



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

Volume XI  
Issue 255

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

# God's Unique Son:

## The Man Christ Jesus

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

*But to us there is but one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, and we by Him (I Corinthians 8:6).*

*He said to them, "But Who do you say that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:15-16).*

*... There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (I Timothy 2:5).*

**T**here are many things that theology teaches about the Lord Jesus Christ that simply will not stand the scrutiny of Scripture. As believers, we must lay aside our indoctrination and take a fresh look at God's Word.



### JESUS CHRIST IS CONTRASTED WITH GOD

**The Lord Jesus Christ contrasts Himself with God.**

*And He Who sent Me is with Me: the Father has not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him (John 8:29).*

*But now you seek to kill me, a Man Who has told you the truth, which I have heard of God ... (John 8:40).*

*... I proceeded forth and came from God ... (John 8:42).*

*Jesus said to her, "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brothers, and say to them, I ascend to My Father,*

(see **UNIQUE**, page 2383)

Much of what is taught about the Son of God is an infringement upon the Father. We do not honor the Lord Jesus Christ by going beyond what the Scriptures ascribe to Him. We would do well to confine our understanding of Him to its pages.

### ONE GOD AND ONE LORD

Paul clearly taught that there is one God, and that there is one Lord.

*But to us there is but one God, the Father ... and one Lord Jesus Christ ... (I Corinthians 8:6).*

*There is ... One Lord ... One God and Father of all ... (Ephesians 4:4-6).*

*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus (I Timothy 2:5).*

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## **Bible Student's Notebook™**

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
  - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14);
  - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
  - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

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**UNIQUE** (continued from page 2381)

**and your Father; and to My God, and your God”** (John 20:17).

But of that day and that hour knows **no man**, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, **but the Father** (Mark 13:32).

### **Peter contrasts the Lord Jesus Christ with God.**

You men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, **a Man approved of God** among you by miracles and wonders and signs, **which God did by Him** in the midst of you, as you also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: **Whom God has raised up**, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be held by it (Acts 2:22-24).

This Jesus has **God raised up** ... Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that **God has made that same Jesus**, Whom you have crucified, **both Lord and Christ** (Acts 2:32, 36).

### **John contrasts the Lord Jesus Christ with God.**

And this is life eonian, that they might know You, **the only true God, AND Jesus Christ**, Whom You have sent (John 17:3).

### **Paul contrasts the Lord Jesus Christ with God.**

But to us there is but **one God, the Father**, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; **and one Lord Jesus Christ**, by Whom are all things, and we by Him (I Corinthians 8:6).

**One Lord**, one faith, one baptism, **One God and Father** of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Ephesians 4:5-6).

To wit, that **God was in Christ**,<sup>1</sup> reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them; and has committed to us the word of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:19).

Now our **Lord Jesus Christ Himself, AND**

1. Is it “Christ was God”? or is it “**God was in Christ**”? We must learn to be scriptural in our language regarding the Lord Jesus Christ.

**God, even our Father**, Who has loved us, and has given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace (II Thessalonians 2:16).

## **THE MAN CHRIST JESUS**

The Scriptures unmistakably identify our Lord Jesus Christ as a man.

### **Jesus Christ identifies Himself as a man.**

But now you seek to kill Me, **a Man** Who has told you the truth ... (John 8:40).

### **Peter identifies the Lord Jesus Christ as a man.**

... Jesus of Nazareth, **a Man** approved of God among you ... (Acts 2:22-24).

### **Paul identifies the Lord Jesus Christ as a man.**

... He will judge the world in righteousness by **that Man** Whom He has ordained ... (Acts 17:31).

In fact, Paul still identifies the Lord Jesus Christ as a man, even after His resurrection and celestial ascension.

For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, **the Man** Christ Jesus (I Timothy 2:5).

By contrast, the Bible plainly tells us that,

God is not a man ... (Numbers 23:19).

The verse goes on to say that God is “neither the son of man,” which, interestingly enough, is one of the titles of our Lord Jesus Christ (He is called the “Son of Man” in some 85 verses. Here are the references for the book of Matthew alone: 8:20; 9:6; 10:3; 11:19; 12:8, 32, 40; 13:27, 41; 16:13, 27, 28; 17:9, 12, 22; 18:11; 19:28; 20:18, 28; 24:27, 30, 37, 39, 44, 25:13, 31; 26:2, 24, 45, 64).

