

**The Christian's 'INHERITANCE' of 'eternal life FROM Christ'
and the Christian's eternal 'REWARDS' of 'service FOR Christ'
contrasted with the 'Gospel' of 'Father' Patrick McCafferty**

Numerous newspaper articles and 'Take Heed' Ministry guest book entries penned by local RC priest Patrick McCafferty have prompted this article.

'INHERITANCE'

God's Word, the Bible, teaches that every 'born again' child of God receives an '**inheritance**'. Currently the fullness of this '**inheritance**' is "**reserved in heaven**" [1 Peter 1:4]. However, at the moment of being 'born again' the child of God receives an "**earnest of their inheritance**" [Ephesians 1:14]. The "**earnest**" for the Christian is, according to Vine's Expository Dictionary, "**the Holy Spirit**" who is given to them '**as the divine pledge of all their future blessedness**'.

When Adam sinned, the divinely promised judgment of "**death**" [see Genesis 2:17] became a reality, not only for him, but also for all his posterity. This state of "**death**" meant that Adam and his posterity could be physically alive but spiritually "**dead**" which meant being separated from communion with God and this state was symbolised by Adam being put out of/evicted from the Garden of Eden [see Genesis 4:23-24].

Since the time of the fall of man, man has naturally been born into this state of "**death**". Paul speaks of people who were physically alive yet spiritually "**dead in trespasses and sins**" [Ephesians 2:1]. By nature, man is not in communion with God. The Lord Jesus declared that when someone becomes a '**believer**' that person "**is passed from death unto life**" [John 5:24]. This means that they have been resurrected spiritually which explains what Jesus said in John 5:25 "**The hour is coming AND NOW IS when the dead** [those physically alive, but spiritually dead] **shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live**" [spiritually resurrected through the preaching of the gospel. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:21 "**it pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe**"].

God's "**earnest**", His divine 'down payment' of this spiritual life is His gift of the **Holy Spirit** to everyone 'born again'. Paul speaks of believers being "**sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise**" [Ephesians 1:13]. On the day of Pentecost Peter preached that every believer receives "**the gift of the Holy Spirit**" [Acts 2:38]. This new spiritual life is called by the Lord Himself "**eternal life**". He said in John 10:27-30 "**My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. And I give unto them ETERNAL LIFE and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father who gave them to me is greater than all and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one**".

Believers in this life possess "**eternal life**" – a restored 'measure' of communion with God, which is obviously limited and restricted by the constraints of this mortal existence but the 'good news' is that the full, eternal 'measure' of intimate communion with God is "**reserved in heaven**" [1 Peter

1:4]. No wonder Paul wrote that “for me to live is Christ and to die is gain” [Philippians 1:21].

An **‘INHERITANCE’** is something given to someone. It is something that they ‘did not work for’ or ‘go to war’ for. It is something bequeathed to a person by someone who has died. An **‘INHERITANCE’** is a gift received as a result of someone else’s labours and death. Present restoration of and the assured possession of eternal communion with God is for every believer based ALONE on the life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His sinless life and His substitutionary sufferings ALONE that form the grounds on which every believer receives the gift of **“eternal life”**. A true ‘born again’ believer’s work and conduct here on earth have no bearing upon their **‘INHERITANCE’**.

In **Hebrews 9:12** we read of Christ **“having obtained eternal redemption for us”** and in **verse 15** we read **“that by means of death [the death of Christ]...they who are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance”**. When Christ spoke in **John 11:25-26**, although He was assuring Martha of the assured resurrection of the physical body, He clearly had this **‘INHERITANCE’** of spiritual **“eternal life”** also in mind when He said **“I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die”**.

The most precious aspect of the believer’s **‘INHERITANCE’** will be the Lord Jesus Christ Himself – no wonder the Psalmist wrote **“The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance” [Psalm 16:5]**. Commenting on this verse, C H Spurgeon wrote **‘We too can make our boast in the Lord; He is the meat and drink of our souls. He is our portion supplying all our necessities and our cup yielding royal luxuries; our cup is this life and our inheritance in the life to come. As children of the Father who is in heaven, we inherit by virtue of our joint heirship with Jesus, all the riches of the covenant of grace; and the portion which falls to us sets upon our table the bread of heaven and the new wine of the kingdom. Who would not be satisfied with such dainty diet?’**

When Paul considered the marvel of his new life in Christ and that would have included consideration of his **‘INHERITANCE’**, no wonder he declared in **Galatians 6:14** **“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ”** – he recognised that at Calvary his **‘INHERITANCE’**, his **“eternal life”**, was worked for and won by Christ ALONE.

‘REWARDS’

Just as the promise of an **‘INHERITANCE’** [**“eternal life”**] based ALONE on the finished **work of Christ** at Calvary, is given to every ‘born again’ believer, who is now no longer **“in Adam”** but is **“in Christ”** [**1 Corinthians 15:22**], so the prospect of heavenly **‘REWARDS’**, based ALONE on their **work for Christ**, is set before every faithful ‘born again’ believer who is **“in Christ”**.

Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 3:12-15** **“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s**

work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire”.

Paul is talking about 'born again' believers, particularly those charged with the responsibility of preaching the gospel, who **“build upon this foundation”** – he is talking about believers who **by their work for Christ** build upon the **“foundation”** of the **finished work of Christ**. This is why Paul basically said **[verse 11]** that before a saved believer can work for Christ, that believer must be relying ALONE on the finished work of Christ for their salvation – **“other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ”**.

In **verse 14** he states, **“if any man’s work abide** [a heavenly testing of **“fire”** identified in **verse 13**] **which he hath built upon it** [built upon the **“foundation”** of Christ’s work] **he shall receive a REWARD”**. This reward cannot be 'salvation', for a faithful workman must already be in possession of that great blessing. Only the work of those already 'born again' and consequently in receipt of that **“that Holy Spirit of promise”** [**Ephesians 1:13**] is pleasing to God and worthy of **‘REWARD’**. Remember that Paul wrote in **Romans 8: 8** **“they that are in the flesh** [those who are not indwelt by the Holy Spirit] **cannot please God”** and in **verse 9** he adds, **“if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his”**.

