

C. White

**THE TWO SONS OF ZEBEDEE
AND THEIR RELIGION**



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PRICE FIVE CENTS



Published by
UNION PUBLISHING COMPANY
Britton, Oklahoma, U. S. A.

THE TWO SONS OF ZEBEDEE AND THEIR RELIGION.

The names of these two boys were James and John. Their father was a fisherman by occupation. The record says when these two boys were found they, with their father, were mending their nets. Peter and Andrew were also brothers, who were the sons of Jonas. They were partners in fishing with Zebedee and his boys. They were also called to be fishers of men at the same time as were James and John. It is interesting to trace the training of these boys and why the Master called them to his work. One of the best ways to learn the greatness of these boys is to study their production of Scripture in later life. In doing this, we will note the Epistles of John first. Never have we seen so much in the writings and character of these boys as we now see. Therefore we try to give to the reader the merits of these writings as we enter into the search for truth contained in them. The pith, as we sum it all up, is to teach each individual reader whether they are a child of the devil or a child of God—which? The examination of the subject, as given by the Apostle, is a critical one. Examine it carefully and ask yourself the question, when through: To whom do I belong? If found to be a child of the devil, we urge a speedy effort on your part to be released from him before it is too late by following the rule laid down by the Apostle. In doing so, remember there is but one way and one rule to follow to obtain that freedom.

The Epistles of John on Obedience.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

"(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ. "And these things write we unto you that your joy may be full."—First John 1:1-4.

The thought in the above introduction to the Epistles of John is: First: That in the beginning the Father and the Son were one in fellowship. Second: The Son

which in this is spoken of as the word, was from the beginning. Third: That word was seen, handled, and made manifest to the Apostles, which was from the beginning. Fourth: That eternal life was in Christ, which was from the beginning. Fifth: All who believed these things had the same fellowship and eternal life as that which existed between the Son and the Father in the beginning.

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—Verses 5-7.

This shows that this fellowship and eternal life with us and the Father and the Son depends on our walking in the light, as he is in the light. Says David, "Thy word is a light to my feet." Another says, "The entrance of thy word giveth light." It is on condition that we walk in the truth, that we are cleansed from all sin.

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."—Verses 8-10.

The light, as we walk in it, shows us that we are born in sin and to say we are not in sin makes God a liar, for he has said that sin and death passed upon all men for that all have sinned.

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."—2:1-6.

God desires us not to sin, but if any does sin after walking in the light, then they have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous. The test is, then, whether we are in him or not. Also that we now

keep his commandments. "He that sayeth he knoweth him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Obedience is ever the test as to our standing before God. It is not our feeling or our saying we believe, neither some experience in healing, or some miraculous supposed happening, but remember it is ever and always obedience that settles the matter with God. He that abideth in him must walk as he walked. That is, do the things Christ did.

"Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning."

"Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth."—Verses 7, 8.

Says the Apostle, this is not something new, but the same we had from the beginning. No, there are no new commandments, but the same old commandments we had from the beginning. John says, "This old commandment is now new to us, because the true light now shineth upon it." We often use the expression about some old thing as it is becoming new to us. So when the commandments are taught in their true light, which we have had from the beginning, they appear new to us.

"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now."

"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him."—Verses 9, 10.

In this scripture the light and darkness are both explained. The light is to keep the commandments. Darkness is to break the commandments.

"But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes."

"I write unto little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake."

"I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father."

"I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."—Verses 11-14.

Note that it is stated here twice that Christ was from the beginning and the appeal is to those who have accepted Christ, that the word of God abideth in them.

Thus showing they have obeyed that form of doctrine which was once delivered to the saints. Not some new doctrine, but that which was from the beginning, which the saints of God had known from the beginning.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."—Verses 15-17.

The last statement here made is, he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. It is ever the doer. Faith, says James, without works is dead, being alone.

"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."

"And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life."

"These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you."

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."—Verses 24-27.

Passing over verses 16 and 17, which is an exhortation, the Apostle again reminds us of that which was from the beginning, which is the commandments which was with the Father and the Son. If those commandments, says the Apostle, remain in us, then we have the fellowship with the Father and the Son. He further says, this is the condition of eternal life which is promised us. We are also reminded that our teacher, the Holy Ghost, teaches no lies, but the truth according to the word which abides in us.

"And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

"If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."—Verses 28, 29.

The person who abides in obedience has boldness in the day of his coming. The test of true righteousness is always the performance of the commandments of God. The Psalmist says, "All thy commandments are righteousness, and thy law is the truth."

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon

us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins: and in him is no sin.

