



## *There is a way that seems right; but, the ends thereof are the ways of death.*

Is it possible that the path that we choose to journey upon has any connection with issues such as life and death? The Bible teaches that, “There is a way (*path*) which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways (*path*) of death” (Prov 14:12). Obviously no one wishes for death; so how are Christians supposed to know which way we should go?

Eliezer said, “tell me; that I may turn to the *right hand*, or to the *left*” (Gen 24:49). Do you know for absolute sure, which way to go?

The Bible teaches that there are really **only two ways** in which we can move about during this lifetime, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is **the way, (path) that leadeth to destruction**, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is **the way, (path) which leadeth unto life**, and few there be that find it!” (Matt 7:13-14) We now should realize that our search for a passageway through this life is actually quite simple; Jesus Christ taught as we have just read, that there are really only two paths upon which humans can journey:

- (1) **the way, (path) that leadeth to destruction;** or
- (2) **the way, (path) which leadeth unto life!**

We either serve (*i.e., we obey*) the Almighty God on the one hand or we serve (*i.e., we obey*) the *god of this world* on the other, “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of (1) **sin unto death**, or (2) **of obedience unto righteousness?**” (Rom 6:16).

We can gain an insightful understanding if we will simply make a straightforward association between those last two Bible passages. The scripture teaches that there are merely two masters that the human can obey: (1) the master of **sin unto death**, and (2) the master of **obedience unto righteousness**; further, as we have just observed, Jesus taught that there are merely two paths that humans can follow: (1) **the way, that leadeth to destruction**, and (2) **the way, which leadeth unto life**. We can easily associate these two masters with the paths on which they would lead:

- (1) there is the master of **sin unto death** who directs his servants in **the way, that leadeth to destruction;**
- (2) there is the master **of obedience unto righteousness** who directs Christians on **the way, which leadeth unto life!**

The whole concept is so simple it is almost lost upon us. In the same fashion as the person who fails to capture the concept of the forest because of his limited focus on the trees, if we are not especially careful, we can all too easily lose sight of the complete picture! Paul taught us that we have been set free from the first master that we might serve the other,



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“For *the law of the Spirit of life* in Christ Jesus hath made me free from *the law of sin and death*” (Rom 8:2). All of humanity since Adam, begins the natural life by serving “the god of this word” who is the master of “*sin unto death*” and who leads us in “*the way, that leadeth to destruction!*” However, through the born-again process, we are set free from the first master and we then begin to serve the second. The major problem is that through conditioning, most Christians continue as if they still served the first master!

Why do Christians continue to think and to act as if they still serve the first master? One of the reasons is that they maintain a vanquished or conquered perspective! To understand this vanquished perspective we must get a concept of those two masters and the paths upon which they lead! We all know that through sin, the devil leads his servants into death and destruction; and through righteousness, the LORD leads his servants into eternal life and freedom. Given those two paths, let’s consider the devil’s pathway in order that we are not tempted to return to it and/or more importantly that we will abandon any and all of his tenets, which may yet conquer our thinking! A key point is that even though we have been previously conditioned by the devil, we are no longer his followers! Therefore, we no longer need to spend so much time thinking about those same death and destruction issues upon which the world so completely focuses its attention! To get a grasp on the world’s focus let us consider the following passage concerning Jesus, “that through death he might destroy him that had the *power of death*, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who *through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*” (Heb 2:14-15). The Bible clearly teaches us here that the world is wholly subject to the bondage of the fear of death! None of the following list of products/services are wrong or in any way sinful! Rather, I simply want us to realize how as Hebrews 2:15 states the case, humanity is in total bondage to the “*fear of death!*” That fear drives the sale of so many of today’s goods and services as the following truncated list shows: health products; health foods; exercise equipment; critical function monitors such as BP and pulse rate devices; medications; health club memberships; health insurance premiums; home security systems; low-fat foods; low-sodium foods; low-cholesterol foods; mental health books; relaxation tapes; high protein drinks; high energy supplements; etc. Most of this list of goods and services could simply be categorized under the general heading of people desiring to experience long, healthy, peaceful, and productive lives! That is certainly a wise goal; however, consider that every Christian has the right to claim and expect the following from God:

