

# Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

May 2001

"Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you." (Colossians 1:2, 3) I pray you have been receiving a blessing from these articles by A. T. Jones. Make sure to read the Questions and Answers section this month. It addresses some concerns about these articles. Also, don't forget about camp meeting in West Virginia. If there is any way you can make it, I would strongly encourage you to do so. I can assure you that your spiritual life will be greatly enhanced if you do. For detailed information about the camp meeting see the April 2001 issue of *Present Truth*. For more information call us at (304) 732-9204. I'll see you at camp meeting.

## Individuality in Religion (Part 3)

By Alonzo T. Jones

(The following is the third and final article in a series of articles that are being printed in *Present Truth*. It is taken from the book entitled, "Individuality in Religion," by Alonzo T. Jones. There is no printing date on the book, but it was first printed between 1890 and 1923. This book contains information so valuable that I believe every person in the world should read it, especially in light of current events relating to the freedom of religion. I have included chapter 8 to the end of the book in this issue of *Present Truth*. The Introduction and the first seven chapters are in the March and April 2001 issues of *Present Truth*.  
*Editor*)

### Chapter 8

#### Individuality the Supreme Gift

Government exists in the very nature of the existence of intelligent creatures. For the very term "creature" implies the Creator; and as certainly as any intelligent creature is, he owes to the Creator all that he is. And, in recognition of this fact, he owes to the Creator honor and devotion supreme. This, in turn, and in the nature of things, implies subjection and obedience on the part of the creature; and this is the principle of government.

Each intelligent creature owes to the Creator all that he is. Accordingly, the first principle of government is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

This is pronounced by the Lord to be the first of all the commandments. It is not the first of all the commandments because it was the first one that was ever given; but simply because it exists in the very nature and existence of every intelligent creature, and so inheres in the nature of things as soon as a single intelligent creature exists.

It is, therefore, the first of all the commandments, simply because it is but the expression of the inherent obligation in the first relationship which can possibly exist between creature and Creator. It is the first in the nature, the circumstances, and the existence of created intelligences.

It is the first of all the commandments in the supreme and most absolute sense. It inheres in the nature and the relationship of the first intelligent creature, and stands as complete in the case of that one alone as though there were millions; and stands as complete in the case of each one in the succession of future millions as in the case of the first intelligent creature, as he stood absolutely alone in the universe. No expansion, no multiplication of the number of the creatures beyond the original *one*, can ever in any sense limit the scope or meaning of that first of all commandments. It stands absolutely alone and eternally complete, as the first obligation of every intelligent creature that can ever be. And this eternal truth distinguishes *individuality* as an eternal principle.

However, just as soon as a second intelligent creature is given existence, an additional relationship exists. There is now not only the primary and original relationship of each to the Creator, for both owe equally their existence to the

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Creator, but also an additional and secondary relationship of *each to the other*.

This secondary relationship is one of absolute equality. And in the subjection and devotion of each to the Creator, in the first of all possible relationships, each of these honors the other. Therefore, in the nature of things, in the existence of two intelligent creatures, there inheres the second governmental principle, mutuality of all the subjects as equals.

And this principle is expressed in the second of all the commandments, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This is the *second* of all the commandments, for the like reason that the first is the *first* of all the commandments: it exists and inheres in the nature of things and of intelligences just as soon as a second intelligent creature exists. And also, like the first, this is complete and absolute the moment that two intelligent creatures exist, and it never can be expanded nor can it be modified by the existence of the universe full of other intelligent creatures.

Each, himself, alone, in his own individuality, is completely subject and devoted first of all to the Creator; because to Him he owes all. And in this subjection and devotion to the Creator first of all, each honors every other intelligent creature as his equal: as equally with himself occupying his place in the design of the Creator, and responsible individually and only to the Creator for the fulfillment of that design. Therefore out of respect to the Creator, to his neighbor, and to himself, he loves his neighbor as himself. And this second eternal truth, equally with the first distinguishes *individuality* as an eternal principle.

This is original government. It is also ultimate government; because these are first principles complete and absolute; and because they eternally inhere in the nature and relationships of intelligent creatures. And this government, which is at once original and ultimate, is simply *self-government*—self-government in rationality and in God. For it is only the plainest, simplest dictate of rationality that the intelligent creature should recognize that to the Creator he owes all; and that, therefore, subjection and honor are the reasonable dues from him to the Creator. It is likewise a simple dictate of reason that, since his neighbor equally with himself owes all to the Creator, his neighbor must be respected and honored in all this as he himself would desire to be respected and honored in it.

It is also the simple dictate of rationality that, since these have all been created, and in their existence owe all to the Creator, this existence with all its accompaniments in the exercise of abilities and powers should be ever held strictly in accordance with the will and design of the Creator. Because it is still further the simple dictate of reason that the Creator could never have designed that the existence, the faculties, or the powers of any creature should be exercised contrary to His will or outside of His design. Therefore it is the simplest, plainest dictate of rationality that this original

and ultimate government, which is *self-government*, is self-government under *God*, with God, and *in* God. And this is truly and only true self-government.

God has created all intelligences absolutely free. He made man, equally with other intelligences, to be moral. Freedom of choice is essential to morals. To have made an intelligence unable to choose would have been to make it incapable of freedom. Therefore, He made man, equally with other intelligences, *free to choose*; and He ever respects that of which He is the Author the freedom of choice.

When, in the exercise of this freedom of choice, an intelligence chooses that his existence, with its consequent faculties and powers, shall be spent strictly subject to the will and within the design of the Creator, and so, indeed, with the Creator and in the Creator, this is in the truest sense strictly and truly self-government.

And when the service, the worship, and the allegiance, of each intelligence is to be rendered entirely upon his own free choice, this reveals on the part of God, the Supreme and true Governor, the principle of *government with the consent of the governed*.

Thus the divine government as it relates to both the Governor and the governed, the Creator and the creature, is demonstrated as well as revealed to be government of perfect freedom; and of perfect *freedom* because of perfect *individuality*.

Through sin man lost his freedom and therefore his individuality. But in the gift of Christ all was restored. "He hath sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives." "Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

Christ Jesus, therefore, came from Heaven unto the world to bring back to man, and to bring man back to, what man had lost. Individuality was the Creator's supreme gift. In the fall, this was lost. In the gift of Christ *the day that man sinned*, the gift of individuality was restored to man.

In the long ages of sinful and imperial despotism from Cain to Tiberius Caesar, men had been so continually and systematically oppressed that they had been robbed of every vestige of individuality. Then Christ came into the world in human flesh as man, and through every phase of human experience established the individuality of man upon its own original and eternal basis. Matt. 25:15. Therefore, without Christianity in its original and native purity there cannot be true individuality.

But in the interests of despotism the very name of Christianity was perverted. And through long ages of ecclesiastical imperialistic tyranny men were again systematically robbed of every vestige of individuality. In the Reformation, God again restored men to Christianity and individuality. But Protestantism hardened in forms and creeds; and every form and denomination of Protestants has denied, and done all that it could to destroy, Christian liberty and

individuality. And now, through denominational, national, international, and world federation and confederation in religion and of religions, again ecclesiastical imperialistic despotism will work with all worldly power, deceiving signs, and lying wonders, systematically to rob man finally of every vestige of individuality.

But Christianity in its supreme gift of individuality, as always before, will now and finally triumph over all. Rev. 15:2, 3. And Christianity triumphing through individuality, in the nature of the case, does it now as always before only in and through the blessed individual: the individual under God and with God, the individual maintaining in perfect sincerity the Divine Right of Individuality in Religion, and Religious Liberty Complete.

Individuality, bear in mind always: *not* individualism: for it is distinctly and eternally an “*ity*”; *never* an “*ism*.”

## Chapter 9 Sunday Legislation

Whence came Sunday Legislation? What is its origin? What is its character? What does it mean to the people of the States, of the United States, and of the world?

These questions are pre-eminently pertinent everywhere in the United States today; for in the States and in the Nation, Sunday legislation is universally demanded; before Congress and State legislatures Sunday legislation is constantly urged.