In **verse 15** if a believer’s work fails the heavenly test of **“fire”** and is **“burned”** the consequence is **“he shall suffer loss”** - in other words he will miss out on receiving a **‘REWARD’**. However, irrespective of the record of **their work**, whether good or bad, their **‘INHERITANCE’** is assured by the words of **verse 15** when Paul writes **“he himself shall be saved yet as by fire”** – the reason the **‘INHERITANCE’** is assured is because it is guaranteed by the **finished work of Christ** and not by the **work of the believer**.

As I said at the start of this article, it was prompted by the public teaching in newspaper articles and entries in our ministry guest book of local Roman Catholic priest, Patrick McCafferty, that the Lord’s parable in **Matthew 25:31-46** teaches that **‘Those who will be saved are those who served Jesus in the poor and needy. The acid test of a true child of God is this love in action - not what people say - not denouncing others - the Last Judgement will NOT be a Theology exam’** [entry posted by Patrick in the ‘Take Heed’ Ministry guest book on 24 July 2002].

In this parable, having placed **“the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left”** [**verse 33**] we read in **verse 34** **“Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, INHERIT the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”**.

As already explained, an **‘INHERITANCE’** is based upon the work and death of another and here this **‘INHERITANCE’**, entrance into the Kingdom of God,

is secured ALONE by the work at Calvary of Christ, described in **Revelation 13:8** as “**the lamb slain from the foundation of the world**”.

It was God’s eternal purpose to grant as an ‘**INHERITANCE**’ “**eternal life**” to those “**redeemed... with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world**” [1 Peter 1:18-20]. On the Day of Pentecost Peter told the “**men of Israel**” of Christ “**being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God**” and told how they took him “**and by wicked hands have crucified and slain**” him [Acts 2:22-23].

Returning to the parable “**the King**” goes on then to refer to acts of charity and kindness carried out by “**the sheep**” and refers to them as having been done unto Him. When questioned by “**the sheep**” about this “**the King**” explains that when a kindly act was done “**unto one of the least of these, my brethren**” in reality it was “**done unto me**” [verses 35-40].

These kindly acts were evidence that these were truly the good shepherd’s “**sheep**” and constituted those of whom Christ spoke when He said in **Luke 12:32** “**Fear not little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom**”. The gift of ‘eternal life’ and entrance into the Kingdom of God is an ‘**INHERITANCE**’ based upon the redeeming work of Christ ALONE and is evidenced in the life of true ‘born again’ believers by their kindly acts to those referred to in this case [Matthew 25:40] as Christ’s “**brethren**”.

These kindly acts will in turn earn a ‘**REWARD**’ in [not ‘of’] the Kingdom of God. In **Matthew 10:40** the Lord says “**He that receiveth you [a disciple of The Lord – see verse 24] receiveth me**” and in **verse 42** the Lord says that “**whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones [*“one of the least of these my brethren”* Matthew 25:40] a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple [and consequently in the name of the Lord Himself] verily I say unto you, he shall in no way lose his REWARD**’.

Returning once more to the parable, the absence of kindly works done to Christ’s “**brethren**” by the “**goats**” – “**in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these [*my brethren*] ye did it not to me**” [verse 45] was evidence that this group were never the Lord’s “**sheep**” and so had no part in the ‘**INHERITANCE**’ secured by His redeeming work at Calvary.

Patrick wrote ‘***Those who will be saved are those who served Jesus in the poor and needy***’. Concerning those who constitute Christ’s ‘**brethren**’ – there are ‘poor’ who are Christ’s ‘**brethren**’ and there are ‘poor’ who are not His ‘**brethren**’. Being ‘poor’ does not automatically qualify someone as being amongst Christ’s ‘**brethren**’.

The ‘**great commission**’ is to preach the ‘**gospel**’ of ‘**Jesus Christ and Him crucified**’ so that sinners [rich or poor] may be saved from eternity in hell. The true ‘**gospel**’ offers ‘eternal life’ based solely on the finished work of Christ’s atonement. It offers the promise that all sins are and will be forgiven for the sake of Christ alone. It offers the end to all personal sacrifices for personal sins.

It offers the promise of all guilt {no remaining 'temporal punishment'} removed on the basis of Christ alone and that through faith alone. It offers an end to all of man's vain attempts to do enough to warrant salvation.

The '**great commission**' is not to feed the 'poor' and starving else why would the Lord not have applauded those who suggested that the precious ointment used to anoint Him could have been sold and the money given to the 'poor' [see **Mark 14:3-9**]. Other passages of Scripture such as **Proverbs 25:21-22** [quoted also by Paul in **Romans 12:20**] refer to how Christians are to treat poor '**enemies**' and these kindly actions will also merit a "**reward**". However, if these 'poor' are the believers' '**enemy**', then Christ is certainly not present in them and these 'poor' are clearly not Christ's '**brethren**'— in fact Christ currently waits in heaven until "**his enemies be made his footstool**" [**Hebrews 10:13**].

The distinction between kindly acts to Christ's '**brethren**' and to the rest of humanity is seen in Paul's exhortation to Christians in **Galatians 6:20** "**As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all, especially unto them who are of the household of faith**" [i.e. those who are Christ's '**brethren**'].

I find in the Bible that following the killing of Stephen as detailed in **Acts 7** we read in **Acts 8 [v1]** "**And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great PERSECUTION against THE CHURCH**". Later in **Acts 9 [v4-5]**, when Paul [then Saul] was confronted by Christ on the road to Damascus, Christ said to him "**Saul, Saul, why PERSECUTEST thou ME? And he said, Who art thou Lord: And the Lord said, I am JESUS whom thou PERSECUTEST**".

Christ clearly limits His 'identity' to those who are His 'born again' sheep – His Church. These are those to whom the promised Holy Spirit is given – see **John 14:16-17 [the Spirit "whom THE WORLD cannot receive"]** and it is only to these people that the Lord says "**and we [Christ and His Father] will come unto him [those in Christ's Church] and make our abode with him**" [**verse 23**]. These 'born again and 'Spirit-indwelt' believers are Christ's true "**brethren**".

This parable [**Matthew 25:31-46**] does not support Patrick McCafferty's teaching that '**Those who will be saved are those who served Jesus in the poor and needy**'. Rather it teaches [1] that those who are truly saved, **INHERIT** the Kingdom of God [because of Christ's life and death ALONE] and [2] that the evidence of being a true child of God will manifest itself in kindly acts to fellow believers and [3] that when read in the light of **Matthew 10:40-42** these kindly acts will themselves attract a **REWARD** in [not 'of'] the Kingdom of God.

