

# **The Know-So Christian**

by

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"I know whom I have believed"

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## **Chapter 1 -**

### **We Can Have An Absolute Assurance**

Not long ago, according to Ripley's "Believe it or Not, a letter, addressed to "The Lord," was sent to Rome, Italy. After some time the letter was returned to the sender, marked "ADDRESSEE UNKNOWN."

The purpose of this little book is to show that GOD is neither unknown nor unknowable. He is beautifully and positively demonstrable, as is plainly indicated in our Lord's Gethsemane prayer, when He says, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

No man at any time has seen GOD in His invisible essence; but the Son, the Lord JESUS CHRIST, has declared Him. No man has at any time seen electricity; but the electric light bulb has declared it. JESUS has said, "**He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.**"

There is an assurance that comes to a believer's heart that is **absolute knowledge**. This knowledge may be yours. You may know that you have eternal life NOW. You may, like Paul, know whom you have believed. You may enter into the most vital experience of the universe -- a humble, "know-so" relationship with Himself. I say, "humble," because there are some who feel sincerely that the "know-so" attitude is one of egotism and pride; that to claim to know that one is **sure** of going to Heaven, is to boast of one's own goodness and personal holiness.

However, that very objection displays a lack of understanding of the truth, and makes it clear that the objector believes that salvation depends upon personal goodness or holiness. Whereas, the Bible clearly teaches that our own righteousnesses at their best, are filthy rags, that "**By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God**" (Ephesians 2:8). Verse nine, which immediately follows, asserts, "**Not of works, lest any man should boast.**"

The "Know-so" attitude of a true believer is not a boastful attitude, but a humble one, for it declares with the Apostle Paul, "**God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world**" (Galatians 6:14).

I send forth this book not in the spirit of controversy, but in love for our Lord and for those who may read it, that they may learn to depend wholly upon CHRIST's finished work of redemption, for their own personal salvation.

Let us immediately plunge into the heart of this subject by looking at some of the

## **HINDRANCES TO ASSURANCE.**

### **1. DEPENDENCE UPON WORKS**

Many professing Christians do not have assurance because they are depending upon their own works for salvation. Their thought seems to be that they may purchase everlasting life by right-living; and that if, at the judgment, their good deeds over-balance their evil deeds the Father will smile upon them and utter those welcoming words, "**Well done, thou good and faithful servant.**" But salvation has already been purchased by the price of the precious blood of CHRIST and eternal life is offered as a free gift to all who believe (Romans 6:23; John 3:36). We cannot therefore purchase that which GOD has already purchased and given unto us. There is nothing that can be added to the perfect and finished work of CHRIST; and we should not insult Him or try to gain His favor by offering our imperfect work as payment therefor.

If our entrance to Heaven were to be attained through our own works, how should we ever know when we had done enough? If we are to save ourselves by church attendance, or penances, or prayers or morality, then CHRIST has died in vain; and we do not need a Saviour, but an example!

For us to expect eternal life by merely refraining from wrongdoing would be about as foolish and as futile as for a farmer to expect an abundant crop of wheat merely because his field was free from weeds, without his having sown any seed.

A religion offering salvation by good works is a false religion. All the false religions of the world that have any ethical teachings at all, set forth the view that man can do something to merit the mercy of GOD. Those Christless religions teach that if we do good works we may hope to be saved in the end. But Christianity teaches just the opposite. We are to believe on CHRIST and be saved right now; and then because we *are* saved we do good works, and live righteously and soberly; *thus good works are the actual fruit of salvation rather than the raw material from which salvation is manufactured!*

Salvation is the foundation of the Christian life. To build a life of good works with a view to being saved in the end would be about as foolish as trying to build a house with the foundation on the roof!

No, my dear friends, we cannot be saved by our own efforts regardless of how good they may be. And because this is so GOD will never give the witness within to a merely professing Christian. For true assurance can come only through the witness of the SPIRIT within; and the SPIRIT will never witness to that which is untrue or contrary to the Word of GOD, which says, "**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).

## **2. DEPENDENCE UPON A MERE RELIGIOUS PROFESSION**

### **DEPENDENCE UPON THEIR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP,**

or affiliation with some religious organization, or their natural religious tendencies, has given many persons a false peace as a substitute for the "blessed assurance" that is the actual possession of the true Christian. These persons say prayers, attend church services, sing in choirs, and sometimes lead in young people's meetings, teach Sunday School classes, or even pray in public. Yet, as was the case in my own experience, their religious activities are not the fruit of the SPIRIT, but the tied-on fruit of profession.

Religion is that which every person in the world possesses. For every man even though he may declare that he has no religion of any kind, does have a little philosophy of religion, either all his own or borrowed from another, by which he finds a temporary relief for those stings of conscience which come to him when he does wrong. For what is religion but a philosophy of life, manifesting itself in the inner emotions and outer activities of the soul.

The heathen are a *religious* people, yet surely no one would think of them as Christian.