Also for another reason these questions are not only pertinent, but all important. That reason is that it is *through Sunday legislation* that all the autocracies, all the governments of law, all the unions of Church and State, and all the churches as such, are to be enlisted and combined under the pressure of denominational, national, international, and world Federation of religion, for the domination of the whole world in religion. The whole movement for the federation of the world in religion, culminates pre-eminently in the one thing of Sunday observance, and this by law.

### Its Origin and Character

The first legislation in behalf of Sunday was that by Constantine; and it originated in *the church* and was enacted solely upon the initiative and the demand of *the bishops*. This is certain, not only from the provisions of the legislation itself, but also from all the facts and circumstances of the legislation, and from the whole history of the *time*, as well as of the legislation.

The first legislation on the subject was about the year A.D. 314, and included Friday as well as Sunday. And the intent of the legislation was specifically religious, for it provided and ordered that on Friday and on Sunday “there should be a suspension of business at the courts and in other civil offices, *so that* the day might *be devoted* with less interruption *to the purposes of devotion*.”

Such is Neander’s paraphrase of the statement of Sozomen respecting this first of all legislation in behalf of Sunday observance; and it shows that the only intent of the legislation was religious. But Sozomen’s words themselves, as we have them in English in Professor Walford’s translation, really intensify the religious character of the legislation. Here they are:

“He [Constantine] also enjoined the observance of the day termed the Lord’s day, which the Jews call the first day of the week, and which the Greeks dedicate to the sun, as likewise the day before the seventh, and commanded that no judicial or other business should be transacted on these days, but THAT GOD SHOULD BE SERVED WITH PRAYERS AND SUPPLICATIONS.”—Sozomen’s “*Ecclesiastical History*,” Book I, Chap. VII.

This puts it beyond all question or contrivance that the intent of the first legislation ever in the world in behalf of Sunday as a day of cessation from certain business and other common occupations was religious wholly and solely.

In the second step in Sunday legislation, in the law of Constantine issued A.D. 321, Friday was dropped and Sunday stood alone. The scope of the law was now extended to include not only courts and other State offices, but also the “people residing in cities” and “such as work at trades.” And still the intent of it was unqualifiedly the same; for Eusebius, one of the bishops who had most to do with the legislation, says of it:

“He [Constantine] commanded too, that one day should be regarded as a *special occasion* for religious worship.”—“*Oration in Praise of Constantine*,” Chap. IX.

And when in A.D. 386 the scope of the legislation was made universal and “civil transactions *of every kind* on Sunday were *strictly forbidden*,” the same exclusively religious character still attached to it; for “whoever transgressed was to be considered in fact, as guilty of *sacrilege*.”—Neander

“Sacrilege” is not in any sense a *civil*, but in every sense only a *religious*, offense.

Thus on the face of the legislation itself it is perfectly plain that there was neither in it, nor about it, in any way, any other than an exclusively religious intent. Yet we are not left with only this evidence, all-sufficient as it would be in itself. By the very ones who initiated and promoted and secured the legislation, there is given the positive assurance that the intent of the legislation was exclusively religious, and specifically so. Again, Bishop Eusebius is the one who assures us of this, as follows, referring to Constantine in this connection:

“Who else has commanded the nations inhabiting the continents and islands of this mighty globe to assemble weekly on the Lord’s day and to observe it as a festival, NOT indeed *for the PAMPERING OF THE BODY*, BUT for the comfort and invigoration of THE SOUL *by instruction in divine truth*.”—*Id.* Chap. XVII.



All this is confirmed by the course of Constantine himself in connection with the law. As the interpreter of his own law, showing what *he* intended that its meaning should be, he drew up the following *prayer* which he had his soldiers repeat in concert at a given signal every Sunday morning:

“We acknowledge Thee the only God; we own Thee as our king and implore Thy succor. By Thy favor have we gotten the victory; through Thee are we mightier than our enemies. We render thanks for Thy past benefits and trust Thee for future blessings. Together we pray to Thee and beseech Thee long to preserve to us, safe and triumphant, our Emperor Constantine and his pious sons.”—*“Life of Constantine,” Book IV, Chap. XX.*

If, however, there should yet be in the mind of any reasonable person any lingering doubt as to whether the original Sunday legislation was religious only, with no thought, much less any intent, of its having any other than an exclusively religious character, even such lingering doubt must be effectually removed by the indisputable fact that it was by virtue of his office and authority as *pontifex maximus*, and *not* as Emperor, that the day was set apart to the uses signified; because it was the sole prerogative of the *pontifex maximus* to appoint holy days. In proof of this there is the excellent authority of the historian Duruy in the following words:

“In DETERMINING WHAT DAYS SHOULD BE REGARDED AS HOLY, *and in the composition of a prayer for national use*, CONSTANTINE EXERCISED ONE OF THE RIGHTS BELONGING TO HIM AS PONTIFEX MAXIMUS, and it caused no surprise that he should do this.”—*“History of Rome,” Chap. CII, Part I, par. 4, from end.*

So much for the exclusively religious origin and character of Sunday legislation as it is in itself. Now what for...

### Its Inspiration and Initiation

This original Sunday legislation was but a part of the grand ambition and scheme of the popular church of the time through politico-ecclesiastical connivance and intrigue with Constantine to establish a “kingdom of God” on earth; and this in the very thought and purpose of an earthly theocracy. For there had in fact arisen in the church “a false theocratical theory... which might easily result in the formation of a *sacerdotal State, subordinating the secular to itself* in a false and outward way.” “This theocratical theory was already the prevailing one in the time of Constantine; and “the bishops voluntarily made themselves dependent on him by their disputes and by *their determination to make use of the power of the State* for the furtherance of their aims.”—*Neander.*

Accordingly the whole scheme of a human theocracy in imitation of the original and divine one in the Scriptures, was definitely worked out by the bishops; and *through Sunday legislation* was made effective. This is absolutely unmistakable and undeniable in the history of the time. It is the plain thread-thought of the whole ecclesiastical literature of the

time; and stands crystallized in Bishop Eusebius’s “Life of Constantine.” The church was Israel in Egypt oppressed by the Pharaoh Maxentius, and Constantine was the new Moses who delivered this new oppressed Israel. The defeat of Maxentius by Constantine in the battle of the Milvian Bridge, and his drowning in the Tiber, was the overthrow of Pharaoh in the sea, and his “sinking to the bottom like a stone.” After this deliverance of the new Israel by this new Moses, the new Moses with the new Israel went on to the conquest of the heathen in the wilderness, to the full establishment of the new theocracy, to the entering of the promised land, and to the saints of the Most High taking the kingdom. Accordingly, by the new Moses a tabernacle was set up, and a priesthood in imitation of the divine original in the Scriptures was established. And still in imitation of that divine original in the Scriptures, Sunday was *by law* made the sign of this new and false theocracy, as the Sabbath was and is the sign of the original, the true, and the divine Theocracy. *And this was done with this direct intent*; for we have it so stated in the words of Bishop Eusebius himself who was one of the chief ones in the doing of it. Here are his words:

“All things whatsoever it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these WE have transferred to the Sunday.”

That the scheme and system of things thus established was in their thought the very kingdom of God on earth, is also plainly and positively stated by Bishop Eusebius thus:

“Invested *as he is* with a *semblance of heavenly sovereignty*, he [Constantine] directs his gaze above and FRAMES HIS EARTHLY GOVERNMENT *according to* THE PATTERN of that DIVINE ORIGINAL, *feeling strength in* ITS CONFORMITY TO THE MONARCHY OF GOD.” “And by the appointment of the Caesars *fulfills the predictions of the prophets*, according to what they uttered ages before: ‘*And the saints of the most High SHALL TAKE THE KINGDOM.*’”—*“Oration,” Chap. III.*

And Sunday observance established and enforced by imperial law, as the sign of the new and false theocracy, in the place and in imitation of the Sabbath as the sign of the original and true Theocracy, was the means of making all the people “fit subjects” of this new and false “kingdom of God.” Here are the words, still by Bishop Eusebius:

“Our Emperor, ever beloved by Him, *derives the source of imperial authority from above.*” “That preserver of the universe orders these heavens and earth *and the celestial kingdom*, consistently with His Father’s will. *Even so, our emperor, whom He loves, by bringing those whom he rules on earth to the only begotten Word and SAVIOUR, RENDERS THEM FIT SUBJECTS OF HIS KINGDOM.*”—*Id. Chap. II.*

These evidences demonstrate that the inspiration and initiation of the original Sunday legislation was exclusively and specifically ecclesiastical; and this all to the promotion of a grand and subtle scheme of the bishops for the erection of “*A sacerdotal state*” that should “subordinate the secular to itself in a false and outward way” and to make effective

“their determination to make use of the power of the State for the furtherance of their aims.”

