



Open Face

One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up all others. Christ our Righteousness

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My Position On The Law

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1. I believe the legal expression of the moral law (the ten commandments) to be a true, but limited expression of the will of God. It is holy and just and good. However, I reject the belief that it is the means by which God governs his children. We are not under the law, we are not governed by the system of the law. (Gal 3:24,26; Rom 7:6; Rom 8:2-4)
2. The legal expression of the law (the ten commandments) was formulated as a stop-gap measure to deal with carnal people, those who did not possess the life of God - a race of carnal people, created when Adam separated his family from the presence and life of God. (1 Tim 1:8-10)
3. I believe that the universe was not designed to function by legal law, but by natural law. In other words, the righteous inhabitants do not do what is right by reference to a set of rules, but because by nature, they possess the life of God, which nat-

urally impels them to love and to do what is good. (Ezek 36:27,28; Jer 31:31-34; Rom 8:11)

4. I believe that the real issue in the Controversy between Christ and Satan is not the defense of a legal system of rules, but a defense of God's principle of government. This principle of God's government is that God accomplishes his purposes and will in his subjects, by living his own life in them, by their own willing voluntary choice. (Col 1:26,27)
5. This is why Christ our Righteousness is the most significant message on the planet, and "Christ in you" is the greatest truth and experience to be obtained. (Matt 24:14; Rev 14:6)
6. So the solution to the sin problem is the new birth, not the keeping of the law. (Heb 7:19; Gal 3:21; 2 Cor 5:17)
7. I believe that God is my father and in Jesus, I have become his child exclusively by means of receiving his life, by faith. (Gal 3:24-26; Gal 4:4-7)
8. I believe that in the home, children belong because they have a birthright, not because they obey the rules faithfully. (John 8:34-36; Rom 8:14-16)
9. I believe it is servants who maintain their place by conformity to the rules, not sons. (Gal 4:3-5)

It is contrary to the atmosphere of love and acceptance in a home to place the

family members under the conditions of legal law, as a requirement for acceptance in the family. I belong to the Clayton family because of the blood in my veins. Yes, it is true that I desire to represent the family in an honorable way (live by its principles), but this is not the condition of my membership in the family. It is the same with God's family. We belong to him because of the new birth, not because of our law-keeping, but at the same time, we represent him and live by his principles (which include the ten commandments).

I do not reject the ten commandments neither do I seek to abolish them. However, I do insist that according to the Scriptures we are not GOVERNED by them, but by a higher rule.

TWO CONCEPTS

Among those of us who believe in the one True God, there are two basic concepts as to the nature of the Great Controversy between God and Satan, between good and evil. One group builds on the idea that the entire conflict is focused on the ten commandment law of God, and the great issue is centered on God's efforts to defend the law. This is a perspective that I do not agree with.

The other view is that the real issue is

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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centered on two different systems of government. Satan has claimed that created beings are better off if they are self-governing and do not need the indwelling spirit of God in order to be good. As Satan said to Adam and Eve, so he continues to say, that if we simply have a knowledge of good and evil, we will be able to function capably without God. In other words, we can live as well as God, without God.

The fundamental issue is, whether or not we can live good lives simply by being educated about good, or whether we actually need God himself living within, in order to be righteous. It is external righteousness vs internal righteousness. It is not about the legal law, it is about which system of government works. It is about the system of natural law, where Christ living in the believer changes his nature and produces the fruit of righteousness, simply by the natural means of giving him a new life. We can see immediately that these two

positions lie at the root of the entire contention over Christ our righteousness, versus righteousness by works.

THE LEGAL UNIVERSE:

I believe that there is a false paradigm with respect to the plan of salvation which arises from placing legal law at the center of the controversy. In essence, the false paradigm is this:

1. Man became guilty by transgressing the legal law
2. God sentenced man to die as a penalty for his disobedience
3. This sentence was irrevocable and could only be satisfied by death
4. God's saved man by sacrificing his son to satisfy his justice

This paradigm is unreasonable and unjust. It suggests that God's nature is such that for the slightest transgression, he requires the death penalty. He requires a penalty terribly disproportionate to the nature of the crime. Even in the unjust human system, we would be appalled if such a system of "justice" were applied. We say it is "the law," which required death, not God, but in saying this, we suggest that the law is separate and distinct from God - something above him to which he must bow, rather than simply an expression of his nature and character.

It suggests that God's justice system is such that the only way he can forgive is if someone actually dies, and in his system, it is acceptable for an innocent person to die instead of the guilty. Again, these are ideas which go contrary to every system of justice that we understand and hold as fair and good. Such practices in our society would leave us outraged, but we tell ourselves that because it is God, somehow it becomes acceptable, even though it abuses our sense of what is fair and just.

