

THE IMPECCABILITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Word impeccable means "free from error, fault, or flaw; incapable of doing wrong; unerring." Two questions arise:

1. Did he sin?;
2. And, could He sin?

We believe the answer to both of these questions is, "NO". Most would agree that, according to Bible record, He did not sin. Yet, many also hold that He could have sinned. Here the very fact of the unity of His Person is involved, and becomes one of the main factors in deciding the matter. Some believe that His humanity was so real that He could have sinned. Some use Adam as an example that an unfallen human being may sin. With Adam, however, there was but one nature, and it could stand in no other way than unsupported and alone. But, the humanity of Christ was not, and could not be, divorced from His Deity, nor could it ever be in a position of uninvolved responsibility. His humanity might act independently in certain ways which involve no moral issues, but because of the absolute unity of His person, His humanity could not sin without necessitating God to sin. Sin as an inherent nature was foreign to Christ.

A number of scriptures prove that He did not sin. He truly was "without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:19), "without spot" (Hebrews 9:14). Thus, He, in His death, offered Himself "the Just", on His part, "for the unjust", or our part (I Peter 3:18).

He challenged His enemies, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John 8:46). It is impossible to envisage any other historical character making such a claim. "And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" (John 8:46). In other words, if there was no sin, then He was speaking the truth, and they should have believed what He said. His words were a tremendous challenge, which was not met, and only one "equal with God" could make such a claim. He alone could and did, say, "...I do always those things that please Him." (John 8:29)

Many impartial witnesses testified to His sinlessness, and purity of life. Judas, the betrayer, confessed, "...I have betrayed the innocent blood..." (Matthew 27:4). Pilate's wife said, "...Have thou nothing to do with that just man..." (Matthew 27:19). Pilate himself said, "...I find no fault in him" (John 19:6), and Luke adds, "No, nor yet Herod..." (Luke 23:14-15). One thief on the cross rebuked the other, "...saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke 23:40-41)

Other inspired writers testified that He was One "who did NO sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." (I Peter 2:22). In contrast, of all humanity it is written, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23).

He, who preexisted (John 1:1,2; Philippians 2:6), took on Him flesh (John 1:14), and entered life by means of a "virgin" (Matthew 1:23). The "virgin" birth did not prove that Mary was His mother, rather it proved that God was His Father. Luke records that the angel disclosed to Mary that of her would be born "that holy thing," which was to be called "the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). The hereditary sin nature that Mary had received mediately from Adam through her progenitors was not transmitted to Christ because of His miraculous conception through the operation of "the Holy Spirit". He had no earthly Father. Therefore, He was free from the degradation that "passed upon all men" through Adam's fall. Thus, Christ said, "...the promise of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John 14:30). Marvin Vincent writes as follows:

"Hath nothing in me. No right nor power over Christ which sin in him would give. The Greek order is, in me he hath nothing" (end quote, *Word Studies in the New Testament, Volume II, "Gospel of John", page 247*).

It is sin which gives Satan his grip on men, but there was no sin in Jesus, as in others. Thus, there was nothing that Satan could take hold of. He was truly free from a sin nature, and, therefore, He did not sin.

If we are going to "honour the Son, even as" we "honor the Father" (John 5:23), then we maintain the absolute impeccability of Christ. Jesus Christ is God. So said Isaiah (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6). So said John (John 1:1,2; I John 5:20). So said Luke (Acts 20:28). So said Paul (Romans 9:5; Philippians 2:6). So said Thomas (John 20:28). And, so said God the Father (Hebrews 1:8,10). Therefore, whatever God is, Jesus Christ is. But, what is God that is relevant to this subject matter? "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5). Also, in God there is "no variableness (or, variation, margin), neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). He does not "change" (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 1:12), but is "the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). God is holy (Exodus 15:11; Acts 3:14). Moreover, it is "impossible for God to lie" (Hebrews 6:18; Numbers 23:19; John 14:6). But, God said, some 700 years before Christ, "He shall not fail..." (Isaiah 42:4). If Christ could have sinned, then He could have made God a liar. If Christ was capable of sinning on earth, he is still capable of sinning now and, therefore, the believer's position and standing in Christ is forever placed in jeopardy.