- “Because he hath set his love upon me, *therefore will I deliver him*: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. 15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: *I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him*, and honour him. 16 *With long life will I satisfy him*, and shew him my salvation” (Ps 91:14-16);
- “My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: 2 *For length of days, and long life, and peace*, shall they add to thee” (Prov 3:1-2);
- “my *peace* I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. *Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*” (John 14:27);
- in the third person, David wrote of himself, “He (*David the king*) asked life of thee, and *thou gavest it him, even length of days*” (Ps 21:4);



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- “if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then **I will lengthen thy days**” (1 Kings 3:14);
- “for **he is thy life**, and the **length of thy days**” (Deut 30:20);
- “just measure shalt thou have: **that thy days may be lengthened** in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee” (Deut 25:15);
- “for **as the days of a tree are the days of my people**, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands” (Isa 65:22);
- “fear the LORD, and depart from evil. 8 It shall be **health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones**” (Prov 3:7-8);
- when one gives alms, “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and **thine health shall spring forth speedily**: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward” (Isa 58:8);
- “Why criest thou for thine affliction? . . . they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey. 17 For **I will restore health unto thee**, and **I will heal thee of thy wounds**, saith the LORD” (Jer 30:15-17).

Rather than the “**fear of death**,” our focus should be upon the blessings of God and that He has promised to us a long and healthy life! There is a clear distinction between those who have a covenant with their God and those who do not! The two groups are going in completely different directions!

Everything that a Christian does after his conversion leads him/her into life; notice several items from the passages above: they keep God’s commandments; they set Jesus as the Lord of their lives; they give alms, they give tithes; they give firstfruits; they pray over their food; they practice honesty; etc. However, these practices, which lead them into life, do not earn them life, “even so by the righteousness of one **the free gift** came upon all men unto justification of life” (Rom 5:18). Eternal life in Jesus Christ has been freely given! On the other hand all the actions of the servants of sin leads him to death and destruction; that is why the previous truncated list of goods and services seemed so long.

One should be asking concerning the Christian, “What do you mean, “Everything that a Christian does after his conversion leads them into life? Aren’t both (*Christians and non-Christians*) already living? How can someone be led into “life?” Isn’t “life” something that both already possess?” Instead of relying on our human instincts, let’s learn from the Apostle John just what Biblical “life” is all about. We notice that he uses two different Greek words for “life” in John 12:25, “He that loveth his **life** shall lose it; and he that hateth his **life** in this world shall keep it unto **life** eternal.” Now let’s break down the verse; “He that loveth his **life** (*Greek word “psuche” pronounced (psoo-khay’); which merely means breath, even animals possess this “breath” form of vitality and life.*) shall lose it; and he that hateth his **life** (*again the Greek word “psuche”*) in this world shall keep it unto **life** (*‘zoe’ pronounced (dzo-ay’) this form of life is best observed through a question asked of Jesus, “Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life (‘zoe’)?” (Matt 19:16). Here the man asked Jesus how he might obtain something that he knew that he did not already possess!*) eternal” (John 12:25).



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There are at least two different words for “life” in the Greek language! First, there is the natural (“*psuche*”) kind of life, which all living creatures possess. An angel first used this Greek word as he spoke of Christ, when he told Joseph that he should return to Israel with Mary and Jesus, “they are dead which sought the young child’s *life* (“*psuche*”)” (Matt 2:20). Secondly, there is the (“*zoe*”) form of life which all servants of Jesus possess, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, *ye have no life* (“*zoe*”) in you. 54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal *life* (“*zoe*”)” (John 6:53-54). Obviously non-Christians do not partake of the communion of Jesus; therefore they have no (“*zoe*”) life in them. As Jesus said, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, *ye have no life*(“*zoe*”).”

For emphasis, let’s establish one of our main premises of this study: *There is a clear distinction between those who have a covenant with their God and those who do not! These two diverse groups are going in absolute different directions!* This means that even though Christians have been previously conditioned and indoctrinated by the devil, he/she should not indulge his/her thinking in the same fashion as the world at large. Since the non-Christian does not have a covenant with God, and is in bondage to the “*fear of death*” he certainly does not rely on Almighty God for his very sustenance, support, and care. This lack of a covenant causes the non-Christian world to devise every conceivable form of life-enhancing; life-sustaining; life-extending; life-modifying device as we earlier observed in this study.

