

The Way of God

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

A young boy stole a watch. He didn't have a very good a vocabulary, but he was magnificent at manipulating the truth. So, when he had to go to court and face the judge, he did such a good job of lying that even though he was a suspicious character, the court could not find him guilty.

The judge called the boy before the bench and explained to him the dangers of a life of lies and thievery, the importance of being honest and getting a good education, and that someday he was sure to be caught if he didn't change his ways. Then the judge looked him in the eye and said sternly, "You are exonerated."

The boy looked up, puzzled, and said, "What?"

"You are exonerated!" the judge repeated.

To which, the boy replied, "Does that mean I have to give the watch back?"

Now that is a funny story, and it was meant

to make you laugh! But the truth is that if we do not choose to study the way of God and to walk in the way of truth, we will walk in the ways of the world, the flesh, and the devil. There is no other choice. And, as the Bible says in Numbers 32:23, be sure, your sin will find you out.

In these days, because the end of time is so near, the devil is taking advantage of every opportunity to wear out the saints and to deceive those who will listen to his lies. He knows that his time is short.

There is a way that seems right to man, but the end of it are the ways of death (Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25). This booklet was written to encourage you in the way of God. Let the Holy Spirit minister the truth to your heart. Stand firm on the old path that leads to eternal life. When Satan tells you to get out of the way, you can resist him by standing your ground.

Chapter One

THE WAY OF GOD'S
AMAZING LOVE

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

“And that [Jesus Christ] died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:14-17).

Jeremiah 5:5 says “great men...have known the way of the LORD.” Abraham sent his servant to find a wife for Isaac. The servant stayed in the

way of God, not knowing where God would take him, and he was led to Rebekah (Genesis 24:27). Joseph was given a special provision after he was sold into bondage and then wrongly imprisoned. Because he stayed in the way of God, he eventually became a ruler in Egypt and was in a position to save many people alive.

God's amazing love found Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. Saul was on his way to commit Christians to prison, where they would eventually be put to death. But the Lord met this Pharisee on the way. He revealed Himself to Saul, forgave him, saved him, gave him a new name, and made him an apostle to the Gentiles. Imagine! A Pharisee of Pharisees became a missionary to the Gentiles.

That is the way of God.

The Way of the Cross

Jesus Christ has a very special way. In fact, in John 14:6, He declared that He *is* "the way, the truth, and the life." And yet, after He told the disciples about the way He would take, they could not understand. He told them, "My love is so deep and so special that I am going to die on the Cross for the sins of the entire world. I will shed My blood from My perfect body in

obedience to God the Father and the Word. I will do this to show mankind the depth of the Father's love.

"I will die for all sinners just as they are—though they may be rebellious and unbelieving, or fearful and unable to trust Me. And though I have never sinned and never will sin, I will become sin for them. The moment any one of them believes on Me, I will save him and teach him how to be godly. In one moment, I will impute my perfect righteousness to each one who receives Me. This righteousness is apart from works and apart from the Law. Never will sin be imputed to him again."

The Way of Ascended Life

Most times when we see the word "way" in the Bible, (regarding God's way), it refers to the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. It speaks of His grace, which we experience through faith in His Finished Work—a work that was completed on the Cross, once and for all (Hebrews 10:10). Our position in Him is secured forever. Not only that, God also gives the believer His Spirit to empower him on the inside and an angel to help along the way (Exodus 23:20). What a beautiful way to go!

The way of God also speaks of rebound. When we fail, we can get right up and go on with God. Rebound brings us back into fellowship with God. It is the way that our conscience is cleansed and purged by the spiritual application of the Blood of Christ (Hebrews 9:14).

In Luke 15, the prodigal son went to a far country. The father never tried to control his son. He gave him his inheritance and let the son go his way. The father, representative of God the Father, didn't strive, argue, or manipulate. Eventually, the son (representing sinners, such as we are) came to the end of himself (Luke 15:17) and headed back home. There, the father was waiting with kisses of forgiveness, ready to throw a party in celebration of his son coming back home.

This is the way of God.

Chapter Two
A NEW AND LIVING WAY

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death” (Philippians 3:10).

“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

“Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

“(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8).

A man was the pastor of a very famous church. He lost his son in a drowning accident, and this man of God went through a tremendous time of grief. As he continued to pastor,

God spoke to him. He said, "I know that you are broken, and your spirit is so broken. But," He said, "before this tragedy, your portion was like a very small package. When you are a package wrapped up in yourself, that is as small as you get (Jeremiah 48:11). But now, because you have allowed me to break you, you are free to break out of yourself. Your soul will be enlarged, and your capacity for My life will expand in the measure that you take up your cross and follow Me."