Cecil Andrews - 'Take Heed' Ministries - 29 July 2002

Following the posting of this article to our ministry web site 'Father' Patrick McCafferty posted several responses to it in the 'guest book' section of the web site.

In addition he took the opportunity to publish the following article in the **Belfast Telegraph of Saturday 24 August 2002**. Patrick is one of a panel of writers used to

write a **'Thought For The weekend'** for publication each week in the Saturday edition of the Belfast Telegraph, which is the largest Northern Ireland newspaper.
Clearly our article prompted the following article by Patrick.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEKEND

"You must love the Lord your God...and your neighbour as yourself"
Deuteronomy 6:5
"Do this and live"
Luke 10:28

The above words are Jesus' answer to a lawyer's question "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 10:25).

The lawyer, anxious to justify himself posed a further question "And who is my neighbour?" The Lord's reply is the beautiful parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37).

The Jews did not associate with Samaritans and considered them outsiders.

They were certainly not regarded as brothers and sisters in the Faith.

And yet, when the Lord wanted to illustrate how we are to treat one another as neighbours, friends and kin, He told of a Samaritan's compassion for a Jew who had been beaten, stripped and robbed.

The Samaritan finding the poor man half-dead, showed himself to be really Christ-like. Jesus concluded by saying to the lawyer and the other listeners "Go and do the same yourself".

Jesus Himself came to us as a poor man with nowhere to lay His head (Luke 9:58).

He emptied Himself of glory (Philippians 2:7) in order to give us an eternal inheritance out of His own infinite riches (2 Corinthians 8:9).

The One, who was Himself a vagrant preacher of the Good News, calls us to take our places in "the Kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 26:34).

However, what we must do in order to have eternal life is love and serve Jesus, present in the suffering and the poor.

Every poor man, woman or child, no matter who he or she is, or where they come from, is the very Person of Jesus Christ – hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, imprisoned and an outcast.

Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan makes it very clear that every human being is my neighbour, sister and brother. In a society that exacerbates divisions and pillories fellow human beings as 'alien' or 'foreign', we must strive to breach all the borders that exist between peoples.

In doing so, we are throwing the doors wide open to Christ. We are doing the Father's Will and advancing Christ's Kingdom of love, justice, equality and peace. **Jesus says: "Do this and life is yours" (Luke 10:28). Upon this hinges our eternal destiny – whether or not the Father will recognise us on the Last Day as His children.**

Contained in this article is the revealed 'gospel' or 'Good News' according to 'Father' Patrick McCafferty. By His first 'heading-quotation' of **Deuteronomy 6:5** which is in essence a summary of the 10 commandments, and his second

'heading-quotation' of **Luke 10:28**, Patrick is clearly teaching that those who keep the commandments of God will be rewarded with 'eternal life'.

By way of reply to this 'gospel' of Patrick McCafferty I am now setting out a response to Patrick's article by **ROB ZINS** who in previous visits to the Province publicly debated Patrick on a wide range of doctrinal subjects and topics.

Titus 3:5

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost"

The above words were spoken by the great apostle Paul in this God-inspired passage of Scripture written to his protégé Titus. The apostle Paul had earlier been knocked off his horse, literally blinded for a while and humbled before his companions on the road to Damascus by Jesus Christ [Acts 9]. But, Paul's humiliation turned out to be the best for him and for us. For, through that encounter with Jesus, Paul came to understand the glorious **Gospel of Jesus Christ**.

Up until this point in his life, Paul [name Saul], was a zealot for the **Law of Moses** and a hater of Christians. He hated Christians because they proclaimed a **Gospel** of full pardon and complete forgiveness of their sins and all penalties due sins by faith alone in Jesus apart from **the Law**. When Paul was shown the **Gospel of Jesus Christ**, he had to adjust his thinking about salvation being conditioned upon works. Paul left all confidence in his good works behind and set out clearly, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the glorious truth that God revealed to him, as far as **the Gospel** is concerned, in his letter to the Christians at Rome:

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law"

Romans 3:28

He would be even more forthright and emphatic in his Divinely inspired letter to the Christians at Galatia:

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified"

Galatians 2:16

This is no small concession coming from one who described himself,

**“Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching
the righteousness which is in the law, blameless”
Philippians 3:6**

Although Paul was a zealous defender of the faith of his ancestors, it was revealed to him by Jesus that a right standing with God could not be attained by keeping **the Law**. In fact, man is so sinful and **the Law** of God is so demanding that any impulse to achieve salvation through keeping **the Law** is unthinkable. Man is simply too sinful. Man will fail miserably!

**“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is
written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are
written in the book of the law to do them”
Galatians 3:10**

In fact, Jesus came to seek and to save the lost and to deliver them from the curse of **the Law**. Paul goes on to tell us that those still trying to be justified by **Law** have fallen from grace and ‘dis-graced’ **the Gospel**. In contrast, Paul proclaims **the Gospel** of the grace of God. This is the promise that all who come to Christ, through faith alone in His death on the cross, would have eternal life and not be condemned by the Law.

Now there are many today who cannot fathom eternal life as a gift freely given on the basis of faith alone in the finished work of Jesus Christ. They, like Paul's contemporaries, seek to point us to this law, or to that law, to this obedience or to that obedience.

**They condition ‘eternal life’ on the things we should do
in this system of works or that system of works.**

But the Christian is assured from the Bible, that the greatest system of works, which demanded good works done in faith and obedience to **the Law** of God, utterly failed to bring salvation to anyone.

This, of course, is **the Law** of God given to Moses.

It failed and all other works systems will fail as well. Why?

Because **the Law** was never issued to give ‘eternal life’. Paul explains:

**“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us unto Christ,*
that we might be justified by faith”
Galatians 3:24**

Eternal life is based upon the promise of God to give life to those who trust in Jesus Christ's death on the cross. Hence, ‘eternal life’ is a promise of God given by grace through faith alone.

Let us not attempt to turn people to ‘faith’ in their own good works, faithfulness, imitations of Jesus and man-made religious rituals that are destined for certain failure. Let us instead point them to the depths of their sin. This sin is so deep that God views any of their personal righteousnesses as being no better than foul, filthy rags.

Then we need to point them to Jesus Christ the author and perfecter of faith. When once a person comes to see their desperate need for Christ's perfect forgiveness through faith alone, eternal life is given to them forever and ever. Jesus said

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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

Upon this promise hinges our eternal destiny and nothing else.

