

# ***THE PRESENT TRUTH***

*Bishop Stephen D. Lewis*

We need to study the character of the motives that prompt us to action in the light of the law of God, in order that we may be made aware of our deficiencies; but while the human agent may see his sins, he is not to become discouraged, although he finds himself condemned by the precepts of righteousness. He is to see and to realize the sinfulness of sin, to repent, and to have faith in Christ as his personal Saviour. It is never safe for us to feel that we are possessed of virtues, and that we may congratulate ourselves on our excellences of character, and our present state of purity and piety. David often triumphed in God, and yet he dwelt much upon his own unworthiness and sinfulness. His conscience was not asleep or dead. "My sin," he cries, "is ever before me." He did not flatter himself that sin was a matter with which he had nothing to do, and that should not concern him. As he saw the depths of deceit in his heart, he was deeply disgusted with himself, and prayed that God would keep him back by his power from the presumptuous sins, and cleanse him from secret faults.

It is not safe for us to close our eyes and harden our conscience so that we shall not see or realize our sins. We need to cherish the instruction we have had in regard to the hateful character of sin, in order that we may truly confess and forsake our sins. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Are you willing to be cleansed from all unrighteousness? Is it your purpose to press forward, but not in your own human strength, toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus? Keep the fear of the Lord always before you. Your only hope is in making Jesus your counselor.

The youth generally need a much higher idea as to what constitutes Christianity and its responsibilities. It is not safe for the professed follower of Christ to associate with the careless and reckless; for it is an easy matter to come to view things as they do, and to lose all sense of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Guard yourself on this one point in particular,--do not be influenced and led astray by those you have reason to know, by their words and works, are not in connection with God. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

If you are pressing forward and upward, seeking to attain new heights in education and in spiritual things, you will have discernment to understand that which is required of you. You will have the Holy Spirit to help all your infirmities. It is natural for the youth to love amusement, to live a life of gaiety, free from all responsibility; but the natural inclinations must be overcome by putting the soul under discipline to God. Let the youth wear the yoke of Jesus, as he has invited them to do, and their thoughts will be brought into captivity to Christ, and they will be led to exclaim, "His yoke is easy, and his burden is light."

A measure of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. Through the ministry of the angels, the Holy Spirit is enabled to work upon the mind and heart of the human agent, and draw him to Christ, who has paid the ransom money for his soul, that the sinner may be rescued from the slavery of sin and Satan. But the Spirit of God does not interfere with the freedom of the human agent. The Holy Spirit is given to be a helper, so that the human agent may cooperate with the divine intelligences; and it is its province to draw the soul, but never to force obedience. Christ is ready to impart all heavenly influences. He knows every temptation that comes to man, and the capabilities of every human agent. He weighs his strength. He sees the present and the future, and presents before the mind the obligations that should be met, and urges that common, earthly things shall not be permitted to be so absorbing that eternal things shall be lost out of reckoning. The Lord has fulness of grace to bestow on every one that will receive the heavenly gift. The Holy Spirit will bring the God-entrusted capabilities into Christ's service, and will mold and fashion the human agent according to the divine Pattern, in proportion as the human agent shall earnestly desire the transformation.

Christ, our Mediator, is the one who gives the Holy Spirit; and by the office work of the Holy Spirit, the atonement made on Calvary is brought in contact with the soul of man to transform his character, and change his nature, until it can be said in heaven, "Ye are laborers together with God, wearing Christ's yoke, bearing his burden." Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, man becomes the agent through which souls are brought into the kingdom of heaven. Through sanctification of the Spirit, he is a light to direct souls in the path of right, and draw souls to Jesus Christ. His hitherto paralyzed moral agency is quickened and reinvigorated with spiritual energy. Through the imputed righteousness of Christ, the Christian is placed on vantage ground, and becomes a channel through which the Holy Spirit can work, and the work done through the human agent, does not disappoint our Redeemer; for in such instruments he does not plead in vain with the souls of men. They are not ambassadors who having eyes see not, having ears hear not, and having hearts will not understand.

Let the youth look upon the divine standard, and never be content with a low aim. Never be found working on the side of the great adversary of souls, who is seeking to counteract the workings of the Spirit of God. Walk not hesitatingly, but firmly in the strength and grace of Jesus Christ. Unto him is committed all power in heaven and in earth. Take refuge in Jesus Christ, and enter into a firm covenant with him in faith, to love and serve him. Choose him as your Advocate; for the door of mercy is wide open for you. The promise is that if we ask anything according to his will, our request is granted if we ask in faith. Jesus says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he will give it you." The soul who neglects to comply with the conditions of salvation, will be left without excuse; for the treasures of his grace are absolutely unlimited. {Youth Instructor, July 5, 1894} Visit us @ [www.thepresenttruth.org](http://www.thepresenttruth.org)