That pastor became tremendously motivated, as never before. He allowed God to come into his life and be manifested through him in a more powerful way. To be present—at home—with the Lord (having manifested His presence to people around you) is a great motivation.

Motives for Godly Living

To get to know Christ in His way is the first motivation for a godly lifestyle. But the day is coming when we will be absent from the body and present with the Lord. Therefore, knowing we will stand before Him is the next motivation to godly living.

To be absent from the body is to be *present* with the Lord. The word "present" is *endemeo*,

and it means to be in your *real* home.

That is why we are called pilgrims, in Hebrews 11:13. Our home on earth is only temporary. Perhaps our loved ones who are now in heaven were happy down here. They loved their families. They loved their friends. They loved their church. But they had to leave because it was God's will for them to be in their real home.

We all operate naturally by the law of self-preservation, and certainly we want to live as long as we can to enjoy this life. Yet we all long for our real home. Our real home is a place where there will be no pain, no sorrow, and no heartache. Our real home is where there is no night. Our real home is where tears will be wiped away. Our real home is where we will be the happiest we have ever been, even though that is difficult to comprehend.

“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 we go to heaven, every born-again believer will meet with God privately, face-to-face. This is known as the Bema, or the judgment seat of Christ—an evaluation for Christians

(2 Corinthians 5:10-12). Here, it will be revealed whether our rewards will be wood, hay, and stubble, or gold, silver, and precious stones (1 Corinthians 3:11-15).^{*} What a motivation to let Christ take over!

In 2 Corinthians 5:17, we read, "...old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." What a reason to be motivated! Anew creation, a new spirit (Romans 7:6), a brand-new heart (Ezekiel 36:26), a brand-new kind of eternal life (John 10:28), a brand-new way, brand-new truth. We are free—liberated by Jesus Christ (John 8:32, 36). What a motivation to glorify Christ through the new creation.

Reconciled to Run the Race

According to 2 Corinthians 5:18, God has reconciled us to Himself. Not only that, but also He has given us the ministry of reconciliation to witness "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. For we are here in Christ's stead. We beseech you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God, for he who knew no sin became sin; that we might be accepted, reconciled to God in the new creation" (see 2 Corinthians 5:19-21).

There are so many reasons to run the race.

There are so many reasons to fight the good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12). The truth, the love, the grace, the Holy of Holies, the Bema Seat, the fact that we are seated above—these are the reasons to continue in God’s way.

“The love of Christ constraineth us...” (2 Corinthians 5:14). On every side of our being is the love of Christ. All over—inwardly, outwardly, behind, on the sides, on the head, and deep within us—the love of Christ enfolds us. What a motivation to glorify God! The love of Christ constrains us, on every single side.

**Be sure to read The Bema Seat: Presented in Joy or Grief?, by Pastor Carl H. Stevens, Grace Publications, 1996.*

Chapter Three

ALONG THE WAY, DRAW NEAR

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

“By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

“And having an high priest over the house of God;

“Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

“And let us consider one another to [encourage] unto love and to good works:

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the

day approaching” (see Hebrews 10:19-25).

The Veil as a Hindrance along the Way

The Bible says that when books of the Law of Moses were read to the people of Israel, though there was a reverence for the Word of God, a veil was upon the hearts of those who heard it. But when they turned to Christ, the veil was taken away (see 2 Corinthians 3:15-16). We have a brand-new and living way because Christ has gone through the veil for us, so that our veil could be removed.

In many marriages, two people *try* to stay married, but there is a veil—something of the flesh that prevents them from being set free. Many families are godly, but when there is a veil, they miss the wonders of family life—the joys of just being a family.

If Christianity does anything, it should manifest tremendous love in marriage. It should manifest a tremendous love in the family. As Christians, we should do everything we can to make sure that our relationships are without the veil.

The Bible says we have “boldness to enter in to the holiest,” and we enter in to the holiest “*by a new and living way.*” In the Old Testament, the

people didn't have this new and living way; a veil obstructed their access into the Holy of Holies. Therefore they could not go straight to God's throne of grace and mercy as sinners saved by grace.

But we have a new and living way. This way has no veil to keep us from getting through. In fact, even in the Old Testament, when they turned to the Lord, the veil of the heart was taken away.

Hebrews 10:20 says that Christ consecrated this new and living way through the veil of His flesh. The perfect Son of God became a man so that we can come boldly to the throne of grace, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. We know that we can hold fast to our profession of faith because He who promised us is faithful.

People in the Old Testament tried to live up to the law as it was given to Moses. They were constantly dealing with their flesh, because the Holy Spirit did not indwell them. He endued them with power, and many had the onresting presence of God, but they lacked the continual indwelling presence of God that changes hearts.