"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."—3:1-7.

Every man who embraces the hope of seeing him at his coming and being changed to immortality purifies himself, even as he is pure. This purifying process is by ceasing to break the commandments of God and doing that which is righteous. Christ came to take away our sins, not the law, but sin, which is the violation of the law, for in him was no sin. He was not a law-breaker. If we abide in him we sin not, but if we sin we have not known him. The test of obedience is what determines whether we are what we claim to be or not. The man who is not willing to obey any commandment of the law of God is no Christian, no matter if they belong to all the churches in the land. The more of a profession they make the greater hypocrites they are. Said Christ, "Yea, rather blessed are they who hear about the word of God and do it." Many don't like to hear about the do religion. In fact the preaching of strict obedience to the commandments of God will kill any of the so-called revivals now in existence. That is not what they want. They want every thing else but the genuine obedience. The warning in verse eight is, not to be deceived by those who merely profess to be followers of God.

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

"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.

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

"Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."—Verses 8-12.

The story is here plainly told how to detect one class from the other. Namely, if a person will not, or is not, keeping the commandments of God, he is a sinner, and has never been born of God, (converted). They are of the devil. A man who is converted cannot break the commandments of God because his seed abides in him. Says Peter, "that seed is the word of God by which we are converted." I Peter 1:22. That word teaches obedience to the law of God, so that man cannot break the commandments of God as long as he regards the instructions of God. This is sanctification in its purity. It is all easy to argue sanctification in the abstract, but apply the test given, namely, if the person is willing to keep all the laws of God as written, the Sabbath not accepted, then we have evidence they are sanctified through the truth. If not willing, then we know they are not sanctified and do sin.

Note. The Apostle is not arguing whether a man can fall from grace in back-sliding. Neither is he arguing the point whether a man knows it all when he is converted, and if he violates in the least degree he is not sanctified. These points are all taken up in other scriptures, such as the text that says "If a man does sin after conversion he has an advocate," and so on. But the point here is not whether a man is born of God at all, but it is whether he is of the devil or of God, which? That is the question here. It is decided by his relation to the commandments of God. We are safe in saying that the person who opposes any of the commandments of God is of the devil. Those who are willing to be taught what the commandments require and accept them by obedience are of God. This is the message we have had from the beginning says the Apostle.

"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."—Verses 13-15,

Love and hatred is a test of our obedience. Hate results in murder, which is a violation of the sixth com-

mandment. Love of the brethren is an evidence that we have passed from death unto life, (converted). The devil and the world always hates loyalty to God's law.

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

"My little Children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

"And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

"Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."—Verses 16-22.

The test of love is further given in plain language which, as Paul says, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13:8. The last six precepts pertain to our duty to man, the first four to God. This, says Christ, is to "love the Lord our God with all the heart, and our neighbors as ourselves."

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."—Verses 23, 24.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of anti-christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

"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.

"They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

"We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

—4:1-8.

The above is a most important scripture and all should understand it. We are admonished to "try the spirits, whether they be of God" or not. Surely in our day this is necessary when, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect. It says the test is this, "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God, and this is the spirit of anti-christ." Verse four tells us how to test whether the spirit of Christ has come in our flesh or not. It says plainly, "Little children ye are of God, and have overcome them. For greater is he that is in you (your flesh) than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore they speak the things that are of the world, and the world heareth them. Hereby we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." Hence, Christ here, is spoken of as coming in the flesh. That is, he is to come in our flesh by his spirit, and aid us in doing that which we cannot do in our own strength. Namely, aid us in the keeping of the commandments of God, which the world cannot do because they are not born again. Verse 13 says, "Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit." Chapter five says, "By this we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments and his commandments are not grievous." Ch. 5:2, 3. This power to overcome the world and keep the commandments of God is obtained by faith through Christ who gives us that power.

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

"This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

"And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in

himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of the Son."—5:4-10.