Some have used the example of one person paying a debt on behalf of another person as a means of justifying this unfair system, but this only raises other questions. When it comes to the payment of money, then we can understand when one person pays on behalf

of another because what we are doing is satisfying the person who is deprived of his money. We are redressing an injustice. However, in the case of a death sentence, how can the death of one person satisfy the requirement for the death of another person? Who requires the payment of blood? Whose need does it satisfy? In such a case, death is simply carried out as an act of retributive vengeance. Is this what we think God's justice requires?

These are the difficulties arising from the legal paradigm, the misconception that the universe is run by legal rules, with a system of penalties, guilt and retributive judgment.

THE NATURAL UNIVERSE

In this paradigm, the issue is not legal law, but natural law. When man sinned, a series of consequences were set in motion:

1. First man and his descendants were separated from God
2. This separation resulted in inevitable death - there can be no life without God
3. Man did not die instantly because Christ interfered with the natural consequences of his rebellion.
4. The law of nature (not a legal sentence) required man's death. All who separate from God, the source of life, must naturally die.
5. Christ had to become one of us, in order to restore the life of God to humanity.
6. In order to choose on behalf of humanity, he had to take our place, separated from God and fully under Satan's power. This condition is what killed him. From the moment he decided to take our place, it was inevitable that he had to die.
7. He worked out a perfect human-divine life as a man, and makes this life available to all who choose to be reunited with God.

This is what the fall of man and the death of Christ was about - not legal issues, but the issue of natural law bro-

ken, and the consequences (not penalties) which followed, and the plan of God and his son to overturn those consequences, using the same natural principles which were broken at the beginning.

The legal system was instituted as a teaching tool, as a type, as a representation of the greater natural system. The problem with Christendom in general is that they have adopted the same legal system outlined in the law and simply blown it up and transposed it onto the true system which governs the universe. They have not understood the new covenant and have not translated the elements of the law as to make sense, and so as to take away the image of God as a cold, distant, legal administrator. When the Old Testament is read the veil is still over their hearts and their faces and they cannot see the glory of God.

PROBLEMS WITH THE LEGAL LAW

There is no legal system which can succeed, or which even exists unless there are penalties attached to that system. By its very nature a system based on legal law must have at its foundation, penalties as an integral part of the system. Without these penalties the law becomes impotent and pointless. There has been an attempt to make the legal law and the natural law (sometimes referred to as “design law”), one and the same. However in doing this we step away from the biblical pattern and we confuse the message of the apostle Paul. Paul says *“the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life”* and here he makes a clear distinction between the legal law and what I refer to as the natural law. We can only understand the points that he is trying to make when we accept this distinction.

If a man told his wife that he wanted her to spend one day of the week completely focused on the relationship between the both of them, and that if she failed to do so, he would kill her, what would be her response? What would be the reaction if he told his children that if he caught them doing a single wrong act, he would kill them! We

would flee in horror from such a person, and yet, when we look at the controversy and the plan of salvation through the legal lenses, we are led to the conclusion that this is how God operates!

And yet, it is true that when the legal law was established it was necessary that penalties should go along with it. God said “keep the Sabbath, spend one day per week with me, and if you don’t I will see to it that you’re stoned to death.” I am not overstating the reality of the situation, this is the truth, it is how it really was. But it was only a stop-gap plan, a temporary measure, a situation where God was trying to teach his people greater lessons through illustrations and parables centered in the law. But this temporary system was to pass away when Christ came as God’s true answer to sin, and imparted his own life to his people. In this way God established righteousness as a natural inborn principle, rather than a condition to be obtained by obedience to a set of legal rules.

Legal law was never the basis of God’s true government. The law did exist in principle, as a natural inborn instinct in all who possessed the life of God. However it never existed as a legal document. Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 1:8, 9, that the law is not made for a righteous person! Clearly he is speaking of the legal law, the legal expression of the law, not the law in its principle, in the spirit. If the legal law is not made for a righteous person, then clearly, it could not have existed before there was sin. It was when sinners came into existence that legal law became necessary as a means of controlling them.

This is very easy to demonstrate because it is clear that some of the ten commandments are specifically designed ONLY for human beings in our present condition. For example, “honour thy father and thy mother,” clearly cannot apply to angels, because they have no mothers or fathers, neither could it apply to Adam and Eve because they had neither father nor mother. Likewise, angels are neither male nor female, they do not marry and clearly were not designed

for sex, so the law, “thou shalt not commit adultery,” does not apply to them. Again, neither could it apply to Adam and Eve because they had no one else around to commit adultery with.