ROB ZINS
Christian Witness to Roman Catholicism
3 September 2002

Rev Ivan Foster had a letter [edited] published in the ***Belfast Telegraph of 31 August*** in response to Patrick's ***'Thought For The Weekend'*** and it said

In his ***'Thought for the Weekend'*** (Saturday 24th), curate Paddy McCafferty made a fundamental error in his interpretation of the conversation between the Saviour and the lawyer (**Luke 10:25-37**). The lawyer was questioning the Saviour with the purpose of tripping Him up. Christ was therefore dealing with an opponent. As such, the Saviour set out to show the lawyer his own sinful and depraved heart and his inability to do that which is necessary under the Covenant of Works to save himself. This the Saviour did, as He always does, by bringing the sinner to the law of God. Hence His question: **“What is written in the law? how readest thou?” Luke 10:26**. The answer given by the lawyer is indeed the sum of man's requirement under the Covenant of Works under which Adam was placed and under which all his posterity are born. Undoubtedly, if a man does this, he shall indeed live, as Christ said, verse 28. The lawyer's reaction shows that he felt that he must 'justify' himself. Justify himself from what, we might ask. It must surely be the charge that while he had a knowledge of what the law required of him in order for him to earn 'eternal life', he had not fulfilled the requirements of the law. His quibble about who was his neighbour was a mere device to deflect from the simple truth, that the lawyer knew himself to be unable to keep the terms of the law in order to obtain 'eternal life' by it. Yet, strangely, Mr. McCafferty urges actions, which the lawyer, by his quibbling, was acknowledging to be impossible. The fact of man's inability to keep the law of God, and so earn eternal life, is central to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In answer to the second question of the lawyer, the Saviour does indeed tell the wonderful parable of the Good Samaritan. Mr. McCafferty is correct in saying that the Good Samaritan is the 'Christ-like' figure in the story. The wounded, dying Jew is a picture of mankind. Now what does the Samaritan say to the Jew in order to deliver him from his plight? According to Mr. McCafferty's 'gospel', he would have instructed him in the things he must do in order to save himself. The parable contains no hint of this, but rather, the Good Samaritan undertakes all the work necessary for the deliverance of the dying man. The dying man had but to submit to and accept the Good Samaritan's ministrations. That is the message of the Gospel as plainly declared in the Bible.

In contrast to Patrick McCafferty's '*gospel*' of '**keep God's law and you will be rewarded with eternal life**', the reality is that sinful man cannot possibly keep '**the Law**' of God to the standard that would earn him 'eternal life' – that standard is PERFECTION. God's verdict on all humanity is found in **Romans 3:10** "**There is none righteous, no not one**" which in itself refers back to God's view of humanity as recorded in **Psalm 14:3** "**They are ALL gone aside, they are together become filthy, there is none that doeth good, no not one**".

There has ever only been one exception [unless Patrick knows differently] and that was the God-Man, the Lord Jesus, and His perfect, 'law-keeping' righteousness is God's gift to all who believe ALONE on the work of Christ [His sinless life and His substitutionary sufferings and death] for their salvation [see **Romans 3:22**].

Some humans may keep God's '**Law**' to a better degree than others in their attempts to obey Patrick McCafferty's '*gospel*' but God's Word shows the equal futility of all such attempts at self-salvation. The Bible declares in **James 2:10** "**For whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all**". Patrick, by his '*gospel*' would have people believe that if they do their best to keep God's law, even though they won't be able to do it perfectly, they will be rewarded with eternal life. God's required standard of PERFECTION means that Patrick's '*gospel*' is '**another gospel**' of the kind anathematised by God in **Galatians 1:6-9**.

No wonder the apostle Paul, having listed all the 'righteous' factors that he previously trusted in for his salvation, declared bluntly that he now viewed those things to be as worthless as "**dung**" [**Philippians 3:8**] and in the next verse he outlined how he was now trusting in the [imputed] righteousness of Christ rather than in his own attempts to fashion a righteousness by keeping '**the Law**' himself. Paul wrote of being "**found in him [Christ], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith**".

Those who seek by their own '*law-keeping*' efforts to earn a reward from God of eternal life should read closely **Romans 4:4-5** "**Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness**". Eternal life is an 'inheritance', graciously bequeathed to those 'born again', and it is based alone on the sole grounds of the life and death of Christ for His people [**"He shall save his people from their sins"** **Matthew 1:21**] The Good Samaritan [rightly identified by Patrick as Christ-like] came to the man and did all that was immediately necessary to save him from his predicament and also made provision for his future security and well-being.

In a published response [Belfast Telegraph 7 September] to the Rev Ivan Foster's letter Patrick McCafferty wrote –
'According to the Rev Ivan Foster I "made a fundamental error" in interpreting the conversation between Jesus and the lawyer in Luke 10:25-37 [Writeback 31 August].

The lawyer may well have been attempting to trip our Lord up. The Gospels also tell however of another eager young man, who could not be described as an opponent of the Lord Jesus. This man 'ran up, knelt in front of Him and asked: Good Master what must I do to be saved?' [Mark 10:17-22] Jesus' answer to him was in many ways similar to the advice He gave to the lawyer. It is abundantly clear from all of the Scriptures that our eternal salvation is conditional upon our following of Jesus Christ.

Rev Foster referred to "the Law" and our inability to keep its strictures. This is true.

Now, however, it is no longer necessary for us to worry about the excessive and scrupulous demands of the old Law. We live in the New Dispensation of Grace. The New Grace is the Person of Christ. By opening our hearts to His Holy Spirit, it becomes possible indeed to love others with Jesus' own love. He commands "Love one another as I have loved you" [John 15:12]. He would never have called us to do this had He not made it possible for us to love in this way through the action of His Spirit dwelling in us.

Finally I wish to assure Rev Foster that 'Mr McCafferty's gospel' does not instruct anyone 'in the things he/she must do in order to save him/herself' As Catholics we firmly believe that we do not and cannot save ourselves.

We look to Christ alone, but we must co-operate with Him and follow the conditions and instructions laid down by our Saviour [John 15:10].

Let me respond first to Patrick's reference to **John 15:10** as proof that for 'salvation' people must co-operate with Christ [which by the way is clearly not (by faith ALONE) '**looking to Christ ALONE**']. What does **John 15:10** say – "**If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love [not 'keep your salvation'] even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love**". Does God's Word tell us what may happen to Christians who fail to "**keep my [God's] commandments**"?