Oh, that we would learn this new and living way! It is new, and it is a living way, beyond the

veil, beyond the flesh. When Jesus Christ died, the veil of our flesh was crucified with Him. We have received a new and living way, and that new and living way enables us to be motivated as we walk by faith and not by sight.

Live unto Christ beyond the Veil

We should “henceforth not live unto ourselves,” falsely protected by the veil of our flesh, but we should live unto God who died for us. Furthermore, He that died for us rose again.

We should live unto the One who died for us. We should live for the One who loves us, the One who was constrained to love us. Now He has given us the Holy Spirit of love, and we are constrained to live according to the Finished Work. He did die, and we indeed died with Him. Spiritually we indeed rose again with Him (Romans 6:5,13), and we are alive with new life, born again, not knowing anyone, including Jesus, after the flesh.

Why is it so important that we do not know Jesus after the flesh? Jesus Christ, who never sinned, and who was not even acquainted with personal sin, became sin for us. He didn't have any sin of His own, but when He became sin for us, He took on a veil. Why is that important? In

Matthew 27:46, the Father forsook His only begotten Son for three hours. He would not talk to Him, He would not look at Him. But in that time, He was getting rid of the veil—which was not Christ’s veil but ours. He was dying for us, as us—“the just for the unjust” (1 Peter 3:18).

And glory be to God, we do not need to have a veil in marriage. We do not need to have a veil in our family. We don’t need a veil in our friendships, in our disposition, or in our temperaments. When we turn to Christ, who was raised from the dead, the veil is taken away. There goes the veil of our flesh, crucified and buried with Christ.

We do not know Christ after the flesh but only after His throne ministry. Isaiah saw Him high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Isaiah saw the risen ascended Christ, and that transformed him. When the Lord said, “Who will go for us?” Isaiah said, “Here am I; send me” (Isaiah 6:8).

What Will Prevent You?

The veil of the flesh, of self-protection, has caused so many problems, yet many people will not turn to the Lord. Though He took care of the veil on the Cross, many will not go after this

new and living way, which He has set apart as holy. We have been given boldness to enter into the holiest place through the veil that was rent from top to bottom when Christ was crucified. When He was crucified, that veil was rent. A completely new life is possible because the veil that separated us from the presence of God has been torn asunder. In Christ, we are free indeed.

Chapter Four

GO FORWARD IN GOD'S WAY

“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” (1 John 4:5-7).

The text of 1 John 4:5-7 could be translated this way: “The cosmic system of the world speaks, and those that are of the cosmic system hear it. On the other hand, those who know God hear Him speak. They love one another, for God is love.”

God is love. His love is unique because it has existed from eternity past toward us sinners who were conceived in sin, who have personally chosen to sin, and who have chosen to live in in-

iquity (which is emotional rebellion against God's authority).

Rebellion: The Way of the World

In every realm, rebellion against authority is one of the world's great problems today.* Children rebel against parents. Students rebel against teachers. Employees rebel against the executives in the workplace. And people everywhere rebel against the Word of God.

While rebellion against bona fide authority has become a real problem, we must also understand that honest differences and disagreements should be expected. If they are handled doctrinally, with proper motives, God will honor everyone involved in the matter. Consider that Sarah told Abraham, her husband and the head of their home, that he had to get the bondswoman (Hagar) out of the house. In this case, Sarah was right. God sided with her and told Abraham to "Hearken unto Sarah," and Hagar and Ishmael were sent away, but not without a generous provision (Genesis 21:10-21).

We must not be rebellious against the way of God. We also must not let disagreements with people become stumbling blocks in the way of God.

Rebellion is part of the ongoing war of Satan against the authority of God. Make no mistake: God is a God of war and battles (Exodus 19:4; Psalm 24:8). He teaches our hands to war and our fingers to fight (Psalm 144:1). But always remember that the battle is the *Lord's*.

We are not alone in His way. He will fight for us. Israel was backed up against the Red Sea, with the huge army of Egypt bearing down on her. Moses told the people, "The LORD shall fight for you" (Exodus 14:14). In the next verse, however, God told Moses to tell Israel, "Go forward." God does the fighting; our part is to go forward.

For the Sake of the Gospel

All men are sinners. Christians are simply sinners who have chosen to receive Christ and are saved forever by His grace. We must extend this same grace to those who are lost. We must share the good news of the Gospel as we go forward in God's way. The Gospel is what the way of God is all about.

In pivotal times such as these, God is after people who will pray and preach and propagate the Gospel. The Gospel of the love of God must be lifted up, and He will draw men to Himself.

