

5 Smooth Stones by D. John Richard, Christian Growth Ministries (CGM): Quezon City, Philippines, 2003 (4 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols)

The first stone --Separation from Sin

1. Our Biblical Walk

The Bible speaks of the ways in which we are to walk. To quote a few references, we are urged to walk before God and be perfect (Gen. 17:1); to walk in all His ways, that is, to listen carefully to all God says and to obey His commandments for our own good. (Deut. 10: 12); to walk in the fear of God (Neh. 5:9); to walk in the name of the Lord (Micah 4:5); to walk humbly with God (Mic. 6:8); to walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16,25); to walk circumspectly (Eph. 5:15); to walk honestly toward outsiders (1 Th. 4:12) and, in short, to walk even as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6). [Page 15]

2. Now what does covetousness do?

First, it makes us discontented with what we have. We want to live as others do.. We want to keep up with the Joneses, with our neighbors. Before long, we are striving to excel them. We forget that we brought nothing into this world and that it is certain we can carry nothing out of it.

Second, covetousness makes us lovers of our own selves. We are so much taken up with ourselves that we have no qualms of conscience about purchasing spiritual power and gifts with money, if it is possible. Simon, the sorcerer of Acts 8, is a case in point. He offered Peter and John money to buy the power of imparting the Holy Spirit to new believers. Thus he originated the sin of so many.

Third, covetousness draws us away from God's people. In 2 Timothy 4:10 Paul grieves after Demas had deserted him 'for love of the present world.' The good things of this life had drawn Demas away from the noble camp of a man like Paul. He, who was once an honored fellow worker with Paul, had succumbed to the dazzle of earth's delights.

Fourth, covetousness makes us tormentors of God's people. It happened to the owners of the damsel with the spirit of divination. (Acts 19:24, 27). It did that to Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, who for 30 pieces of silver betrayed his master. It happens even today. Countless enemies of Christ are drawn from the ranks of the covetous.

Fifth, covetousness makes us follow Jesus far ignoble I purposes. We go after Him for the sake of the loaves and fishes we can get out of Him. Using Him far the advance of self-glory becomes our primary concern. The Lord using us far the advance of His own glory is far removed from the realm of our thinking, simply because we are propelled by the spirit of covetousness.

Sixth, covetousness excludes the love of the Father. "Whoever loves the world has not the Father's love in his heart, because everything in the world, the passions of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and the proud display of life have their origin not from the Father but from the world" (1 John 2:15,16 Berkeley). James brands those who are governed by the standards of the world as God's enemies. He goes so far as to call them adulteresses, unfaithful to the Heavenly Bridegroom. "Suppose you were going down a road when suddenly it forked in two directions, and you didn't know which way to take. There at the fork in the road, you could see two persons - one dead and one alive. Of which would you inquire the way?" [Page 52]

3. Life Based on Empty Tomb

Renan, the French skeptic could not have uttered a truer statement than when he exclaimed, "You Christians live on the fragrance of an empty tomb. [Page 52]

4. The Trinity Characteristics

Father God, You are holy, loving, kind, knowing, present, unique, patient, complete, radiant, reliable, wise, able, just, sufficient, strong, stable, steadfast, secure, sovereign, creative, majestic, forgiving, available, accessible, invincible, excellent, infinite, spotless, timeless, changeless, measureless, victorious, glorious, gracious, generous, righteous, beautiful, faithful, healthful, joyful, merciful, powerful, peaceful, truthful, wonderful, great, good, mighty, responsive.

Jesus, Son of God, the Virgin's Son, the Babe of Bethlehem, the God Incarnate, the Lamb of God, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, the Lamb upon His throne, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the Lamb without a blemish and without spot, the King of the angels, the King of the nations, the King of the Church, the King of Creation, Captain of our salvation, the Author and Finisher of our faith, the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him, the Prince and Author of life, the Prince of Glory, the Prince of the Kings of the earth, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, our balm in sorrow, our stay in strife, the way, the truth and the life, our righteousness, our sure Foundation, our ever living intercessor, Guard, Guide and

Friend, the Friend of sinners, the Friend that sticks closer than a brother, Prophet, Priest and King, Merciful and Faithful High Priest, the Apostle and High Priest of our Confession, the Coming King, the Matchless King, King of love, King of peace, King of Glory, Lord of love, Lord of peace, Lord of glory, Lord of truth, Lord of the years, Lord of all the Ages, Potentate of time, Creator of the rolling spheres, Earth's Redeemer, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, the Risen Lord. My Lord and My God, the One who is alive for evermore, the Incarnate, Crucified, Resurrected, Ascended, Exalted, Interceding, Returning Savior, Jesus, Name above all names, Beautiful Savior, Glorious Lord, Emmanuel, God with us, Blessed Redeemer, Living Word, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last, Holder of the Keys of Death and Hades, the One Altogether Lovely, the Chiefest among ten thousand, the chief cornerstone, elect, precious, Head of the Church, Head above all principality and power, Mediator of the new covenant, Advocate above, Everlasting Word, the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd, the Chief Shepherd, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Door, the Good Shepherd, the Resurrection and the Life, the way, the truth and the life, the vine, the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the valley, the bright and morning star.

Holy Spirit, Great Spirit, Good Spirit, Mighty Spirit, Divine Spirit, Anointing Spirit, Gracious Comforter, Helper, Encourager, Strengthener, Stand By, Counselor, the Dew, the Dove, the Wind, the Light, the Fire, Refining Fire, Cleansing Fire, All Sacred Fire, Celestial Dove, Heavenly Wind, Advocate Within, Source of the old prophetic fire, Fountain of Life, Light and Love, Lord God the Holy Ghost, Holy Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Spirit of Adoption, Spirit of Burning, Spirit of grace, Spirit of Glory, Spirit of Light, Spirit of Life, Spirit of Love, Spirit of Faith, Breath of God, Breath of Life, Breath of Love, Love Divine, Joy Divine, Truth Divine, Power Divine, Peace Divine.

God, the Father, God, the Son, God the Holy Spirit, God One in Three, God Three in One, o Holy Triune God, o Blessed Trinity, I magnify You, exalt You, extol You, praise You, adore You, worship You, glorify You, celebrate You, love You, honor You, humble myself before You, I prostrate my heart before You, I lift up my hands unto You, I lift up my soul unto You, I lift up my voice of rejoicing unto you, Lord Jesus, I crown you as the Lord of my life this day. [Pages 63-65]