Hebrews 12 encourages Christians to "**lay aside...sin**" [v1] and in verses **5&6** reminds Christians of God's Word as found in **Proverbs 3:11-12** "**My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction; For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father, the son in whom he delighteth**". There is no mention here of God condemning a 'saved' Christian but much mention of Him 'correcting' an erring child.

John 15:10 teaches that the Christian who makes a conscious, concerted effort to keep God's commandments [which as a 'born again' believer are now written in his heart and mind – see **Hebrews 10:16-17** "**This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts and in their minds will I write them and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin**" – no Masses, no penances, no indulgences etc] will continually enjoy a sense of Christ's love in his soul. Such a Christian will prove the truth of **Psalm 1:1-2** "**Blessed [Oh the blessednesses/happineses of] is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly nor standeth in**

the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord and in his law doth he meditate day and night”.

According to Patrick’s *‘gospel’*, one unconfessed **‘mortal sin’** is enough to knock any Roman Catholic off the ‘highway to heaven’ and place them on the ‘slippery slope’ to hell. What a contrast to the Lord’s compassionate words of **Matthew 12:20** **“A bruised reed shall he not break and smoking flax shall he not quench”**. Commenting on this verse Mr Spurgeon wrote when referring to God’s children **‘weak as they are, and because they are so weak, they have this promise made specially to them. Herein is grace and graciousness! Herein is love and lovingkindness! How it opens to us the compassion of Jesus – so gentle, tender, considerate! We need never shrink back from His touch. We need never fear a harsh word from Him; though He might well chide us for our weakness, He rebuketh not [no redirection from heaven to hell!] Bruised reeds shall have no blows from him, and the smoking flax no damping frowns’**.

Oh, by the way, for that one condemning **‘mortal sin’** to be forgiven it **must** be confessed to a Priest – during a visit to America in 1989 by the present Pope, the Los Angeles Times reported as follows ***‘Rebutting a belief widely shared by Protestants and a growing number of Roman Catholics, Pope John Paul 2nd on Tuesday dismissed the widespread idea that one can obtain forgiveness directly from God and exhorted Catholics to confess more often to their priests’*** – so much for Patrick’s claim of **‘looking to Christ ALONE’**.

The Pope was merely articulating the teaching of Rome found in paragraphs 1456 & 1448 of their Catechism ***‘Confession to a priest is an essential part of the sacrament of Penance. All mortal sins...must be recounted by them in confession. The Church...through the bishop and his priests forgives sins in the name of Jesus Christ and determines the manner of satisfaction’*** – so much again for Patrick’s claim of Roman Catholics **‘looking to Christ ALONE’** - and of course the confessing sinners’ need to render **‘satisfaction’** as determined by the bishop/priest to whom confession is made shows again that they are not **‘looking to Christ ALONE’**.

When Patrick says that **‘As Catholics...we look to Christ alone’** what he really means is that **‘Catholics look to Christ alone for instructions on how to co-operate with Him in order to be saved’** whereas true believers **‘look to Christ alone and to His work at Calvary alone as the sole grounds of their salvation’** – reminding us of the verse in **Isaiah 45:22** that spoke to young Spurgeon and led, under Holy Ghost conviction, to his conversion **“Look UNTO ME and BE SAVED all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none else”** –this is the same God Who said in **Isaiah 43:11** **“I am the Lord and beside me there is no saviour”**. When it comes to ‘salvation’ believers can no more co-operate with Christ than could the unfortunate **Uzzah** who tried to ‘co-operate’ with the Ark in **2 Samuel 6:6-7**.

Christians such as myself who truly **‘look to Christ alone’** for salvation have the following anathema placed upon them by Patrick’s Church –***‘If anyone saith, that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which***

remits sins FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, or, that this confidence ALONE is that whereby we are justified, let him be anathema' [Council of Trent Canon XII].

These exchanges have served to show that faithful, Biblical 'evangelicals' have no identity with the 'gospel' of 'Father' Patrick McCafferty and as good neighbours to both 'socially-active/sacrament-trusting' Roman Catholics and unregenerate so-called 'Protestants', we must continue to set before those of them that we providentially encounter on our own journey through life, the only Saviour of men, the 'Good Shepherd', even our Lord Jesus Christ.

I can think of no better way to end this section than by quoting Spurgeon's devotional thoughts from last evening, 6 September, as he considered this –

"If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" – Galatians 5:18

He who looks at his own character and position from a legal point of view, will not only despair when he comes to the *end* of his reckoning, but if he be a wise man he will despair at the *beginning*; for if we are to be judged on the footing of the law, there shall no flesh living be justified. How blessed to know that we dwell in the domains of grace and not of law!

When thinking of my state before God the question is not, "Am I perfect in myself before the law?" but, "Am I perfect in Christ Jesus?" That is a very different matter. We need not enquire, "Am I without sin naturally?" but "Have I been washed in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness?" It is not "Am I in myself well pleasing to God?" but it is "Am I accepted in the Beloved?"

The Christian views his evidences from the top of Sinai, and grows alarmed concerning his salvation; it were better far if he read his title by the light of Calvary.

"Why," saith he, "my faith has unbelief in it, it is not able to save me."

Suppose he had considered *the object* of his faith instead of his faith, then he would have said, "There is no failure in *Him*, and therefore I am safe."

He sighs over his hope: "Ah! my hope is marred and dimmed by an anxious carefulness about present things; how can I be accepted?" Had he regarded *the ground* of his hope, he would have seen that the promise of God standeth sure, and that whatever our doubts may be, the oath and promise never fail.

Ah! believer, it is safer always for you to be led of the Spirit into gospel liberty than to wear legal fetters. Judge yourself at what *Christ* is rather than at what *you* are. Satan will try to mar your peace by reminding you of your sinfulness and imperfections: you can only meet his accusations by faithfully adhering to the gospel and refusing to wear the yoke of bondage.

In Patrick's published response to Rev Foster in the Belfast Telegraph [7 September] he said the following –

'Now however it is no longer necessary for us to worry about the excessive and scrupulous demands of the old Law. We live now in the New Dispensation of Grace. The New Grace is the Person of Christ. By opening our hearts to His Holy Spirit, it becomes possible indeed to love others with Jesus' own love'.

Rob Zins has kindly taken the time to write the following in response to what Patrick wrote.