THE ORIGINAL SIN

Lucifer and his angels were cast out of heaven not so much because they broke specific rules, but because they wanted to take control of heaven. Basically they were children in a home who decided to throw out the parents. Let us ask ourselves a question: if Lucifer had managed to oust God from heaven, and then kept the same exact laws, the same exact 10 Commandments which many insist already existed in heaven before sin, and established the 10 commandments as the basis of his new government, would this have made his rebellion acceptable? In other words, was it laws that Lucifer rebelled against or was it God that he rebelled against? Was it the details of the rules or was it the person who was in charge that irritated him?

Of course somebody will say that every transgression comes under the heading, “thou shalt have no other gods before me.” And they will say this because for them everything has to be broken down to the place where the law maintains center spot! But it is God who is the center and Lucifer’s crime was that he wanted God’s place. It was not an attack upon a set of rules, but an attack upon a person.

In the last day, Jesus will say to some, “I never knew you!” This is the ultimate problem. Those who hear this sentence were never a part of God’s family! How could he say that he never knew them if they had once been a part of the family of God? They do not belong because they were never born again! It is not a question of their behaviour. Their works of lawlessness only demonstrated that they never belonged to God. But their acceptance in the family was never on the basis of their behaviour it was always on the basis of the fact that Christ knew them, and they knew him. This relationship was visible in their works, but was not dependent on those works.

JUDGED BY WORKS

There is no question that the Bible teaches that God will judge the world on the basis of their behaviour, they will be measured by the law. But the judgement is only a demonstration which reveals who is a member of God's family and who is not. It was never about how well we kept the law, that was never our focus nor our emphasis! For us it was always Christ. Our eyes were not on the law, the law was not our concern, being in harmony with the law was the incidental fruit of the fact that Christ lived in us. The natural law living in us, ensured that when the legal law is called into action in the final judgement it can find no place where it finds fault in us.

LAW AND THE NEW COVENANT

I reject the idea that the legal law is a part of, or was ever intended to be a part of the everlasting covenant. The everlasting covenant is God's promise to put his life in us through his son and by this means to bring us into harmony with himself.

The legal law is strictly limited to the typological system that was given to the Hebrews at Mount Sinai. Everything in that system was type, an expression of a greater reality and this does not exclude the 10 Commandments. They were a legal expression of the life that God would give us when Jesus came to live inside of his people. But the life that Jesus gives is not the memorization of 10 statements, absolutely not! What Jesus does is infuse within us the very principles which are at the foundation of God's life and God's behaviour. What he does is give us the nature of God, a life which is instinctively oriented towards what is loving and good. This is what the law in the heart is about, it is not a legal document, it is not 10 statements. It is the very nature of God imparted to us. This is the new, or the everlasting covenant.

A DANGER?

Some have suggested that my emphasis is a danger to Adventism. I really cannot answer to that point, it is very possible that they are right. I don't start by ask-

ing myself, what does Adventism believe? I start by asking myself what do I see in the word of God, what is the Lord saying in each statement? I have endeavoured to step out of the box which I found stifled my ability to think and to read with an open mind. If Adventism is threatened by what I find in the Bible what am I supposed to do?

At every stage in the development of the Christian church men and women have faced the same question and at every stage there were those who were very concerned that "the church" was being endangered by the teachings of these persons. Everybody knew that the church was right and they were wrong, but today, hundreds of years later in hindsight, we hold these people up as heroes. I don't know if the same is true of me, but I know that I want to stand in the same way that they stood, upon the foundation of a clear conscience and an attitude of supreme loyalty to God.



The Sabbath Law

The Seventh day has been blessed and sanctified. God blessed that day and sanctified it forever, that is very clear from the Scriptures. However, the Bible speaks of no command to keep the Sabbath before Mount Sinai. Before man sinned, all the Sabbath was, was an appointment, a meeting time between God and man when they could enjoy each other's company. Did God's people keep it before Mount Sinai? I am sure that there were people who did, but they did not do it as an obligation, not because they were commanded to do it, with threat of punishment, but simply because they loved God and cherished the blessing he had provided.

The Scripture says very clearly that the law was made for unrighteous people. In other words, the need to command people with the threat of punishment

arose *only* because God was dealing with carnal, unconverted people who did not love him. When the relationship of love is restored by the born again experience, there is no need for God to command his people to worship him. That in itself would be self-defeating because love cannot be commanded. By its very nature, when love is demanded, it dies. Conformity and hypocritical behavior may be commanded, but not the true service of love.

I am not suggesting that the information concerning the Sabbath is no longer relevant. The Sabbath is still a wonderful appointment which God has set apart and blessed for the purpose of fellowship with his children. Why would any Christian neglect such a privilege?

However, God's people are no longer

under the law, we are not governed by the law, the demands of the law are no longer the basis on which we operate. Our service to God is based entirely upon the motivation of a new nature which operates on the basis of love and devotion to God - not the fearful servitude of slaves.