Therefore by the evidence on these two counts—1. “The Origin and Character;” 2. “The Inspiration and Initiation,” of the original Sunday legislation—that the said Sunday legislation is specifically religious and ecclesiastical, with every other thought and intent specifically excluded, stands proven to a demonstration: to a *demonstration*, because it is the unanimous testimony of all the evidence that can be brought in the case.

### How Stands the Case Now?

The exclusively and specifically religious and ecclesiastical character of the original Sunday legislation being a positive fixture, the question next arises, Has Sunday legislation ever lost that exclusive and specific religious and ecclesiastical character?

First of all, how could that character possibly be lost? That being its native and inherent character; that being absolutely the only character that it ever had; it is perfectly plain that this character simply never could be lost. As certainly as the thing survives at all, its native and inherent character is there. Therefore, wherever, to the world’s end, Sunday legislation shall be found, its native and inherent religious and ecclesiastical character inevitably attaches to it.

That is true in the very principle and nature of the case. But let us trace the thing historically and see how completely the principle is manifested. The “sacerdotal State,” in the erection of which the original Sunday legislation was such a potent factor, did, all over Europe and for more than a thousand years, “subordinate the secular to itself,” and did thus most despotically “make use of the power of the State—for the furtherance of her aims.” In all this dismal time Sunday legislation was continued, and with no pretense of any other than its original, native, and inherent, religious and ecclesiastical character.

In 1533 Henry VIII divorced himself and England from the Pope of Rome. But that was all: for, to what then and thus became “The Church of England” Henry immediately stood as pope in the place of the pope. By statute it was ordered that the king “shall be taken, accepted and reputed the only supreme head on earth of the church of England.” And in 1535 Henry assumed officially the title “On earth supreme head of the Church of England.” That which was now the Church of England was only that which before had been the Catholic Church in England. “In form nothing had been changed. The outer constitution of the Church remained unaltered.”—*Green*.

And in this same unchanged system the original papal Sunday legislation was continued, and has been continued to the present day: and still with no pretense or suggestion of anything else than as in its original, native, and inherent, religious and ecclesiastical character.

From England there spread colonies to America. In America these colonies were established by English charters, and so were but the extension here of the English Government. And in strict accord with the English system, and in plain extension of it, every colony established in America, except only Rhode Island, had an established *religion*: either in the form of “the Christian religion” in general, or else, as in most, in the form of some particular *church*.

And in every one of these colonial religious establishments in America, there was extended, and in some there was even intensified, the Sunday legislation of the English system, which was only the extension of the Sunday legislation of the original Roman and papal system.

And still here, as always before in England and in Rome, the Sunday legislation of the colonies in America was never with any thought or purpose, or pretense, other than as in its original, native, and inherent, religious and ecclesiastical character.

Presently these colonies cut loose from the government of Britain and became “free and independent States.” But still each of them was the same as before in its system of established religion and Sunday legislation. Virginia, however, immediately dis-established there the Church of England and her religion; and as regards established religion as such swept it all away by “An Act for Establishing Religious Freedom.” Yet on the statute books of the now State of Virginia there stood and remained unmodified the identical Sunday legislation of the *Colony* of Virginia, which was only the unmodified Sunday legislation of the English Church-and-State-system, which was only the unmodified Sunday legislation of the Roman and papal system in its old, original, native, and inherent, religious and ecclesiastical character.

And the story of Virginia in this is substantially the story of every other of the original Thirteen States; excepting always Rhode Island. And the Sunday legislation of all the States of the Union, after the original Thirteen, has been only the extension, and practically the copying, of the Sunday legislation of the original Thirteen States that had it. And in this bad progress even Rhode Island has been perverted and disgraced. And always this Sunday legislation of the later States has been of the same original native and inherent religious and ecclesiastical character of that of the Colonies, of England, and of Rome.

Thus, from the original Sunday legislation of Constantine to the latest Sunday legislation in the United States, it is all the same thing, to the same purpose, and of the same character precisely.

### Sunday Legislation Unconstitutional

Then came the formation of the national government of the United States with its total separation of religion and the

State, and its constitutional provision that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” This principle of the national Constitution with the preceding “Act for Establishing Religious Freedom,” in Virginia, has been the guide in the formation of the Constitutions of all the States of the American Union, after the original Thirteen: and even the Constitutions though not the legislation, of the original Thirteen States have been materially shaped by it. And so faithfully has this guidance been followed, and so generally has the principle been recognized throughout the whole American Union, that, as summarized, the case stands thus:

“Those things which are not lawful under any of the American Constitutions may be stated thus:

- “1. Any law respecting an establishment of religion.
- “2. Compulsory support, by taxation or otherwise, of religious instruction.
- “3. Compulsory attendance upon religious worship.
- “4. Restraints upon the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience.
- “5. Restraints upon the expression of religious belief.

“These are the prohibitions which in some form of words are to be found in the American Constitutions, and which secure freedom of conscience and of religious worship. No man in religious matters is to be subjected to the censorship of the State or of any public authority.”

“The legislators have not been left at liberty to effect a union of Church and State, or to establish preferences by law in favor of any religious persuasion or mode of worship. There is not complete religious liberty where any one sect is favored by the State and given advantage by law over other sects.

“Whatever establishes a distinction against one class or sect is, to the extent to which the distinction operates unfavorably, a persecution; and if based on religious grounds, a religious persecution. The extent of the discrimination is not material to the principle; it is enough that it creates an inequality of right or privilege.”—*Cooley’s “Constitutional Limitations,” Chap. XIII, par. 1-9.*

Now, in view of these facts, provisions, and principles, taking Sunday legislation for just what it unquestionably is,—exclusively and specifically religious—it is perfectly plain upon every principle that anywhere and everywhere in the United States, and under all the Constitutions, Sunday legislation is “a religious persecution,” and is absolutely unconstitutional and void of itself.

That it is unconstitutional has been admitted by both State and United States Courts. The Supreme Court of Ohio said plainly that “if religion were the sole ground of Sunday legislation, it could not stand for a moment” under the Constitution. And a United States District Court has remarked upon the “somewhat humiliating spectacle of the Sunday

Advocates trying to justify the continuance of Sunday legislation... Upon the argument that it is *not* in conflict with the civic dogma of religious freedom,” when “*It surely is*” and says that “the potentiality of the fact that it *is in aid of religion* might be frankly confessed and not denied.” And the latter court distinctly recognized it, in very word, as “persecution.”

## Judicial Invention and Fiat

And yet all over the United States Sunday legislation is held by courts to be constitutional! How can this be? The answer is that *it is solely by judicial invention and fiat.*

Note: It is not by judicial construction or interpretation of the *Constitutions*, but wholly by judicial invention and fiat as to the *character of the legislation*. That is to say: By judicial invention and fiat an utterly new and foreign character is given to Sunday legislation; and then upon this new and foreign ground the legislation is held to be constitutional. If this new and foreign ground were in truth the original and native ground, even then the constitutionality of such legislation would be open to question. But not in any sense is the new and foreign ground true. It is a sheer invention, and false both as to principle and to the facts.

