The Judgment Seat of CHRIST

Pastor E. Valverde, Sr.
• **The Importance of Water Baptism** - “One Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Ephesians 4:5). Which is the true baptism?

• **The Holy Spirit and Tongues** - There is great confusion in Christianity concerning the receiving of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

• **Death and the Children of God** - Should the children of God be afraid of death? What does death mean to the children of God?

• **The Hope of the Resurrection** - This subject is at the core of God’s message to humanity.

• **The Truth Concerning the Rapture** - The deceptive message of the rapture has formed a false hope in the great majority of Christianity. Will the Church suffer tribulation? Will the Church disappear before the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?

• **666: Literal or Symbolic?** - Who is the beast? What is the mark of the beast?

• **Daniel’s Seventy Weeks** - God’s prophetic calendar is contained in His message to Daniel the prophet. The misinterpretation of this message has produced a false prophetic calendar widely used in Christianity. What is the correct calendar?

• **Leaving Babylon** - Babylon is symbolic of the widespread confusion in Christianity. How can we know if we are part of this confusion? How can we escape this confusion?

• **The Difference Between Theocracy and Democracy** - Theocracy is the government of God. Democracy is the government of man. Which of these is the true government in the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ?

• **Liberty or Libertinism?** - What is the true significance of being set free from religious-political environments?

• **Tithing and Christian Stewardship** - What does the Word of God say about tithing? Does God command His children to tithe?

• **The Truth Concerning Evolution** - The false theory of evolution has been used by the devil to deny God’s existence.

• **Knowing our Enemy** - The primary goal of the Christian is to know God; our secondary objective is to know the devil.

• **Spiritual Manifestations** - “Beloved, believe not ever spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

• **The Filthiness of our Flesh** - The most lethal enemy of the Christian is not the devil. Who is this enemy?

• **Divorce and Remarriage** - What does the Word of God say about divorce?
Other Books by Pastor E. Valverde, Sr.

- **The Oneness in the Godhead** - All the immensity of God’s creation evolves around this marvelous truth: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord” (Deuteronomy 6:4).

- **Lord Jesus, God’s Supreme Name** - In the Bible, God identifies Himself by many names, yet there is One Name that is above all of God’s names.

- **Does the Trinity Exist?** - All of God’s truths are based on this marvelous revelation: GOD IS ONE. Why, then, has the great majority of Christianity accepted a doctrine that divides God into three persons?

- **The Verb of God** - God put into action His awesome and eternal purpose by His Visible Image.

- **The Humanity of the Lord Jesus** - The human body in which “God was manifest in the flesh” was not an ordinary human body (1 Timothy 3:16).

- **Who are Israelites?** - In spite of the prevalence of anti-Semitism in the world and in Christianity, God’s covenant with Israel and the Jewish people is eternal.

- **History of the Modern State of Israel** - The establishment of the modern State of Israel and the return of the Jewish people to the Promised Land are the fulfillment of the greatest Biblical prophecies of our time.

- **The Bride, the Lamb’s Wife** - The New Jerusalem is not a literal city built with material gold or precious stones; she is the Bride the Lamb’s wife, the total sum of God’s people from both Israel and the Church.

- **The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ** - The Church is not the property of any religious group or organization. The Lord Jesus Christ is the sole owner of His Church (read Matthew 16:18), because He alone purchased her with His Blood.

- **Children of God: Fantasy or Reality?** - The greatest calling in all of God’s creation belongs to His children. What in fact does it mean to be a child of God.

- **The One Hundred Forty Four Thousand** - Who are the 144,000 depicted in Revelation chapters 7 and 14?

- **The Leadership Among the People of God** - Throughout history, God has called men to serve as leaders among His people. What are the Godly requisites of these chosen vessels?

- **Ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ** - “Let a man so account us, as of the ministers of Christ as stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (2 Corinthians 4:1-2).

- **Called to Attack** - The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ has not been called to simply ward off the attacks of the enemy; the Church has been called to attack the “gates of hell” (Matthew 16:18).

- **The Marvelous Grace of God** - “For by Grace are we saved through faith; and this is not of ourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 3:8).
“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of CHRIST; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

(2 Corinthians 5:10)

The Lord knows that our fallible consciences can be easily “blinded by the god of this world,” who is Satan, the antichrist (2 Corinthians 4:4 and 1 John 4:3). Once blinded, the Christian begins to presumptuously take advantage of God’s goodness. He knows that “God is love,” yet, he deliberately ignores that “with God is a terrible majesty” and that “our God is a consuming fire” (1 John 4:8, Job 37:22 and Hebrews 12:29). And as a result, this unwary Christian ceases to serve the Lord with “fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12).