In a recent letter submitted to and published by the Belfast Telegraph, Roman Catholic priest Patrick McCafferty, invites us to agree with his interpretation of an encounter between Jesus Christ and a rich young ruler who came to Jesus asking, "**Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?**" [Mark 10:17]. This story is recorded, not only in Mark, but also in Matthew and Luke in the New Testament. It is a well-known story. It is generally referred to as the '**story of the rich young ruler**'.

We know that this man who approached Jesus was 'young' (Matthew's account) and that he was 'very rich' (Matthew, Mark and Luke's account).

In answer to the question, "**what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?**" Jesus instructs the rich young ruler to '**keep the commandments**' [Matthew 19: 17]. Jesus then goes on to mention a few of the commandments and the rich young ruler answers, "**All these things have I kept from my youth up. What lack I yet?**" [Matthew 19:20]. Jesus answers, "**One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross and follow me**" [Mark 10:21].

From this exchange, Mr. McCafferty concludes:

"It is abundantly clear, from all of the Scriptures, that our eternal salvation is conditional upon our following of Jesus Christ."

Christians understand that Jesus was getting to the heart of the matter with this rich young ruler. He told him plainly that 'eternal life' was there for the taking if he would only obey the commandments. Full of self-appreciation, the rich young ruler should have taken better stock of himself. He perhaps thought that he had obeyed the Law and was therefore a candidate to receive 'eternal life' and a heavenly reward.

Jesus knew better. He had exposed the heart of this man by zeroing in on his Achilles heel. The man was rich. Jesus said that he now needed to sell it all, give it away and follow Jesus. This was too much. The rich young ruler went away downhearted. He knew that he could not. He is not alone, no one can perfectly comply with the demands of the Law that exposes our failure to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, mind and soul!

As for Mr. McCafferty, he has been sufficiently corrected for his previous articles in which he has suggested that keeping the Law of God is a requirement for salvation. But now He attempts an escape from the obvious manifold tyranny of the Old Testament Law having evidently seen that there is no hope of being 'justified' by that Law. Mr. McCafferty thinks that he has now found a New Law that is less demanding and presents to us 'keepable' conditions for inheriting eternal salvation. McCafferty states:

"Now, however, it is no longer necessary for us to worry about the excessive and scrupulous demand of the old Law. We live now in the New Dispensation of Grace...We look to Christ alone, but we must co-operate with Him and follow the conditions and instructions laid down by our Saviour."

Mr. McCafferty believes that 'eternal life' is now contingent upon how well we follow the commandments of Jesus Christ. He believes that Jesus has laid down for us certain conditions and instructions that, if followed faithfully, will land us into eternal bliss. But is this the case? It is not. Not now and not ever! We shall get to this assertion presently.

But before that we need to examine a strange anomaly in Roman Catholic teachings. Mr. McCafferty refuses to yield to the Christian accusation that Roman Catholics believe that they 'save themselves' by their merits. He instead insists that Roman Catholics do not and cannot 'save themselves'. Rather, they co-operate with God for their own salvation.

It is a mystery as to why Roman Catholics cannot see that the party most likely to fail [100% of the time] in this co-operative effort is man and not God. Hence, the essence of salvation is suspended upon frail man. Thus, the accusation that Roman Catholics are taught to 'save themselves' is correct.

The work of Christ is finished and will never fail. Thus, if someone is going to be saved in Rome, it will be dependent upon him or her. We point this out because Rome plays a word game here. She says that because man did not invent salvation, nor go to the cross, nor bring it down to man, then man cannot be the one that saves. But, this is silly if the essence of salvation is dependent for its application on the faithfulness of man!

The equally spurious assertion is that Jesus Christ has conditioned man's salvation on our faithfulness to His alleged conditions and instructions. We ask plainly, "What conditions and what instructions were given by Jesus, that if obeyed, gives us 'eternal life'?" We can find only one. The one and only condition is the double-sided coin of repentance and faith.

"Repent and believe the gospel" [Mark 1:15].

There is no command to baptize infants for justification; there is no command to perform a confirmation, a mass, a penance, an indulgence or any other Roman Catholic sacrament. Hence, even if Jesus had left conditions and

instructions for our salvation, Roman Catholicism has invented her own! But Jesus did not. Instead, He called men unto Himself and promised them 'eternal life' if they would trust His sacrificial death on the cross. Far from offering a new set of resolutions for mankind to succumb to, Jesus offered Himself, as THE substitute for what man could not possibly ever do.

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation...For God hath made him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him"
2 Corinthians 5:19 & 21.

Furthermore, Mr. McCafferty errs greatly in dividing Jesus Christ from God. He views the command to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul and mind as being part of **"the excessive and scrupulous commands of the old Law."** Yet, remarkably, he thinks that **"love one another as I have loved you" [John 15:12]** is perfectly possible for us to do and furthermore it is a condition of salvation. What? Has God been divided?

How do we love as perfectly as the sinless incarnate Son of God? Mr. McCafferty says, **"He would never have called us to do this, had He not made it possible for us to love this way..."**. Are we then to infer that this same God did call His people to love Him with all their heart soul and mind in the Old Testament, but did not make it possible for them to do this?

And, if He did make it possible, then how is this command a part of the **"excessive and scrupulous demand of the old Law"**, which could not, by being followed, give salvation?

The most fundamental flaw in Roman Catholicism is its failure to understand the perfection of God and Jesus Christ. Because this is sullied and blurred in Roman Catholic circles, they thrive on inventing ways to please God with their own best efforts! They see the utter failure of God's perfect Law to save even one soul due to sin and imperfection and yet go on to build a new law of their own.

They think that Jesus left conditions and instructions which are much more workable and reasonable given man's sinfulness. They think that Jesus came to give His life so that God could relax the standard of perfection that He established in His old Law. They go on to think that God has given the Holy Spirit now so that 'their new laws' can be managed by a co-operative effort between God and man.

All this amounts to a total misreading of and a complete failure to understand the gravity of the death of Christ and the holiness of God. Jesus was not an emissary of God bearing writs and decrees of a softened law that He would validate by His death on the cross. On the contrary, Jesus came to establish the Law, by fulfilling its perfect demands Himself, and by giving salvation as a free gift to those who could not possibly perfectly follow Him or His teachings.

When the rich young ruler went away “**sorrowful**” Mark records Jesus as saying, “**how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God...how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God**”
[Mark 10:23 & 24].