This judicial invention and fiat of new and foreign ground for Sunday legislation is the proposition that it is for the *physical* benefit, for the promotion of the *health* and for the restoration of the *wasted energies, of the people; that “it is for the protection of labor,” and so is constitutional “as a police regulation”: and a “purely civil rule”!*

Now, everybody who knows but the A B C of Sunday legislation, knows full well that no Sunday law in the world was ever enacted with any such intent, or for any such purpose, or upon any such ground, as that; but that every Sunday law ever in the world was enacted solely because of its religious and ecclesiastical character, with every physical and civic element specifically excluded.

The State of Idaho is an illustration in point, and being the very latest, is strictly pertinent. In the very spirit, and with the very aim, of the bishops in the time of Constantine, an ecclesiastical clique, *not of the State of Idaho*, framed for Idaho a Sunday Bill and carried it to the legislature of Idaho and got it enacted into the law of Idaho. And then under a Constitution declaring that

“The exercise and enjoyment of religious faith and worship shall forever be guaranteed; and no person shall be denied any civil or political right, privilege, or capacity on account of his religious opinions;... Nor shall any preference be given by law to any religious denomination or mode of worship,”

The Supreme Court of Idaho held that religious and ecclesiastical statute to be “constitutional.”

The State of Washington is another illustration. The Constitution of that State declares that



“Absolute freedom of conscience in all matters of religious sentiment, belief, and worship shall be guaranteed to every individual, and no one shall be molested or disturbed in person or property on account of religion.”

When in 1889 this constitutional provision was framed, it was the unanimous intent of its framers that it should exclude Sunday legislation equally with every other form of religion in law. The writer of this book was present with the committee of the Constitutional Convention when that provision was framed. And I personally know that such was the intent of the framers of it, because this very subject of Sunday legislation was particularly considered by the committee and it was held by the committee unanimously that this constitutional provision *as framed* would, *as intended*, exclude Sunday legislation. And yet under that Constitution the Supreme Court of the State of Washington has held Sunday legislation to be “constitutional.”

Thus with Sunday legislation actually framed by ecclesiastics with no other than religious and ecclesiastical provisions framed with direct intent to prohibit it, the courts by sheer judicial invention and fiat make it “constitutional.”

But every such decision is plainly in open disregard of one of the very first *principles*, and of “the universally admitted *rule*,” of judicial action—the *principle* and the *rule*, that “the intention of the law-maker is the law”; that “a law can have no meaning beyond the intent of those who made it.”

This principle, that must ever, *in justice*, guide in the construction of *statutes* as well as *constitutions*, is authoritatively stated as follows:

“A court which should allow a change of public sentiment to influence it in giving to a written constitution a construction not warranted by the intention of its founders, would be justly chargeable with reckless disregard of official oath and public duty.”—Cooley, *Constitutional Limitations*,” p. 67.

The principle applies with equal force to the construction of a *statute*, as to the construction of a *Constitution*. And whether the change of sentiment which a court should allow thus to influence it, be public and general or only the private and personal sentiment and bias of the court itself, the principle is the same and such court is equally “chargeable with reckless disregard of official oath and public duty.” Yet this is precisely what has been done by the courts when, by setting up an utterly new and foreign meaning, they give to Sunday legislation a construction not in any sense warranted by the intention of its founders or its framers, anywhere in human history or experience.

### A Palpable Subterfuge

Yet even this invention and fiat of new and foreign ground for Sunday legislation, is not allowed to exclude the original and native *religious* ground of it. This invention, in fact, is only the stalking-horse by which Sunday legislation

*as religious* can be brought in and made to stand as “constitutional” under constitutional provisions that absolutely prohibit it. For no sooner has it in each instance been made “constitutional” as “purely a civil rule” than it is immediately given standing *as religious* by the declaration that “*the fact that the legislation is founded in religion*” and is “the peculiar feature of Christianity,” “is nothing against it, but rather is strongly in its favor.” Thus, under Constitutions prohibiting religious legislation, by sheer sleight of judicial legerdemain the feat is accomplished of making “constitutional” legislation that is wholly religious and ecclesiastical.

### Still it is Unconstitutional

But against it all there still stands the abiding truth that Sunday legislation is unconstitutional everywhere in the United States, because of its religious character. The inventing of a “*civil basis*” for it in order to render it constitutional, only leaves it still unconstitutional because of its original, native, and inherent *religious* and ecclesiastical character. In other words, when the Constitution guarantees absolute freedom from all religious observances, restrictions, or provisions, *by law required*, then *any religious character whatever* attaching to any law renders it unconstitutional *for that reason*.

The Constitution is the supreme expression of the will of the people in the government. And when that supreme will excludes from legislation all things religious, then this supreme will can not be evaded by the mere trick of inventing a “*civil basis*” for a *religious thing*. By such trick every religious thing ever heard of could be made constitutional and enforced upon all: and the constitutional guaranty of religious freedom would thus be turned into a tantalizing figment.

Therefore, instead of the “*religious* ground of Sunday observance being nothing against, but rather in favor of, Sunday legislation as a civil rule,” the truth is that this is the strongest possible objection against it; so strong indeed that this alone nullifies it, whatever might be its “civil” nature or necessity.

The Supreme Court of California has well stated this principle, as follows:

“The Constitution says that ‘the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed in this State.’... The constitutional question is a naked question of legislative power. Had the legislature the power to do the particular thing done? What was that particular thing?—It was prohibition of labor on Sunday. Had the Act been so framed as to show that it was intended by those who voted for it, as simply a municipal regulation; yet, if, in fact, it contravened the provision of the Constitution securing religious freedom to all, we should have been compelled to

declare it unconstitutional for *that* reason.”—*Ex-parte Newman*.

The *principle* is that it would be impossible for as much damage to accrue to the State, to society, or to the individual, through being deprived of a desired “*civil benefit*,” as must certainly accrue to the State, to society, and to every individual, through the infringement of religious freedom, and invasion of the rights of conscience, and the clothing of religionists with civil power.

### Even if Constitutional it Would Yet Be Wrong

It is undeniable then, that Sunday legislation is religious and ecclesiastical, and, as such, and under whatever plea, is unconstitutional and “a persecution” everywhere in the United States. But even if it were constitutional here, as it is in England and France and Spain and Russia, it would still be wrong. As religious and ecclesiastical, Sunday legislation is wrong of itself and never can by any possibility be right.

King Nebuchadnezzar, as against the three Hebrew young men, made a law having a religious basis and character. But God taught him and all kings and people forever, that it was wrong.

The Medo-Persian government, as against Daniel, enacted a statute of inflexible law having a religious basis and character. But God taught that government and all governments and people forever that it was wrong.

And as for the church “making use of the power of the State for the furtherance of her aims,” which could not possibly be with any other than religious intent—that by this slimy, serpentine, trick there was accomplished by the church her “aim” at the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory, *this* is sufficient demonstration to the wide universe and for eternity that such combination and the procedure under it is supremely and satanically wrong.

Thus there is a higher law and a mightier Authority than any of earth; that is the will and authority of God. *Religion* is the duty which intelligences owe to their Creator, and the manner of discharging that duty. The religion therefore, of every soul stands only between him and the Sovereign of the soul. Therefore, though Sunday legislation were constitutional in every State or government on earth, still, as *being religious*, it would be altogether wrong; because it is an invasion of the realm, and a usurpation of the authority and jurisdiction, of God.

### No Possible Ground for it

There are just two authorities to whom, as respects law or government, anybody in the world is under any obligation to render anything. These two are God and Caesar. Accordingly the Lord Jesus declared this truth thus: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.”

Sunday legislation and Sunday observance come from neither God nor Caesar.

It is not of God; for, as the evidence shows, in the very beginning of it, it was set up as the sign of the false and human theocracy of the man of sin in the *place of God*, showing himself that *he* is God, to supplant the Sabbath of the Lord as the sign of the true and divine Theocracy in which God Himself is God alone.

It is not of Caesar: for, as the evidence shows, it was not as *Caesar*—the head of the *State*, but solely as *pontifex maximus*—the head of religion, that Constantine decreed Sunday to be a sacred day and established its observance: and this under the inspiration and demand of “*the Church*” which is neither God nor Caesar.