## **JESUS CHRIST WAS GENERATED**

Our Lord Jesus Christ is identified as the “Son of God” in nearly 50 verses in the New Testament. Yet He is never – not even once – identified by man’s theological term “God the Son.”

As all sons do, Jesus Christ received His life from His Father. ►

For as the Father has life in Himself; so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself (John 5:26).

... I live by the Father ... (John 6:57).

... He lives by the power of God (II Corinthians 13:4).

### JESUS GREW IN WISDOM AND STATURE, AND IN GOD'S FAVOR

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:52).

And the Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him (Luke 2:40).

### JESUS CHRIST WAS TEMPTED

... God cannot be tempted with evil ... (James 1:13).

For we have not a 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).

### JESUS CHRIST WAS SANCTIFIED BY GOD

Say you of Him, **Whom the Father has sanctified**, and sent into the world, "You blasphemed," because I said, "I am **the SON of God?**" (John 10:36).

### JESUS CHRIST WAS MADE PERFECT

For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to **make** the Captain of their salvation **perfect through sufferings** (Hebrews 2:10).

The third day I shall be **perfected** (Luke 13:32).

### JESUS CHRIST LEARNED OBEDIENCE

Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered (Hebrews 5:8-10).

### JESUS CHRIST IS OUR BROTHER

For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, **in bringing many sons to glory**, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He Who sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause **He is not ashamed to call them brothers**, Saying, "I will declare Your name **to My brothers**, in the midst of the church will I sing praise to You" (Hebrews 2:10-12).

We are the brothers of the Son of God; we are not the brothers of God.

As He is, so are we in this world (I John 4:17).

### THE SON OF GOD

One of the great scriptural contrasts is "Father" and "Son." The terminology demands distinction. A father and his son cannot be the same person. One is the generator, the other is the one generated.

### TWO MEN

### TWO ACTS

### TWO UNIVERSAL EFFECTS

### ONE MAN (the first Adam)

### BROUGHT THE FALL

### ONE MAN (the last Adam)

### BROUGHT REDEMPTION

And so it is written, "The **first man Adam** was made a living soul; **the last Adam** was made a quickening spirit (I Corinthians 15:45).

But not as the offense, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of **one** many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by **one MAN**, Jesus Christ, has abounded unto many (Romans 5:15).

For as by **one man's** disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of **One** shall many be made righteous (Romans 5:19).

### THE SON OF GOD'S LIFE AND MINISTRY WERE DEPENDENT ON THE FATHER

Jesus said to them, "My meat is to do the will of Him Who sent Me, and to finish His work" (John 4:34).

... The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do: for whatever things He does, these the Son also does likewise (John 5:19).

I can of My Own Self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not My Own will, but the will of the Father Who has sent Me (John 5:30).

Then Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things" (John 8:28).

For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father Who sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak (John 12:49).

I have glorified You on the earth: I have finished the work which You gave Me to do (John 17:4).

### THE SON OF GOD DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE FATHER KNEW

The Scriptures teach us that He "increased in wisdom" (Luke 2:52).

Here is what we know from His Own testimony:

But of that day and that hour **knows no man**, no, not the angels which are in heaven, **neither the Son**, but the Father (Mark 13:32).

Our Lord Jesus Christ had to "hear" and be "taught" by the Father to be able to "speak."

Then Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He, and that **I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things**" (John 8:28).

**I can of My Own Self do nothing: as I hear, I judge:** and My judgment is just; because I seek not My Own will, but the will of the Father Who has sent Me (John 5:30).

### THE SON OF GOD WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD BY GOD

This Jesus has God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses (Acts 2:32).

Be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Whom you crucified, Whom God raised from the dead (Acts 4:10).

Him God raised up the third day (Acts 10:40).

God raised Him from the dead (Acts 13:30).

### THE SON OF GOD NOW LIVES BY AND UNTO GOD

He lives by the power of God (II Corinthians 13:4).

In that He lives, He lives unto God (Romans 6:10).

### THE SON OF GOD IS GIVEN AUTHORITY IN RESURRECTION

Because He has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness **by that Man Whom He has ordained**; whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead (Acts 17:31).

He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is **He Who was ordained of God** to be the Judge of quick and dead (Acts 10:42).

For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, **that He might be Lord** both of the dead and living (Romans 14:9).

Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All power is **given to Me** in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18).

### "THE SON OF GOD" IS GOD'S INSTRUMENT OF DOMINION

... Adam, who was the son of God (Luke 3:38).