The above scripture abounds with proof that all the Apostle has said is true, and the last statement is that we have the witness within ourselves that it is true. First, there are three in heaven, the Father, the Word (Christ), and the Holy Ghost. These three are one. They are united. Christ said, "Me and my Father are one" in unity. He also said, "He would send the Holy Ghost unto us which would lead us into all truth." So there are one in perfect harmony. There are also three in earth, says John, that bear witness. The spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one. So there are six mentioned of which all agree in one. The three in heaven witnessed to Christ being the Word that came and dwelt among us: First, by Christ being conceived by the Holy Ghost. Second, at his baptism there was a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And third, on the cross, when his blood was spilled for the world, the voice from heaven again was heard, and the sun refused to shine on the scene. These three witnesses on earth were all given to bear testimony to us that Christ was the Son of God. And last, says John, we have the witness within ourselves. We know the works of the flesh has been destroyed in us by his coming in the flesh in us. Thus enabling us to do that which we could not do without him. Namely, keep the commandments of God. For, "The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:3. Paul says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest which are these: adultery, lasciviousness, witchcraft, variance, emulation, strife, sedition, heresy, drunkenness, idolatry, and sedition, which as I have told you before, that they which do such things cannot inherit the kingdom of God and Christ. But the fruit of the spirit is joy, peace, longsuffering, meekness, temperance, and faith." Gal. 5:19. Thus we see it is the same truth which has been from the beginning, not a new doctrine, not a new plan, not some side issue to tell whether we are sanctified or not, but obedience is the test. This obedience or disobedience is seen by the fruit we bear whether it is the works of the spirit or the works of the devil whether we are the children of God or the children of the devil. All is plain when

the heart becomes in a condition it is willing to turn to the Lord by obedience. Don't be deceived in these last days as to who are followers of God and who are not. "Great peace have they that love thy law and nothing shall offend them," that is, nothing in the law, when presented, will be of the least objection to any child of God, but the children of the devil will argue against it and do all in their power to avoid its obligations. It is easy to know of what spirit we are of.

The Second Epistle of John.

"I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

"And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

"And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."—Second John 4-6.

This Epistle is written to the Church as a whole as expressed by the term Lady. Again it is repeated that the commandment is from the Father and from the beginning. The beloved disciple is rejoiced to know that the children walk in the truth.

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

"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.

"If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."—Verses 7:10.

The warning given to the Church is to beware of deceivers. He calls them anti-christ. He tells us who are anti-christ, it is those "who transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ," and that doctrine is the keeping of the commandments. Also anti-christ are those who say Christ is not come into our flesh, to strengthen us so we can keep the commandments of God. Some say anti-christ is the Catholic Church, some say one thing and some say another. But the facts are, every one who in any way opposes obedience to the whole law of the Father as written either on stone or in a book by Moses, is anti-christ. Every one who says the

law cannot be kept, or is abolished, or is not good, or is contrary to us, or is a yoke of bondage, or says the Sabbath is Jewish, or in any other way opposes the laws of God are anti-christ, and no evading it. Who will dare deny it? The beloved says, "If any man has this doctrine he has both the Father and the Son." The last verses quoted are strong, namely, "If any come to you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, (congregation). Neither bid him God's speed." We cannot conscientiously bid a law-breaker God's speed in his rebellion, for in so doing we become partakers of his evil deeds. Paul says, if any be a covetous man we are not to so much as to eat, (the Lord's supper). This shows us that no law breaker who purposely violates any of God's commandments are entitled to the communion of the Lord's body. Some make the test as to whether you have been baptised by a minister who has been authorized by a certain denomination, as though the saving virtue was in their authority. Shame on such ignorance. Paul says let each "examine himself" and see that he does not eat and drink unworthily, for, "for that cause many are sickly and die among you." Hypocrisy is a terrible thing. Ignorance like a dumb brute is another awful mistake, and what is still worse, is for teachers to teach that their organization and membership to it, entitles one to partake of the communion unwarned as to the result. All such ignorance in any sect or creed will say anti-christ is the Catholic Church when they are equally guilty.

Three Boys.

James and John were the sons of Zebedee, Peter was their partner. We now see how the beloved John taught the law and obedience, if you will read the book of James, following this you will have another example. Then I read that when Peter was told by the Lord to arise and slay and eat all manner of beasts let down to him in the sheet, which represented the unclean Gentiles, he said, "Not so Lord, for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth." And further said, "I perceive that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness (keeps the commandments) is accepted of him." This tells me that his parents had raised the boy to obey God and his commandments, and

in his home, did not have his table filled with hog, turtles, rabbits, frogs and every abominable thing. It teaches me also that Christ knew where to get his disciples, among boys that had been trained right. Who will profit by this lesson of these boys and obedience?

Recapitulation.

First: The witness within us tells us that if our religion is of the right stamp it is always capable of proof. Paul, in speaking of Christ's righteousness, says, "But now the righteousness of God is manifest without the law, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." Rom. 3:20. Both the law and the prophets testified that Christ did everything required in the law and as taught by the prophets. Hence, he was righteous. John says in his Epistle, "He that is righteous doeth righteousness even as he is righteous," and "he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him, and hereby we know that he abideth in us. By the spirit which he has given us."

The Witness Within Us.