It is unto this careless and self-righteous Christian to whom the Lord utters the following warning: “But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My covenant in thy mouth [the believer that witnesses and the minister that preaches]? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My Words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief [one who steals honor], then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers [those who defile the Word of God]. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother’s son. These things hast thou done [in this life], and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself [improperly esteeming God]: but I will reprove thee [of self-righteousness], and set them in order before thine eyes [at the ‘judgment seat of Christ’]. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation [by Grace] of God” (Psalms 50:16-23). •
It is an undeniable fact that from all the multitudes of believers who are “in Christ,” only a minority “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” The Lord said that His true followers would be a “little flock” (Luke 12:32). This is and has always been the case. We desire that it would be different, that it would not only be a “few that be saved” (Luke 13:23). We desire that the number of those who walk with the mark of God, “going forth and weeping, bearing precious seed,” would be in the majority (read Ezekiel 9:4 and Psalm 126:5-6). We desire that many Christians, both ministers and laity, who presently “walk after the flesh,” would heed the warnings of our Divine Advocate. If they would only accept the admonition of the Lord, then at the end of time they would not have to appear before “the judgment seat of Christ” because of accursed sin of self-righteousness.

Conclusion

As this book comes to a close, in the Name of our God and Savior Jesus Christ, I issue a serious warning to all my brethren in Christ: the subject of this book is not simply an interesting commentary, it is the undeniable truth of a Divine warning that implies spiritual life or death. It is eternal life for those who earnestly accept it. And, it is judgment and eternal condemnation for those who neglect it.

For those who know the Word of God and who claim to be true believers in the Lord Jesus, we understand perfectly well that “God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). For the sake of our salvation, it behooves us not to be counted among those who “hate instruction, and cast the [Lord’s Words] behind them” (Psalm 50:17).

Many are the Christians—both ministers and laity—who in these the last days do not live in conformity to God’s will but according to the dictates of their own conscience. This mentality is completely opposed to what God tells His children. He commands us to subject our consciences to “the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:16).

Introduction

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

When considering the aforementioned Scripture, it is easy to assume that the Apostle Paul is declaring that certain judgment awaits all Christians at the end of time. The prevalent explanation applied to this Scripture says that through this future judgment everyone will receive a reward for their good deeds and punishment for their bad ones. This forewarning of judgment is commonly used as an effective evangelistic tool. Once the unbeliever is convinced that certain judgment awaits him, he is more easily persuaded to stop living in sin.

When this forewarning of judgment is used specifically for evangelism, then its application is accurate. However, the interpretation of this Biblical text goes beyond this elementary application. Regardless of how good our intentions may be, when we limit our interpretation of this judgment to merely evangelistic purposes, then we risk promoting an erroneous concept.

As a result of their limited understanding of this Scripture, I have heard many faithful Christians worriedly ask: “Does it mean that even though I serve the Lord faithfully in this life, I still have to appear before His judgment seat?” They ask this question because they cannot consolidate this warning of judgment with God’s promise to His faithful children, which says: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:1). This reasoning has troubled many believers who love and serve the Lord with all of their hearts.

Seemingly, it appears that a contradiction exists between these two Scriptures (Romans 8:1 and 2 Corinthians 5:10). The same can be said about many other portions of the Holy Scrip-
tured. Nevertheless, the true believer knows that the Word of God cannot contradict itself. He understands that the explanation resides in the Word of God and that he can obtain it through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The subject of this book is certainly not a Biblical mystery comparable to or as complex as the “mystery of Godliness” which speaks of God’s Oneness (1 Timothy 3:16). Yet, this does not mean that it is a subject that does not enclose a tremendous truth. For the faithful believer who loves the Lord with all of his heart, the understanding of this truth can positively change his perspective regarding the assurance of his salvation by Grace.

The Editor

During our lifetime, in the process of this judgment, our “Advocate” is the same One who will be the Supreme Judge on the last day (1 John 2:1). The Lord said, “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Matthew 16:24). Therefore, if we want to follow Christ, then we must unconditionally subject ourselves to His instructions and counsel. If we are obedient to the voice of our “Advocate” and “Redeemer,” then for us, at the end, “there is therefore now no condemnation.”