Therefore, since it is from neither God nor Caesar, but only from “the church” through a heathen “head of religion,” there is no obligation, no ground, and no room, for anybody in the universe ever to render to anybody any observance of it in any way whatever.

### Its Ulterior Purpose

By every count in the indictment then, it is demonstrated that the original, native, and inherent character of Sunday legislation abides ever the same—exclusively and specifically religious and ecclesiastical.

And the ulterior purpose in Sunday legislation is likewise ever the same. We have seen that in the original Sunday legislation the ulterior purpose was “the formation of a sacerdotal State, subordinating the secular to itself in a false and outward way”; and the making effective of “the determination” of the ecclesiastics “to make use of the power of the State for the furtherance of their aims.”

And *that* is precisely the ulterior purpose of it now. Congress and legislatures are constantly besieged; legislators are persistently pestered, and even threatened, by ecclesiastics now, as the imperial office was then, always for Sunday legislation, and more Sunday legislation. It matters not how much of such legislation there may be already on the statute books, still the persistent demand is that there shall be more, and more, and yet more; and it is all dictated, when it is not actually framed, by the interested ecclesiastics themselves, and in terms more and more approaching the Inquisition, precisely as by those other ecclesiastics at the first.

We need not follow the subject further here. The evidences here presented show conclusively that the character of Sunday legislation is ever only exclusively and specifically religious and ecclesiastical; that, therefore, *in the United States* it is unconstitutional and un-American; and that everywhere it is un-Godly and anti-Christian. ✍

(I pray that you have been blessed by this article. This concludes the powerful book, *Individuality in Religion*, by Alonzo T. Jones. Editor)



# Saving Faith

by E. J. Waggoner

*“But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above); or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”* (Romans 10:6-9)

May we accept these words, especially the statement in the last verse, as literally true? Shall we not be in danger if we do? Is not something more than faith in Christ necessary to salvation? To the first of these questions we say, Yes, and to the last two we say, No, and refer to the Scriptures for corroboration. So plain a statement cannot be other than literally true and one that can be depended on by the trembling sinner.

As an instance in proof, take the case of the jailer at Philippi. Paul and Silas, after having been inhumanly beaten, were placed in his care. Notwithstanding their lacerated backs and their manacled feet, they prayed and sang praises to God at midnight and suddenly an earthquake shook the prison, and all the doors were opened. It was not alone the natural fear produced by feeling the earth rock beneath him nor yet the dread of Roman justice if the prisoners in his charge should escape, that caused the jailer to tremble. But he felt in that earthquake shock a premonition of the great judgment, concerning which the apostles had preached; and, trembling under his load of guilt, he fell down before Paul and Silas, saying, *“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”* Mark well the answer; for here was a soul in sorrest extremity and what was sufficient for him must be the message to all lost ones. To the jailer’s anguished appeal, Paul replied, *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”* (Acts 16:30, 31) This agrees exactly with the words which we quoted from Paul to the Romans.

On one occasion the Jews said unto Jesus, *“What shall we do that we might work the works of God?”* Just the thing that we want to know. Mark the reply: *“This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”* (John 6:28, 29) Would that these words might be written in letters of gold and kept continually before the eyes of every struggling Christian. The seeming paradox is cleared up. Works are necessary, yet faith is all-sufficient, because faith does the work. Faith comprehends everything and without faith there is nothing.

The trouble is that people in general have a faulty conception of faith. They imagine that it is mere assent and that it is only a passive thing to which active works must be added. But faith is active and it is not only the most substantial thing but the only real foundation. The law is the righteousness of God (Isaiah 51:6, 7), for which we are commanded to seek

(Matthew 6:33), but it cannot be kept except by faith, for the only righteousness which will stand in the Judgment is “that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” (Philippians 3:9)

Read the words of Paul in Romans 3:31. “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.” Making void the law of God by man is not abolishing it; for that is an impossibility. It is as fixed as the throne of God. No matter what men say of the law, nor how much they trample upon it and despise it, it remains the same. The only way that men can make void the law of God is to make it of none effect in their hearts by their disobedience. Thus in Numbers 30:15, a vow that has been broken is said to have been made void. So when the apostle says that we do not make void the law through faith, he means that faith and disobedience are incompatible. No matter how much the law-breaker professes faith, the fact that he is a law-breaker shows that he has no faith. But the possession of faith is shown by the establishment of the law in the heart, so that the man does not sin against God. Let no one decry faith as of little moment.

But does not the apostle James say that faith alone cannot save a man and that faith without works is dead? Let us look at his words a moment. Too many have with honest intent perverted them to a dead legalism. He does say that faith without works is dead and this agrees most fully with what we have just quoted and written. For if faith without works is dead, the absence of works shows the absence of faith; for that which is dead has no existence. If a man has faith, works will necessarily appear and the man will not boast of either one, for by faith boasting is excluded. (Romans 3:27) Boasting is done only by those who trust wholly in dead works or whose profession of faith is a hollow mockery.

Then how about James 2:14, which says: “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him?” The answer necessarily implied is, of course, that it cannot. Why not? Because he hasn’t it. What doth it profit if a man say he has faith, if by his wicked course he shows that he has none? Must we decry the power of faith simply because it does nothing for the man who makes a false profession of it? Paul speaks of some who profess that they know God but who deny Him by their works. Titus 1:16. The man to whom James refers is one of this class. The fact that he has no good works—no fruit of the Spirit—shows that he has no faith, despite his loud profession, and so of course faith cannot save him; for faith has no power to save a man who does not possess it. ✍

(This article was first printed in the August 1, 1890 issue of the *Bible Echo*. It is also found on pages 66-68 of the book *Lessons on Faith*, by A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner. Editor)



## Questions and Answers

by Lynnford Beachy



### Question:

“About the article typed out from Alonzo T. Jones’ book [*Individuality in Religion*]... How did our inherent God-created duty and nature to serve and love God somehow become tainted with the idea that sinning, not choosing God and his commands, is a ‘religious liberty’? How is it that this ‘sinning’ is called ‘freedom’ and that it is somehow that God made this ‘freedom’ in us? Is the ability to sin a ‘gift from God’? Where is the liberty in sinning?” *Maryland*

(The above question is a small portion of a long letter. I am going to address the main points here. All questions in this issue from Maryland come from this and a subsequent letter. The following answers are slightly edited versions of letters I have written and sent, in response to these letters. *Editor*)

### Answer:

You brought up some good questions. First of all let me make it clear that Jones never said that “sinning... is a religious liberty.” Sinning is not a religious liberty. The ability to choose to serve God or not, that is a religious liberty, a freedom, and perhaps the greatest freedom of all. Yes, the ability to choose, even to sin, is a gift from God. Please allow me to explain.

Let us suppose for a moment that when God created man He did not give him the freedom to choose whether to serve God or not. What would man be then? Man would be very similar to a robot that had been programmed to act a certain way, and no matter whether he wanted to or not, he could not act any differently. Look at it from God’s point of view for a moment. If you created these beings who could not choose to act differently from what you commanded, would you gain any pleasure in the service of those beings? I mean, there would be no way to say, “I really appreciate the way you are acting, worshipping and praising me,” because they had no choice to do otherwise.

Suppose you have a son who is like a remote control child. You push the buttons and the child does exactly what you say, whether he wants to or not. He has no possibility to choose to serve you because he wants to, or to choose not to serve you because he doesn’t want to. That type of service could never be pleasing to a parent or to God. I know I would get very tired of that kind of service being rendered to me. It would be the difference between having a child that does good because he enjoys it and having a robot that does good because he has no choice to do otherwise.

Think about it for a moment. The Bible tells us of some beings who “*rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*” (Revelation 4:8) If these beings were created in such a way

that they could not possibly choose to do otherwise, then it would be similar to me programming my computer to say over and over, “I love you, I love you, you are the best, I love you.” If I did that, could I gain any pleasure from it? If so, I would be a very demented, egotistical individual. I would find no pleasure in such empty words coming from my computer. Now, however, if my wife loved me so much that she, very often, would say similar words, I would gain satisfaction from that. I would appreciate it, because I would know that I had not forced her to do it, but that she chose to, of her own free will, because she truly loves me.