God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have **dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth ..." And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and **subdue** it: and have **dominion**

over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (Genesis 1:26, 28).

For He has put all things under His feet. But when He says all things are put **under** Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, Who did put all things **under** Him. And when all things shall be **subdued** to Him, then shall the Son also Himself **be subject** to Him Who put all things **under** Him, that God may be All in all (I Corinthians 15:27-28).

### THE SON OF GOD IS SUBJECT TO THE FATHER

The Scriptures make it clear that the Son is in subjection to the Father.

... My Father is greater than I (John 14:28).

... The head of Christ is God (I Corinthians 11:2).

... You are Christ's; and Christ is God's... (I Corinthians 3:23).

... But when He says all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, Who did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued to Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him Who put all things under Him, that God may be All in all (I Corinthians 15:27-28).

### THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS THE IMAGE OF GOD

Who is the Image of the invisible God ... (Colossians 1:15).

The English word “Image” is Strong’s Greek Lexicon #1504, *eikon*, meaning, “a likeness ... representation ... resemblance.”

Jesus is not said to be “God,” but rather the “Image of the invisible God.” God is a spirit (John 4:24), and therefore as our passage states, is “invisible.”

Because of this, Jesus Christ could not be in the *physical* “image” of His Father, for His physical image came through Mary (“made of a woman” Galatians 4:4), being a descendant of David (“Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, Who was made of the seed of David

according to the flesh (Romans 1:3)).

Jesus was in the “**spiritual**” Image of His Father. He manifested His Father’s true and genuine nature and attributes. Thus,

No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him (John 1:18).

He who has seen Me has seen the Father (John 14:9).

If we want to see the Father **spiritually**, look to the Son, for He is the **spiritual** Image of the Father.

We will sometimes say of a son, “Why, he’s the spitting image of His dad.” Now, He’s not his dad, but he’s just *like* him. The Lord Jesus Christ is not God, He’s the Image of the invisible God.

### THE LANGUAGE OF SCRIPTURE

The Scriptures use the language “*God the Father*.” It does not use the language “God the Son” or “God the Holy Spirit” anywhere.

The Scriptures use the language “*the Son of God*” (the Son proceeding out from God) and “*the Spirit of God*” (the spirit proceeding out from God). It does not use the language “the Father of God.”

There is only one true God. God’s “Spirit” is not a separate person anymore than our own “spirit” is a separate person than we are. His “Spirit” is like His “grace” – it belongs to Him. In fact, the Bible talks about the “*seven Spirits of God*” (Revelation 3:1; 4:5; 5:6).

The Lord Jesus Christ is not His Own Father. Jesus Christ is not His Own God. Jesus Christ is the blessed Son of His Father; He is the glorious, unique, Son of God; He is the Image of the Father. The Spirit was given to Him without measure (John 3:34), and in Him the fullness (compliment) of Deity dwells (Colossians 2:9).

Let us learn to say what the Scripture says about the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We can’t go wrong with the language of God’s Word.

# Stumbling Over the Issue of Stumbling Blocks

by – Jeff Bowman

Christians commonly teach that the Lord does not want us to do anything that might cause another Christian to stumble and fall in their Christian lives. After all, the Bible does say,

*But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak (I Corinthians 8:9).*

Here are some critical questions that need to be addressed:

What is stumbling?

How is it different than disagreement (even strong disagreement)?

Does Paul say that someone can “stumble” by just knowing something about a person?

Paul was a “Jew” to the Jews and a “Greek” to the Greeks. Was he causing the Jews to stumble when he ate “unclean” food?

Did Paul tell the Jews the truth of “good meat?” (i.e., that you can eat anything?)

What are Christians supposed to do when they differ in thought and actions?

So what is a Christian to do? Many just live their life avoiding anything that might cause their fellow believer to “stumble.” Then there are some who know that God does not call their actions “sin” and so they secretly do them and never let anyone else know.

A typical example would be drinking alcoholic beverages (wine, beer, etc.). We know the Bible teaches that getting drunk is wrong (Ephesians 5:18). Yet the Bible does not present that drinking a glass of wine is wrong.

Now we come to the issue. Should a Christian drink a glass of wine? Some will say, “Why not?” Others will say that for the sake of others they will not have a drink even though they know that they could. Then there are some

who think, because of their religious upbringing, that any drink is a sin. So what is a Christian to do? Many choose simply to avoid the problem by not drinking at all! This is fine, but is it really what God wants? Does He care if you have a drink or not? ...