Moreover, "God cannot be tempted with evil..." (James 1:13). But, someone is ready to object by saying, "If God cannot be tempted (James 1:13), and Christ was tempted (Matthew 4:1), then Christ cannot be God". Let the objector remember that God the Father was also "tempted" by the Israelites (Hebrews 3:8-10). The fact often overlooked is: In Matthew 4:1 and Hebrews 3:9 the temptation came from without, where as James 1:14 makes it clear that the temptation arises from within, from uncontrolled appetites and evil passions. Compare Mark 7:23. Paul exhorted God's children "not" to "lust" after evil things, as they also lusted" (I Corinthians 10:6). But why? Because, "when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin" (James 1:15). There was no "lust" in Christ. Therefore, there was no "sin" in Christ.

Now "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15). There is a definite correlation between sin and death, and life and holiness. Thus, "...sin...death..." (Romans 5:12; 6:23). Remember, Christ said, "...I am the...life..." (John 14:6). that which truly lives is without sin. Christ was "the life" because "sin," the cause of "death," was not in him. God, therefore, is "true" and "living" (Jeremiah 10:10) and Jesus Christ is "true...and eternal life" (I John 5:20). Thus, He is the "I am," the "I" denoting personality, and the "am" denoting the eternity of presence.

Christ did die, but His death was not the result of sin in Him. He had no sin. His death could only be effected, if He willed it. He died as no other one ever died. He dismissed His own spirit.

The "flesh", in which He took up residence, and "dwelt among" humanity, was completely subservient to the divine nature. There were two natures, true, but only one personality. This is why the conflict which Paul describes in Romans 7:15-24 was never descriptive of the Son of God during His earthly sojourn.

He was free from hereditary depravity, being "virgin" born. He was supernaturally conceived. To deny this is to deny the purity of Mary, to deny the truthfulness of Matthew's and Luke's narratives, and to make God a liar because this is "the record that God gave of his Son" (I John 5:9-10). He was free from actual sin. This is seen in that He never offered sacrifice. He never prayed for forgiveness. He taught that all but He needed the new birth. He challenged His enemies to convict Him of a single sin.

His human nature was not exempt from hunger (Matthew 4:2), thirst (John 19:28), sleep (Matthew 8:24), weariness (John 4:6), etc., and it was subject to the ordinary laws of human development (Luke 2:40). But, this nature was completely submissive to the Lord who indwelt it. He possessed an ease, a freedom, a grace, about doing the will of God. He was born to it. He does it naturally, as a matter of course. We are never told that He forgot, or even that He remembered. We are not told that He arrived at truths by the means of reasoning them out, rather He reasons them out for others. There was no irreverent familiarity about His fellowship with the Father, also no traces of wonderment. Great prophets and apostles had fallen to the ground, awestruck, when the divine glory was revealed to them, but our Lord stood calm and erect. He existed before Abraham, yet He was born in the time of Caesar Augustus. He wept, was weary, and suffered many things at the hands of men, and died, yet He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and His "years shall not fail". Truly, "He was in the world" at the incarnation, yet "the world was made by Him" for He preceded "all" created things. In the flesh, He was "made a curse for us," "made a little lower than the angels," "made of a woman," "made under the law," but as preincarnate He wasn't "made" anything, rather "all things were made by Him; and without him was not anything made that was made." He is before all history. He is the beginning of all history since "He made the worlds". Throughout all history, "he upholdeth all things by the word of his power." He is the end of all history because He is

"heir of all things." yet, He "became poor". But, how poor? Ask Mary! Ask the wise men! He was born in another's manger. He rode another's ass. He was buried in another's tomb. And, why? "For your sakes."

I commend you to the Lord of glory, the Christ of the Christian's faith, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

He who is "the God of glory" (Acts 7:2) knew "humiliation" (Acts 8:33) that "we may be also glorified" (Romans 8:17).

He who is "from everlasting" (Micah 5:2) was "cut off out of the land of the living" (Isaiah 53:8) that we might "live forever" (John 6:51).

He who is "the mighty God" (Isaiah 9:6) was "crucified through weakness" (II Corinthians 13:4) that we might be "strengthened with might" (Ephesians 3:16), and know "the working of his mighty power" (Ephesians 1:19).