The only person who needs a court order to support his child is the devilish person who does not want to do it. The law is like that, it is God's court order to those who have evil minds. For the father who loves his child, it is insulting for someone to order him to support his child. It is totally unnecessary, because he does not operate on that level.



Relative Perfection

One of the things I was conscious of very early in my Christian experience, is the fact that Adventism has a system of beliefs that emphasizes and teaches perfection- or at least that's how I understood it. Adventists are one of the few groups of people upon earth who dare to use this word in relation to the character and moral development of human beings. I've wondered many times what perfection is and how one can attain to it. My own life persuaded me that perfection is not easily attainable. According to *Webster's New World Dictionary*, perfect means

"complete in all respects; without defect or omission; sound; flawless."

"In a condition of complete excellence; as in a skill or quantity, faultless; most excellent."

When talking about perfection, there is no room for any flaw, the presence of a flaw will immediately mean that perfection is missing. The question is, does God require perfection? When we go to the Bible we find that repeatedly, there are phrases, sentences and verses which indicate that God requires, desires, and commands perfection. For example, in Matthew 6:48, Jesus says,

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. (Matt 5:48)

I once had discussions with a person who said that God understands that we can never attain to a certain height of excellence, so He makes allowance for that. But in the Bible I don't find God saying, "be 75% perfect" or, "Be 90% obedient." I always find absolutes. The Bible demands a great deal of us, and the only thing that gives hope is the fact that along with these demands, we have the assurance of the absolute ability of God to fulfill in us, what He requires of us.

In 2 Corinthians 13:11, it says,

Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one

mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. (2Cor 13:11)

GOD'S PROMISE FOR PERFECTION

God not only commands perfection but also promises perfection. The Bible says:

And he gave some, apostles; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, For the perfection of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: (Ephesians 4:11-13)

Notice that when he says 'unto a perfect man,' he means 'unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.' Paul says that God gave certain gifts to the church: apostleship, prophets, and evangelists and so on, but in doing this God had a purpose, the purpose of these gifts was to bring the church to a state of perfection; they were to continue until the church should grow up to the place where it was equal to 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ!' Isn't that what it is saying? It is inescapable. The Bible does teach perfection, and it promises that this is where God is leading his people.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

PROMISES TO THE PERFECT

The Bible not only promises perfection but also commands it and there are certain outstanding promises that God makes to those who become perfect.

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. (Psalms 37:37)

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. (Isaiah

26:3).

The Bible says that the man who is perfect will have peace. This does not mean an absence of difficulties, disappointments nor trials in life, but rather the existence of something inside that brings peace. Like the song which we sometimes sing, says,

*I've got something within me,
Something that I cannot explain.
All that I know, thank God Almighty,
I've got something within me,'*

Many times in the past, the thought came to me: does it mean I can never have these blessings until I am perfect? I realize today that my understanding of the term perfect was distorted. The truth is all these promises and blessings can be ours **right now!** We don't have to wait until tomorrow or until one day in the distant future; they can be ours right now.

A PERFECT HEART

Many verses in the Bible suggest that God is searching through the earth for something specific. He is searching and examining people, but what is He really looking for?

Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. (Psalms 101:6).

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him... (2 Chronicles 16:9)

God promises marvelous things to those who become perfect and the Bible tells us that there were men who were "perfect." A classic example is Job. God said to Satan, 'Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?' Additionally, in Genesis 6:9, we are told that Noah was a

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Jamaica Campmeeting 2018



Jamaica Camp meeting 2017, what a great time we had! People came from all parts of Jamaica. There were quite a few who were attending for the first time, along with those who come year after year.

One of the highlights was our baptism of several persons into the body of Jesus Christ. The truth about God is spreading like fire in all parts of the earth, and Jamaica is not an exception. As always, we had brethren from Spanish town from Kingston from Saint Elizabeth from St. James from Manchester and other parts of the island. But it was a treat for us that this year we also had visitors from many different places including England, the United States, Germany, and from different parts of Jamaica. Some of these people we had never met before, but they had learned of our ministry either by watching videos on the Internet or through finding our website.

This year we had several folks from Saint Elizabeth, from St. Thomas and from St. Mary who were new to the Meeting. We had a fairly large number of persons attending and there were more than 100 people present on the Sabbath of the meetings.

Our speakers were brother Ken Corklin from Pennsylvania, Brothers David Clayton and Howard Williams from Jamaica, along with brothers Franklin Coach and Peter Barnz. But in addition

this year we also had Gregory Maxwell from Florida, and Brother Wayne Sutherland who came with his family all the way from England.

One of the great joys was being able to worship in our own facility. Our windows and doors were in, the floor was tiled and our two dorms were also basically finished. We had water in abundance and electricity from solar power. The two main things which remain to be done is that we need to put in the ceiling, and we also need bunkbeds for the dorms. Most of the brethren who came this year slept on the floor on foam mattresses, but some brought their own tents and slept outside.