How important is the difference between those who have a covenant with their God and those who do not? The Bible should be the Christian’s source of knowledge in these areas. Let’s observe how David understood and made a clear distinction of this critical difference, “And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying . . . for who is *this uncircumcised Philistine*, that he should defy *the armies of the living God?*” (1 Sam 17:26). Now remember scripture records concerning David, “I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart” (Acts 13:22). So here is how a man after God’s heart made that distinction. When David said, “*this uncircumcised Philistine*,” he drew attention to the “uncircumcised” status of the Philistine, David essentially separated the world into two broad but major categories; (1) those who have a covenant “*circumcision*” with Almighty God and (2) those who don’t have a covenant or the “*uncircumcised*.” The Christian, like David must be aware that a distinction does exist. In fact, that distinction should be the very source of their courage against the old master! Notice David’s words as he continued his discussion, “David said unto Saul, Thy servant (*that is, David*) kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: 35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. 36 *Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear* and *this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them*, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God” (1 Sam 17:34-36). Notice something powerful in this context; David establishes the Biblical principle that the uncircumcised (*those who remain outside of the covenant of God*) are to be in the same category as a lion and a bear, “*this*



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***uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them!*** Here, the Bible reveals to us, through the words of David, that the uncircumcised (*those who remain outside of the covenant of God*) are no different than a lion or a bear! In other words, a man without a covenant with God lives on the same level as the natural life (“*psuche*”) world! This ***does not*** in any fashion denigrate or degrade those outside of a covenant with God Almighty (*indeed they are made in the image of God*); however, it does very emphatically indicate that they remain in the category of the natural life world! Therefore, they serve that master whom we have already learned who by sin he is leading his servants into death and destruction!

Now focus on this very important concept; have you ever seen a cow, a horse, or some other natural creature hopelessly standing out in the harsh elements during inclement weather conditions? You probably felt a little sorry for the dumb creature. On the other hand, what did Jesus do when he was confronted with a fierce storm, “they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. 25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith?” (Luke 8:24-25). The point is that Jesus Christ walked in a covenant with the Almighty God! Therefore, He did not react to a storm in the same fashion, which is by doing nothing as an animal or natural creature might react. The animal kingdom simply cannot do anything about the weather! In the natural world, people unsurprisingly think that they cannot change conditions and circumstances such as the weather either! They believe that they are just like the rest of the natural world! During a dry year the wild animals of the field languish and certainly die! The only real difference between the human kingdom and the animal kingdom is that humans can create life-enhancing; life-sustaining; life-extending; life-modifying devices. As a result, natural humans place their faith in these devices, rather than in God!

What the Christian must realize is that David grouped the uncircumcised (*those outside of a covenant with God*) in the same category as the animals, “this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them” (*meaning the uncircumcised are just like the animal kingdom*). David equated the uncircumcised (*those possessing merely the “psuche” form of life*) in the same category as the animals; in essence David asked, “How could an animal (*a living being from the natural kingdom*) possibly prevail against a man who is in covenant with God Almighty?”

As we consider this powerful revelation that David opens to us on the subject of the uncircumcised (*those “psuche” human beings who remain outside of a covenant with God*), let’s realize just how important the words of Paul are as we review the passage, “***For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death***” (Rom 8:2)? The “law of sin and death” is evident through: sickness, disease, natural disasters, war, poverty, and all of those things that the bible relates are the result of “the curse!” Paul said, “***sin entered into the world, and death by sin***; and so death passed upon all men” (Rom 5:12). All of the natural creatures meaning those living in the “psuche” existence, experience death, “For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth



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beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that **a man hath no preeminence above a beast** (Eccl 3:19). Obviously then, according to scripture this death experienced in the human family is the same death which occurs in the animal kingdom, “For to him that is ***joined to all the living*** there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion” (Eccl 9:4).

Unregenerate humanity (*those who have not experienced the regeneration “he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3:5)*) lives merely through a “*psuche*” existence; therefore they experience the same life and death conditions as the animal kingdom, ***“this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them!”***

Here is a key concept: When death for the human family came into the world through Adam, it turned out to be the ceasing point of sin for the individual! Notice how Paul describes it, “sin entered into the world, and ***death by sin***” (Rom 5:12). Sin naturally brings death to those who indulge in it as Paul wrote, “But sin, that it might appear sin, **working death in me**” (Rom 7:13). Realize this, sin works death in the individual human being! The apostle James describes the sin/death process, “Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, ***bringeth forth death***” (James 1:15). Paul taught us that sin actually takes its adherents captive by a new law, “bringing me into ***captivity to the law of sin*** which is in my members” (Rom 7:23). Once the individual is taken captive by sin then death is the natural result! When human beings sin against someone else they generally experience pangs of guilt and sorrow; indeed, the smitten conscious is part of the process, “the sorrow of the world ***worketh death***” (2 Cor 7:10). God has established this entire process in order that “the law of sin and death” would place a curb on sinning in the individual human. Upon death, sinning obviously terminates also.