Let’s examine this further. Lucifer (the previous name of the angel who is now called Satan) was created perfect. (Ezekiel 28:15) He was a perfect individual who loved God perfectly and enjoyed serving Him. However, it is evident that Lucifer was given the freedom to choose to serve God or not. We know the story. Lucifer desired to be exalted above what God intended for him. He began to have distorted ideas about God’s love for him, which led to a desire to try his own path, do his own thing, and reject God’s counsels. Lucifer rebelled against God and sinned, by choosing his own way.

God knew that Lucifer would rebel, yet He created him anyway. He could have created Lucifer in such a way that there was no possibility for him to choose to do wrong. But it is obvious that God did not want to do it that way. God had a choice. He could have created all beings in such a way that they had no choice to disobey Him. If He had done this, then nobody ever would have rebelled, sin would not exist, but God would be left with a universe full of robots, and I am certain God would not have been satisfied with such programmed service.

There was only one other alternative for God in order for Him to enjoy true fellowship with other beings, and that was to create beings who had the freedom to choose to do good or to do evil. Then if His creatures chose to do good and serve Him of their own free will, He could be satisfied with such service and have genuine fellowship with His creatures.

God knew from the beginning what would result if He chose to create beings with the freedom of choice. He knew the pain and suffering that would result when Lucifer chose to do wrong, yet God created him anyway. From the very first creature God created with the freedom to choose for themselves there was always a possibility for someone to rebel. If it would not have been Lucifer, it could have been someone else. The possibility existed for His creatures to have a curiosity to know if God’s ways are right or if there might be a better way.

Yet God had a marvelous plan in mind. He knew sin would arise, He also knew how to ensure that it would never rise the second time. God said, “*What do ye imagine against*

the LORD? he will make an utter end: **affliction shall not rise up the second time.**” (Nahum 1:9)

God knew affliction would arise, but He had a plan to keep it from happening a second time. He knew that if the entire universe could see where rebellion leads, and also see how far God would go to save the rebellious ones, then they would never, ever choose to rebel again. God will not take away our freedom of choice when we get to heaven; what will be clarified is the question of where choosing wrong will lead. The entire universe will be certain that, even though they have the choice, they would not dare go down the same road Lucifer went down, and rebel against God.

God knows this, and will end up with His desired goal of having other intelligent, free beings to fellowship with who will never rebel against Him even though they have the freedom of choice to do it.

The stories of Lucifer and Adam and Eve prove, without a shadow of a doubt, that God made both man and angels with the inherent ability to choose to do good or not. I praise God that I am not a robot. Sometimes I wish that God would force me to do right so that I will be obedient continually, but I know that it would not be right that way. I know that God doesn't work that way, and I am thankful for it.

Yes! And a thousand times yes! The ability to choose to obey or not to obey God is a religious freedom, and the greatest of all freedoms. I am very thankful that God has made me in such a way that I can choose to serve Him or not to serve Him. Joshua said, “**And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**” (Joshua 24:15) God would not ask us to choose who to serve if He did not give us the freedom to choose to serve Him or not. Yes, freedom to choose to do good or bad is a gift from God.

Let me put it in another way. Suppose I would take away your freedom to serve God in the way you choose. Suppose I forced you to worship God the Father and His only begotten Son, excluding the trinity completely, on the true Sabbath day, Saturday. Do you suppose you would enjoy that type of worship? If it is contrary to your beliefs, you would not enjoy it at all, and you know what, God would not enjoy it either, because you would be doing good, not because you wish to, but because you were forced to.

God, all of heaven, and myself, are steadfastly opposed to force in matters of religion. And all those who are forced in matters of religion are opposed to it as well. For this reason, many people refused to yield their freedom of conscience when persecuted by pagan Rome during the first three centuries, and by papal Rome during the Dark Ages. I stand in good company when I stand for, and adamantly support, religious liberty and the freedom of conscience, for millions of

sleeping saints stood for the same principle, and God Himself is on my side.

I stand with A. T. Jones when he wrote, “Any service as to God that is not freely chosen by him who renders it is not service to God. There can be no virtue in it; there can be none of God in it. Any service rendered as to God that is not freely chosen on the part of him who renders it cannot be of God, because “God is love;” and love and compulsion, love and force, love and oppression, never can go together. Therefore any duty, any obligation, anything, offered or rendered as to God that is not of the individual's own freely chosen choice, can neither be of God nor to God. Accordingly when the Lord created whatever creature—angel or man—in order that that creature should be happy in the service of God, and in order that there should be virtue in rendering service or worship to God, He created him free to *choose* to do so.” (*Individuality in Religion*, pages 8, 9)

Certainly you can see the truth in this statement, for it is an eternal principle that has been alive since the beginning, since God created the first angel, and will be alive throughout eternal ages in the world made new. I am glad that this principle is a part of me.

If God wanted people who could not choose to sin, why didn't He create us that way? The very fact that there are people who sin proves that God gave them the ability to choose to sin. Yes, that is a freedom, because with it also comes the freedom to choose to serve God. You cannot separate the two. If you take away the freedom to choose to sin, then you also take away the freedom to choose to serve God.

### Question:

“How is it ‘love’ to ...create us as creatures that love God and enjoy Him and want to serve Him (the inherent principle) and then to say that if God does not allow us to ‘sin’ He does not love us?”

Maryland

### Answer:

I believe you are misunderstanding A. T. Jones again here. He did not say that if we do not have the choice to sin that God does not love us, but that if He forces us, even to do good, against our will, then He does not love us. If I *forced* you to disbelieve and dishonor the trinity and keep holy the Sabbath, could you say that I love you? If you think that is love, then you must agree with the policy of the papacy of burning “heretics” and seizing their churches if they do not agree with you. Do you agree with the principle of forcing people to do what you want them to regardless of their personal convictions or desires?

God could have forced Lucifer to keep His commandments, but He didn't, because He knew Lucifer's service would then be fake and dry.

Let's look at the example of Adam and Eve. God purposely put a tree of forbidden fruit in the middle of the



Garden of Eden, which proves that Adam had a free choice. If God had cut off every possibility for Adam to choose to do wrong, then Adam's service to God would not be out of love, but out of compulsion and force. Obviously God does not operate on that principle.

*Question:*

"Is this man saying that unless we are able to sin, to deny God, to choose the devil, we have no virtue, no righteousness in our following God's commandments?" *Maryland*

*Answer:*

Yes, A. T. Jones is saying that if we have no choice to do wrong, then all of our doing right cannot have any virtue, because it is not a choice. For example, if I create a robot that works every day except for the Sabbath, the seventh-day of the week, and on that day the robot rests from his work. Could I praise the robot for doing something virtuous? Could I claim that my robot is doing a good deed when it had no choice to do otherwise?

Take child training for example. I have a young son, and I need to train him to do good and be obedient. Suppose I am trying to train him to be obedient by teaching him to refrain from pulling a glass dish off the table. If I remove the glass dish from the table completely, so there is no possibility that he can reach it, would I praise him for not pulling the dish off the table? Would I think that he had done some virtuous thing by not pulling the dish off the table? Certainly not! I would, however, be very happy if I could train him to listen when I say no, and he chose to restrain himself from pulling the dish off the table. Now I would have something to be happy about. Certainly you can see the truth in this.

Let me clarify something here. God expects us to choose whom we will serve, but we do not have any power in and of ourselves to do good. We can choose to yield our will to God, and He will work in us to do His good pleasure.

*Question:*

"If 'religious freedom' is only possible as a result of the presence of sin tempting us away from God, then certainly God is not free since he cannot be tempted by any evil..."

*Maryland*

*Answer:*

Jones never said that religious freedom is only possible as a result of the presence of sin. Religious freedom existed long before sin, and will exist long after sin and sinners are destroyed. Religious freedom is the God-given ability to choose to worship God or not. When everyone in the universe chooses to worship God (Revelation 5:13), it will not mean that the ability to choose has been taken away, but only that every individual in the universe will know where choosing evil would lead.