It is our privilege to know our standing before God. He has given each individual the witness within them. This standing is found out by self-examination. Paul says, "Examine your own selves whether ye be in the faith." Prove your own selves. II Cor. 13:5. John gives us many tests as follows: "Hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments," 2:3. "But who so keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected," 2:5. "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever," 2:17. "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," 2:24. "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him," 2:29. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not, whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him," 3:6. "He that committeth sin is of the devil. For the devil sinneth from the beginning," 3:8. "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," 3:9. "In this the children of God are manifest and the children

of the devil. Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God," 3:10. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments," 5:2. "For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments," 5:3. "And this is love that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment ye have heard from the beginning. Ye should walk in it," Second Epistle 6. "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. If there come unto you any and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into thy house, (congregation). Neither bid him God's speed, for he that biddeth him God's speed, is made partaker of his evil deeds," 9-11. "He that doeth good is of God, but he that doeth evil hath not seen God." Third Epistle 11.

Christ is Come In the Flesh.

Christ's coming in the flesh of each individual is another test as to our being a child of God. The purpose of God in having his Son take on himself our nature was that he might dwell in our flesh in this life. He being tempted in all points like we are, yet without sin, he would "be able to succor those who were tempted." John says, "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. If ye love me keep my commandments and I will pray the Father and he will give you another comforter that he may abide with you forever, even the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. But ye know him for he dwelleth within you and shall be in you." John 14:15-17.

The work of this abiding of Christ is to "strengthen us with all power by his spirit in the inner man." So that we can do that which we could not do in the work of overcoming without it. Thus Paul says, "Walk in the spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." For the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary, the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led by the spirit ye are not under the law, (under its condemnation)." Gal. 5:16-18. Paul says, "That when he would do good evil was present with him

and how to perform that which was good I found not." But he also said, "I thank God through Jesus Christ there was deliverance." Rom. 7:7.

Now coming back to John again we read of the evidence of Christ's coming in the flesh in us. "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ. He is anti-christ that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son hath not the Father. But he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also." 1:22, 23. "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you and ye need not that any man teach you: But as the same anointing teacheth you all things and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you ye shall abide in him." 2:27. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." 5:10. "And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment that as ye have heard from the beginning ye should walk in it. For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an anti-christ." Second Epistle 6, 7.

It is now clear that coming in the flesh, that is, in our flesh by the Lord, is the great test whether we are children of God or not. In the last days eighteen sins are enumerated by Paul as characteristic of those who have a form of Godliness but deny the power thereof. That is, by their actions they deny the power which is at our command to help us overcome. Hence, all such are anti-christ, whether they be Catholic or Protestant. All false professors are anti-christ. Paul further says, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile." Rom. 1:16. So we appeal to every one who profess to be followers of Christ to "examine themselves whether they be in the faith" or not. Have you the witness within you as proof that you are an overcomer? Are you willing to take the commandments of God as your rule of life? Can you realize there is in you a power which is transforming your character day by day? Are you reprov'd of sin in your experience each day, when you do wrong? Can you see by self-examination each day the things you once loved you now hate? Do you see the things of evil

temper, covetousness, speaking evil of people, pride in dress, are you ambitious to be greatest, and so on, are they passing away from you? Are these, with hundreds of other failures heretofore known by you passing away? These will easily tell you where you stand. Are you prejudiced against any commandment God has given you to obey, such as the Sabbath, now so unpopular? Are you willing to be led by the spirit in all truth whatever it may be? All is plain as your duty to God. If so, then the spirit will teach you the truth. "We are sanctified through the spirit and belief of the truth." Paul says, "We are sanctified by the washing of water by the word." Peter says, "As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby." Said Christ, "The Kingdom of God is like a grain of corn, first the blade, then the stalk, then the full ear in the stalk." God's principles are, both in nature and divine life growth, "overcoming", from babyhood to manhood. The above will tell you all about your religion, of what sort it is, if you wish to know. We say, don't be deceived. Lay your foundation on the rock of truth so the floods will not throw down your house now of sand.

The Book of James.

James, the brother of John, became a pillar of the faith among the disciples. At the council held at Jerusalem, as recorded in Acts fifteen and also in the twenty-first chapter, he was the chief speaker and advisor on doctrinal questions. His book is dedicated to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. In this book he sets forth in clear language his position on the question of obedience and commandment keeping, which he calls works as they are placed by the side of faith.

"Wherefore lay apart all fitness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

"For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

"For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was."

"But whose looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."—James 1:21-25.

