

# St. Paul's New Phrases, -- Without Sin, Without Stumbling, Without Spot, Without Offence.

by Daniel Steele

---

*St. Paul's new phrases in the New Testament convey the idea of being without sin, stumbling, spot, and offence, and how we can strive for this kind of purity through the help of the Holy Spirit.*

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 10:32, 1 Corinthians 15:58, Ephesians 1:4, 1 Timothy 6:14, James 1:27, 2 Peter 3:14

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Christian Perfection"

---

## Description

Daniel Steele preaches about the remarkable change in believers brought by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, evident through the use of strong Greek words not found in the Old Testament or Gospels to describe the heavenly glory within believers. The indwelling Spirit has the power to guard Christians from stumbling into moral failures, emphasizing the possibility of living without sin through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Steele highlights the importance of striving for spotless and blameless lives, both inwardly and outwardly, as a testimony to the transformative work of Christ in believers.

---

## Transcript

The wonderful change wrought in believers by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is very noticeable, especially to the student of the Greek Testament. Strong words not found in the Old Testament, nor in the four Gospels, are either invented by the apostles or borrowed from classical Greek, to convey an adequate conception of the heavenly glory which has come into earthen vessels.

Jude 24. One such word, *aptaistos*, "from falling," St. Jude uses in that remarkable ascription with which this brief epistle concludes. The R. V. reads. "Now unto him who is able to guard you from stumbling." This is more difficult than the A. V. inasmuch as the unsteady walker is more prone to stumble than to fall. The indwelling Spirit in his fullness can save even from stumbling.

Of course this does not signify intellectual mistakes. It is salvation from moral failures, however slight. Hence the Vulgate, the supreme standard in the Roman Catholic Church, has *sine peccato*, "without sin." This is the real significance of this adjective. Christ has sent down from heaven a personal guide, who is able to keep every Christian from the commission of sin. Let every doubter try it for himself. Satan is very busy in keeping in circulation the falsehood that freedom from sin is impracticable and impossible in this world. He who believes this lie will continue to commit sin. He will stupefy his own conscience with the idea that sin is inevitable. Soon he will begin to fight against the scriptural doctrine, "Whosoever is born of

God doth not commit sin." There is no doctrine that the devil more cordially hates than the possibility of holiness perfected this side of the grave. When he gets a Christian minister to take his view, and to advocate the necessity of sinning, he is specially well-pleased. His personal attention to that parish is no longer required. The word *aspilos* "without spot," is used four times in the New Testament; once as descriptive of Christ as a lamb without blemish, 1 Pet. 1:19, and thrice in the portrayal of Christian character. Let us look at these latter in detail.

2 Pet. 3:14, "Be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." This is the end towards which we are exhorted to make an effort. Some may object that this spotlessness is not to exist in us during our earthly probation; it is only to be found in us in the day of judgment, to which the context points. If it is found in us, then it must have been in us before death, unless we assume that it is the work of death or of some sanctifying agency after death. Neither of these last alternatives is supported by the Holy Scriptures. But the other two texts determine the time beyond all controversy. 1 Tim. 6:14, "That thou keep this commandment without spot, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is the divinely inspired charge of Paul to Timothy relating the manner of his life while in this world. God makes the same requirement of the laity as he does of the ministry. Both are to be equally pure. This is certainly indicated in our next text.

James 1:27 includes keeping ourselves "unspotted from the world" as one of the essential elements of pure religion. This seems as impossible to the man of weak faith as it would for a white-robed lady to dance among dye-tubs or tar-buckets without being smirched. But "all things are possible to him that believeth." This world needs a gospel which gives victory over sin. There are two stages of this victory. The first is deliverance from sinning. The new birth introduces the sin-sick soul into a state of triumph over actual sins, giving him the ability not to sin. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus"; that is, no consciousness of acts of willful sin. Justification saves from sinning, but not from the tendency to sin, improperly called sin, because it lacks the voluntary element essential to guilt. Controlled tendencies to sin are consistent with non-condemnation, or justification

But in these proclivities to sin, though repressed, there is peril and cause of inward strife, the flesh warring against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. When this war ends by the extinction and annihilation of the flesh as the lurking-place of the sin-principle, there is deliverance from sin also, as well as from sinning. Justification, implying regeneration, saves from sinning; entire sanctification saves from sin.

Much like this word is another used by Paul three times, and found in no other New Testament writer. This word is *aproskopos*, "without offence" "toward God and men," as in Acts 24:16. This was the kind of conscience the Apostle to the Gentiles "exercised himself to have always." He has left on record no confession of his failure to hit the high target at which he aimed. There is no doleful lamentation over crooked paths; no self-reproach for falling below his own splendid ideals. His own unoffending life gave him the vantage-ground in exhorting others to the same style of character. In Phil. 1:10 he prays "that love may abound yet more and more in perfect knowledge and all discernment, . . . that ye may be sincere and void of offence." Note that this is "against the day of Christ" (Ellicott), as a probationary preparation for the judgment, and hence it is a proof-text for entire holiness, inward and outward, this side of the grave. In 1 Cor. 10:32, Paul exhorts to unoffending conduct far beyond the realm of ethics in the domain of things morally indifferent, such as eating flesh when it might occasion a weak brother to stumble. Here he appeals to his own perfectly unselfish example as a model for the Corinthian church. "As I also in all things please all, seeking not my own advantage, but that of the many, that they may be saved."

In his first epistle to Timothy, Paul three times employs another adjective expressive of purity, found nowhere else in sacred Greek. It is *anepilaptos*, "irreproachable," or "irreprehensible," applied first to candidates for sacred orders (3:2), then to Timothy himself (6:14), and finally to the believing widows (5:7) and, by implication, to all Christians. It is a strong ethical term, implying that one is not worthy of reprehension, even if he should be reprehended by his fellow-men.

We come now to *amomatos*, "without rebuke," found only twice in the New Testament (Phil. 2:15), "that ye may be children of God without rebuke," and (2 Pet. 3:14) a text already quoted, "that ye may be found in him without spot and blameless," or without rebuke.

There is another word for unblamable, *amomios*, used by Paul three times in portraying perfect Christians. Eph. 1:4, "According as he hath chosen us [believers] in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love." Love is always the sphere in which holiness and blamelessness are found. Eph. 5:27, "That it [the church] should be holy and without blemish." Col. 1: 22, "Unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight": not merely in man's sight. who is incapable of penetrating the invisible springs of action wherein real character lies. Jude 24, R. V., "And to set you before the presence of his glory, without blemish in exceeding joy." We are not to be found faultless in some dark corner of the universe, where flaws and flecks would be unnoticed, but faultless amid the splendors of his ineffable glory. This is what divine grace as mediated by the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, is able to do for the weakest saint who perseveringly trusts in Jesus Christ, the adorable Son of God and Savior of men.

Another once-used word, *ametakinatos*, "unmovable," occurs in 1 Cor. 15:58, " that ye may be unmovable," like the granite cliff unshaken by the tornado and the tidal wave. Such vertebrate Christian men and women dwelling in houses of clay may become when "strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man."

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/daniel-steele/st-pauls-new-phrases-without-sin-without-stumbling-without-spot-without-offence/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**