It was that time of year when we normally have a lot of rain, but the Lord blessed our camp and the weather was beautiful except for one afternoon when it rained very heavily. Admittedly, it was a hard shower, and a few people had their belongings get really wet and drenched. But everyone viewed it as just one of the normal hazards of camping and we had a thoroughly enjoyable time, not only socially, but also spiritually.

The theme of our camp meeting was, "Foundations of the Gospel." Our emphasis was, as it has been for the last 12 years, the subject of Christ and his Righteousness. However, more and more, we have been seeing the clear connection between the truth about God and the true message of righteousness

by faith. This was emphasized at the camp meeting and was well received by all who attended.

This year we made some attempts to broadcast the messages live, however, we had some challenges with our equipment and though we did manage to broadcast, our video feed was not very good, and so those who joined us online were not really able to experience the feel of the camp meeting. However, the messages have since been uploaded and are all available online.

For our baptism. The folk in the community told us of a little spot that was not very well known, not very far from the campsite where there was a beautiful baptismal place. We set off to find this place and found that it involved walking for a little distance down a very steep hill. But when he got to the bottom and saw the pool we were delighted because it proved to be the perfect spot with a little tiny waterfall in a little stream coming down the hill and settling in a lovely pool at the bottom. It is here that we had our baptism where three souls were born into the body of Christ.

At the end of the camp meeting as always, we separated from each other with deep regret that it was over so soon and with a hope and prayer that the Lord will keep us faithful and bound in spirit to one another, until we meet again next year.





Relative Perfection

Continued from page 5

just man, and *perfect in his generations*. But what is this perfection that God is asking of us? Consider the following verses:

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing man sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. (Hebrews 2:9, 10)

Who is this talking about? It is talking about Jesus and it says Jesus *became perfect*, through sufferings. Was Jesus perfect as a baby? Of course he was! What about when He was a little boy growing up? What about when he was a teenager? Yes He was perfect. But here the Bible says that He *became* perfect through suffering. In this case, the Bible is speaking of perfection as though it was something He did not have at the beginning, but rather obtained through the things He suffered. In this verse we find a clue to help understand what God is talking about when He says He requires perfection of all of us.

The perfection of the 144,000 is held up in the Bible as being something unusual. I've always had this picture in my mind, that the 144,000 will reach a height in their relationship with God, that is unparalleled by any previous generation of Christians. They go through an experience that purifies them, and brings them to a place that no other generation has ever attained unto in the history of this planet. But even though the 144,000 has not yet been developed or revealed, there is perfection available to us today, and that is what we want to look at, rather than concerning ourselves with the perfection of tomorrow.

In 1 Chronicles 28:9, where David gives counsel to his son Solomon, he says,

And thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts... (1 Chronicles 28:9)

David counseled Solomon to serve God 'with a perfect heart'. What does that phrase mean? This brings to mind the occasion when Samuel went down to Bethlehem to anoint a king of the sons of Jesse. Jesse brought out Eliab, and God said to Samuel:

Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. (1 Samuel 16:7)

The Bible indicates multiple times and in several places that when God looks at people, what He's concerned about is the state of the heart. This is a clue as to what we are talking about, when we talk about Christian perfection.

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:12-14)

Paul wrote these words, but was Paul perfect? We are told that the most outstanding of the apostles, the most obedient perhaps, was the apostle Paul, but was Paul perfect? "I am not yet perfect," he says, and this seems like a contradiction because Paul was very strong in advocating for a pure and holy life. But as we look at something Paul said in Acts chapter 24, we begin to get an idea of the kind of perfection God is really looking for.

And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man. (Acts 24:16)

It is interesting how many times Paul emphasizes that what God is looking for, is something which he refers to as a "good conscience."

Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. (1 Timothy 1:5)

Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck. (1 Timothy 1:19)

I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day. (2 Timothy 1:3)

Here is another question: Can anybody be saved if they are not perfect? It depends on what we mean when we talk about being perfect, right?

We know people will be saved who have been worshipping on Sunday. They were disobeying God's commandments, or disregarding them it seems, and yet they will be saved, 'because that's all they knew.' When we include this phrase something becomes very clear; what God is looking for in people, is not perfect knowledge. God is looking for perfect submissiveness; He is looking for perfect obedience insofar as we know right and wrong. Sometimes we think that the more knowledge we have the more perfect we can become. But the goal of the Christian is not necessarily to learn more, but rather to be obedient to what he already knows. If you are not obedient to what you already know, why are you searching for more knowledge? Are you trying to heap more condemnation upon your head? Jesus said that to whom much is given, much is required. I have realized that when the Bible speaks about perfect, it is speaking about the heart that is perfect in its surrender towards God.

