

# WRITINGS OF C NORMAN BARTLETT

by C. Norman Bartlett

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*A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by C. Norman Bartlett, compiled for study and devotional reading.*

27 Chapters

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## 1.00.1. GALATIANS AND YOU

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GALATIANS AND YOU Studies in the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians by C. Norman Bartlett

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## 1.00.2. Preface to this Digital Module

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### Preface to this Digital Module

I've been using computer Bible study software since the days of MS-DOS - early 1990's. From the first time I did a "CTRL-S" maneuver, I've never cracked open a Strong's again! (And no regrets about that!) As a busy preacher, I've tried to assemble a classic research library inexpensively. Access to the free digital materials included in the Bible study software packages I used increased my study library in amazing ways. The amount of free stuff I've accumulated would have cost a small fortune. Then one day I realized that I owed a debt. So I started looking for public domain resources to convert to digital Bible study modules. Now my personal journey has come full circle: from the excitement of discovering free computer Bible software to the excitement of helping and being a blessing to others.

Thank you, Michelle, Jeremiah, Isaiah & Micah, for understanding my debt and graciously tolerating my near compulsive computer use for hours on end. Thank you, C. Norman Bartlett, for converting your studies to eternal print. Thank you, Brother Virgil Butts of BaptistBibleBelievers.com. Virgil painstakingly digitized this text. Wow! And of course - most importantly - my thanks to the Lord Jesus who saved my soul for all eternity. This Edition There have been no changes to Bartlett's work, except for the following:

1. Scripture references have been converted to Scripture hyperlinks using the "Format Scripture ToolTip."
2. A few obvious Scripture reference errors have been corrected, as well as some obvious spelling errors.
3. The copy and paste process has unfortunately removed most of the italicized print. While the words have not been changed, some of Bartlett's emphasis may be missing. It is with regret that I have not taken the time to correct this. The sense is still accurate. [By the way - would you understand this paragraph without italics? Of course!] Also, the italicizing of the foreign words have been lost. It is my hope that the reader will be able to follow the flow regardless of these flaws. They - the flaws - are mine, not Bartlett's.
4. I am quite sure my edition of Bartlett's work is rather imperfect. I pray that, nonetheless, it will be productively useful in the study of God's Word.

Finally Feel free to contact me with comments. You can reach me via e-mail at [doctordavet@gmail.com](mailto:doctordavet@gmail.com)

If you convert a classic resource to be used with eSword or TheWord, send me your work! I'd love to utilize it! Also - make sure you stop by [www.doctordavet.com](http://www.doctordavet.com) - for more digital Bible study modules. May the Lord bless you as study His word.

Dr. David S. Thomason

Florida, USA

2012

### 1.00.3. Table Of Contents

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## 1.00.4. Preface

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### Preface

Since many, even in our churches, are confused in their thinking concerning legalism and the teaching of the Scriptures about the grace of GOD, Galatians and You meets a very real need. Moreover, no method of Bible study is more fruitful than that of analyzing an entire book and letting the SPIRIT of GOD speak directly to the heart through the whole message presented on the sacred page. From a wide experience in the pastorate, in Bible conference ministry, and in the classroom, Dr. C. Norman Bartlett, member of the faculty of Moody Bible Institute, has prepared this text.

It is our prayer that each student who takes up this book may know experimentally the meaning of justification by faith, bearing the fruit of the SPIRIT by that "faith . . . which worketh by love." Then, with Paul, each one can pray from a sincere heart, "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."

William Culbertson President, Moody Bible Institute

## 1.01. Historical Background of the Epistle - Ch 1:1-10

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### Historical Background of the Epistle Ch 1:1-10 Importance of the Epistle to the Galatians

Galatians is beyond question one of the most important books in the New Testament. No other sets forth the doctrine of justification by faith so concisely or more convincingly. Most fittingly has it been called the Magna Charta of Christian Liberty. In the hands of Martin Luther and other great leaders of the movement it proved to be "the hammer of the Reformation." And the epistle has lost nothing in force and pivotal importance with the passing of subsequent generations. It remains today a citadel of the evangelical faith. Lovers of the truth still turn to it as an arsenal of proof texts for the refutation of all man-made theories of salvation by works. In this day of loose thinking on the fundamentals of the faith, we who seek to advance the cause of CHRIST do well to recharge our batteries of doctrinal conviction by a mastery of the teachings in Galatians. Who shall say that revivals of tremendous sweep and magnitude may not yet be waiting to be launched upon the tides of prayer and renewed emphasis upon the doctrine of salvation by grace alone? Who Wrote This Epistle? The authenticity of no book in the New Testament is more solidly established than that of the Epistle to the Galatians. From the earliest times no breath of suspicion has rested upon its authorship. Along with Romans and the two Corinthians letters, it stands in that group of epistles which have been accepted as indisputably Pauline by even the most radical of higher critics. No other production of Paul so reflects the whole man as does this letter. His fiery personality flashes forth in almost every sentence and phrase. The authenticity of Galatians is impregably secure.

#### Where, When, and to Whom Was Galatians Written?

While there is some disagreement among scholars on this matter, the probability is that Galatians was written from a city in Macedonia about A.D. 56.

Whether this letter was written to churches in southern or northern Galatia has been, and continues to be, a subject of warm debate. Strong arguments can be offered in favor of either position. To enter into the involved details of this problem is aside from our purpose and would not prove particularly profitable. Those of our readers who may be interested in the question are referred to a wealth of material to be found in articles in Bible dictionaries, books on New Testament Introduction, and critical commentaries. The writer of this course leans toward the northern Galatian view. But the question will perhaps never be satisfactorily settled this side of eternity. We can get firsthand information from Paul when we meet him on the other shore. In the last analysis, however, the doctrine and value of this book for us are not affected in the slightest degree by its original destination; its message is for the whole Church, regardless of time or place.

#### The Occasion for Writing Galatians

False teachers known as Judaizers had crept into these Galatian churches and were seeking to undermine the faith of the Gentile converts by insisting that they could not enter into the fullness of salvation unless in addition to their belief in CHRIST they submitted to the rite of circumcision and

other requirements of the Jewish religion. As to whether these Judaizers were sincerely but sadly mistaken Hebrew Christians, or were merely professed believers who sought to use Christianity as a cloak for the propagation of Judaism, we must leave to the judgment of the LORD. Paul, who was in a much better position than present-day commentators to know the facts in the case, was rather thoroughly convinced that they were false teachers, wolves in sheep's clothing: "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage" (Gal 2:4) and Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Php 3:2-3). The objective of the Judaizers was twofold: (1) they sought to undermine confidence in Paul as a divinely commissioned apostle on a level with the Twelve; and (2) they wanted to subvert his teaching that men were saved by faith alone. Paul wrote Galatians to defend his apostolic authority and to establish the doctrine of justification by faith upon a secure basis of Scripture and reason. It is hardly needful to say that in writing the epistle he was so inspired of GOD that his exposition of the doctrine is divinely authoritative for all time to come.

Character and Content of Galatians The style and thought of the epistle are in keeping with the end that Paul has in view. It is outstanding among the apostle's writings for its unity of purpose. As Romans is the most concise and vigorous presentation of Paul's evangel. Hewing to the line, it cuts right to the heart of the issue at stake. The phraseology sizzles with the passion of conviction. There is no mincing of words. Stern truth is not clothed in silken diction. The crisis forbids roundabout language. The Galatians must be rescued before they are swept over the brink of apostasy. The structural outline of Galatians is very simple. After the introduction, comprising the ten opening verses, the epistle falls into a threefold division as follows: personal explanation, chapters 1 and 2; doctrinal exposition, chapters 3 and 4; practical application, chapters 5 and 6. Having completed this brief preliminary survey of the background of the epistle, we are now ready to enter upon our expository studies. We take up first an interpretation of the Introduction as found in chapter 1, verses 1 to 10 exclusively.

## Introduction

### Gal 1:1-10 Salutation (Gal 1:1-3)

"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father)" In head-on collision with the false statements of the Judaizers, Paul contends that he has not been commissioned by men, has not received his instructions through human channels, but, contrariwise, has been as directly and as divinely appointed by the LORD as have any of the Twelve. Paul is concerned to defend his apostleship, not from any feeling of wounded pride, but for the sake of his readers, whose acceptance of his doctrine of justification hinges upon their confidence in his apostolic position. While the apostles continued a closed circle of men inspired of GOD and divinely invested with a unique and unparalleled authority in the Church for all time to come in matters of faith and practice, let it not be forgotten that all true ministers of JESUS CHRIST are called and equipped for their work by the LORD. For a Christian leader to forget his source of authority in CHRIST, is to forfeit his weight of authority with men.

"and God the Father who raised him from the dead." These words are freighted with profound significance. No one can read the New Testament with any degree of care and fail to note the

prominence given to the resurrection of CHRIST in the preaching and writings of the apostles. Paul in particular stresses repeatedly that in raising CHRIST from the dead GOD the FATHER vindicated His claims to deity and certified the atoning efficacy of the blood shed on Calvary. Why, then, are sinners so reluctant to let the GOD who raised CHRIST for their sins, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom 4:25) raise them from their sins: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" (Eph 2:1, Eph 2:5).

"and all the brethren which are with me." In these words Paul points to the fact that the Christians among whom he is laboring are at one with him in his presentation of the true Gospel as contrasted with any and all counterfeits. Congregations well grounded in the Word are good sounding boards for the Gospel messages of their pastors.

"unto the churches in Galatia." How desperately these fickle churches needed the truth so uncompromisingly set forth in this epistle! And there are many churches today swayed by error that just as surely require a secure anchorage in the teachings of Galatians.

"Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal 1:3). Grace may be defined as the undeserved - or perhaps we had better say, the illdeserved favor of GOD toward sinners. And let it never be forgotten that all of us who have put our trust in JESUS are but sinners saved by grace: " For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph 2:8). Keeping this fact in mind ministers to spiritual enrichment. Humility of heart heightens the sublimity of grace. Our riches in CHRIST lose much of their luster when taken for granted.

"Grace... and peace" Grace is the divine love manifesting itself to man, and peace is the state of mind resulting from a reception of that love. We must know the grace of GOD to have the peace of GOD.