Death therefore became the only factor in the life of the human being that would cease him from his sin, “the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and ***madness is in their heart while they live***” (Eccl 9:3). The prophet Jeremiah continues in this expression of the wickedness in the heart of unregenerate humanity, “The ***heart is deceitful*** above all things, and ***desperately wicked***” (Jer 17:9). Imagine what the world would be like if notorious sinners from the past remained alive! Let’s consider, if Adolph Hitler were still alive, what manner of evil and destruction would he be instigating in today’s age of atomic, biological, and chemical weapons of mass destruction? God prearranged that death would bring an end to everyone who sins, instead of allowing them to eternally exist in that kind of a chaotic world. In effect, death establishes a curb against the prolongation of sinning on the part of each individual human! This is the essence of what the Bible describes as “the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:2).

It is easy to observe that there are “death cycles” in this world such as: war, terrorism, disease, and natural disasters. All of these cyclical natural and/or man-made conditions result in death and destruction. Even our financial community is subject to these “death cycles.” One writer of the 1980’s predicted in his book that there would be a worldwide financial collapse during the 1990’s. He based his predictions on the fact that



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approximately every fifty years there was a pattern of financial collapse in the national/world economy. His predicted financial collapse has been artificially held-up for a decade; however, everyone is expecting some kind of an imminent massive turnover in the economy! A key question that we should be asking is, “Should Christians expect to be adversely affected by future downturns in national/world economic conditions?”

Why would predictable turnovers in the financial world occur every fifty years or so? Why do rich young rock stars, actors, and sports figures such as: Jim Morrison, Janice Joplin, John Belushi etc, continually die prematurely? God created the natural “law of sin and death,” as a curb for sinning in each human. When these young ignoble individuals come into more adulation and financial resources than their natural human character can deal with, they begin to binge on powerful and deadly substances such as drugs, alcohol and other things! Their continued overindulgences in these potent substances naturally led to their untimely death. A famous historian once said that man learns nothing from history!

As we have just read, the scripture is clear about the “law of sin and death.” Born-again Christians are no longer subject to that law of death; therefore, they are not subject to its negative effects! Since they have a covenant with their God, they are different from the natural world! Therefore, they can pray-off these destructive conditions that the world naturally suffers! Jesus said that just like salt (*widely known and understood as a preservative in the ancient world*) Christians are supposed to be a preservative in this world, “Ye are the salt of the earth” (Matt 5:13). Jesus taught that Christians are to be preserving agent to a dying world! Therefore, the Christian should by **“the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,”** thrive during periods of disaster in: the economy; health; and natural circumstances; in these instances they bring glory to God Almighty in whom they place their trust and by whom they are delivered!

Let’s notice a specific example where the distinction between those who have a covenant with their God and those who do not have a covenant is in plain sight. By implication, the “law of sin and death” declares that a human being who goes into deep water without a life-saving device during a storm will naturally drown to his death. However, with the help of Jesus, Peter stepped out on the water during a storm and he walked on the surface of the water! Through Jesus, Peter was not subject to the law of sin and death! Paul explains why, **“the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” hath made me free** from the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:2).

Just like Peter, Christians today are not subject to “the law of sin and death!” Because of their freedom from the law of sin, they are not authorized to tempt God, “thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Luke 4:12); however, they surely are authorized to claim **“the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,”** especially during times of grave danger! When Christians vocally claim “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,” they even have the power to suspend or override the natural forces of nature. Once the Christian realizes that he is “the Righteousness of God,” he begins to speak and act quite differently, “The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. 31 The law of his



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God is in his heart; ***none of his steps shall slide***” (Ps 37:30-31). Born-again Christians are people of faith and their words are spoken words of faith, “The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, ***the word of faith***” (Rom 10:8). This verse presents quite a different set of circumstances for “the person of faith” as opposed to those who do not have a covenant with their God. The “uncircumcised” in heart remain under “***the law of sin and death,***” those “Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood” (Ps 144:8)! The Christian is free from “***the law of sin and death!***” Therefore, as they learn and begin to claim and expect the promises of life, they enter into the powerful understanding that they are not subject to the same circumstances as the natural human!