Jesus knew the heart of this man. But the disciples were amazed. They asked, “**Who then can be saved?**” Jesus answered, “**With men it is impossible but not with God: for with God all things are possible.**”
[Mark 10:26 & 27]

With man salvation is impossible.
Man cannot have the final say in it because with man salvation is impossible. Man cannot hold up to God his ‘co-operative’ best and trust it for salvation because with man salvation is impossible.

Peter knew this. Paul knew this. All who come to Christ, as beggars despairing of their own righteousness, know this.
Mr. McCafferty does not know this and those who follow him do not know this either.

May those who have ears to hear come to Christ forsaking their self imposed conditions and instructions. Then they may walk in newness of life and understand what Jesus meant when He said:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

**"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.
For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."**
Matthew 16:24 & 25

And what Paul meant when he said

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
Galatians 2:20

Rob Zins
Christian Witness to Roman Catholicism
13 September 2002

**In a published response [Belfast Telegraph 14 September]
to Patrick McCafferty's letter the Rev Ivan Foster wrote –**

I repeat my basic charge against Mr. McCafferty of erroneously interpreting God's Word since he repeated the error in his reply [Writeback 7 September]. When the young man referred to by Mr. McCafferty responded to the Saviour, he claimed that he had kept the Saviour's summary of the law of God in its entirety from his youth (**Mark 10:20**). According to Mr. McCafferty's gospel, that should have satisfied the Saviour. But instead, the Saviour said: **“One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me” (verse 21)**. The Saviour was again dealing with a man who did not feel himself to be a lost sinner unable to keep the law of God. To convince such a one of his sin, He brought the man to the practical implications of the law. To love God with your whole being is to be ready at His bidding to sell all and bear the reproach of Christ. It was then that the young man was faced with the sinfulness of his heart and he went away from Christ because, despite his claims, he did not love God before all things (**verse 22**). The whole thesis of the message of Christ is to convince men that they cannot keep the law, being sinners. The purpose of bringing sinners to the law is to convince them of their inability to keep its terms because of their utter sinfulness, and to teach them of their need of a Redeemer who would undertake for them the obligations of the law and to rest in His work wrought on the behalf of the elect. The dreadful description of the law employed by Mr. McCafferty when he spoke of the **‘excessive...demands of the old law’** indicates his measure of ignorance of the Word of God. The Law of God, summarised in the Ten Commandments, was not **‘excessive’** but rather a revelation of the perfect holiness God demands from mankind. It appears **‘excessive’** to sinful man but God, its author, cannot be charged with making **‘excessive’** demands upon His creatures. There is no **‘excess’** in perfection. Nor is it the **‘old’** Law since it is still in power and has not been replaced. Another example of Mr. McCafferty's poor exegesis is his use of **John 15:12** as proof that salvation comes through our works. **“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you” (John 15:12)**, is not a law whereby the sinner obtains ‘eternal life’. Rather, it is a command to a sinner who has obtained ‘eternal life’ to show that this is the case by loving his brethren in Christ, an essential manifestation of the life of God within the soul. Just as Lazarus could only **“come forth”** after he was raised from the dead by the power of Christ, so the command of **John 15:12** can be kept only by those who, convinced by the Holy Spirit of their utter sinfulness and inability to satisfy the law of God by their works, and likewise drawn by the same Holy Spirit to faith in Christ and repentance toward sin, have, by His grace, been regenerated. They, as living saints, are now obligated and enabled to walk in the law of Christ. The dead Lazarus did not co-operate with Christ in his resurrection nor can the dead sinner co-operate with Christ in order to bring about his spiritual resurrection. The Gospel message is one of grace alone, not grace mixed with our assistance of God.

Just underneath the Rev Foster's published letter was the following notation
‘Footnote: This correspondence is now closed. Letters editor’.

Mr McCafferty however has carried on the correspondence directly with the Rev Ivan Foster who has informed Patrick that it will be published in his own church publication ‘The Burning Bush’ and I have also received permission from the Rev Foster to publish it in this article.

**Email received by Rev Ivan Foster from
Patrick McCafferty 16 September 2002**

I write, Rev Foster, in regard to your letter to Belfast Telegraph's *Writeback* 14/9/02. I further refute your '**basic charge**' that I am '**erroneously interpreting**' God's Word in Luke 10:25-28 and Mark 10:20. Either out of malice or ignorance, you are misrepresenting what I mean in reference to the old Law. I do not, in any way, consider the Ten Commandments excessive. They are, indeed, as you put it, '**a revelation of the perfect holiness God demands from mankind**'. And upon our keeping of this Law, now in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, our salvation depends.

The Law finds its fulfilment and fullest meaning in Jesus our Saviour. It is no longer a series [of] dos and don'ts, impossible for us to keep by ourselves. The Spirit of Love, Who is in the Father and the Son, Who has been poured into our hearts (Romans. 5:5), makes it possible for us to keep the New Law, the New Commandment, because now we are joined to Jesus Christ and He is become our Wisdom and our virtue and our holiness and our redemption. (I Corinthians 1:30-31). By being joined to Christ we share in His love and goodness. We have no virtue of our own only His Merits.

We are joined to Him as the branches to the Vine so that He can produce the lasting fruits of His Love in us. However, Rev Foster, as the Saviour Himself explicitly says "Remain in My Love" and "cut off from Me you can do nothing". Cut off from Christ we wither like dead branches. The Lord would never have warned us thus had it not been possible for us to stray from His Love. Our eternal salvation is conditional upon our remaining in Christ our whole lives long as Wisdom Himself says: "those who persevere to the end will be saved". Salvation and forgiveness possessed now can be lost. Read the Parable of the unforgiving debtor in Matthew 18 and mark well what the Lord says in verse 35. The debtor, who had been released from the colossal debt he owed his master, had his forgiveness rescinded when he failed to forgive his fellow servant, who owed him a comparatively paltry sum.

As regards the resurrection of Lazarus, certainly Lazarus was powerless lying in bodily death and the Lord's raising of him is, certainly, a demonstration of His mighty power over death and, more importantly, His raising us from spiritual death. Lazarus, however, DID co-operate with the Lord Jesus by COMING FORTH from his tomb. We, having been saved and redeemed by the Lord of Life, must also come forth to Him for the glory of God. We must demonstrate clearly by our way of living that life is at work in us. We must co-operate with God, otherwise all that the Lord has achieved and wrought for us will be in vain in so far as someone refuses to respond to grace.