TOTAL SURRENDER

Picture this scenario. You have two children: one of them is always willing to obey you, and the other is always stubborn and argumentative. One day, your obedient child does something wrong, something that seems totally

out of character. When you called him and asked, "Why did you do such a thing?" he says, "I did not know it was wrong." How would you respond or feel about that child? Would you be upset or angry? Or would you punish that child?

Picture a second scenario. Your little child goes outside and starts pulling up your garden, but she weeds up all of the flowers, or the vegetables, along with the weeds. You come out angrily and ask, "Why did you do this?" And she says, "Daddy see, I'm helping you, I'm helping you weed the garden." She has done something that costs you but how do you as a good parent react to the situation? You say, "Thank you sweetheart, but look, these are the bad ones and these are the good ones." You know that this child needs education and not punishment. Can you see the point? A child who is obedient and submissive only needs education to do better.

God doesn't expect more of you than you have. All God wants is a heart that is perfect in its attitude towards Him. And once he gets that, his problem with us is no longer there. Forget about needing more light and understanding; what we really need is hearts that are submissive. Once we have that, a flood of light will come upon us. God doesn't have a problem with opening up our minds, or sending light. The problem is getting us to obey what we already know.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

This verse tells me that God sees my heart, my thoughts and my motives. Many times we deceive ourselves, telling ourselves that a particular concept is what we believe, don't we? We lie to our hearts because we do not want to submit. But do we fool God? There are so many areas that you can think

about in which we are dishonest; I want to be honest before God, I want a **perfect heart**. God says this is possible. If we want to overcome sin, if we want to be obedient, we can; Christ lives in us and gives us that power.

All our spiritual problems arise because we are not willing to submit to God. George Muller was an outstanding man of faith. Muller said that whenever he found that he had a difficulty in discerning the will of God, it was usually because of his own desires. He would get a sheet of paper and write down all of the reasons why he should do this thing and all of the reasons why he should do that thing. He would take this paper before God and pray. He said when he got rid of his own inclinations and preferences, it usually jumped out at him what God's will was.

Many times we blind our mind, our conscience, to the nagging of the Holy Spirit. So often, and in so many ways, we override this voice because of what is convenient for us. But in the light of God's word we can be true to our conscience; God makes it possible and we can be perfect but it takes this thing called surrender. One of my favorite songs expresses this truth wonderfully. It says,

*You have longed for sweet peace,
and for faith to increase,
You have earnestly, fervently
prayed;
But you cannot have rest, or be
perfectly blessed,
until all on the altar is laid.
Oh we never can know what the
Lord may bestow,
of the blessings for which we have
prayed;
Till our body and soul, he doth
fully control,
and our all on the altar is laid.'*

Look at the vision; it's so beautiful. Heaven is open before us, but it takes everything in terms of surrender. It means saying to God, "all that I am and have, I return to thee, without reservation, to be absolutely, whole heartedly, and forever yours."

There are some things that others can do, even Christians, which you cannot do. You don't have to be self-righteous, or brag over them or make it known what you're doing. But between God and yourself, you cannot do it, because your conscience must be clean before Him. You don't know how another person is being convicted, but if you have a conviction that this is what God wants you to do, you have got to do it. Why? Because God says, "be perfect," and He means perfect in surrender. The other person must follow his convictions in a faithful way, but God leads us each at a different pace, doesn't he?

The important thing is to be true in your heart towards God. Don't deceive yourself because you can lie to men and get away with it, but when you start lying to yourself, you come to the place where you're actually fooling yourself. This is very dangerous; if I lie to a man, someone may convince me of my error, but when I lie to myself, to the point where I actually believe the lie, I am in very desperate shape.

*And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not **the love of the truth**, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. (2 Thessalonians 2:10, 11)*

These verses speak about the anti Christ who will come with all lying wonders. Notice that it says, '... in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth.' First of all, it was not that they didn't love the truth neither was it that they did not know the truth. It was that they did not receive the love of the truth; they did not want the truth. Why does someone not want the truth? Because it requires too much of a cross to take up; it affects his relationship with his good friends and family or it makes him uneasy. There is too much that he has to give up.

Take for example, the rich young ruler who Jesus told to sell everything and

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Chia Seeds

Lenworth Frankson



Chia seeds are the tiny black seeds of the chia plant (*Salvia Hispanica*). They are native to Mexico and Guatemala, and were a staple food for the ancient Aztecs and Mayans. Chia is the ancient Mayan word for "strength". Chia seeds contain large amounts of fiber and omega-3 fatty acids, high quality protein and several essential minerals and antioxidants. Eating chia seeds may improve risk factors for heart disease and diabetes, lead to better digestive health and increase blood levels of heart healthy omega-3 fats.