"from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ." This linking of the name of the SAVIOUR with that of the FATHER on a plane of equality is very characteristic of Paul's writings and is clear proof that he believed profoundly in the full deity of CHRIST. Commendation of the True Gospel Gal 1:4 certainly gives us the Gospel in a nutshell.

"who gave himself for our sins." What a world of meaning is wrapped up in these few simple words! CHRIST was both the Priest who offered the sacrifice and the Sacrifice that was offered.

Let it never be forgotten that the value of the blood shed on Calvary rests upon the nature of the One who gave it. Unless JESUS CHRIST be indeed the very Son of GOD, His death on the Cross can avail no more than that of any one or all of the long line of heroes and martyrs through the centuries. The Cross of CHRIST is the one and only bridge of reconciliation between GOD and man.

"who gave himself." Spiritually our acquisitions wait upon our evaluations. As we experience ever sweeter joys in our friendship with JESUS, we do well to remind ourselves from time to time that CHRIST had to give Himself for us as the Author of our redemption before He could give Himself to us as the Object of our devotion.

“for our sins.” CHRIST left His glory-lit throne to save our sin-stained souls. The atonement was the reason for the incarnation: “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin” (1Jn 3:5). CHRIST gave Himself for my sins to save me from my sins. How can I, then, regardless of what the world may say, make light of my sin in the light of His Cross? Devotion to the CHRIST who died for my sin will bring forth abhorrence of the sin that put Him on the Cross.

“that he might deliver us from this present evil world.” By “this present evil world” the apostle means the world system arrayed against GOD and His CHRIST, the spirit of the age that is no friend to grace: “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph 2:2). Deliverance suggests, of course, a bondage from which men need to be freed. Those out of CHRIST are in subjection to the world, the flesh and the devil. It is a master strategy of Satan, however, to keep men ignorant of their enslaved condition and of their need of a SAVIOUR: “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2Co 4:4). In passing, it might be observed that the enlightenment of the modern mind that rejects the message of salvation is nothing but the old-fashioned “endarkenment” of the sinful heart. Scoffing at the reality and enormity of sin, men are blissfully unmindful of the fact that to deny the iniquity of sin is but to prolong their captivity to sin. Oh, that they would wake up to their desperate plight! The cost to CHRIST of redemption from sin appallingly emphasizes the cost to men of persistence in sin; for it is inconceivable that GOD would have allowed His only begotten Son to suffer and die for sin upon the Cross of Calvary were there any other road to salvation.

“that he might deliver us from this present evil world.” In addition to their solemn import for the unregenerate, these words are susceptible of a most pertinent application to the hearts and lives of Christians. Particularly do they suggest the believer’s attitude toward the world. We who have been redeemed by the precious blood of JESUS should view the world from a twofold standpoint, namely, (1) from the standpoint of what the world did to CHRIST, and (2) from the standpoint of what CHRIST did for the world. The first will cause us to shrink with loathing from any participation in the sins and follies of the world that put our LORD to death; the second will kindle within our breasts a love for souls that will send us forth to win from sin those for whom CHRIST died. All this obviously involves an obligation for the followers of JESUS to lead separated lives. And yet all too many professing Christians are more absorbed in being conformed to the world than in being transformed by the LORD: “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Rom 12:2). Be not caught in what ought to be fought: “No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2Ti 2:4). May we suggest this for a slogan for the Christian life, a guiding star in our service for the Master?

“according to the will of God and our Father.” These meaningful words should serve to correct a widely prevalent misconception with regard to the atonement. There are those who speak and write as if CHRIST had to die in order to make GOD love and want to save sinners.

There never was, however, and never can be, any conflict of will in the Godhead. All three Persons in the Trinity are one in the purpose and plan of salvation, although each one has His own peculiar office and function in connection with redeeming sinners. The GOD whose justice demanded an eternal penalty for sin is one and the same GOD whose mercy provided an eternal remedy for sin. JESUS did not die in order that GOD might love sinners, but because He did love them: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). What clouds of misunderstanding gathering about the Cross would be dissolved were these simple facts but kept in mind!

"to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." As the apostle contemplates the wonder of God's redeeming love in CHRIST, his overflowing heart bursts forth into a doxology, a song of praise to GOD. How is it with us? Are we not all too prone to take grace for granted? Do we bow humbly and gratefully as we ought in adoration of the GOD of infinite mercy? While our worship does not, and of course, cannot, add one tiniest ray to the ineffable glory of GOD, it does bring immeasurable blessing into our own lives by opening our hearts, like flowers in the sunlight, to the riches of grace that GOD waits to shower upon us. We absorb what we adore; we appropriate what we appreciate; and we are enriched by what we revere. Ennoblement of spirit is enablement for service.

Condemnation of the False Gospel (Gal 1:6-10) Paul turns in these verses from a commendation of the Gospel of grace to a condemnation of the gospel of works.

"I marvel!" The apostle's soul is a seething caldron of wonder, horror and anger as he beholds his Galatian converts being swept from their moorings by a legalism that contradicts and nullifies all that CHRIST died to procure for them. Oh, that we were more concerned over the perils of souls yielding to the deceitful snares of any form of works-righteousness!

"that ye are so soon removed." While the Galatians have not gone over bag and baggage in to the apostasy, they are giving such quick and ready ear to the false teaching of the Judaizers that a wholesale desertion of the faith is alarmingly imminent.

"removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." The apostle is at a loss to understand what possible attraction this false gospel can have for his readers if they have ever been really gripped by the truth and grace of CHRIST. And we find in our own day all too many professing Christians who are "carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph 4:14). A faith feebly held is lightly dropped. How can these who have drunk deeply of JESUS and His love think even for a moment of turning from Him to the broken and empty cisterns of legalism (Jer 2:13)? Deceivers would make less spoil of the faith if believers found more spoil in it. Doubt preys on him who does not pray to GOD; for prayer keeps the verities of the faith fresh and green in our experience. There would be less falling from the LORD if there were more calling on the LORD. It will be noted that the apostasy is described as from a Person rather than from a doctrine. This is deeply significant; it attaches the stigma of ingratitude to backsliding. Disgrace lies in forsaking His grace. A deepened love for our SAVIOUR will result in a strengthened hold on His doctrine. Let us prayerfully ask ourselves this pertinent question: Would there not be less wandering from the truth of JESUS if there were more wondering at the love of JESUS?

“which is not another.” There is but one Gospel; all others are counterfeits. Man has no substitute for God’s Substitute. Substitution for the Gospel is opposition to the Gospel. If only men could be brought to see this!

“but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ.” We may rest assured that any and all so-called improvements of the Gospel are deadly perversions of it - and no perversion of the Gospel can produce the conversion of a sinner. A revolutionized gospel is not a revolutionizing gospel. To add to it is to take from it. Wet gun-powder fires no shots.

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you... let him be accursed.” The apostle seeks to drive home to his readers that the controversy is not between one teacher and another, but between truth and falsehood. Men are too easily lured from the Gospel by the brilliant reputations enjoyed by false teachers. Changing the label does not alter the contents of the bottle; poison remains poison. No man is as great as the Gospel he proclaims or perverts. Men do not give authority to the truth; truth gives authority to men. The glamour of a name is powerless to change the nature of a truth. Beware the false humility that shrinks from opposing the authority of the critic with the authority of the Bible. Alas, if we dread the scorn of scholars more than we love the souls of sinners!

“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Gal 1:10). Paul is saying in effect that, while in the past, before he knew JESUS, he may have trimmed his sails to the breeze of popular acclaim, he now has but one aim in life, and that is to please CHRIST to whom he owes complete and undivided allegiance. We who bear the name of JESUS need to learn that the surest way to lose the favor of the LORD is to seek the favor of the world. Whom we seek to please shows who pleases us. The more CHRIST pleases, the more earnestly shall we seek to please Him in all we say and do and think: “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Col 3:17). The deeper and sweeter our communion with JESUS, the more repellent is any suggestion of compromise with sin or conformity to a world that is at enmity with GOD.

“If I pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.” Men will never be transformed by the gospel that is cut to the style of the time or the tastes of the crowd. Steer clear of a diluted gospel that flatters the pride of men. Souls that want to be flattered need to be flattened. Let us not think to advance the cause of CHRIST by whittling down the truth. When tempted to tone down our message to the whims of men, let us tune up our message to the Word of CHRIST.

\*\*\* What do I believe the author means by a “diluted Gospel?”

Simply, it is a Gospel that substitutes the eternal blood of Calvary, shed for us for the remission of our sins - and continually applied to the mercy seat in the Heavenly temple for our intercession is replaced with something else. The worse case of dilution is to replace the blood with water. To go to a bloodless sacrifice, a symbolic sacrifice - for it is only the blood that can save the lost soul - and not the water of a baptismal fountain.

Paul is dealing with Judaizers that sought to force circumcision upon grace as an addition to the work of CHRIST - today, unregenerate teachers seek to substitute the baptistry for the rite of circumcision - but hear what the apostle has stated so clearly, “In whom also ye are circumcised

with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Col 2:11-12), where we are shown that circumcision was a spiritual cutting away of our sins, and then linking it to baptism in such a way as to continue the thought of its symbolic nature; for it pictures our death, burial and resurrection in JESUS CHRIST at the instant of our salvation.

## 1.02. Personal Explanation - Ch 1:11-24

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### Personal Explanation - Ch 1:11-24 Revelation from JESUS

#### Gal 1:11-24

Passing from the Introduction, we come now to the first of the three main divisions of the epistle, 1:11-2:21. In this section we find Paul defending his apostleship on two fronts. He first shows that he has received his Gospel and commission to proclaim it directly from the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself. Then he proceeds to make clear that, far from preaching a message and carrying on a work at variance with the views and policies of the church at Jerusalem, as was charged by the false teachers, he had, on the contrary, been granted the fullest endorsement of his ministry by the apostolic council held in that church to settle the issue of the status of the Gentile converts (Gal 2:1-21).

Pursuing the first of the two above mentioned lines of defense, the apostle unfolds to his readers, in Gal 1:11-24, that the revelation from JESUS CHRIST had been made known to him (Gal 1:11-12), in him (Gal 1:13-17), and through him (Gal 1:18-24).

#### Revelation from JESUS to Paul (Gal 1:11-12)

“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man” (Gal 1:11). In the expression, “the gospel which was preached of men,” Paul has particularly in mind those distinctive principles which were just the opposite of the teachings of the errorists - such principles as freedom from the bondage of the law and justification by faith entirely apart from works. The apostle assures his readers that this Gospel which he made known to them while in their midst was “not, as to its nature, human” (K.S. Wuest). In short, he certifies its divine origin.