Years ago Christians were told, “you should not dance” (because it looks bad and is “sensual”); “you should not listen to rock music” (even Christian “rock”) because it has a beat; “you should not play cards”; you should not go to movies” (because you are supporting the “world”); and “whatever you do, do not do anything that is questionable” (because you might cause someone to “stumble”).

Here is my summary on the “stumbling block” texts of Romans 14 and I Corinthians 8.

A person can be caused to stumble by another person doing the freedom in front of them, or encouraging them to do something that they believe is wrong. To stumble then, is for a person to sin against their conscience in participating in a freedom that they feel is wrong. Listen to Paul’s words:

*However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol’s temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? (I Corinthians 8:7-10).*

*But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin (Romans 14:23).*

We must remember that “stumbling” is not simply to disagree with the actions of the person. Also, if someone “stumbles” over truth, are they really “stumbling?” ▶

Not as I understand it. Should we be silent on the truth because it might “offend?” I don’t think so. A disagreement of opinion is a totally different issue with a totally different approach.

In both texts Paul discusses the topics of eating meat offered to idols. He in essence says that it doesn’t matter to God if you eat or not. In I Corinthians he even goes so far as to say there are no such things as “gods.” They are made up in the minds of the people, so eating meat offered to them is no big deal. However, not everyone has such knowledge. In both places Paul defends the right to eat (or not). This is often an unacknowledged point of the texts.

We must note that Paul was discussing the topic with both eaters and non-eaters. He tells both of them (that it doesn’t really matter) but adds not to actually eat the meat in front of another brother who feels it is wrong. Please note: in the telling of the truth about the idols, Paul was potentially offending the non-eaters.

In my Christian experience I would avoid discussing controversial topics because I didn’t want to “offend” (on the basis of these passages). Yet Paul never avoided talking about truth. He exhorts us not to do the offending act of freedom in front of someone who differs. But Paul never says don’t discuss it – he was doing that very thing. Paul never says that if you eat meat, “don’t tell anyone that you do.” He simply says don’t eat it in front of those who might stumble because of it.

Christians have avoided talking about many controversial and sometimes critical topics because we don’t want to offend. I think we’ve missed Paul’s point. We need to discuss all aspects of life that impact our culture even if our fellow Christians don’t want to, or think it improper. We who are leaders in Christ’s Body have a responsibility to evangelize and edify. We are responsible to understand and discern our culture and apply God’s unchanging Word of Truth. We need to say, “There is nothing wrong in God’s eyes with eating idol meat, drinking a glass of wine, having a beer, smoking a cigar, etc. These are *NOT* sin to God. Yet the person who has a “weak” or uninformed conscience might view them as sin, and they might actually be “sin” to them, but not to God. In this case the knowledge and application of truth can help the person *IF* they are willing to receive it. However, you should never make someone stumble by doing it in front of them.

My observation is that over the years the church has been subject to unfounded fears that have caused it to fail in evangelism and edification. These “phantom fears” are truly imposed upon ourselves by non-biblical views. This causes Christians to have a secret life (notice

I didn’t say private). We create Believers who talk one way on Sunday but a different way the rest of the week. By being honest with each other regarding our lives we prevent this hypocrisy. ...

In summary, Paul would have been violating his own command if it meant not discussing meat eating with “non-eaters.” He potentially offended the non-eaters by discussing it and then telling them that the meat eating doesn’t matter, but truth is more important than cultural misunderstanding. However, he would not have eaten the meat in front of them. This is the point of not causing your brother to stumble.

The typical Christian view of stumbling today is one that ignores the personal responsibility of the “others” in our lives. We aid them in not taking responsibility for their actions by not discussing and sharing our personal freedoms. Paul addressed both the eaters and non-eaters with truth.

In conclusion, whatever we take from this discussion on stumbling and freedom, we must keep the balance of God’s Word. In Colossians, one of the pinnacle letters of the revelation of grace, Paul has some strong statements regarding people’s freedom in Christ. These must be factored into the discussion of stumbling.

*So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from Whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God. Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations – “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,” which all concern things which perish with the using – according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh (Colossians 2:16-23).*

Another interesting thing to do is to take whatever taboo topic is in question and carefully substitute it for the meat offered to idols topic in Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8. The texts jump to life with application.