If we allow God’s Word to judge us now, then we are counted among them to whom the Lord will say on the day of His Second Coming: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:21 and 34).

For the unfaithful believers, those who are not willing to humble themselves in order to unconditionally obey the Lord, they will have to appear before God’s judgment seat on the last day. Thereupon, they will be judged by the same Word whose judgment and correction they rejected in their lifetime. On that day, the Lord, who presently is our “Advocate” and “Redeemer,” will sit in judgment against them as Supreme Judge so that “everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

On the last day, at “the judgment seat of Christ,” it will be too late for many Christians to humble themselves and repent. It will be too late for those who during their lifetime did not allow God’s Word to judge and correct them. It will be too late for those who did not take seriously the stern warnings of judgment from the Lord. For these unwary Christians, who during their lives neglected and scoffed at the Lord’s admonition, the following judgment will become a horrible reality: “There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Luke 13:28).
The Lord declared that the believer who allows the Word of God to judge him during his lifetime would be delivered from final judgment and condemnation: “And if any man hear My Words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My Words, hath one that judgeth him: the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:47-48).

The aforementioned declaration from the Lord Himself provides us the solid and definite foundation to confirm this book’s explanations concerning “the judgment seat of Christ.” By inverting the Lord’s statement, we can understand that if someone hears God’s Word and believes and keeps it, then the Word already judges him during his lifetime. Whosoever does not reject the Lord and receives His Words no longer has anyone that can judge him. Because, by allowing the Word of God to judge him beforehand, the believer avoids being judged by that same Word on the last day. In other words, “the fine is prepaid” and therefore the believer no longer is required to appear before the Judge.

If the believer ends his earthly journey “in Christ,” “walking after the Spirit,” then he knows that for him there is “no condemnation.” This is the faithful and obedient Christian who humbly allows the Word of God to correct and control every aspect of his life. This is the child of God that truly realizes that God’s Words are “Spirit and they are life” (John 6:63). This true Christian agrees that everything he says and does, as well as everything he thinks and feels, should be in conformity with God’s Word. He agrees to be molded by the literal Word, and even more particularly by the divine guidance of the Holy Spirit that resides in God’s Word. He does this in order to produce “the fruit of the Spirit… against such there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-25). It is in this child of God—minister or laity—in whom continuously resides “the wisdom that is from above,” which is “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy” (James 3:17).

Salvation by Grace

It is not possible to fully elaborate in just one book concerning God’s message of salvation by Grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. However, a brief explanation on this subject is subsequently furnished to benefit those who lack this information and to confirm those who already understand it.

Although the message of salvation by Grace is amply explained in the New Testament, it is a subject that has caused great disputes throughout the centuries of Christianity. These controversies have endured in the Church from its very beginnings. They were first initiated among the Jewish believers and have lasted unto the present among the Gentile believers.

There are many Scriptures from the New Testament in which
the Lord Himself and His apostles speak concerning God’s salvation by Grace. Among all of these, I make reference to one particular declaration by the Apostle Paul that was used extensively during the Protestant Reformation: “For by Grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). The Protestant Reformers used this Scripture to counter attack the erroneous doctrine of the Roman Papacy that teaches justification by works and religious sacraments.

Only those who have truly known the Lord and have been “born again” can appreciate the supreme value of “the Grace of God that bringeth salvation” (John 3:7 and Titus 2:11). With our hearts filled with gratitude, we can never forget that marvelous day when we accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior. In that very moment our wretched lives were miraculously transformed by God’s saving Grace. Then, after calling upon the Holy Name of the Lord Jesus Christ in water baptism, by faith we believed that God cleansed our souls and consciences from all guilt and sin (read Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38 and 1 Peter 3:21). The gratitude that floods our souls is not limited to those of us who formerly experienced a bitter life of sin. With all the more reason it should abide in those to whom it pleased God to perform the blessing found in the first Psalm: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

No previous merits or any good works counted for us on that marvelous day in which the Lord extended His Hand of salvation to us. Upon recognizing our wretched condition, we understood that only by God’s Grace did He choose to save us “from this un- toward generation” (Acts 2:40). This is exactly how each one of us, in our own place and time, began walking with the Lord. This is how each one of us began serving Him with all of our strength and in holiness. In this same manner we continue to walk in this glorious path, acknowledging that all that we do for the Lord can never merit the marvelous salvation He provided for us at Calvary.

the time of God’s final judgments, we will be counted among “the wise” who shall judge not only the world but also the fallen angels (Daniel 12:3 and 1 Corinthians 6:3).