**Yours sincerely,
Rev Patrick McCafferty,
St Patricks, Lisburn, Co Antrim.**

**Email reply by Rev Ivan Foster to
Patrick McCafferty 16 September 2002**

I was glad to receive your e-mail and happy to continue the exchange begun in the columns of the Belfast Telegraph. I would like to state immediately that I will be reproducing any letters we exchange by email in 'The Burning Bush', a little publication I edit. You will have received the full text of the letters I sent to the Belfast Telegraph. They include those statements the Editor saw fit to exclude from the letters' column.

I wish to assure you that I was not acting out of malice when I replied as I did in my second letter. I would wish to stress that. I make no secret of my abhorrence of the doctrines you propagate but that does not mean that I would resort to dishonesty in responding to them. Were that necessary, then my confidence in my own beliefs would evaporate. I do not believe I acted in ignorance. Your statement: ***'Now, however, it is no longer necessary for us to worry about the excessive and scrupulous demands of the old Law'*** can only be seen as an expression of your view that the ***'old Law'*** was ***'excessive'*** in its demands. You were wrong in making such a statement and you cannot avoid the rebuke for such by claiming that I misrepresented you. Now that would be malicious!!

It is clear that you believe that it is upon our keeping of a law that ***'our salvation depends'***. Just what ***'law'*** is it we are required to keep, for you clearly contradict yourself between what you say in your first paragraph and what you say in your second paragraph? Let me show you what I mean. You say, ***'I do not, in any way, consider the Ten Commandments excessive. They are, indeed, as you put it, 'a revelation of the perfect holiness God demands from mankind'. And upon our keeping of this Law, now in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, our salvation depends.'*** Here you say that our salvation depends upon our keeping of the Ten Commandments. But in the next paragraph you say something entirely different. ***'The Law finds its fulfilment and fullest meaning in Jesus our Saviour. It is no longer a series [of] dos and don'ts, impossible for us to keep by ourselves. The Spirit of Love, Who is in the Father and the Son, Who has been poured into our hearts (Romans. 5:5), makes it possible for us to keep the New Law, the New Commandment, because now we are joined to Jesus Christ and He is become our Wisdom and our virtue and our holiness and our redemption. (I Corinthians 1:30-31).'*** Here you appear to be saying that we are saved by the keeping of a ***'new commandment'*** different from the ***'old Law'*** because it is no longer a ***'series [of] dos and don'ts.'*** Just what is this ***'new law'*** you refer to and wherein does it differ from the ***'old law'***?

You claim that as a result of our being joined to Christ we are thus enabled to keep ***'the new commandment'*** and so accomplish the saving of our souls. But surely it is our union with Christ, which has brought about our salvation. We possess 'eternal life' once we are brought into union with Christ. Union with Christ is not in order that we might purchase our salvation by our obedience of the law but rather, having obtained salvation we now walk in the spirit of the law of God. You set the cart before the horse and claim the effect is the cause and the cause is the effect! The Christian rises to walk in newness of life because they have obtained salvation through faith in Christ rather than, as you claim, they obtain salvation by walking in newness of life.

The new life within us is the result of God having saved us rather than the means by which we save ourselves. ***"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them," Ezekiel 36:27.*** The walking in the statutes of God follows the work of regeneration rather than occasioning it. No matter how you package it, the Bible teaches that salvation is not by works but by the grace of God enabling the sinner to rest by faith in the finished work of Christ and that the new life thus received is manifested by the converted sinner beginning to walk according to the will of God set down in His Word. This truth is set forth in the record of the conversion of the Thessalonians, ***1 Thessalonians 1:4-10.***

1. They received the gospel. The word **'receive'** means **'to take hold upon.'**
2. They followed Christ and Paul. The word **'followed'** means **'imitated.'**
3. Their whole lifestyle changed for they turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.
4. They already enjoyed deliverance from wrath to come. They were not hoping to earn it by a keeping of the law.

The role of works in the life of the believer is not as a means to life but rather as a manifestation of life. The sinner who is grafted into Christ the Vine will bear fruit not in order to be made a Christian, a partaker of the life and grace of Christ but as an evident result of his union with Christ. Yes, Lazarus co-operated with Christ AFTER his resurrection and as an evidence of his having received new life. His **'coming forth'** was not in order that he might receive life as you teach. Surely you must see that your contention is ludicrous!

Your stating that a believer may fall away and be lost is, of course, an essential part of any theory, which claims that the sinner must contribute to his own salvation. But since the Holy Scriptures teaches a salvation which is entirely of God, the true believer cannot fall away and be lost. **"Salvation is of the LORD," Jonah 2:9. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast," Ephesians 2:8-9. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," John 10:27-28.**

When Peter fell 'away' on the occasion of his vehement denial of Christ, it was a falling away from the fellowship of Christ not union with Christ. The prodigal son left his father's house but in so doing he did not cease to be a son of the father. He cut himself off from the privileges of his father's house but he was not cut off by the father. The privileges were still his to enjoy when he returned home. Likewise, Peter was still a child of God even though he spoke and acted more like an enemy for a time. When Peter repented, he did not form a new relationship but renewed his enjoyment of his continuing relationship with Christ.

The parable of **Matthew 18:21-35** does not support your view that the believer may fall away and be lost. Rather, it teaches us that God's dealings with His people are tempered by their dealings with others. It is the same truth as that stated (though commonly misunderstood) in **Matthew 7:1-2. "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."** This same truth was stated by the Psalmist in **Psalm 18:26. "With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward."** Likewise, Eliphaz the Temanite said, **"Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same," Job 4:8.** The Christian, in his dealings with others, should ever remember God's merciful dealings with him. **"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," Matthew 6:12. "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you," Ephesians 4:32.**

God does not pardon our sins only to resurrect them again on some future occasion and hold them against us. That cannot be for it would be contrary to the terms of the Covenant of Grace. **"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more," Hebrews 10:16,17.**

This basically brings us back to my first letter and my pointing out that the Good Samaritan did all that was necessary for the wounded man, without assistance from him. This is the essence of the gospel of grace.

**Yours sincerely,
Ivan Foster.**

“And for this cause he [Christ] is the mediator of the new testament that by means of death [Christ’s] for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they who are called [Christians] might receive the promise of eternal INHERITANCE” [Hebrews 9:15]

Cecil Andrews - “Take Heed” Ministries - 17 September 2002