We will win people by the Good News and by caring for them. They will not be won by saying, "I told you so; here is God's judgment." Our response must be to pray, to get out the Gospel, and to go forward with the Word of God. This is the time to teach that God paid the price for all of our sins. Anyone—*anyone*—can be saved, receive the gift of repentance, and have a brand-new life as a brand-new creation of God.

God Leads His People in the Way

God is faithful to those who are His, and He will lead them in the way. Consider the history of Israel. Despite her disobedience, God has kept her through the centuries. Captivity and defeat and wandering marked her history since the time of Jeremiah, when Babylon overthrew the nation. In A.D. 70, the Romans laid siege to Jerusalem. Israel's people became scattered throughout Europe and met persecution at every turn. History records the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition and the Holocaust, which resulted in the deaths of millions upon millions of Jewish people. Many more have died by persecution from communist states.

In 1948, God miraculously brought Israel back to the land He first promised to Abraham

and his seed, in Genesis 12:7. There, she has remained, a small but politically powerful country in territory inhabited by many Arab nations. With fighting and terrorist attacks almost a daily part of life in Israel, truly, these are days of sorrow for Israel. Yet, God has promised that she will one day see peace in the land:

“And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one....

“And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

“And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem....

“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles” (Zechariah 14:9-16).

The Touch of His Hand

One beautiful thing about Jesus Christ is His ministry of touching us in His way with His constraining love.

More than forty times in the New Testament,

the Scriptures refer to His hands. In Matthew 8:3, Jesus went to the leper. In those days, a person with leprosy was required to holler out, "Unclean! Unclean!" to warn people so that no one would get near him. But there went Jesus Christ, and He touched the leper with His hand.

Jesus went to Peter's mother-in-law and laid His hands upon her and healed her (Matthew 8:15).

Then He went to the twelve-year-old girl, in Matthew 9:25, put His hand upon her, and raised her from the dead with divine resuscitation.

He touched the blind couple with His hand, in Matthew 9:29.

When the disciples were fearful of what they saw on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:7), Jesus Christ put His hand upon them to comfort them.

The Word of God says in Luke 4:40 that there were people who were demon possessed, people who had every kind of problem. But when He put His hand upon them, they were made clean.

Jesus loved to touch people, and in John 13:5, He washed the disciples' feet. In the holiness of His righteousness, in the constraining

love of His expression, in the communication of His compassion, Jesus Christ loves to touch men and women such as you and I.

As He was being crucified, picture those precious hands that held the children while he declared in Mark 10:14, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God....”

Even in the Old Testament, in Psalm 22:16, we see the precious hands of Jesus, pierced. His feet were pierced, and in His side was a gaping hole, where the water and the Blood poured out.

There are so many reasons to be motivated in the way of God. And while the world may offer us many different ways to walk—many seemingly good ways to go—with God there is only one way. His name is Jesus Christ—the way, the truth, and the life. And His way is the way of love.

**Read Authority Begins at the Cross, by Pastor Carl H. Stevens, Grace Publications, 1998.*

CONCLUSION

“[The Lord] made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel” (Psalm 103:7).

It is up to us to know the way of God. But there is no way to know God’s way unless we have doctrinal wisdom. Doctrinal wisdom is knowing God’s mind through categorical doctrine in every realm of life. Doctrinal wisdom gives manifold faith for manifold trials (1 Peter 1:6-7), manifold grace for the details of life (1 Peter 4:10). Doctrinal wisdom also gives manifold wisdom (Ephesians 3:10) for everything we face, as it provides for every detail of our lives.

In these perilous times, we as believers must recognize our heavenly position. We are seated together with Christ above all that is going on in the cosmic system, which is the way of the world. Christ’s Finished Work—His death, burial and resurrection—prepared the way for us. Our faith in Christ has placed us on the right

road. In His time, God will bring us home to heaven. Until then, we walk by faith and not by sight, in the way of God.

We have not found the way of works, nor the way of legalism, nor the way of condemnation. We have found the way of love—a way that creates capacity to honor and obey God, to love His doctrine, and to follow Christ by grace through faith.

When a message seems difficult to understand, then we mix what we hear with faith. God will always show us the way to go. The Lord will give us the manifestation of His divine presence, the peace that passes all human understanding, and the poise that comes when we apply the truth of the Word of God that resides within us.

Heavenly Father, we thank You that we have a new and living way. This new and living way doesn't have to contend with flesh—even though we have the flesh.

In the midst of indescribable confusion and warfare that is promoted in the invisible atmosphere surrounding us, may we show the world Your way of protection in the power of God. It is Your way of grace, of forgiveness, of peace, of joy, and of power. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.