“Certify” is a word of potency. We buy with confidence food and drug products bearing this label. There are times when, as in the purchase of a home, for example, an ordinary check will not be accepted in payment; it must be certified. And yet how easily men and women who pride themselves upon their shrewdness in business matters are taken in by all sorts of fantasticisms and vagaries in the realm of religion. With eternal destiny hanging in the balance, it is assuredly the most arrant folly to accept a so-called gospel which is not divinely accredited.

“For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal 1:12). In the words, “by the revelation of Jesus Christ,” the apostle is referring, not to the appearance of the LORD to him on the road to Damascus - although that, of course, is necessarily involved - but to the communication of the Gospel to him by none other than the LORD JESUS, in its basic features or structural framework at the time of his conversion, and in fuller details afterwards. While obviously none of us today are, or can be, the recipients of revelation as were Paul and the other writers of the New Testament, let us never waver in our conviction that the Word of Life entrusted to us to make known to the world is the truth of GOD and not a dream of man. What we believe of the Gospel governs what we achieve with it. We must have a conviction

of authority to witness with the authority of conviction. If we are going after men with a gospel that is "after man," we may as well turn back before we get started.

It may not be out of place, while we are still on this subject of the apostle's independence of human authority, to add one or two further observations. We make a very serious mistake if we construe Gal 1:12 as affording Scriptural warrant for little or no training for the ministry or for lowering the educational requirements for ordination. Revelation closed with the Apostolic Age. The young man or woman called of the LORD into full-time Christian service today needs and should seek the best scholastic preparation obtainable; but let it be under teachers who, in addition to their scholarship and intellectual competence, have a firm and deep-rooted belief in the Bible as the authoritative and inerrant Word of GOD. Teachers of the Word should be learners on the Word. There is in our day altogether too much wresting of Scripture instead of a resting on Scripture.

Revelation from JESUS in Paul (Gal 1:13-17)

"For ye have heard of my conversation (manner of life) in time past in the Jews' religion." The apostle in Gal 1:13-14 takes occasion to remind his readers of his course of life prior to his conversion, a career marked by brilliant promise of advancement and by intense zeal for the religion of the fathers. What he thus writes of his prospects as a future leader in the religious life of his own people is not an overstatement but an understatement of facts; for, in the opinion of not a few scholars best qualified to pass judgment, Paul possessed the greatest mind of his generation and could undoubtedly have risen to the loftiest heights of eminence in any one of several fields he might have chosen to enter. Be that as it may, when Paul, praised to the skies by his religious contemporaries in Judaism, met JESUS face to face on the road to Damascus, he was shocked into an awareness of the fact that the commendation of men was no insurance against the condemnation of GOD - a salutary consideration that may well be taken to heart by highly gifted but Christless leaders in our own time.

"how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it." Although freely forgiven by the mercy of GOD, Paul could never forgive himself for the havoc he had wrought in the Church by his ruthless persecution of believers in those bitter years before he was brought to know the LORD. What would he not have given to undo the damage thus inflicted! These painful memories cost him many a sleepless night and kept him ever a humble suppliant at the throne of grace. Oh, yes, Paul had been thoroughly sincere in his attacks on Christianity - and also, be it said, terribly misled by the devil. Sincerity of conscience and security in JESUS may be as far apart as the east is from the west. It is more than likely that our LORD may have had Paul in mind when in the midst of His farewell discourse He said to His disciples, "Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2).

"being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." In using this expression, "the traditions of my fathers," the apostle had reference, not to the Mosaic law as found in the Pentateuch, but to the hedge of more than six hundred human commandments which the old rabbis had built around the law for purposes, as they thought, of protection. Paul's violence against the Christians was so excessive largely because in his mind the growth of the Church would sound the death knell of the Pharisaism to which he was so fanatically devoted. And who shall say that his fears were wholly groundless? There are man-made systems today, respectable enough in

themselves, that are as far removed from evangelical Christianity as was Pharisaism of old, and that command the loyalty of countless devoted adherents. We need not enlarge upon the lamentable fact that there are hosts of people today who would rather win the favor of the world through holding to the traditions of men than seek the mercy of the LORD through contrition for sin at the foot of the Cross. How tragically shortsighted to be more concerned about one's standing with men than with GOD.

"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace." From the vantage point of his new life, Paul could see how even from birth he had been ordained of GOD for the work of his apostleship to the Gentiles; and he was brought to realize, furthermore, that through all the circumstances of his life, not excluding his fierce warfare against the Church, the LORD had been ruling and overruling in the furtherance of that ultimate objective. GOD will not be thwarted. His plans come to fruition despite all opposition.

He makes even the wrath of man to praise Him (Psa 76:10). It behooves each of us to know and do God's will for his or her life. Disobedience ensures failure. To spurn His appointment is to meet disappointment. If GOD wants you for His service, do not turn a deaf ear to that call. We must be in the center of His will to draw on the treasures of His grace.

"to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen." Note the words "his Son." GOD revealed to Paul a CHRIST who was His Son. In the Gospel records we find three occasions when GOD witnessed to the divine Sonship of JESUS, namely, at the baptism (Mat 3:17), at the transfiguration (Mat 17:5), and at the visit of the Greeks on Tuesday of Passion Week (John 12:28). And yet there are men who have the temerity and effrontery to pay more heed to the doubts of skeptics than to the Father's testimony with regard to the nature of CHRIST's person. We follow a Christ of man's contrivance when we strip the crown of deity from the brow of JESUS: "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1Jn 4:3).

"to reveal his Son in me." It is to be borne in mind that not only was CHRIST revealed to Paul at the time of the risen Saviour's appearance to him on the road to Damascus; but He also revealed in Paul through the ministration of the HOLY SPIRIT. And this twofold revelation, the object and the subjective, was to the end that through Paul the LORD JESUS might be made known to the heathen, that is to say, to the Gentiles among whom the apostle was called to labor. This triple manifestation of the SAVIOUR is of the very essence of an effective Gospel witness in any time or place.

Let us showing of stereopticon pictures serve as a suggestive analogy of the process. The slide is put into the lantern where it is made translucent by the light in the machine, so that the picture on the slide may be flashed upon the screen for the people in the room to see. Even so, the revelation of GOD in CHRIST must be objectively presented to us through the written or spoken word or through some other external medium; but this objective presentation will be ineffective apart from the inward illumination by the SPIRIT: "But 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" (1Co 2:14) and "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any many have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom 8:9). Then

and only then can CHRIST be seen in us by those with whom we associate from day to day.

“Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.” Paul mentions this fact to indicate that there was no need for him to submit his commission from CHRIST to any man or group of men for their endorsement. This has some bearing upon the proper reaction of the young man or woman today who feels called of the LORD into full-time Christian service. While all due weight should be given to the opinions of those who seem best qualified to offer advice, care must be taken lest the still, small voice of JESUS be drowned in a din of human counsels. In the last analysis the final decision as to one’s life work is a matter to be settled between the LORD and the individual immediately concerned. Never let what people think the LORD wants you to do stand in the way of what the LORD tells you He wants you to be and do.

“Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus” (Gal 1:17). Continuing to emphasize his independence of the Twelve, Paul states that, instead of going up to Jerusalem to confer with the apostles, he went into Arabia. How long he remained there we have no way of knowing, but it must have been at least a year. There can, however, be little question as to the purpose of this retreat. Following the revolutionary upset in his way of thinking and his whole outlook upon life, brought about by his conversion on the Damascus road, Paul felt himself in desperate need of a protracted period of seclusion for prayer and meditation. He required uninterested leisure for formulating and organizing the materials of the message he was commissioned to carry to the Gentiles. It was not in the make-up of the apostle to go forth until he was prepared to proclaim the Gospel. And we may be sure that during the weeks and months of his retirement in Arabia he received more than one special revelation from his new-found LORD and SAVIOUR. An ever deepening communion with JESUS CHRIST was the all-important consideration. Conferences with church leaders could wait until later, and even then they would have no binding authority upon him.

All this reminds us of our need as Christian workers. Do we spend enough time in secret communion with JESUS? Magnitudes of truth come to bloom in hours of solitude with GOD.

Spiritual snapshots need to be developed from negatives into finished photographs. Even our fellowships in CHRIST, however rich and sweet, can never make up for the lack of time spent in fellowship with Him. How we let Him speak to us conditions how we speak for Him.

Revelation from JESUS through Paul (Gal 1:18-24)

“Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days” (Gal 1:18). The word for “see” brings out the purely personal character of this visit.

Paul visited Peter as an equal; not by the farthest stretch of the imagination can Peter be said to have launched Paul upon his apostolic career. This is not to say, however, that Paul was not wondrously blessed in a spiritual way from his two weeks of intimate visitation with one who, in company with the other disciples, had been so close to JESUS during the years of His earthly ministry. And the warmer our love for the SAVIOUR, the sweeter will be hours spent with others “of like precious faith.” But be sure to let JESUS visit with you before you visit with Peter.

“But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother” (Gal 1:19). It is hardly needful, perhaps, to mention that James, the Lord’s brother, was not one of the twelve apostles. In

fact, it was not until after CHRIST's resurrection that James: "After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles" (1Co 15:7) or any of His brethren came to believe in JESUS. But although not an apostle in the more specialized and technical sense, James, as we gather from numerous references to him in the Book of Acts and in the epistles, was head of the mother church at Jerusalem, and in that position of leadership wielded a wide and commanding influence. Tradition reports that he was held in high repute by Christian and non-Christian Jews alike, that his knees became hard as camel's hoofs from long hours of intercessory prayer, and that he finally suffered a martyr's death.

"Now the things which I write unto you, beloved, before God, I lie not" (Gal 1:20). The apostle calls upon GOD to witness to the truthfulness of what he is writing. He is not swerved from conviction as to his divine commission by any or all of the attempts of the Judaizers to discredit him. And the true servant of JESUS CHRIST must allow no opposition whatsoever to make him lower his flags of spiritual authority as an ambassador of CHRIST. What really matters is not what men say we are, but what GOD knows we are.

"Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ: But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me" (Gal 1:21-24). And well might Paul's change from persecutor to a flaming herald of the Cross cause the churches in Judea, that had never seen his face, to glorify GOD in him. We too are to "let our lights so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven" (Mat 5:16). We are to be floodlights for the LORD - and floodlights call attention but to the object they illuminate, be it a picture, a statue, or a building. Whatever causes men to glorify GOD is worth all its costs in hardship, danger and sacrifice.

## 1.03. Personal Explanation - Ch 2:1-10

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### Personal Explanation - Ch 2:1-10 Confirmation by Council

#### Gal 2:1-10

Having established the fact that he had received his apostleship and the Gospel he was to preach directly from the LORD JESUS Himself, Paul now turns in Gal 2:1-10 to his second line of defense, which is to show how his ministry to the Gentiles had been fully endorsed by the leaders of the mother church at Jerusalem. In this chapter we shall study some of the factors contributing to the endorsement. The student will be helped to a better understanding of the full meaning of the proceedings of the conference if, along with the passage in Galatians, he reads the fuller account contained in Acts 15:1-41. The two records supplement each other to give us a well-rounded picture of what transpired. Luke gives us an outside and Paul an inside view of the happenings.

Message explained to council (Gal 2:1-2) "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also." The facts stated in this verse are of weighty significance. It is to be borne in mind that during this period Jerusalem was the headquarters of the apostles. Denial by implication that he had been in Jerusalem since the visit with Peter mentioned in Gal 1:18 was an effective way of denying that during the intervening period he had had any communication with the Twelve.

Barnabas is mentioned to show that Paul was accompanied by one whose orthodoxy no Hebrew Christian doubted. And there can be no question that Titus was taken along to be made a test case for this whole issue of the circumcision of Gentile converts.

"And I went up by revelation." In the second verse of the fifteenth chapter of Acts we read that Paul and Barnabas, together with other delegates, were appointed by the church at Antioch to go up to Jerusalem. Is this at variance with what Paul writes? By no means. The two statements are not contradictory but are complementary. The SPIRIT, most likely in answer to earnest prayer for guidance on the part of the apostle, made it clear to Paul that the Antioch church was led of GOD in its decision to send its representatives to Jerusalem to try to effect a settlement of the matter that was playing havoc with the peace and unity of the Church: "And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question" (Acts 15:1-2). The LORD confirmed the action of the Church. Religious leaders must not be too sure that the voice of a church on any momentous question is necessarily the will of GOD. Disastrous consequences are too likely to follow in the train of assumptions which have not been checked and counterchecked by prayer.

Nor, on the other hand, can personal disinclination to fall in line with an ecclesiastical policy or plan of procedure be regarded as proof that the church is wrong and the objector right. It is more than

probable that Paul did not relish the prospect of attending and participating in what promised to be a stormy session. Why not let well enough alone? Why bear the lion in his den?

Why head into a cyclone? Discretion is the better part of valor. The trouble will lie down if given time enough to run its course. It is not at all inconceivable that Paul might thus have reasoned within himself. But the SPIRIT of GOD saw otherwise and must have revealed to the apostle that far more was involved than could be seen on the immediate horizon. The future of Christianity hung upon the outcome of the council. In going up "by revelation" Paul was able to swing the convention in favor of Gentile freedom and thus, in the providence of GOD, to save the day for Christianity as a great world religion; for, had Gentile believers been required to come into the new life by way of Jewish rites in addition to faith, it is doubtful whether the Gospel would not have shriveled up into a mere school of Jewish religious thought. With its channels choked by prejudice, the water of life, instead of swelling into a mighty river of blessing to all mankind, would have shrunk into a ting trickle of sectarian Judaism.

All this is not without a very pertinent, practical application. Again and again trifles have determined the course of Christian history. One can never know when a seemingly unimportant choice may prove to be a continental divide in the spiritual realm. How imperative it is, then, for those in the service of JESUS to follow in even the minutest details the leading of Him who knows the end from the beginning! Let us not, if we have reason to think GOD is going to ask us to do something that runs against the grain of our personal preferences, be like the small boy who makes himself scarce and gets out of earshot whenever he suspects he is going to be sent to the store. Such conduct is shortsighted and may mean the forfeiting of the opportunity to fill a strategic role in promoting the kingdom of our LORD and SAVIOUR. Revolutions for good are brought about by men and women directed by revelations from GOD in making known His will for them.

"and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles." The word "them" refers to the apostles and elders of the church. Now it is important to keep in mind that Paul did not have to explain to these pillars of the church at Jerusalem what the pure Gospel was, he simply proved to them that the Gospel which he had been proclaiming to the Gentiles was the orthodox faith held by all true believers. Alas, that so often in our day the story of the Cross has become for many who stand high in ecclesiastical affairs an idle and forgotten tale in an unknown tongue. It is but too tragically true today that the preaching of the old Gospel is sometimes the occasion for exclusion rather than for endorsement by church leaders. Pillars of the church should be holders of the truth. How carefully our mission boards ought to be not to send out to heathen lands missionaries loaded down with quack remedies of human concoction instead of the one and only message of salvation through a divine REDEEMER!"but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain." Paul was a practical man. While his head was often up in the clouds, his feet were always on the ground. He was possessed of a sanctified common sense that Christian workers of our day and age may well covet for themselves. The apostle wisely went before the leaders and officers of the church before presenting his case to the membership at large. If we are under the impression from a surface reading of the latter part of this second verse that Paul was not sure of his message, not certain of being on the right track, we should at once disabuse our minds of any such idea. Rather, he was sensible of a danger lest his work be rendered ineffectual by the opposition of the mother church at Jerusalem, and particularly by the strong disapproval of its most influential leaders. And so, as a

wise kingdom builder, he proceeded to do everything within his power to remove unnecessary hindrances to progress. The Word of Life is too precious and indispensable for its spread to be blocked by obstacles and opposition that can be avoided by the employment of a few grains of ordinary intelligence. We all too often permit willfulness and self-sufficiency to limit the circulation of the Gospel, so far as our personal ministrations are concerned. Stubbornness, masquerading as backbone and rock-ribbed conviction, has caused many a wreck on the Gospel highway. Obstructionist tactics in the work of CHRIST are unworthy.

#### Freedom Preserved at Council (Gal 2:3-6)

“But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.” We need to get the full force of this waiving of circumcision in the case of Titus. Paul was not against circumcision as such. He even permitted Timothy to be circumcised (Acts 16:3) because his mother was a Jewess. But to insist upon Jewish usages for Gentile converts would be to make them essential parts of Christianity. And this Paul would not, and could not, do. The noncircumcision of Titus was really a decision in favor of Gentile freedom from the yoke of Judaism. There may have been three parties at Jerusalem: (1) those standing for freedom; (2) those who insisted upon circumcision; and (3) those in favor of an appeasement policy, who urged the Paul should lay aside his scruples and permit Titus to be circumcised. When Paul states that Titus was not compelled to be circumcised, he is not denying the attempt at compulsion but the success of that attempt. The apostle, however, refused to compromise, for he realized that the principle of liberty in CHRIST was involved. How easy it is not to see that additions to the Gospel are subtractions from it! While the Christian leader is not to go around with a chip on his shoulder looking for controversy, he must not, when vital Christian doctrines are involved, love peace more than truth. It is true, of course, that while we are to be firm as rock in standing for principles, we are to be tolerant, ready to give and take, when the disagreement has to do only with nonessentials. But it is the LORD who is to draw for us the line between what is fundamental to the faith and what is a matter of minor consequence. Men are prone to relegate into a back corner as unimportant whatever is foreign to their own interest. Those who set little or no value upon the things of GOD will naturally consider doctrinal distinctions as a mere tempest in a teapot. Dare we yield to such indifference? Sacrifice of principle with regard to the essentials of our faith is too big a price to pay for the good will of our opponents.

“and that because of false brethren unawares brought in.” Since these false brethren could not come in the front door, they were - as someone has aptly expressed it - sneaked in the back door. Someone in those days must have taken advance lessons in the infiltration tactics of our own time! Very likely these false brethren were unsaved Jews who had, as K. S. Wuest suggests, accepted the LORD JESUS as their MESSIAH, but who knew nothing of salvation through His precious blood.

“who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage” The future tense tells us that it was not merely their intention, but that they thought they had assured hopes of success in bring the Gentile believers under the yoke of Judaism. “Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.” We may depend upon it that Satan and his minions will do everything within their power to induce believers to substitute a Gospel of works for trust in the all-sufficient merits of JESUS’ blood shed upon the Cross of Calvary. Let not the enemies of the

Gospel spike our guns by robbing us of reliance upon grace alone to save and keep us saved.

“to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour.” Paul refused to compromise. He would not hedge an inch. Too much was involved. There is in many religious quarters today altogether too strong a tendency to substitute a subjection of conscience through fear of man for a subjection to conscience through fear of GOD. Such substitution on the part of leaders jeopardizes the spiritual welfare of souls that look to them for help and guidance. Forbid that we should ever permit enemies of the faith to dictate or tamper with our message.

“But of these who seemed to be somewhat.” Appearances to the contrary, Paul is not in these words seeking to discredit the apostles and elders of the church at Jerusalem; for, as we see elsewhere, he held them in highest regard. It is probable that the Judaizers had been exalting the other apostles at the expense of Paul by virtue of their having been with JESUS during the years of our Lord’s earthly ministry. In the words, “God accepteth no man’s person,” Paul implies that not even having known CHRIST after the flesh gives the other apostles pre-eminence over him, so far as the authority of his message is concerned.

Mission Endorsed by Council (Gal 2:7-10) The apostles and other leaders at the Jerusalem council were impressed not only with Paul’s statement as to the orthodoxy of the Gospel he had been preaching to the Gentiles; they were, if possible, even more powerfully convinced, by his recital of God-wrought miracles accompanying his ministry, that the LORD had as definitely commissioned him to the Gentile apostleship as He had called the other apostles into their peculiar spheres of labor.