It is difficult even for the born-again Christian to operate in this mode of believing faith. Too many Christians just don’t ***feel*** as if they are worthy! However, ***feeling*** one’s way through any circumstance is simply not proper for the person of faith. Regarding this point of ***feeling***, we should take a lesson from the natural world; only a blind man would rely on feeling his way through any unfamiliar circumstances; so too is it with those Christians who remain “spiritually blind!” Christians who continually seek to “feel” God’s presence, flirt with doubt and therefore they choose to linger in that “spiritually blind” condition! Christians are supposed to ***know*** that God is continually with them, “for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Heb 13:5)! The Christian is supposed to stand firm on God’s word in believing faith!

Christians, who choose that mode of believing faith, begin to believe and act on the promises of God. They have Abraham’s grandson, Jacob (*Whose name means “the supplanter/schemer”*), as an example. Through the process of his life, Jacob eventually began to walk in the meaning of his new name, Israel (*Which means “the prince or overcomer with God” – Notice the Bible’s use of the two names, Jacob – Israel. Each name conveys to us when he is operating correspondingly in the flesh or in the spirit!*), “And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, ***If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go*** (*Here we find Jacob wanting his God to lead him, to provide for him, and to protect him; therefore he placed “conditions” upon God! – Notice the “If – Then” conditional nature of the verse.*), and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father’s house in peace; ***then shall the LORD be my God***” (Gen 28:20-21). We can observe Jacob in a subsequent passage where he gives testimony about how God Almighty proved Himself that He in fact was Jacob’s God, “And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto ***God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way (path) which I went.*** 4 And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand . . . and ***the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them,*** and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob” (Gen 35:3-5).

Once Jacob began to serve and trust in his God, he had to learn that God also ***directed his path.*** Notice Jacob’s words concerning God, “***and was with me in the way (path) which I went.***” In fact, Jacob’s God never did abandon him or his children. Just like their father



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Jacob, the children of Israel had to learn to follow the paths that their God set before them! So today also we Christians must learn to follow the paths that the Lord sets out before us!

God always led the children of Israel; however, He often led them through seemingly illogical pathways! God's paths are almost always beyond the realm of human understanding, "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that **God led them not through the way (path) of the land of the Philistines** (*To the land that God had given to Abraham*), although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: 18 But **God led the people about, through the way (path) of the wilderness of the Red sea**: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt" (Ex 13:17-18). Instead of experiencing sure war, God led His people to the seeming dead-end of the Red Sea; He did this in order that they would become familiar with his miraculous ways and learn to trusting His leadership, "that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth" (Deut 4:10)! So too, must Christians learn to walk in faith through circumstances that seem odd, "without faith it is impossible to please him" (Heb 11:6).

We have been learning the various distinctions between the "circumcised in heart" and the "uncircumcised in heart." The ancient nation of Israel failed to continually maintain that distinction between themselves and the nations around them. So too must the Christian maintain the distinction between those who have a covenant with their God and those who do not! We Christians can only be successful as we follow the leadership of God Almighty and **trust** in Him to sustain us! As we follow his lead, we must abandon the path and therefore abandon the fear on which "the law of sin and death" holds its captives.

We all should want to be led by God! But, what does the leading of God mean for each of us? Let's observe a story in the life of king Saul whose father Kish had sent Saul to find donkeys which had become lost. Not having found the donkeys after several days, Saul became concerned that his father might be more worried about his son than the donkeys, so he indicated to his servant that they should go home. However, Saul's servant shared some awesome revelation, "And he (*the servant of Saul*) said unto him, Behold now, **there is in this city a man of God**, and he is an honourable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure **he can shew us our way (path) that we should go**" (1 Sam 9:5-6). In other words, Saul's servant advised him that they should inquire at the hand of the man of God! Perhaps the man of God would make their way prosperous. We who seek to follow God's direction and path need to learn that in some instances, God leads us through a man of God.