Chia seeds are small, flat and oval shaped, with a shiny and smooth texture. The color can range from white to brown or black. Chia seeds have a relatively bland flavor so it can be added to almost everything. They can be soaked in liquid and added to porridge, made into pudding, used in baked goods, smoothies or simply sprinkled on top of salads or yogurt. Because of their ability to absorb liquid and form a gel, they can also be used to thicken sauces or as an egg replacement in recipes. Soaking chia seeds before eating is optimal, but not necessary.

NUTRITION FACTS

For the Aztecs, chia seeds were loved for its ability to sustain and to give endurance. It's believed that you could live off chia almost entirely, because Chia seeds contain 18 of the 22 amino acids, including all nine essential amino acids: isoleucine, leucine, lysine, me-

thionine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan, valine, and histadine. Chia seeds contain 486 calories per 100 grams, or 138 calories per ounce. By weight, they are 6% water, 46% carbohydrates, 34% fat and 19% protein.

INTERESTING FACTS

- Chia is gluten free
- It is super high in dietary fiber, making it great for digestion and healing digestion issues.
- It contains 20% omega-3 ALA, making it a super food for the brain and heart.
- Chia has eight times more omega-3 than salmon!
- It boasts 20% protein
- It is high in antioxidants (more than blueberries)
- Chia contains five times more calcium than milk
- Chia contains seven times more vitamin C than oranges
- It contains three times more iron than spinach
- It has twice the potassium content of banana
- It is food for healthy skin, hair and nails
- It has a positive impact balancing blood glucose levels (making it great for diabetics)
- Chia makes a great egg replacement. Just combine with water to form a gel, and add it to recipes that call for egg.

FIBER

Quite simply, we have two kinds of fibers in our foods, soluble and insoluble fiber. Insoluble fiber is the kind that does not absorb water, yet passes through our digestive tract helping in improving digestion, bowel movement,

and also regulating digestive activities. Then there is the soluble fiber, the kind that is found in Chia. This fiber absorbs water, swells up in the digestive tract and gets fermented by bacteria. Soluble fiber can be extremely useful for regulating blood sugar level as well as cholesterol. The kind of fiber that Chia has creates what is called "the Chia gel" that helps clean the intestinal walls with its scrubbing action and can also help in cases of diarrhea by helping in "bulking up" the stool.

Since Chia absorbs moisture and works along the digestive tract, it also happens to help the colon, thus reducing the risk of colon cancer. In addition, fibers slow down the breaking down of food to make sugars and in this way stabilize blood sugar levels. Soluble fiber like that in chia will slow down the movement of bulk along the intestinal passage and as a result the feeling of being full continues longer, helping one stay satiated longer. This is especially true if it is eaten along with healthy fats and proteins. Almost all of the carbs in chia seeds is fiber, which means that almost none of those carbs are sugar or starch. This is also great for people on low-carb diets.

ESSENTIAL FATTY ACIDS

Essential fatty acids cannot be made in the body and therefore have to be obtained from foods. Omega-3 and omega-6 are the essential fatty acids for humans and other animals. One of the unique characteristics of chia seeds is their high content of heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Most of the fats in chia seeds consist of omega-3 fatty acids. About twenty percent consist of omega-6 fatty acids. Chia seeds are actually the best-known plant-based source of omega-3 fatty acids, even better than flaxseeds.

For most people, an omega 6 to omega 3 ratio of 4:1 is ideal– that's 4 omega 6s for every 1 omega 3. Anti-aging experts

also suggest going even further, maintaining a 1:1 ratio or higher in favor of omega 3s. The average American eats a ratio of anywhere from 12:1 to 25:1 omega 6 to omega 3. This imbalance increases the risk of coronary heart disease and also heightens the body's natural inflammatory processes. Modern diets contain too few omega-3 fatty acids. By adding about two tablespoons of chia seeds its possible to lower ratio of omega-6 to omega-3. A more balanced ratio may cut the risk of various chronic diseases, such as heart diseases, cancer, inflammatory diseases and premature death.

PROTEIN

The chia seed is made up of roughly 14-19 % protein, with 100 grams of chia seeds providing about one third of the recommended daily protein intake. Adding chia seeds to your diet is incredibly easy. They may be eaten raw or cooked. You can grind them to make a powder, as well as you can have them whole.

A high protein intake has been associated with feeling satisfied and full after meals. Chia seeds contain more protein than most grains. They are a great plant-based protein source. They contain high-quality protein with all the essential amino acids, and are therefore a good plant-based protein source. They are also gluten free, so gluten-intolerant individuals can enjoy them. However, they are not recommended as the sole protein source for children.

VITAMINS AND MINERALS

The absorption of some minerals, such as iron and zinc, may be reduced because of the phytic acid content of chia seeds. Chia seeds however are an excellent source of many essential minerals, but a poor source of vitamins. They are high in manganese, phosphorus, copper, selenium, iron, magnesium and calcium. The most abundant minerals are listed below.