“But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.” It goes without saying that Paul does not mean that there are two different gospels, one for the Gentile and one for the Jew; he has reference here to the distinctive and divinely appointed fields of service. The LORD makes a key to fit the lock of every door He wants opened - and when and where. Let each and every servant of CHRIST stick to his own post of responsibility. Some Christian workers seem to labor under the delusion that they are skeleton keys the LORD can use to open whatever doors of service they may happen to want for themselves. Gate-crashing in the Lord’s work is an idle and wicked pursuit.”(for he that wrought effectually in Peter... was mighty in me toward the Gentiles.” The blessings of GOD had been resting richly upon the labors of Peter and of Paul in their respective fields in making their preaching effective, not only in the working of miracles, but also in the secret ministrations of the SPIRIT in the hearts and lives of those that received the message. And the leaders in the Jerusalem council were wise enough to interpret this fact as proof that both apostles were engaged in the special ministry to which the LORD had commissioned them.

Today, as in the first century, it is to the Lord’s interest to work effectively through instruments wholly yielded to Him. If we carelessly let ourselves get out of tune spiritually, we put our LORD in a position similar to that of an expert pianist who is asked to give a concert upon a piano half or more of whose keys are broken and out of tune.

“And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.” It is not known whether the decision to recognize Paul’s right of leadership was based on his statement of the

contents of the Gospel he preached, or on the story of how he received it, or on the recital of its results, or in part on the spirit he himself manifested at the conference. Probably all of these factors played a part in bringing about the agreement which was at the same time an acknowledgment of his apostolic authority. James, Cephas and John, "who seemed to be pillars" (as we have already indicated, this clause is not to be understood as in any sense derogatory), showed their real caliber in endorsing the work of apostles whom GOD had called into a field of service so distinctly different from their own. True pillars of the church today are boosters rather than critics of men whom GOD is manifestly using in a large way to further the name of JESUS; they are more concerned about the promotion of the Gospel than over the maintenance of their own prestige. How regrettable it is when jealousy among leaders hampers the progress of the kingdom!

"They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship." The fellowship indicated a partnership in preaching of the saving Gospel. And after all, how trivial can be the things that divide alongside of those which unite us in the Lord's work!

"Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do." Just a word or two on this verse will have to suffice. Doctrinal discussion should not blind to practical service. But let it be remembered that, while practical service should be the consequence of soundness in the faith, it cannot be a substitute for it.

## 1.04. Personal Explanation - Ch 2:11-21

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### Personal Explanation - Ch 2:11-21 Contradiction of Freedom

#### Gal 2:11-21

While it may seem to the student that in Gal 2:11-21, the portion of Galatians covered in this chapter, we have already launched out upon the great deeps of Paul's exposition of the doctrine of justification by faith, the passage really constitutes the climax of the defense of his apostleship. With a view to further refutation of the charges of the Judaizers that he did not have an equal footing with Peter and the other apostles, Paul recounts and enlarges upon his rebuke of Peter for inconsistency. Upon that occasion Paul's authority as an apostle showed to better advantage than did that of Peter. Instead of Peter's rebuking Paul - as the Judaizers no doubt would have preferred - we find Paul rebuking Peter. Nor does this occurrence fit in very well with theories of the primacy of Peter that have held sway in many quarters from that day to this. Out of fairness to Peter, however, it ought to be pointed out that his true greatness is shown in the humble spirit in which he took the rebuke and profited by it. True humility submits to correction.

**Error of Peter (Gal 2:11-14)** To get the full force of Paul's argument in verses Gal 2:15-21, we need to grasp the situation occasioning the reproof he felt called upon to administer to his highly esteemed colleague and fellow apostle. We shall try to sketch this background as clearly and briefly as possible. Peter stood condemned by the Christians of Antioch for inconsistency of conduct that was not without a mixture of cowardice and hypocrisy. For some time Peter and the other Jewish Christians had been eating with their Gentile brethren. In so doing they were acting contrary to the Mosaic law. But GOD had made clear to Peter in the vision recorded in Acts 10:9-16 that the ceremonial barriers between Jew and Gentile were abolished by the Gospel and the ushering in of the dispensation of grace. (Be sure you know the facts of Acts 10:1-48; Acts 11:1-18, together with the significance of same as presented in this chapter.) Despite this revelation of the divine will, after the arrival of certain men from Jerusalem whether official delegates from James or chance visitors is a matter of disagreement among scholars - Peter and others with him, through fear of censure, withdrew from their Gentile brethren and no longer ate with them. In doing so, Peter and Barnabas and the rest affected scruples they did not feel and lent support to a very grievous error, namely, that Hebrew Christians were under obligation to keep the Mosaic law even though the apostolic council had declared Gentile converts free from its bondage. Peter's conduct and example raised the question whether Gentile believers were to be admitted to social intercourse with Jews without conforming to Jewish institutions. But there was a still more serious phase to the problem. Peter's high authority would constrain believers from among the Gentiles to regard Judaizing as necessary for all, since Jewish Christians could not associate with Gentiles in communion without it. Thus Peter was forcing the issue of conformity to the law or disunity in the Church. The Church was being split wide open. It was a crisis that called for decisive action. No half-way measures would do. As Peter had erred and sinned publicly, it was needful for the cause of the Gospel that he be rebuked before the whole Church. The word for

“withdrew” is one employed of military strategy. Peter covered up his better knowledge as a defense against criticism. He may even have persuaded himself that this little subterfuge would work for the greater good after the agitation had quieted down a bit. But the end never justifies the means where a compromise of principle is involved. Temporizing forfeits respect for truth and right. Nothing must be allowed to jeopardize the doctrine of grace. Any weakening of the basic tenet that men are saved in no other way than through faith in CHRIST, is to imperil souls, like the melting of ice on a lake that traps the unwary to a watery grave. It is all too easy for religious leaders in the interest of ecclesiastical policy or preferment to sacrifice some of the great fundamentals of the faith. Substitution of some form of works-righteousness for the Gospel of grace is all too common in these days.

“But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel” In other words, they did not steer a straight line in relation to the Gospel; they wavered and wobbled. We are prone to try to bend the Bible into agreement with human opinion. We lack a mastery of the Word that reveals seemingly insignificant deviations from its teachings.

Unwittingly we multiply points of harmony between worldly wisdom and Gospel truth where none exist. We need keener discernment of basic differences between the Gospel and other spheres of thought and practice.

“If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles... why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” Paul’s point was well taken. And it is pertinent today. Ecclesiastical leaders are too inclined to try to force Christians of alien cultures into the mold of western Christianity, failing to distinguish between the fundamentals of the Gospel and its accidentals.

#### Freedom Through JESUS (Gal 2:15-21)

It is a bit uncertain as to whether Gal 2:15-21 are a continuation of Paul’s rebuke of Peter in the hearing of the church at Antioch or whether they constitute an enlargement for the benefit of the Galatians of what he said to Peter. The former is the more likely, for verse 14 would not be enough to convince the Galatians that he had really come to grips with Peter on the matter at issue.

“We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles...” Paul is here writing, not from the viewpoint of man’s standing before GOD, but of the Jews’ attitude toward the Gentiles.

It is often very difficult to get a hearing for the Gospel among those encased in pride of race, class or ancestry. In the sight of GOD birth is not worth. None but blood bought children are justified in God’s sight.

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.” Deliverance from the guilt and penalty of sin comes through making JESUS CHRIST the object, not the pattern, of faith. Of course, after we have found salvation in Him, we shall seek to make Him our example in a childlike trust and confidence in GOD, our heavenly FATHER. We are saved by a faith in CHRIST, we live through the faith of CHRIST.

“A man is not justified by the works of the law... for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Despite these clear statements as to the utter hopelessness of men’s saving themselves by their own good works, we find countless men and women vainly hoping to justify themselves before GOD on the basis of character building. If they had even the remotest conception of what

an infinitely holy GOD requires in the way of moral perfection, they would realize the utter futility of such efforts. They seem blissfully unaware of the ever receding horizons of what the law demands in the way of fulfillment in spirit as well as in letter (cf. Mat 5:17-48). "All have sinned" (Rom 3:23). Compared with God's standards of perfection, the gradations in moral attainments among men are like the varying elevations of hills and mountains in comparison with the inconceivably great distance of the stars from our earthly planet. For even the best of men in their natural state to measure up to what GOD calls for in the way of holiness, is tragically beyond the bounds of possibility. It is as if the star pupil in a grammar school class in arithmetic were called upon to equal the mathematical achievements of an Einstein, the penalty of failure to do so being life imprisonment or death. Yet this analogy is but a feeble suggestion of man's desperate plight apart from God's redeeming grace in CHRIST.

"even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ" In CHRIST, and in CHRIST alone, the sinner acquires by faith the righteousness that GOD requires. Even as one must endorse a blank check made out in his name before he can cash it for the amount of money he needs, so must the sinner appropriate by faith the justification made available for him by the death of JESUS upon the Cross of Calvary. Salvation by faith and dependence on works are mutually exclusive. As has already been brought forcibly to our minds in another connection, what redemption from sin has cost the SAVIOUR shows what persistence in sin will cost the sinner; for we may rest assured that GOD would not have allowed His Son to suffer such excruciating agonies of body and spirit had there been any other way of salvation.

Gal 2:16 ought to one of your memorized verses.

"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid" No wonder Paul adds the words, "God forbid" (or, literally, "May it not be thought of!") to the supposed possibility and inevitable conclusion involved in it. The very suggestion that CHRIST could ever be the minister of sin is too horrible, not to say blasphemous, even to contemplate. Nevertheless, we cannot escape the conclusion that if those who have accepted CHRIST are not justified before GOD, then the claims of JESUS were false and He has been proved a deceiver. Thus by plunging trustful sinners into the whirlpool of delusion, he would become the minister of sin. These are frightful statements; but we need occasionally to be confronted with what is involved when we make GOD a liar by questioning Scriptural teachings as to the one and only way of justification.

"For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor." For the purpose of softening the harshness without a sacrifice of directness as to the issue itself, Paul in Gal 2:18 substitutes the personal pronoun "I" for references to Peter. Sin lies, Paul says in substance, not in going from law to grace - as Peter's conduct would imply - but rather in returning from grace to law and thereby putting one's self under the law with all its penalties.

Such a stupid return from freedom by grace to the bondage of the law is like a man's going back to prison to serve out a life sentence after he has received a full and free pardon from the governor. Or, it is like stepping off a train five hundred miles short of one's destination to walk the rest of the way, even though it means missing an appointment that is a matter of life and death.