However, beyond following after a man of God, Christians need to learn that God continually keeps **His own eye** on those that follow after Him. God keeps His eye on His children to deliver, to feed, and to protect them that trust in Him, "Behold, **the eye of the LORD** is upon them that fear him, **upon them that hope in his mercy**; 19 **To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine . . . because we have trusted** in his holy name" (Ps 33:18-21). Indeed, more than keeping his eye on us, God guides us with His



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eye, “**I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way (path) which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye**” (Ps 32:8). God, Himself becomes our guide. Notice how the New King James Version describes one certain Psalm, “Righteousness will go before Him, And shall make ***His footsteps our pathway***” (Ps 85:13) NKJV. In this passage we learn that God’s own steps become our path.

Stated as simply as possible the Book of Proverbs teach us to follow the ways or the paths of God, “Enter not into **the path of the wicked**, and go not in **the way (path) of evil men**. 15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away . . . 18 **But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day**. 19 **The way (path) of the wicked is as darkness**: they know not at what they stumble” (Prov 4:14-19). Yet again, from that last passage we should recognize that there are merely two paths for the human:

- (1) the **path of the just** and
- (2) the **way of the wicked**.

The Christian **must seek** the leadership of God, “**Lead me in thy truth, and teach me**: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day” (Ps 25:5). Here David asked for God’s leadership; however, he was willing to wait (*That is to say, he was willing to patiently look to God in full expectation of his request.*) Notice other usages of the word wait, “But they that **wait** upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isa 40:31). Those who patiently wait in faithful expectation of their request are never left in a state of shame because God did not perform, “and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for **they shall not be ashamed that wait for me**” (Isa 49:23); “The **LORD is good unto them that wait for him**, to the soul that seeketh him. 26 **It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD**” (Lam 3:25-26). Christians must begin to hope for and expect deliverance from the hand of their God, “the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save” (Isa 59:1). As the words of the song about Lazarus’ death and resurrection go, “Isn’t it great; when He’s four days late; He’s still on time!” God always delivers His children! Mary and Martha learned this after four days of death!

We must realize that along with the guarantee of deliverance, the word of God promises that He will direct our paths! We have God’s direct promise that He will always lead us, “Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, **which leadeth thee by the way (path) that thou shouldest go**” (Isa 48:17). God has promised to lead us in the way that we should go, “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: **he leadeth me** beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: **he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness** for his name’s sake” (Ps 23:2-3).

When His paths become our paths, we are promised blessings from God, “The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured. 9 But **they that have gathered it shall eat it**, and praise the



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LORD; and they that have brought it together shall drink it” (Isa 62:8-9). The people of God need to rely on His leadership and blessings. Yet, one may ask, “How does/will God lead me?”

Today, the Holy Spirit is our leader, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he will guide you** into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and **he will shew you** things to come” (John 16:13). Our personal and individual guide is the Holy Spirit of God! We must have faith that God leads and protects those who patiently wait on the LORD! However, we must continually recognize that there is a distinction between those who live in covenant with God Almighty through the Holy Spirit and those who do not!

The distinction between those who have covenant with God Almighty and those who do not is directly associated with one’s attachment to, “***the law of sin and death.***” The clear distinction is Life –versus– Death! Notice how all of the following scriptures explicitly or implicitly make that clear distinction:

- “Forsake the foolish, and ***live***; and go in the way of understanding” (Prov 9:6).
- Wisdom said, “But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me ***love death***” (Prov 8:36).
- “Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness ***delivereth from death***” (Prov 10:2).
- “Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness ***delivereth from death***” (Prov 11:4).
- “As righteousness tendeth to ***life***: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own ***death***” (Prov 11:19).
- In the way of righteousness is ***life***; and in the pathway thereof there is no ***death***” (Prov 12:28).
- “The law of the wise is a fountain of ***life***, to depart from the snares of ***death***” (Prov 13:14).
- “The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his ***death***” (Prov 14:32).
- “***Death and life*** are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof” (Prov 18:21).
- “thus saith the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of ***life***, and the way of ***death***” (Jer 21:8).
- “Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye ***die***, O house of Israel? 32 For I have no pleasure in the ***death*** of him that ***dieth***, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and ***live*** ye” (Ezek 18:31-32).
- “He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath ***everlasting life***, and shall not come into condemnation; but is ***passed from death unto life***” (John 5:24).

