initiated. There are some secrets that you will never know until you are inducted into the family of God. I am not a member of the Masonic Order, but I am told that the secrets of that order can be revealed only to those who are members of it. This same thing is true in the Christian's life. There are some things that you learn after you become a child of God. This is one of those secrets. The Jews never saw this secret. They saw the coming of Christ in the flesh and they saw the things that would take place at His first and second coming, but this age when Christ would dwell in the hearts of men in the person of the Holy Spirit was a mystery that was hidden from them. There are many people today who can talk about the human Christ and the historic Christ, but they seem to know nothing about the indwelling Christ.

We ought not to be satisfied just to be in Christ, but we ought to press on into this glorious experience of having Christ in us. This is the hope of glory. This is that extra supply of oil that will cause us to be ready when the Bridegroom comes. This is that establishing grace that will cause us to be able to stand. Jesus tells us about a soul that the unclean spirit went out of, and the unclean spirit walked about and sought rest and found none. Finally, he decided that he would go back to the house from whence he had come out. When he did return, he found the house swept and garnished, (clean) but empty; and because it was empty, he went and took seven other unclean spirits with himself and they went into this soul. Jesus says that the last state of that men was worse than the first.

The secret safeguard against the attack of the devil is to be so full of the Holy Spirit that there is no room for anything else. Jesus said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Thank God, we can say the same thing if we are full of the Holy Spirit. We can be so full that there will be nothing in us to which he can appeal. I

thank God that this is true! I also want to say that this is the only way that we can be kept from evil. No man can go into a strong man's house and spoil his goods, until first he bind the strong man. Thank God! if we have the strong man, the Holy Spirit abiding in us, we are safe and secure.

Mr. Moody was once talking to some children, and he held up before them what appeared to be an empty bottle. He asked them what was in it, and they said, "Nothing." He assured them that it was full of air. Then he asked them how he could get the air out of the bottle, and they said that it could not be done. He told them that it could be gotten out. Then he took a pitcher and poured the bottle full of water and held it up and said, "Now, the air is out." The only way to get sin out of the human heart is to fill it so full of God that there is no room left for sin. The only way to keep sin and Satan out of the heart is to keep so full of the Holy Spirit that he will find no room in us. I thank God that it is possible to have Him come and abide in all His fullness. I also rejoice that I now enjoy His abiding presence.

I trust, dear reader, that, if you do not have Him abiding in you, you will just now lay aside this book and make a complete surrender of your all to Him. Let the Holy Spirit come in to abide.

If you will do this, then you will be able to live as an overcomer, because "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." Amen.