“For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.” It may be that Paul here passes from his exact words to Peter to the general purport of his argument - although we cannot be certain that such is the case. But the thought contained in the words is clear enough. To die to a thing is to cease to have any relation to it. Paul is saying that, by his acceptance of CHRIST, he has been freed from bondage to the law as a legalistic system and has entered true liberty. A man who moves across the border into another state is no longer under the law of the state in which he formerly made his residence. So the sinner who takes JESUS as his SAVIOUR passes from the condemnation of the law into the glorious liberty that is in CHRIST: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:1-2).

It is to be noted, however, that the apostle says that he is freed from the law, not that he may live in sin, but that he may live unto GOD. This is a most important point for those who hold firmly to the doctrine of justification by faith to keep ever in mind. The purpose of grace is not to give freedom to sin but to bring freedom from sin. Freed from sin, the believer is now free to live for GOD. What, then, is the purpose of the law? Anticipating in a word what will receive fuller treatment in our exposition of chapter 3, we may say that the objective of the law is to lead to CHRIST by showing man his utter need of a SAVIOUR. The law is an X-ray which reveals his sin to the sinner but does not remove the sin from the sinner.

It condemns for sin but cannot redeem from sin.

It shows the malady without affording a remedy.

Again, we might think of the law as a road that leads up to the one and only bridge over a frightful chasm that must be crossed - and that bridge is CHRIST. In CHRIST we die positionally to the sin for which He died.

“I am crucified with Christ” It is hardly necessary to say that Gal 2:20 is one of the preeminently great texts of Scripture (Memorize it!). Better, perhaps, than any single verse, it summarizes Paul’s philosophy of life. And for untold numbers of believers it has been a polestar of faith, the very essence of what CHRIST means to them. We may very profitably devote to it long hours of meditation and study. In this lesson we can but touch upon the highlights of interpretation. The fact remains that we have been crucified with CHRIST. The perfect tense expresses action begun in the past and continuing in the present. Positionally, our crucifixion with CHRIST occurred the moment we accepted Him as our LORD and SAVIOUR; but the effects of our acceptance of His finished work for us on the Cross will continue through all eternity. There is, however, an experimental, as well as a positional, aspect to our being crucified with CHRIST. Justification should issue in perfect sanctification. To realize that we are made holy in position should help us to become holy in condition. Many a Christian, however, wants to take a Pullman sleeper at justification and wake up in glorification, without covering on foot the rough intermediary road of progressive sanctification. On the other hand, not a few believers fall short of the full measure of victorious living through failure to grasp the transforming truth of identification with CHRIST; they depend upon what they can do for themselves in their own strength, instead of resting upon the finished work of their SAVIOUR.

“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.” In connection with these words, Luther makes the illuminating observation, “My physical life ‘in the flesh’ is but the mask under which lives another, namely, CHRIST, my true life.” Like deep-sea divers who, while working on the ocean’s floor, live by the oxygen pumped down to them from above, so our life in this world of time and sense is really sustained by that higher life which we live in CHRIST. The validity of faith rests upon the stability of its object. Faith in thin ice may have tragic consequences. As we have already stated in another connection, CHRIST must be the object of our faith if we are to be saved. There are many voices in our day bidding us, with a great show of wisdom, to have faith in faith, not in a theological CHRIST, in order to be saved. That is to say, our salvation lies in believing wholeheartedly in something - what that something may be is immaterial. Nonsense! As well tell a man to have faith in his own digestive system and to ignore any narrow-minded distinction between food and poison - the difference between mushrooms and toadstools is purely a matter of taste!

“who loved me, and gave himself for me.” There is need for warmly personalizing the mighty truths of the atonement. Let me not only know that CHRIST died for the world; let me feel that He loved me and gave Himself for me. It matters not how much heat there is in the central heating plant if I neglect to turn on the radiators in my own apartment. Let us open our hearts in prayer and meditation to the love of JESUS for us individually. There is the closest relationship between deepened love and strengthened faith.

“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” To attempt to earn by merit what GOD gives in mercy is to frustrate the grace of GOD, so far as our experience of it is concerned. “There is,” as K.S. Wuest puts it, “no salvation for the sinner who depends in the least upon good works as a means of acceptance with GOD.”

How important it is then for us to emphasize this in dealing with souls whom we seek to lead to CHRIST! If men could be saved by works of the law, there was no need for CHRIST to give His life a ransom for many (Mat 20:28). A man wanting to cross the Atlantic would be fit for a lunatic asylum if, instead of taking passage on an ocean liner, he insisted upon trying to beat the steamship by swimming the three thousand miles or more between New York and Liverpool. And yet his insanity would be wisdom alongside the folly of the sinner who despises the finished work of JESUS CHRIST and trusts to his own good works to get him into heaven.

## 1.05. Doctrinal Exposition - Ch 3:1-22

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Doctrinal Exposition - Ch 3:1-22 Gal 3:1-29; Gal 4:1-31 With this chapter we come to the distinctly doctrinal portion of Galatians, which comprise chapters 3 and 4. As an aid to memory, the subdivisions in our outline will be indicated by a series of phrases uniform in structure.

Continuance in Grace Enjoins In these first five verses of the third chapter, the apostle points out to his readers the folly of turning their backs upon the Gospel of grace, the truth of which had been so abundantly confirmed in their Christian experience.

“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?” In giving head to false teachers, the Galatians had, indeed, shown the grossest stupidity. That is why the apostle wrote to them, asking, “Who hath bewitched you with his evil eye of sorcery to exchange the priceless Gospel of grace for a worthless gospel of works?” We need not enlarge upon the need for driving this pointed interrogation home to the hearts and minds of people today. Many unstable folk are fairly begging for a ride in every newfangled substitute for the Gospel that comes along. Almost every day we hear that gullible victims are being swindled out of funds by smooth-spoken crooks who induce them to invest in worthless enterprises. Put no trust in anyone who seeks to lure you away from a simple reliance upon your all-sufficient SAVIOUR. It cannot be insisted upon too strongly that subjection to works is rejection of grace. Self-righteousness is spiritually fatal. He who turns his back upon CHRIST as his one and only Mediator with GOD loses everything.

“Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you.” The tense of this phrase brings out the thought that CHRIST has been crucified but is now glorified. In the words, “evidently set forth,” Paul reminds his readers that the message of the Cross was set forth in their midst so vividly and clearly that those who reject its saving truth are left without excuse. Never let it be forgotten that it was through His death on Calvary that JESUS has become our living LORD. Regardless of how many fulsome tributes of praise we bestow on CHRIST as the matchless Teacher, Leader and moral Example for men to follow, we dishonor Him if we refuse to acknowledge Him as the Son of GOD who died for sinners. The CHRIST glorified is the CHRIST crucified. The One to be lifted up by us must be the One lifted up for us and for all who will put their trust in Him as the atoning Sacrifice: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:14-15).

“This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” This query ushers in a series of questions skillfully designed, by the honest answers evoked, to build up an indisputable argument from Christian experience in support of the thesis that men are justified by faith alone. The question immediately before us in Gal 3:2 points to the manner in which the Galatian believers had become children of GOD through the miracle of the new birth and the reception of the HOLY SPIRIT. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom 8:9). If, then, regeneration was wrought in their hearts through the mighty work of GOD in response to their simple faith in JESUS as SAVIOUR, how can there possibly be any

place for works, either alone or in addition to faith, so far as the obtaining of salvation is concerned?

“Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” Sanctification, no less than regeneration, is the work of the HOLY SPIRIT, conditioned by faith on the part of the Christians. This is a further reason why all forms of legalism should be cast out root and branch. Is it reasonable, Paul asks in effect that you can by conforming to rites and ceremonies bring to fruition that which the HOLY SPIRIT alone could initiate in your souls?

Merely to ask such a question is to answer it in the negative. What has been implanted by the SPIRIT must be unfolded in the SPIRIT. What He begins He will complete: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Php 1:6). The source of spiritual nativity points the course to spiritual maturity. The grace of continuance hinges on the continuance of grace. How stupid, having found regeneration by faith, to seek sanctification through works! As well might a navigator, after setting sail upon a swelling flood tide, deliberately run his ship aground and try to float it on dry land.

“Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.” It will minister richly to our stability and fortitude in Christian living if we get the real force of this appeal to the Galatians. In common with many other followers of CHRIST in that first century, the Galatian converts had undoubtedly been called upon to endure persecution of greater or lesser intensity in defense of their new-found faith. But, if Paul contends, addressing the Galatian Christians, this salvation could have become yours through conformity to Judaistic practices, and not by faith entirely apart from works, then you have needlessly gone through great sufferings. Again, granted that you were right and the Judaizers wrong, then, in following their counsel in substituting a gospel of works for the Gospel of grace, all the rewards you have been laying up for yourselves through your sufferings and sacrifices for the SAVIOUR: “Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you... For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works” (Mat 5:12; Mat 16:27) and “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together” (Rom 8:17) will have been forfeited. Pertinent applications to our own experience are not far to seek. Whenever we avoid bearing the cross of ridicule, reproach and persecution for JESUS’ sake through temporizing and conformity to popular forms of works-righteousness, we neutralize our past witness and limit our future rewards. Why sell cheap what has cost us dear in the way of reproach for the name of CHRIST? Furthermore, GOD may even be using the fires of present affliction for the SAVIOUR for the forging of stronger anchors of conviction in days to come. The more we suffer for our faith, the more precious does it become to us, and the less likely shall we be, under future pressure from legalistic quarters to exchange our faith in Christ for any form of works-righteousness.

“He... that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” And now the apostle offers the fact of miracles wrought in their midst in response to faith as further evidence that justification must be by faith and entirely apart from works, is it conceivable that faith should have proved in their experience to be the key to birth in CHRIST, growth in grace and works for GOD? Nor must we of today ever forget that faith in works and works of faith are mutually exclusive.

Inheritance of Faith Explained (Gal 3:6-9) In this and the succeeding subdivisions of the material covered in our chapter, we find Paul bringing in Abraham as the classic example from Old Testament history of the great principle of justification by faith. In connection with this study of Gal 3:6-22 read very carefully the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans where this subject is treated at greater length.

“Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” (Read Gen 12:1-3; Gen 13:14-18; Gen 15:1-21; cf. Gen 15:6 with Rom 4:3; Gal 3:6; Jas 2:23. Memorize Gal 3:6). When it is said that Abraham believed GOD, what is meant is his personal trust in GOD, his acceptance of God's Word absolutely, simply because it was His Word. This famous verse (Gal 3:6) was first recorded in the chapter which tells of God's covenant with Abraham. The patriarch believed that GOD would give him the promised son, through whom the nation should come which would give to the world the promised Redeemer. Such belief implied confidence in the faithfulness and ability of GOD to keep His promises, and so it was faith in the fullest sense. It is to be noted, however, that faith is the condition, not the ground, of acceptance with GOD.

It is simply the hand that seizes the life preserver thrown to a drowning man.

It is the channel through which flows the grace that transforms deserts into gardens.

It is reckoned as righteousness because it alone makes a man the recipient of the one and only kind of righteousness that GOD can value as such. In no other way than through faith in JESUS is it possible for the sinner to acquire the righteousness that GOD requires. Many a man is destined to be cruelly and eternally disillusioned when he appears at the judgment bar of GOD laden with the worthless stock of his own self-righteousness.

“Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham... So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” These words of the apostle may very likely be in reply to a charge of the Judaizers that only those who were circumcised could participate in the Messianic blessings. It is far otherwise, however, Paul writes in substance, since faith puts all who believe in JESUS in the line of spiritual descent from Abraham. And this he insists upon, despite the fact that many Jews counted upon their racial descent from Abraham in the flesh to guarantee them against all condemnation and to procure for them eternal blessings, irrespective of the kind of life they might be living. Circumcision was commonly regarded as affording immunity from penalty. In these assumptions, the Jews overlooked two basic facts, namely, that birth is not worth, and that rites do not in themselves confer rights. And we must keep ever in view that it is faith alone which saves. Forms without truth are plates without food. They are empty words without meaning and value.

It was imperative that the Galatians be brought to see that by faith alone they could enter into the spiritual inheritance of Abraham. And yet even down to our own day the fallacy of works has continued to rob multitudes of the legacy of faith. The heritage of eternal life becomes ours only as we accept CHRIST by faith. No man is made right with GOD by a man-made rite.

Read again Gen 12:1-3, from which passage the quotation in Gal 3:8 is taken, “in thee shall all nations be blessed.” In this promise that the SAVIOUR should come through the family of Abraham - Paul tells us in Gal 3:8 - GOD “preached... the gospel unto Abraham.”

Deliverance from Wrath Procured (Gal 3:10-14) "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." In Deu 27:15-26, we have the basis for Paul's statement that to be under the works of the law is to be under the curse of the law. The law knows no mercy.

- it tolerates not the slightest deviation from its unyielding demands.

- it exacts the full penalty for every ting transgression.

- it ever condemns and never condones.

- it confronts men like a sheer perpendicular cliff towering thousands of feet into the air, with the demand that men scale it or die in the attempt. Trapped on a ledge, as all men will be sooner or later, there is no way of deliverance save through the grace of GOD. That no man can possibly keep the whole law is self-evident from experience and observation; moreover, it is clearly taught in Scripture. He that breaks the law at even one point is guilty of all (Jas 2:10). A chain, however long it may be, needs to have but one link break to be rendered useless. Even though a man live right on the border line, he is still under the laws of the state in which his house stands, "So near, and yet so far!" he might well say, if the state just across the street from his house were tax-free, while he himself was being taxed beyond all endurance.

Need we make the application?

"The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them." Man might live by the law if he could perfectly keep the law; but the point is, no man ever has met, and no man ever can meet, these conditions. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23); consequently, if man is to live and not die, he must find life through the grace of GOD. The only escape from the penalty of the law - referring to the illustration at the close of the preceding paragraph - is for him to step across the line into the state of grace. Once that step of faith is taken, the law has absolutely no more claim upon him (Rom 8:1).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." CHRIST became a curse for us to remove the curse from us. GOD made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us (2Co 5:21). (Memorize Gal 3:13 and 2Co 5:21). It is so easy for us to repeat these words; but do we even begin to grasp their tremendous and solemnizing meaning?

CHRIST bore the full penalty of sin in our behalf.

- He paid the debt to the full penalty of sin in our behalf.

- He paid the debt to set us free. As JESUS hung on the Cross for us, the FATHER beheld the innocent SAVIOUR through the sinner, that for all time to come He might be able to view the penitent sinner through the SAVIOUR. The wrath of GOD fell upon our adorable LORD when He became our Sin bearer, even though He was never more the object of God's love than when on the Cross He was accomplishing the very work that He came to do in fulfillment of the eternal counsel of the Triune GOD (Rev 13:8). When JESUS cried out in those awful words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was then that He tasted death for us and went through the very pains of hell in our behalf.

“That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” Two gracious purposes of the Redeemer are coupled together: (1) the extension of blessing to Gentiles as well as Jews: and (2) the outpouring of the SPIRIT upon those who embrace the faith of CHRIST. There can never be an experience of the Kingdom of CHRIST in the hearts and lives of men, apart from an enduement of the SPIRIT. The question is, Are we willing to pay the price in prayer and obedience to procure the fullness of the Spirit’s power which it cost JESUS the Cross to make available for us?

**Integrity of GOD Displayed (Gal 3:15-22)** In Gal 3:15-22 of this third chapter, the apostle proceeds to show that, contrary to what at first might be thought, the promise to Abraham was by no means annulled in the giving of the law, with all the penalties attached thereto.

**Promise of CHRIST (Gal 3:15-18)**

“And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” Had the inheritance been made conditional on obedience to the law given four hundred and thirty years after the covenant made with Abraham, the previous promise would have been thereby invalidated. The promise was not an undertaking based on terms of mutual agreement. GOD Himself took the initiative. It was a spontaneous offer on His part. Far from being a contract between equals, it was a free and unmerited outpouring of divine mercy. If works of the law were to play any part in justification, that would annul the Abrahamic covenant and would make invalid God’s promise concerning CHRIST. The law given later could not set at naught the promise given earlier. The integrity of GOD was at stake. It is important that we see this. The principle of the self-consistency and honor of GOD is not without a forceful bearing upon our own experiences and attitudes. We should be willing to stake everything on the conviction and assurance that GOD cannot deny Himself. All apparent contradictions are reconciled in the truth. The clouds that obscure do not destroy the summit where all the slopes of the mountain come to a peak. GOD cannot be untrue to His own nature. He is bound to keep His Word. Therefore, test GOD by Himself. Compare Scripture with Scripture. Find in CHRIST the master key to the Book. He is the answer to every question pertaining to eternity. In Him is the solution to every enigmatic “X” in the universe (Col 1:17; Col 2:3).

We must never for a moment lose sight of the fact that we become heirs of promise only as we yield our hearts to JESUS and thus enter into vital union with the One in and through whom the promise is fulfilled.

**Purpose of law (Gal 3:19-22)**

“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.” This verse marks the law as supplementary and hence subordinate to the promise. Weymouth tells us that the law was “imposed later on for the sake of defining sin.” The law magnified Israel’s sin and pressed upon them the need of a SAVIOUR. The law was given to reveal sin, not to remove it. As someone has put it, the mirror which shows one that his face is dirty does not wash it for him.

“But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” In a day when there is much foggy thinking on the relation between

law and grace, we need to understand clearly that the law and the promise are not in conflict because they have entirely different functions to fulfill. Sin necessitated the law; grace precipitated the Cross. The law was a supplement to, not a contradiction of, the covenant.

- the law revealed the need, and the Cross produced the way, of salvation.

- the law was a plowing for the seed, not a planting of the seed.

Conviction of sin by the law is a far different thing from the production of life through the CHRIST in whom alone we can be made children of GOD and heirs of the promise.

## 1.06. Doctrinal Exposition - Ch 3:23-4:7

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Doctrinal Exposition - Ch 3:23-4:7 Gal 3:1-29; Gal 4:1-31 Maturity in CHRIST Acquired (Gal 3:23-29) In the portion of Galatians to be covered in this chapter, the apostle shows first how with the coming of CHRIST the dispensation of law has given way to that of grace (Gal 3:23-29), and then enlarges upon the wonderful privileges that belong to those who have become children of GOD through faith in the Redeemer (Gal 4:1-7).

Preparation for CHRIST (Gal 3:23-24)

“But before faith came, we were kept under the law.” Paul refers here, not to faith on the part of the individual believer as a subjective experience, but rather to the coming and spread of the Gospel. Prior to the advent of the SAVIOUR the Jews were, in the picturesque “kept under the law” and “shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.” The illustration is that of prisoners guarded by a jailer “kept in ward” until the time comes for handing them over to a higher authority. The law was standing guard over its subjects, preventing sinners from escaping into some kind of illusive freedom which in the nature of the case could be nothing more than a mirage. The Mosaic law served but to prepare and discipline men for the new order of grace. It brought condemnation for sin, but was powerless to affect deliverance from its relentless grip. There are many calling themselves Christians today who do not seem to have to any real understanding as to the relation of law to grace. They appear still to think that works have some part, if not in procuring, at least in preserving, their salvation. There are still others who spurn the grace made manifest and available in the blood of JESUS and seek to earn a passage to heaven by their own righteousness. They err most grievously who make the law, which GOD designed as a preparation for the Gospel, to be a substitute for the Gospel. The law might be likened to a police officer, while GOD is the Judge who Himself in the person of His Son pays the infinite penalty He imposes.

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” The word “schoolmaster” speaks of a “pedagogos”, a slave, usually of very superior caliber, who had charge of a boy in a wealthy home from the age of six up to about sixteen. He was charged with the responsibility of supervising the boy continually in all matters pertaining to his physical and moral well-being. As Findlay put it, “In his food, his clothes, his play, his walk - at every point - the pedagogue was required to wait upon his young charge and to control his movement.” This figure of the pedagogue, then, represents the childish and undeveloped state of those living under the dispensation of the law as compared with those who were to become sons of GOD through faith after the ushering in of the age of grace. The law gave instruction concerning CHRIST, showed the need of CHRIST, operated until CHRIST came; but it could not justify.

Culmination in CHRIST (Gal 3:25-27)

“But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” Since even Jews are not any longer under the law, it is absurd, Paul argues in effect, to try to fasten its shackles upon believing Gentiles. The coming of faith mentioned in this verse has to do with the appearance of the Gospel

as a historic event; it does not refer to the subject experience of faith on the part of believers. Nevertheless, it must be ever kept in mind that the faith which has come into the world must become a faith in the soul to be the medium of salvation. The powerhouse sends its currents of electricity only into the homes that are wired for it. Even so faith wires the soul for "the faith." Putting the same truth another way, "the faith" is the bridge that CHRIST by His death on Calvary has built across the gulf which sin has dug between GOD and man. "My faith" steps across that bridge from bondage into freedom, from death to life. What we believe governs what we receive. Apart from appropriating faith, justification is of no avail so far as the individual sinner is concerned.