So why do Christians die? With our bodies (*that is, in our flesh*), we serve the law of sin, “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh ***the law of sin***” (Rom 7:25). Clearly, the flesh serves “the law of sin and death!” But I do not serve that law of death! Since I do not serve “***the law of sin and death***” in my spirit or in my mind, just in my flesh, when can I expect deliverance from God? Now consider Paul’s answer to our question as he explains just when we should expect **deliverance** from God, “But we had (*past tense*) the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: 10 Who delivered (*past tense*) us from so great a death, and doth deliver (*present tense*): in whom we trust that ***he will yet deliver us (future tense)***” (2 Cor 1:9-10). The Biblical answer is clear; the Christian should expect deliverance from Jesus Christ at all times including the past, present, and the future!



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One cannot be delivered out of something that he is not in; therefore it appears that our flesh may suffer death! However, even if we die, that should not occur because of God's promise that we have lived a long and prosperous life. Even then that death is only temporary, "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 **The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death**" (1 Cor 15:25-26). Jesus will destroy that death by a resurrection, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor 15:21). Jesus gives immortality to us now in our spirit and in our minds and he will also bring the resurrection from the dead later in our flesh! Notice when this resurrection is set to take place, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump**: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor 15:52).

So what about "the law of sin and death?" Are we servants of the law of death, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom 6:16). No! Through righteousness we have gone beyond death, "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death" (Rom 6:20-21). Death existed in us in the past; but it does not live in us today. We are to live in Christ! Therefore, we are not condemned for anything that we do while in this life, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from **the law of sin and death**" (Rom 8:1-2).

Jesus Christ begins an awesome process which ultimately results in eternal life in the Christian; "he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also **quicken** (*meaning to place that "zoe" form of life in*) your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom 8:11). Jesus went through the same process which authorized him to give us "zoe" life, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but **quickened** by the Spirit" (1 Peter 3:18). The placing of His "zoe" form life into His people starts a process that can actually be mapped. Once we have been given "zoe" life, we begin to call upon His name, "**quicken** ("zoe") us, and we will call upon thy name" (Ps 80:18). Christians are given this "zoe" form of eternal life through the word of God, "**quicken** ("zoe") thou me according to thy word" (Ps 119:25). After they have received "zoe" life from Jesus Christ through the word of God, Christians are placed upon God's paths, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity (*the old way "path" of life*); and **quicken** ("zoe") thou me in thy way (*path*)" (Ps 119:37). Once the Christian is placed upon the paths of God they begin to walk as the righteousness of God, "he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made **the righteousness of God** in him" (2 Cor 5:21); as the Psalmist said, "**quicken** ("zoe") me in thy righteousness" (Ps 119:40).



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“Zoe” or eternal life is given to God’s people only through faith! By definition, Enoch was a man of faith, “**By faith** Enoch was translated **that he should not see death**; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, **that he pleased God. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please him**: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, **and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him**” (Heb 11:5-6). This passage unequivocally teaches that Enoch diligently sought after and became a man of faith; further, it teaches that he became an example for us of someone who placed his complete trust in God! Why is Enoch’s example so critical to our understanding? Because there is coming a generation of Christians who like Enoch will never see death; rather, they will remain alive unto the coming of the Lord! Our generation is quite probably that very generation which will pass from life to life eternal without the intervention of death, “we which are **alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord** shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then **we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds**, to meet the Lord in the air!” (1 Thess 4:15-17). Therefore, God will reveal special things to this generation, “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but **he revealeth his secret unto his servants**” many new aspects of His word that He has never before revealed, shall we begin to understand!

Paul spoke of our “treasure in earthen vessels” and revealed that we are never destroyed, “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, **that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body**. 11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, **that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh**. 12 So then death worketh in us (*Here Paul reveals that some are ordained to die while others are intended to live*), **but life in you** . . . 14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up **us** also by Jesus, and shall present us with **you** (*notice that Paul cites two different groups ‘us’ and ‘you’*)” (2 Cor 4:6-14). In this next passage, we will observe how Paul clearly expressed that he believed that he actually had the choice of “life” or “death.” He wrote, “so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, **whether it be by life, or by death**. 21 For **to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain**. 22 But **if I live in the flesh**, this is the fruit of my labour: **yet what I shall choose I wot not** (*This life or death decision for Paul presented to him a great dilemma!*). 23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: 24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you” (Phil 1:20-24).

There indeed is a “way (path) that seems right unto a man,” and all of living “*psuche*” humanity is on that path toward death. However, Christians are following God’s path, which leads to eternal “*zoe*” life!