Manganese: Whole grains and seeds are rich in manganese, which is essential for metabolism, growth and development.

Phosphorus: Usually found in protein-rich foods, phosphorus contributes to bone health and tissue maintenance.

Copper: A mineral that is often lacking in the diet, important for heart health.

Selenium: An important antioxidant mineral, involved in many processes in the body.

Iron: As a component of hemoglobin in red blood cells, iron is involved in the transport of oxygen throughout the body. It may be poorly absorbed from chia seeds due to their phytic acid content.

Magnesium: Often insufficient in the Western diet, magnesium has important roles in many processes in the body.

Calcium: The most abundant mineral in the human body, essential for bones, muscles and nerves

IMPROVED BLOOD SUGAR CONTROL

Having healthy blood sugar levels is crucial for optimal health. Studies in animals have shown that chia seeds reduce insulin resistance and improve blood sugar control, which are important risk factors. Human studies have shown that bread made with chia seeds causes a reduced blood sugar response compared to more traditional breads. Chia seeds may regulate blood sugar levels. Breads made with chia seeds cause smaller spikes in blood sugar than traditional breads.

LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for chronic diseases, such as heart disease. Chia seeds and chia flour have both been shown to lower blood pressure in individuals with high blood pressure.

ADVERSE EFFECTS

No adverse effects have been reported from consuming chia seeds. However, to avoid possible digestive side effects, drinking plenty of water with chia seeds is generally advised, especially if they have not been soaked before eating.

BLOOD THINNING

Large doses of omega-3 fats, such as those from fish oils, may have blood-thinning effects.

If you are taking blood-thinning medications, then consult with your doctor before incorporating large amounts of chia seeds into the diet. The omega-3 fatty acids may affect the activity of the medication.

To sum up, Chia seeds are very rich in fiber, antioxidants, minerals, and heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. They are high in protein and many essential minerals. They have been linked to lowering risk factors for heart disease and diabetes, as well as benefits for digestion and gut health. Chia seeds can be added to other foods as a topping or put into smoothies, breakfast cereals, energy bars, granola bars, yogurt, tortillas, and bread. They can be soaked in water and consumed directly or be mixed with any kind of juice. They may also be made into a gelatin-like substance or eaten raw. The gel from ground seeds may be used to replace as much as 25% of the egg and oil content in cakes, corn bread and other pastries.

With all of these advantages and benefits, Chia seeds are very easy to incorporate into a healthy diet, and are truly worthy of their reputation as a super food.



THINGS DON'T CHANGE

At Gerard's Cross I plainly declared to those whom God gave into my hands the faith as it is in Jesus: as I did next day to a young man I overtook on the road and in the evening to our friends at Oxford. A strange doctrine, which some who did not care to contradict yet knew not what to make of; but one or two, who were thoroughly bruised by sin, willingly heard and received it gladly.

(The Journal of John Wesley)

Relative Perfection

Continued from page 9

come follow Him. He did not love the truth at all. If Jesus had said, take a quarter of your wealth and give to the poor, he would have worked with that. But this uncompromising everything was simply too much. Sometimes God shows us things that we neither love nor want. So instead of loving the truth, we tell ourselves: I don't think God requires that. We say it so often, and we blind ourselves to the evidences so much, that we eventually come to believe the lie.

Notice that the verse then says, '*And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie.*' People come to the place where they actually believe with all their hearts something that is false. Sincerity, at that point, means nothing and cannot

save anyone. You have come to believe this lie because, first of all, you were not honest in your dealing with God. You shut your heart against God on this point, so determinedly, so decidedly, that God says, "I'm going to leave you alone, I cannot break through the barrier you have placed around yourself." So you come to believe the lie with all your heart. It is not a question of how big is the sin: whether it's as great as rejecting the Sabbath, or as small as eating something that is forbidden. It is the fact that you say, "God, in my life, on this point, you shall not have supremacy; on this point I will maintain control." This is very dangerous attitude and such a person cannot be saved.

This to me is logical, reasonable and good because if a man goes to heaven saying to God, "You cannot have this

little space," he has in him the seed of Lucifer and he will raise rebellion against God again sometime in the future. On the other hand, a man who goes to heaven ignorant, knowing maybe only one of the commandments, but who says, "Take me, I'm yours, and anything you say, I'm yours," only needs to be told, "Here are a few other things you didn't know." His heart already belongs to God; he only needs education.

Many of us might, in some things, be on the road of self deception. But in the light of the word of God, we can discern where we are, and we can purge these things out of our lives. I have a desire in my heart, to be among people whose only desire is to have a relationship with God where there are no shadows, because that is what God wants. May all of us by the grace of God, have only one ambition: attaining to this experience of absolute surrender to our Father.



Open Face

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