*"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man."* (James 1:13) Notice the verse says that God cannot be tempted with evil. Why? Because God alone knows the end from the beginning. God knows what the whole universe needs to learn, and that is that evil is definitely the wrong path to go down. There is no chance that God will sin. He knows the end from the beginning. He hates sin and knows perfectly well where sin leads, and therefore will not possibly follow that course.

The rest of the universe, however, does not know perfectly where sin leads. It is true now that many beings have a good idea where sin leads, but when sin is ended, the entire universe will know where it leads, and they will know the goodness and justice of God, and never again will they be tempted with evil. Why? Is it because they no longer have the freedom of choice to choose to do evil? Certainly not! It is because they will know clearly that sin is the wrong choice, and no amount of temptation could ever get them to sin. This is the condition God is in right now, and the condition in which He is longing for the entire universe to be.

I do not believe that the desire to sin will be present in the earth made new. We will all have glorified bodies. Satan will have been destroyed. There will not be anyone around to tempt us, and the idea that Lucifer cherished, that brought sin into his life, will forever be shown to be faulty, so we will no longer have any desire to do otherwise than what God commands. However, this is not achieved by God removing our freedom of choice. The ideas that Lucifer cherished that brought sin into his life were his desires to be exalted above what God intended for him. He began to have distorted ideas about God's love for him, which led to a desire to try his own path, do his own thing, and reject God's counsels. This will not be existent in the earth made new because everyone will know where Lucifer's path leads, they will know God's great love for them, and they will not even think of taking the same path Lucifer took.

God does not have lusts to do evil, and we will not either in the earth made new. Remember this also, Lucifer did not have lusts to do evil when he was created either, so there is more than lust involved. There is the question of whether God is right or not in all that He does. This question will be forever answered in the earth made new.

*Question:*

"Could Christ sin and fall from heaven the way Satan did? Could any of the elect angels? Could any of us in the final glory of heaven sin and fall from heaven?" *Maryland*

*Answer:*

You asked an excellent question, and one which was answered in detail in the January 2001 issue of *Present Truth*. Please refer to it for a thorough answer to this question.

God will not have anyone in heaven who is doing what is right because they have no choice to do wrong. The choice will always be there, but carrying through with that choice will never happen because all will know what the outcome would be. Nobody will ever question God's government again. It was laid on the line once, but never again. Of Christ, Isaiah wrote, *"the government shall be upon his shoulder."* It was upon His shoulders once, but never again. God's government will be forever vindicated, and nobody will question it again.

Yes, Christ could have sinned. Christ was free to choose to do other than what His Father had commanded. He said, *"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."* (Luke 22:42) Christ obviously had an independent will, and in this case it was different from His Father's will. He freely chose to submit His will to His Father. Christ evidently had that choice.

Christ became a man, a man like you and me. He was *"in the likeness of sinful flesh."* (Romans 8:3) *"As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."* (Hebrews 2:14) *"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."* (Hebrews 2:18) *"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* (Hebrews 4:15)

Christ took upon Himself the same flesh and blood that you and I have now. He was tempted, which indicates that He had lusts and He had the ability to sin. To say otherwise is to claim that Christ was merely acting, and that He is null and void as our example. Let me clarify something here. Although Christ had lusts that come to the human family by nature, He never once committed sin, and therefore He never had the cultivated evil habits that you and I must overcome. For example, some people may be enticed by a cigarette, while others are repulsed by it. Those who are most enticed are those who have developed the filthy habit of cigarette smoking, while those who are repulsed are those who either have never had the habit, or have overcome it.

Yes, all the elect angels could have sinned, and still could, along with all the righteous who will be in heaven, but God carried out His plan so thoroughly that He has insured heaven against the possibility of sin arising the second time. It will not rise again, not because the choice is gone, but because the question regarding God's government is gone—gone for good. That is why God will only bring those to heaven whom He can be sure will never rebel against Him in the future. Thank God for that.

I pray this helps answer some of your questions on this issue.

### Question:

"I have a question on the way women must behave in church. The issue is in 1 Timothy 2 verses 9-15. So is it that

women should not preach or even stand in front of men during Sabbath School? Please help me by answering my question on your *Present Truth* question and answer segment."

Zimbabwe

### Answer:

Thank you for bringing up such an important subject. Let's read these verses to see what Paul is saying. *"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."* (1 Timothy 2:11, 12)

First of all, it is obvious that we cannot take these words in their most literal sense, because elsewhere Paul gave instruction that *"The aged women"* must be *"teachers of good things."* (Titus 2:3) The evident context of 1 Timothy 2:11, 12 is in a church setting. However, even here we cannot take these words in the most literal sense, for women were not kept silent, by Paul or others, in public church meetings. I will give some examples.

*"But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head."* (1 Corinthians 11:5) Here Paul is speaking concerning women praying or prophesying, and in chapter 14 he wrote, *"he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, ... he that prophesieth edifieth the church."* (1 Corinthians 14:3, 4) For a woman to prophesy she must speak to her brethren, and this is often done in the church.

The Bible speaks of many women prophetesses. We will note a few. *"So Hilkiah the priest, ... went unto **Huldah the prophetess**, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;) and they communed with her. And **she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel**, Tell the man that sent you to me, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read."* (2 Kings 22:14-16) Here God directly spoke to His people through a woman prophetess.

She was not the only prophetess in the Bible. *"And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time. And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment."* (Judges 4:4, 5) It is obvious that women play a part in God's work of teaching others the ways of God.

At the time of Christ Anna was a prophetess. *"And there was one Anna, a prophetess, ..."* (Luke 2:36)

And in the New Testament church God still used women to prophesy. *"And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy."* (Acts 21:9) For further examples of women in the church read Acts 18:26 and Romans 16:12.

It is evident that Paul was not seeking to exclude women entirely from public speaking in the church. Paul was stressing

(Continued on page 16)



## Letters from our Readers



"We thank you so much for the spiritual work you are doing through literature you are distributing worldwide. May God bless you abundantly and help you prosper. Let me share with all the saints world over that unfortunately your ministry has led to some members in our country to be censured and some even to be disfellowshipped for preaching these truths. It is too strange to note that those who are acting as judges are not even interested in reading for themselves but use the church manual as their guide and strength. Please pray for the brethren. On the brighter side, more people are coming forward to share the truths, at all costs. May you kindly send some materials (tracts and booklets) to the following brothers:... May I also have any books that will help me understand the prophecy or last day events as written by Daniel and Revelation. Thank you so much."

Zimbabwe

"I am personally happy that this idea could come out from your ministerial office to think of having a crusade in Kenya. Kenya is a religious country and a very ripe field for harvest. It can take place no doubt if it is the will of God. I would like us to work together since you must have held such like crusades somewhere else.

"Before I can prayerfully be able to start working out about this worthy course for God in saving souls for eternal lives, I would like also if you would let me know what part your office wish to do and what we need to do here in Kenya, then I will be able to give you full structure of how such a thing could take place and who might take charge. As soon as possible please."

Kenya

"Thank you very much for the last issues."

Finland

"Greetings to you all in the name of our heavenly Father the only true God and Jesus our Saviour. From the very first moment I learned about you all and read your material you have no idea what joy and blessing came to my soul. Allen, Lynnford and the staff, I pray for you all each day. Very few men are standing up for God and His truth in this time. I love you very much and because you love, and God is using you all to lead people in the right way. Thank you very much for the money you sent me; it helped me a great deal. Tell all my brothers and sisters at Smyrna I love them. I will see you at camp meeting by God's grace, if not before."

Florida

"Could you please send me the 'These Last Days' Bible study so I may learn the Word of God. Please also put me on the address list for the monthly issue of *Present Truth*."

Ohio

"I want to thank you all for sending me all these wonderful readings. These really helped in my spiritual life. Also, it is good that I can tell people of these wonderful readings."