Christianity is that which is the possession of those only who are believers on the Lord JESUS CHRIST. **"Believers were called Christians first at Antioch."**

We are not saved by religion, neither are we saved by believing in Christianity; but we **are** saved by a Person. It is not the Church of Christ, but **the Christ of the church**. The Bible does not say, "Believe in religion or Christianity and thou shalt be saved," but rather, **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved"** (Acts 16:31). You see, dear reader, neither religion nor the church died on the Cross. But it was CHRIST the Son of GOD who suffered there in our stead. He, a Person, died for us as our Substitute (only a person could substitute for another person) and provided for us that marvelous, substitutionary atonement -- He alone is our Saviour! Hence you do not need to become religious, but you do need to *accept a Person!* The moment you see Him with the eye of faith, that moment you become a Christian; and at that moment you may have assurance of salvation. You have become a "**know-so**" Christian.

Of the many, many conversions recorded in the Book of Acts, only three are given in *detail*. They are: Saul of Tarsus, the Ethiopian eunuch, and Cornelius the Gentile. Is it not significant that each of these was a very *religious* man *prior* to his conversion? May it not be that the HOLY SPIRIT has given us the record of these in detail for the very purpose of revealing to the world the absolute necessity for even the pious and good to have a personal, saving knowledge of JESUS CHRIST.

## **3. DEPENDENCE UPON FEELINGS**

Due to misleading and preconceived ideas as to just what may be meant by conversion and regeneration, some very earnest souls have feared to trust the promises of GOD for eternal life until they have attained to *some particular emotional experience*. These ideas which often are

the result of listening to the glowing testimonies of Christian friends, have been obstructions on the road to peace for many, over which they have stumbled, being led to seek for an experience rather than for the Lord Himself.

We are all essentially different by nature and GOD does not see fit to give the same manifestation at the time of conversion. Let us therefore exercise great care, lest we be led astray in search of "feeling" in an effort to copy the experiences of our Christian friends. GOD's order is, first **faith**, then fact, and then feeling. But Satan would lead us to reverse this order; and as a result many sincere souls have given up in despair, unable to attain that for which they sought.

In a certain western state, where our party was conducting a campaign in 1923, I was introduced to a very fine, earnest farmer who had prayed daily for twelve years for GOD to save him, but he was still in spiritual darkness and he had about concluded that he was "*not one of the elect.*"

The glowing testimonies of his Christian friends and acquaintances had told of visions and dreams, visiting angels, balls of fire and moments when their whole emotional nature vibrated with spiritual joy. That man had prayed and sought in vain for similar experiences as tokens of his acceptance with GOD.

I had driven twelve miles out in the country that afternoon to see him. I simply opened to him the Scripture, showing him I John 5:13. He was quite certain that he had accepted CHRIST as his personal Saviour, but he had never seen the *truth* as revealed in that verse that, "**These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.**" He knelt with me and prayed, thanking GOD for eternal life." He asked GOD to help him stand on the authority of the Word. When I left him he was still without the inner witness, but he was tenaciously clinging to the promise that he now had eternal life because in his heart he had believed on the Son of GOD.

That night in the big tent he was the first man to take my hand; and looking up into my face he said radiantly, "I **know** I am saved." He had found in five minutes that for which he had been seeking for twelve years! His neighbor's testimonies had turned his faith away from the light of the Cross and the "finished work."

Let us keep our eyes upon JESUS. He is the LIGHT of the world, and all the light of those who know Him is but reflected light, even as is that of the moon which shines only by reflected sunlight.

The experiences of some seem to be calm and restful like the deep and silent waters of a placid stream, while others seem continually to be carried from one mountaintop to another. Still others are carried upon the high tides of thrilling and intoxicating emotions. Whatever may be our joys or sorrows, standing like a beacon light on the sea of life to guide us safely to the Father's house is the Word of GOD, saying, "**I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish**" (John 10:28).

Feelings, my friends, are often deceptive; and if we depend upon them we shall be continually doubting; "**The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God**" (Romans 8:16). But let us not dictate to Him in what manner He shall speak to us.

#### 4. Seeking for Peace Through Intellectual Channels Only

Many today are endeavoring to find soul rest and GOD through merely intellectual channels. Failing to do so they either turn atheistic or agnostic and look with pitying disdain upon others who by simple faith in CHRIST and the Bible have found peace of mind and heart. They scorn all attempts of the "know-so" Christian to talk spiritual things to them, branding the man of faith as an emotionalist and saying, "*I want to see this thing through the door of reason alone.*" In saying this they merely show their ignorance of GOD's method of dealing with the souls of men. They seem entirely blind to the fact that there are two realms: the physical and the spiritual; that these go hand in hand rather than contrary to each other, and that each holds its own laws which work with absolute and assured results when set in operation.

In the material realm many experiments are made; even so in the spiritual. The science of chemistry has its own textbooks with its various formulas clearly outlined. Once a law is established we may rest upon it as authoritative; it will always work. The combination H<sub>2</sub>O will always mean water.