Like his brother John, we see at once that he lays his foundation as a test whether a man is of God or the world, is by the works he performs in harmony with the law of God. The above scripture uses the law as a glass for each one to look in and behold what manner of man he is. He says if he continues doing as the law directs and does not become a forgetful hearer, then he shall be blessed in his deeds.

"For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

"And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

"Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?"

Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

"But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?"

"Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?"

"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well."

"But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors."

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

"For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law."

"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."—Verses 8-12.

James draws the line very close when he says if we offend in one point we are guilty of all. That is, we have broken the law, and it is a truth that if one is placed in all respects the same he would break them all as he had broken the one under his present circumstances. Man does not love one commandment more than another. Let the circumstances be the same and he will prove that to be true. He uses two as a comparison, the same comparison can be used with any of the ten, the Sabbath not excepted.

"For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment."

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?"

"If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye

warned and filled: notwithstanding ye gave them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

"But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"

"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."—Verses 14-20, 24.

James makes religion a practical question, the same as his brother John. Namely, the test whether a man has the genuine is whether he obeys the law or not. Many today talk of faith but not much of works. It is true that a man is saved by faith, but a faith that does not work obedience to the law is no faith at all. It is worthless. Paul says we may speak with the tongues of angels and men, we may give our bodies to be burned, we may have all faith, but if we do not have charity (love) enough to keep the commandments of God then we are but as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Nothing but show. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Let the readers remember, as they read this, that works is obedience to the commandments of God.

John, when banished on the Isle of Patmos, received his vision which is contained in the book of Revelation on "the Lord's day." The day he had always been taught to observe with all other saints from the beginning. Rev. 1:10. In tracing down the world's history till he reached the Remnant people of God. He says, "Here is the patience of the saints. Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." 4:12. He also says of the other class, "they were wrought with the Remnant of her seed who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." 12:17. In the last chapter of the book he says, in verse 14, "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have a right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates of the city."

I conclude, from this testimony of these two boys, they had been well trained by their father, Zebedee, to honor God and obey him. I also conclude that Christ knew where to look for men who would be true and

loyal to God by obedience. Paul knew where to look for a young man to take his place. The boy Timothy was chosen. He had been taught the scriptures from his youth by his mother and grandmother. This further teaches me that God, when he wants a man to work for him, he does not go to the wild, rough element to find some one who can tell how bad they had been and boast of the wonderful change which had been wrought in them. Paul was a persecutor, but he done it ignorantly through denominational prejudice, which he had imbibed, but he had been taught much scripture and was an honest man at heart, who desired to do right. Let these lessons of obedience be impressed on parents who are raising men and women in the world. Teach them how they must obey. It is the first principle to teach children who will make useful people in the world. This obedience is taught in love and duty to both God and man. God pity those who will in any way discourage obedience to all of God's laws just as they are written. It breaks down all respect to God and for his word. Shame and disgrace to the man or people who will say it was a yoke of bondage, not good authority to us, etc.

A person can be, and millions are, deceived, which we must admit, by those who come and find the door shut and say, "Lord, Lord, we have prophesied in thy name," and so on, but the Lord says, "I never knew you." They are deceived by various ways by impressions received, by certain feelings coming over them in meeting, by professing to be followers of God and associations with those who profess, by supposed visions, in brief by every device of Satan but those who have the witness within them that reveals their overcoming of evil in their own nature, such as covetousness, soon angry, lust of the eye, pride, foolishness, falsehood, stealing, Sabbath breaking, and every other disobedience when they were of the world. We say all such never need have any fears of being lost, for they have the witness within themselves. Let others say what they will, they know the tree by the fruit it bears.

Christ in the Flesh.

"In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God. The same was in the beginning." "The word became flesh and dwelt among

us." The prophet says, "I did take thy word and did eat it." The priests ate the unleavened bread which was a symbol of the pure word of God. They also ate the flesh of the burnt sacrifice without the blood or fat. Both a symbol of Christ's flesh and body. Thus as we eat the word of God we eat his flesh, and just as literal food sustains the natural body, so does the word sustain the spiritual life and body; and just in that manner Christ dwells in our flesh and makes his abode in us. John says, "If we abide in him and his word abides in us we ask what we will." There are many who are dwarfed professed followers of Christ who are starved and perished for lack of knowledge of his word. There are equally many poor shepherds who starve the flock of God. They know nothing themselves and how can they feed the flock of God? They cannot, hence, turn to fables and things to entertain. This is the true condition of our day. It is also true that a large number exists who have no appetite for good food, but ask and want only that which will give them no spiritual life. Sad, sad is the present condition, when preachers preach for hire and the people love to have it so.