Canada

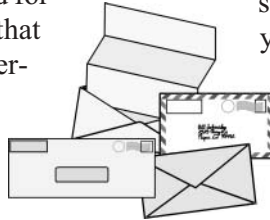
"I would like to greet you all in the name of the soon coming Lord Jesus, full of joy and peace that you really care for your fellow ones in Christ. I was very happy and impressed when I received the newsletter *Present Truth* and immediately 'The Love of God' telling me I'm now in your mailing list. Brethren, you are doing a good job and do it not to impress any man but God. I came to know you when a brother in Christ gave me some tracts like 'Knowing the Truth About God.' And surely keep up the good work. Your materials contain the truth, so continue sending me a variety of books. And now I like reading prophecy; especially Daniel and Revelation, but the problem is sometimes I do not understand, so please, if you could help me with such books I could be happy again, including the book on 'Last Day Events.' May the loving God bless you and your families. Please send me a Bible, Brethren. Mine is torn and I cannot afford to buy one. Help. I'm now desperate."

Zimbabwe

"Once again God has granted me the privilege of another day of life and the opportunity to grow closer to Him, as well as share His wonderful and perfect Word with others. It is an awesome God we serve. We love Him because He first loved us.

"I am enclosing Lessons 3 and 4 with this letter. Thank you and the ministry for sharing God's Word with me. With all the Satan inspired talk I hear on a daily basis, it is God's Word that keeps me grounded. Some years ago I used to be embarrassed to say grace when I sat in the dining hall (chow hall) to eat. One day I was sitting in the chow hall getting ready to eat when I could hear parts of the many meaningless conversations going on around me. It came to me if the unbelieving are not embarrassed to spew forth their foolish talk, why should a child of God be embarrassed to pray among them to the all-knowing God in giving thanks and asking blessings for the food consumed? Ever since that time not a morsel of food enters my mouth without giving thanks for it of the Father. Over the years I notice more and more of the prison population doing the same thing. Certainly I was not the instigator of such thoughtful behavior. But I am a perpetuator.

"How wonderful it is that the Father sent His Son into the world for sinners like you and me. What a blessing it is when we are called into His spirit-begotten family. There





is no better way of life than that of God's Way through Jesus Christ. Without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit we could not know the things of the Father. So many people in the world don't have a clue to the wonderful life there is in Christ. It is my prayer that Truth Seekers Ministries is able to draw their interests to the Father and that He opens their minds to His wonderful Truth... I am looking forward to more Bible study lessons." *Michigan*

"I can never thank you enough for letting the Lord use you to give me the first glimpse of God's love. It gave me enough hunger to keep searching until I found it in it's fullness. My heart feels like it is going to burst all the time. I can't find enough people to tell about His love.

"For the first time I understand the 'assurance of heaven.' But also for the first time I understand that heaven is not my goal. Serving Him and pleasing Him and being like Him are my goals.

"May God richly bless all of you and may you continue to bring this extremely 'Good News' to the world." *Arkansas*

"I was reading your *Present Truth* (overcoming sin) for the first time and I really like it and I would like some of your back issues if you have any left. I have picked out some titles I would like to read and they are:... And I would like to give a \$15 donation. Thank you." *West Virginia*

"Mail call inside a prison is always the highlight of the day. For the past two days it has been especially wonderful... Thank you so much for sending me these materials! I am so grateful to you and your ministry for supplying me with such truth... I am so very excited to have found a group of people who possess the true missionary spirit of Jesus. Praise His name! Thank you for all you've done and I hope to hear from you soon. I'll keep you all in my prayers." *Oregon*

"I was very thrilled to see your report on the Baptist Temple seized by the Feds. I had heard of this but only in drips and drabs. I wanted to hear about it from a Christian source (I live here in Washington DC and the hate and despising of the cross and our Saviour is always at a high level among the 'informed' media) and then I got your newsletter. Thanks much, keep up your good work (and thanks to Allen Stump who was the reporter of that story). I hope you keep tabs on the progress for us." *Maryland*

"Greetings brethren! I just wanted to send a greeting and to let you know my new address. I arrived at this new prison yesterday. I am sorry for any inconveniences I may cause you on my address changes lately. However, Yahweh willing, I will be here for quite some time so unless I win my appeal I will not go to another facility. I hope I still can receive the *Present Truth* materials. As soon as

my money transfers from the previous institution I will send an offering for the cassettes and other materials you sent to me. In closing, I want to thank you for being so kind and generous and helpful to me. Please pray for me for protection and guidance as I witness the truth here. I felt bad vibes and other paganism in this pad. Until next time may Yahweh the Father and Yahshua bless and guide you in all righteousness." *Ohio*

"Just a note to let you know that I love the material you are putting out. I am the daughter of a life-long literature evangelist. My mother would be really happy if she was still alive, to be able to distribute your material to passers-by from my car as she used to wait for me while I was doing my job assignments, and say sweetly 'present for you.' This is also in my blood! I would love to have some of your tracts." *Australia*

"We just finished reading the April 2001 issue of *Present Truth*. The article on the 'Individuality of Religion' was awesome. To have a Biblical concept of freedom of conscience is great. This is what being an American is all about. It is the most precious gift and right that we have. Sad to say, one can see it eroding away. The concepts of this article need to be firmly entrenched in our mind. 'For Our Sakes Also' was of great encouragement. No matter how weak we are, God provides the strength. Thank you for your encouraging newsletter." *Montana*

"The idea of one from Smyrna paying us a visit here in Zimbabwe is the wish of the whole of our group. We are even planning to organize our own camp meeting. Details of this idea will be furnished, for now let us know what our role would be to bring the idea to a success. I mean the idea of one of you brethren at Smyrna to pay us a visit." *Zimbabwe*

"We have read the materials: 1) 'The Love of God' 2) 'The Holy Spirit' 3) 'The Sabbath Question' 4) 'God's Plan to Save You' 5) 'The Importance of Knowing the Truth About God' 6) 'The Truth About God' 7) 'Christ Our Righteousness' Bible lessons 1-16. Yes I have agreed with all that you have printed because it is biblical." *Tanzania*

"Please send me a sample issue, also place my name on your mailing list." *Maryland*

"Dear Sir: I am as broke as one can get with medical and dental bills. I can only view computer screen for no more than an half hour at a time—eye strain. Please send me gift copies of all your books." *Michigan*

(Thank you so much for all your kind letter, and even the not so kind ones. Please keep them coming. Editor)

(Questions and Answers, continued from page 13)

that women should not “*usurp authority over the man,*” or as the American Standard Bible says, “*to have dominion over a man.*” There is no record in the Bible of a woman ever being ordained or anointed as a king, priest, bishop, or elder. In fact, Paul gave strict instruction for those who are to be bishops or elders. They must be “*the husband of one wife.*” (1 Timothy 3:2) It should go without saying that this excludes women, but let’s read on. “*One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)*” (1 Timothy 3:4, 5)

Here Paul said that an elder or bishop must rule his house well in order for him to be able to take care of the church. There has been a push recently to put women in responsible positions in the church, such as elders and pastors. However, to do this would reverse the roles of husbands and wives in the home. If it is right for a woman to be an elder, bishop, or pastor in a church, then it must also be right for a woman to be the head of the house. Paul wrote, “*But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*” (1 Corinthians 11:3) There is a specific order of authority given here. God the Father is the Highest, who is the head of Christ. Christ

is the head of the man, and the man is the head of the woman, in a similar way that Christ is the head of the man.

In today’s society women are seeking to usurp the authority of the man in the home and in the church. There are some men who are promoting this as well, in an attempt to remove from themselves the responsibility God has given them.

It is this type of usurping authority that Paul was condemning in his letter to Timothy. This should be a strong rebuke to those women who wish to hold a higher position in the church than God has given them. It has never been God’s plan that a woman should take away the authority that God has given to the man in the home and in the church. This does not mean that women cannot share testimonies in church, prophesy, or even lead out in Sabbath School lessons. Women are a valuable asset to the church.

I pray this helps answer some of your questions on this issue. 

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