The following declarations made by the Lord Himself confirm the dreadful judgment that awaits those who presently spurn God’s judgment: “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? And in Thy Name have cast out devils? And in Thy Name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:21-23). “Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not” (Matthew 25:41-43).

The aforementioned Scriptures, as well as all the other portions of the Word of God connected with this subject, are intended for those who believe. God’s Word is not directed to a humanity that ignores and rejects Him. The Lord does not demand faithfulness from individuals who do not acknowledge Him or His Word. Therefore, the Biblical warnings of unfaithfulness are directed to those who know God and have knowledge of His Word.

God’s Word is entirely and invariably directed to those who “are in Christ.” The Word of God is intended for those of us who understand it and allow it to judge us throughout our lifetime, in every moment and in every circumstance. For the true believers, it is precisely the Word of God that in our lifetime is “the judgment seat of Christ.”

The Advocate and the Judge
This special judgment is different than all the other judgments of God, because it is judgment that spans the lifetime of each child of God. It is not a judgment that takes place during one specific day as all the others. The Lord Himself established it this way, and nothing and no one can change it.

Excluding the judgment of His faithful children, the numerous “incomprehensible judgments” of God for the remainder of humanity are confined to only one day (Romans 11:33). These judgments will be executed on the “Day of the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 5:2). As it is written: “For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble…” (Malachi 4:1). These judgments will take place on that same day in which the “Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10). It is the very same day in which the Lord “shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.”

The judgments effected at “the judgment seat of Christ” are solely for “the people of the saints of the Most High” (Daniel 7:27). They are exclusively for those individuals who are most special to God: His children. As the children of God, we have been given a privileged opportunity. If we live and walk “in the Spirit” until the end of our days, then we can arrive “at that day” having “no condemnation” (Galatians 5:25 and 2 Thessalonians 4:8).

However, there is an essential condition attached with this privilege and that is our complete and unconditional obedience to the Lord. Any Christian can refuse to pay this price. The Lord does not force anyone to pay it. Howbeit, any Christian who by his own decision and disobedience refuses to pay this price must realize that he is postponing his judgment until “the day of the Lord.” This means that he will be obligated to appear before “the judgment seat of Christ” on the last day. In turn, the children of God who in their lifetime willingly “appear before the judgment seat of Christ” to be examined and corrected by the Lord, at

Those of us who have been saved by God’s Grace fully understand that we can never purchase our own salvation through acts of righteousness. We understand that only with a grateful and indebted heart do we labor in the work of the Lord. And we do this, remembering, every step of the way, that only by the Grace of God are we saved. Moreover, it is only by the marvelous Grace of God that we are delivered from judgment and condemnation. This is the primary message of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Error of Self-Righteousness

A

fter a Christian has served the Lord for some time, there is always the danger of falling into the error of self-righteousness and consequently neglecting the Grace of God. This is a subtle operation of the devil, who is relentless in his pursuit of the believer. If he is careless and unwatchful in his Christian walk, the believer will fall prey to the error of self-righteousness.

After serving the Lord for some time, the Christian is no longer considered a new believer. Whether he is a minister or a layperson, he is no longer considered a “novice” (1 Timothy 3:6). He now understands what he did not know in the beginning of his Christian walk. He now has obtained what he did not have before. And naturally, he now is able to do what he could not do in his early walk with the Lord. This is when the danger of neglecting God’s Grace presents itself.

If the believer is careless, then he neglects the desire he felt in the early days of his Christian walk when he sought the Lord with humility and tears. He has forgotten the overwhelming gratitude that flooded his soul when he initially considered that it was only the Grace of God that saved him. The power of the marvelous Name of the Lord Jesus Christ has since faded from his memory. He has forgotten that he was justified and his sins were forgiven by faith in the Name of the Lord (read Acts 22:16). Furthermore, this neglectful Christian also forgets the marvelous joy he felt on the day God filled him with the gift of His Holy Spirit.
This so-called “experienced” Christian has fulfilled the necessary sacraments and ordinances that are traditionally taught in his Christian environment. He now considers himself a “complete Christian” as he continues performing his religious responsibilities. As a result of his good deeds, he has accumulated merits in his favor. He even occupies positions of honor and distinction. He is recognized for his morals and his Christian works. In accordance to the established rules of his religious group, everything appears to be fine. Nevertheless, by neglecting the supreme value of God’s Grace, this careless Christian has fallen in the error of self-righteousness.