The science of Christianity (not Christian Science) has its own laws in the spiritual realm. It has its own textbook, the Bible, with its various formulas; and its laws are never-failing. There is the law of sowing and reaping revealed in Galatians 6:7-8: "**Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.**" There is the law of II Corinthians 5:17: "**If any man be in Christ he is a new creature.**" No man who has made this experiment according to the requirements has found it to fail. **These laws are as certain as the laws of gravitation.** The Bible declares that JESUS CHRIST is GOD's Son and that whosoever believeth in Him hath everlasting life.

Those who have tried this great experiment **have** found it workable. It is true! It is scientific! Yet the intelligentsia have closed their eyes to these great facts and are saying, "Show me spiritual truth through my own way of seeing things." They try to climb the mountains of spiritual attainment by digging in the mines of intellectual brilliance. They travel the roads of spiritual darkness and complain when the lights of learning fail to reveal to them the way. They turn to look in the opposite direction for the things that are before their very eyes. They are still "searching for truth," when what they need to do is to accept the revealed truth as it is in CHRIST. The water of life is everywhere about them yet they complain of "not a drop to drink." How true is the statement of CHRIST that the Father hath "**hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes.**" They are hidden from them because they are looking for them in the wrong places. Trying to attain the spiritual by the merely intellectual method and scorning the means of faith is like trying to run an automobile with a well-filled radiator but with an empty gasoline tank!

The Bible is very plain in its teaching along this line, declaring that "**The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned**" (I Corinthians 2:14). For, "**The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God**" (I Corinthians 1:18).

The above statements are unequivocal. The natural man does not and **cannot** appreciate the truths of the Gospel, nor the way of salvation, without conforming to their requirements. He cannot reason them out, though there is nothing in the world more reasonable than these very truths, made more reasonable as we walk in their light. Otherwise they may be as foolish to us as a chemistry formula to an African chief. "**He hath revealed them unto babes,**" is the declaration of JESUS CHRIST.

When we consider the fact that many of the greatest minds in the world bow in surrender to the truths of Christianity and feast upon the Word of CHRIST; while other minds equally as great, grope in darkness, still worshiping at the shrine of the goddess of Reason and feeding their ego upon the husks of so-called broadmindedness, we realize that it is **not because of intellectual difficulties that men do not know GOD**; but because they have failed to try the great experiment: "**If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know**" (John 17a).

## 5. Failure to Follow CHRIST

No one is quite so miserable as the person who has truly been born again, but who cherishes some favorite sin, or who, like Lot, has been led into a life of compromise by the alluring treasures of the world. Sin may not always be that which is gross and base according to the accepted standard of judgment but it may be some questionable practice or habit, or even some neglect of duty which the SPIRIT has revealed. "**He that knoweth to do good and doeth it not to him it is sin**" (James 4:17).

It will indeed be a great day for us when, at the end of life's race, we shall hear the voice of the Lord saying, "**Well done, thou good and faithful servant.**" Yet how infinitely sweet even now to have the witness within day by day, when the SPIRIT whispers, "Well done," and when there is no qualm of conscience for acts or thoughts that have grieved or quenched Him.

How many there are who rob themselves of the peace of GOD by living unsundered lives! Sin is the darkening cloud that casts the shadow of doubt over their Christian experience. For as CHRIST Himself has said, "**He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness**" (John 8:12).

The tragedy of the compromising life is not alone that it chokes the channel of faith between GOD and man through which should flow the pure stream of assurance; but as it was in the case of David, it gives the enemies of the Lord an occasion to blaspheme. Worldlings are delighted when they can find some inconsistencies in the lives of Christians, and they often magnify them to unbelievable proportions and show their own inconsistencies by offering them as excuses for the sins which they themselves commit.

Dear thinker, if you are a Christian, let me urge you to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset you (Hebrews 12:1). The precious witness of the SPIRIT within is too great a prize to lose, as is also your testimony before the world. Let us tear down every idol and in its stead enthrone the Lord JESUS CHRIST. For the glory of abiding peace shineth all about the throne where He holds absolute sway.

Canon Wilberforce, on the Isle of Skye, rugged island of the Hebrides Group, once witnessed the

strange fall and death of a golden eagle. He was first attracted to the eagle by its awkward flight, as if one pinion were broken. As he watched its frantic struggles, he wondered if it might not have been wounded, yet he had heard no shot.

Then abruptly, the eagle seemed to lose control of its wings, and a moment later came crashing to the earth and lay quivering in death at his feet.

The mystery was solved when Wilberforce saw, clutched tightly in the talons of the eagle, a live weasel, which had eaten through the flesh into the very heart, thus causing instant death.

The eagle fell and died because of the weasel to which it clung.

Dear Christian friend, you cannot afford to hold on to one single sin that may be the cause of your fall . . . Sin, if persisted in, may cause premature death: "**To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus**" (I Corinthians 5:5).

Most certainly a continuation in sin, will, after you have come to know the Lord JESUS CHRIST as your Saviour, rob you of assurance, and of fellowship with Himself.

~ end of chapter 1 ~

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