To the Christian who cloaks himself with self-righteousness and has neglected the Grace of God, the Holy Spirit directs these words of warning: “I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil. And thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not; and hast found them liars. And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my Name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore form whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent” (Revelation 2:2-5).

What happened to this unwary Christian? Where did he go wrong? Once again the destructive cycle of self-righteousness has been repeated and this Christian has fallen into this age-old deception. He has fallen into the diabolical snare that has existed ever since the Age of Grace began.

The Apostle Paul emphatically reproved the error of self-righteousness when he rebuked the Galatian believers, saying: “Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” (Galatians 3:3). Presently, this same spiritual deviation continues operating in the lives of numerous Christians. In the same manner as humidity penetrates a non-

If we truly understand the meaning of being “in Christ” and the definition of walking “after the flesh” or “walking after the Spirit,” then we can decipher the seeming contradiction mentioned at the beginning of this book. This dilemma occurs when we attempt to merge the Scriptures that state that “we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,” and “there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.”

For those of us who are “in Christ,” who walk “after the Spirit,” who “walk with God” even as Enoch did (Genesis 5:22), we have full assurance that there will be “no condemnation” for us at the end of our earthly journey. For those of us who in this life “follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth” (Revelation 14:4), we are assured that at the end of time we will not appear before “the judgment seat of Christ.” We are sustained by this divine guarantee because we live every day acknowledging the marvelous significance and incomparable value of God’s saving Grace.

The Apostle Paul’s reference to “the judgment seat of Christ” actually consists of a continual “examining process” for the believer. It is a process that begins from the moment we surrendered our lives to serve God and continues until the end of our days. Since “the judgment seat of Christ” pertains to those who are “in Christ,” then we must understand that it is a judgment exclusively for the children of God. This is a special judgment by which the Lord judges His holy people (read Daniel 12:7-10). It is a judgment that the Lord reserves solely for His children so “that we should not be condemned with the world” (1 Corinthians 10:14).
James exhorted the believers, saying, “But if you have bitter en-
vying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the
truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly,
sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is con-
fusion and every evil work” (James 3:14-16).

The aforementioned declaration concurs with the admonition
of the Apostle Paul, who said, “Let nothing be done through
strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem oth-
ers better than themselves. Look not every man on his own
things, but every man also on the things of others” (Philippians
2:2-4). If we live according to this Godly standard, then we are
truly walking “after the Spirit.”

In his rebuke, the Apostle James reveals a truth that it is im-
perative for Christians to understand if we desire to be delivered
from the deception of self-righteousness. We must inevitably ac-
knowledge the truth that among the people of God there are two
types of wisdom that operate. There is the “wisdom that cometh
from above” and the wisdom that is “earthly, sensual and devil-
ish.” Much like Moses’ serpent and those of Pharaoh’s magi-
cians, we are dealing with two “wisdoms” which look very much
alike (read Exodus 7:10-12). A Christian who is not aware of this
truth can be easily deceived, confusing the Divine Wisdom with
that which is diabolical.

For those of us who are “in Christ,” the only way we can un-
derstand the difference between these two types of wisdom is by
not walking “after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” In order to do
this we must continually battle against the pride that resides in our
flesh; we must continually walk with sincere humility and bro-
kenness of spirit before God. Only then can we avoid falling into
the abominable sin of self-righteousness, because of arrogance
and boastfulness.

Self-righteous Christians have become spiritually short-
sighted because they have “forgotten that [they were] purged
from [their] old sins” (2 Peter 1:9). Many self-righteous Chris-

insulated building and slowly begins to deteriorate its construc-
tion, the error of self-righteousness infiltrates the life of the be-
liever with deceitful subtlety and begins its destructive operation.
Throughout the Christian centuries, self-righteousness is one of
the most effective weapons used by the antichrist—Satan—to
“overcome” multitudes of saints. These are the saints that have
been spiritually defeated by the enemy who are mentioned in

The most despairing aspect of this deceitful operation is that
a great majority of its victims are unwary of its effect in their
lives. Consequently, these unsuspecting Christians do not accept
the fact that they are already defeated as they persist to justify
themselves with their good works. In doing so, they have ne-
eglected the Grace of God that once saved them and that it is the
only thing that can keep them until the end.

These self-righteous Christians have become so satisfied with
their outward justifications that they have long forgotten how to
break their souls and cry out unto the Lord as they did in their be-
ginnings. They no longer know how to humble themselves. They
have forgotten to suffer loss for the sake of others. It is no longer
appropriate for them to say that they do not know, or to seek
counsel and assistance as they did when their hearts were simple.

The sad and undeniable truth is that these unwary Christians,
who have been ensnared by the error of self-righteousness, are not
walking “after the Spirit.” Despite all of their exterior holiness
and morality, because of their self-righteousness, they have aban-
doned their “first love” and are walking “after the flesh”
(Romans 8:1 and Revelations 2:4). Since they no longer live in
humility and with a genuine acknowledgement of God’s Grace in
their lives, the blessing that should be in their lives has been
subtly transformed into a curse by the enemy. As a result, these
deceived Christians are wrong even though they believe they are
right.
Walking After the Flesh

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:1).

The aforementioned Scripture tells us that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. However, this deliverance from condemnation is based on the condition that for those who are in Christ that they “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” The declaration in this Scripture encloses a profound truth, because the contrasting conditions are what determine the final outcome of each person who professes to be a Christian. Yet, as it occurs with many other Biblical portions, this Scripture can be read in a cursory manner that completely ignores the significance of its truth. It is precisely this ignorance which contributes to multitudes of Christians who profess to be “in Christ,” but because of their self-righteousness, to walk “after the flesh” and not “after the Spirit.”

According to “the letter of the law,” no one can accuse these self-righteous Christians that they are walking “after the flesh.” However, in accordance to the Spirit of the “New Covenant,” the Covenant of Grace, this is exactly what they are doing. Since they have abandoned their “first love,” they are counted among those Christians who have “become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal” (1 Corinthians 13:1-8). With their acts of self-righteousness, they make noise, but it is empty noise. It is lifeless.

Concerning these self-righteous Christians, the Scripture says that they have “a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof” (2 Timothy 3:5). They live in conformity to exterior rules and not in accordance to those of the Spirit. This is exactly where the difference is found. Concerning this difference, the Apostle Paul stated, “For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life” (2 Corinthians 3:6). When the believer ignores this difference, and through his self-righteousness confines himself only to the law of the letter (exterior rules), then he brings condemnation upon himself.

For a great majority of Christians who claim to know the Lord and are acquainted with His Word, the term “walking after the flesh” is applied only to those Christians who are living in exterior immoralities. Certainly, this interpretation is correct, because the commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ remains firm: “Go and sin no more” (John 5:14 and 8:11). For those who have sinned through the “filthiness of the flesh” (2 Corinthians 7:1), there is no concealment concerning their sin and therefore no deception. These individuals are aware of their wrong and it is difficult to conceal it from others, particularly when their sinful actions are committed publicly. Nonetheless, the subtle deception of self-righteousness is a sin that operates in those who also walk “after the flesh.” In this case, the sin of self-righteousness operates in those who have not erred in the “filthiness of the flesh,” but in the “filthiness of the spirit” (2 Corinthians 7:1).

After all, in order for deception to remain deception, it must operate in the realm of the hidden and the unknown. Deception exists when that which is wrong remains hidden, yet outwardly appears to be normal and correct. It is like a malignant cancer that remains undetected. Exteriorly, to the victim, nothing appears to be wrong. As long as there is no external indication of the deadly disease, the victim remains unsuspecting of the destructive organism at work in his body. As a result, he proceeds to live his life as if nothing was wrong. In like manner, the subtly diabolical operation of self-righteousness has deceived multitudes of Christians into believing that they are truly “in Christ.” Howbeit, the sorrowful truth is that they walk “after the flesh” and not “after the Spirit.”

The repulsive sin of self-righteousness is paired with the sins of arrogance and pretense. It is arranged with these and other spiritual sins that are Biblically categorized as the “filthiness of the spirit.” As previously mentioned, the sin of self-righteousness has existed throughout the age of Christianity. Observing the operation of this error among the Christians of his time, the Apostle