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." The word translated "children" speaks of sonship. It is not so much a matter of relationship as of position and privilege that Paul has in view. Regeneration makes us all sons of GOD; and as sons we are not in servitude, but we enjoy liberty and freedom in CHRIST. As those who have been made His own at the price of the precious blood of JESUS, we are the objects of God's filial favor, the recipients of eternal blessings and privileges. Our status of sonship carries with it freedom from bondage. It will be noted that in this verse the apostle makes a sudden shift from the first to the second person plural pronoun, thus indicating an extension from the Jewish to the Gentile world. He assumes their adoption into the family of GOD on the basis of their acceptance of JESUS CHRIST as LORD and SAVIOUR.

"... In Christ Jesus." While it is true that we became children or sons of GOD with all the unspeakable privileges belonging thereto the very moment we embraced JESUS CHRIST by faith, the thought of the apostle here is that we live in the faith by which we were saved, even as we live by breathing. CHRIST is the very air we breathe, the life in and by which we live. It is to be feared that many Christians fall far short of the full measure of happiness and satisfaction in JESUS because, while they cling firmly to the truth that CHRIST died for them, they have not come to a real understanding of their mystical union with the SAVIOUR whereby they live in CHRIST and CHRIST in them.

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." While the apostle has the rite of baptism in mind as the symbol of baptism by the SPIRIT, we must not forget that water baptism by itself avails nothing for salvation; it is but the outer sign - albeit a sacred one divinely ordained - of an inner change. Baptism beautifully symbolizes the believer's identification with CHRIST in His death and resurrection. We die with CHRIST to the old life of sin and rise with Him into newness of life, as is so forcefully set forth in Rom 6:3-4 : "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

We die positionally in JESUS to the sin for which He died, and in Him we enter the portals of eternal life. Baptism, furthermore, eloquently pictures forth the glorious reality of the believer's baptism by the HOLY SPIRIT into the Body of CHRIST, the church invisible. This was probably the dominant idea in the mind of Paul when he wrote these words.

"... have put on Christ." We cannot be certain what underlying illustration or metaphor Paul was thinking of when he used this expression. He may have had in mind the donning of the manly toga

which marked the high point in the birthday festivities celebrating a Roman youth's entrance upon manhood's estate. Or, perhaps more likely, the custom of candidates for baptism in putting on new, white robes at the time of the observance of this ordinance may have suggested the apostle's picturesque phraseology. Again, he may have had in view the use of a signet ring that entitled its wearer to all sorts of special favors and rights. But whatever the metaphor behind them, the words "have put on Christ" are freighted with precious and sacred significance. Alas, for any who have "put on Christ" hypocritically, or in mere pretense. Such falsity invites frightful condemnation. When we "put on Christ" sincerely and in faith, we are clothed in His imputed righteousness; we enter upon a new life as children of GOD; we are arrayed invincibly in the invulnerable armor of light, even CHRIST JESUS Himself: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom 13:12-14). In connection with advertising by clothiers and dressmakers, we are constantly informed as to "what the well-dressed student will wear," "what the well-dressed society woman will wear." Is it not time more earnest thought were given to what the well-dressed Christian will wear? The only raiment worthy of a born-again child of GOD is the imputed righteousness of JESUS CHRIST, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1Co 1:30). Why do so many professed Christians seem ashamed to appear in public arrayed in these spiritual garments, beside which all the costliest apparel of royalty is but tawdry rags? Imagine a young woman recently engaged covering a costly diamond ring with a bandage every time she went out in the evening for fear some of her friends might see it! And yet many a professed follower of CHRIST is ashamed to wear the name of JESUS in public! Chosen by the King, and afraid to own Him!

Unification in CHRIST (Gal 3:28-29)

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." In CHRIST, Paul says, all distinctions of race and state and sex are abolished. That is to say, while such differences do obtain on the surface, they are lost in that deeper and eternal unity whereby all who believe in JESUS are one in Him. None of them is or can be a barrier to salvation or a preventive to growth in grace. In no other way than through CHRIST can men thus be brought together. He is the mightiest solvent in all time of prejudices and alienations. Would that we who claim to be followers of the Redeemer might grasp this great truth! How trivial, after all, are the accidentals that divide us in the world, as compared with the fundamentals that unite us in the LORD! This unity in CHRIST we cannot produce - it is GOD alone who has made it a reality; but we should do everything within our power to give concrete expression to it before the eyes of the world. That oneness in the SAVIOUR which it cost the Triune GOD so much to accomplish is certainly worth every sacrifice on our part to keep in good repair. Lamentable beyond words are those sinful divisions, jealousies and enmities that rend the garment of the unity of the Church.

"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

These words hark back to what Paul has unfolded at some length in verses Gal 3:6-22 of this same chapter. Through faith in CHRIST we become spiritual descendants of Abraham and heirs of

promise. Why is it that men will resort to the most desperate means to break a will for the sake of obtaining a temporal legacy, and at the same time turn a deaf ear to entreaties to yield their wills to CHRIST and thereby gain “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that faded not away, reserved in heaven” for them if they will but accept JESUS as their one and only SAVIOUR for time and eternity? (1Pe 1:4). We who are the children of promise by spiritual descent are at the same time children of promise for spiritual ascent; the most brilliant genius entering upon his chosen career does not begin to have the promise for the future possessed by the humblest follower of the LORD JESUS who has found in Him the key to eternal life and satisfactions that will unfold into ever greater fullness forever and ever. We become heirs with promise when we become heirs of heirs. And yet multitudes of men and women would rather put on airs of pride than become heirs of faith.

#### Prosperity of Sons Described - Gal 4:1-7

“Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant... Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.” In these first three verses of chapter 4, Paul draws a comparison between the position of an heir during the years of his minority and the status of Israel under the law. Until he reached the year of his majority, the rights and privileges of the heir were held in abeyance. In fact, he was as much under authority as any of his father’s slaves. The tutors referred to in the second verse were charged with watching over his person, while the governors were stewards managing his property. The father was free to appoint as many of these supervisors as he would to serve at the same time or one after another. Even so, the apostle reminds his readers, Jews and Gentiles were classed together before the coming of CHRIST as being in the childhood of the race, and as such, they had to be subjected to definite rules of order and justice as a necessary preparation for the freedom of the SPIRIT which would follow in the wake of the Gospel. By “the elements of the world” Paul means the rudimentary teachings of a non-Christian character, the elementary lessons of outward things, such as legal ordinances and various rites and ceremonies.

“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.” Doctrinally this verse is of pivotal importance. What a world of truth is packed into a few words! It is a searchlight flashed upon the incarnation. The CHRIST who came was eternally pre-existent. He was God’s Son. “Made of a woman” clearly points to His miraculous birth. How anyone can read this verse and maintain that Paul knew nothing of the virgin birth of our LORD is difficult to understand.

“Made under the law” As the preceding words bring CHRIST into relation with the human race, these bring Him into relation with the Jewish nation. He thus took upon Himself all the general obligations imposed by GOD upon mankind in the law written in their hearts (Rom 2:15), and the particular duties imposed by GOD upon the Jews in the law given at Sinai. Never must it be forgotten that unless CHRIST had met all the requirements of the law, His death on the Cross would have been devoid of all atoning efficacy.

CHRIST came “when the fullness of the time was come.” GOD does nothing prematurely. He had been preparing the world for the coming of His Son. Roman rule; Greek culture, including the universal spread of that language throughout the empire; and the Hebrew dispersion - all combined to facilitate the rapid spread of the Gospel in the first century. Students will benefit by

consulting any good Church history for an expansion of this point.

“God sent forth his Son, made of a woman...” Where can we find a clearer statement of the fact that CHRIST was both divine and human? He was possessed of perfect deity and perfect humanity. For analogies of the relation between the two natures in JESUS CHRIST, the reader is referred to the author’s book *The Triune GOD* (pages 135-160). To go into the subject in this book would take us too far afield and hopelessly beyond the limitations of space at our command. It is important, however, to remind our readers that when we refer to CHRIST as GOD made man, we are not to think that when He became man He was no longer GOD.

Sacrificing none of His deity - although laying aside His pre-incarnate glory - He took upon Himself a perfect human nature (Luk 1:35), as we might think of light fashioning for itself a lamp through which to shine, the perfections of CHRIST’s human nature being the parts of the lamp. Or, we might think of CHRIST’s deity as analogous to the genius of a great organist, and His fullness of humanity as like a perfect organ at the command of the organist.

“to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

CHRIST came down from where He was to where we were that He might lift us where we were to where He eternally is. The Son of GOD became Son of Man that sons of men might become sons of GOD. In passing, we might allude to a vivid contrast between the tower of Babel and the Cross of JESUS: in the one we behold the pride of man reaching up to GOD sinfully; in the other we see the grace of GOD reaching down to men savingly. “God sent forth his Son... that he might redeem...” Think what it cost the Son of GOD to make me a son of GOD! GOD gave His Son to make us His sons. Do we value our privileges as sons of GOD in the light of the sacrifice of the Son of GOD? If GOD sacrificed His Son for our sins, why are many of us so reluctant to sacrifice our sins for His Son, by confessing them and thereby finding forgiveness and cleansing? Never must we let the privilege of our sonship make us forgetful of the sacrifice of our SAVIOUR.

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” In Rom 8:15-17 we have a beautiful and striking parallel passage that we do well to consider in connection with Gal 4:6-7. “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear” (Rom 8:15 a). The verb “received” points to the time when the believers were baptized into a new relationship with GOD through JESUS CHRIST. The SPIRIT of GOD, the third Person of the Trinity, coming into our hearts should banish the spirit of fear as a state of mind. As Christians, instead of shrinking from GOD in dread, we now cling to Him in love and trust; and yet how many Christians fail to enter into the full blessedness of their filial bonds with GOD! How an earthly parent sorrows when his child is afraid of him for some reason or other - probably without any real foundation! And who shall say that our FATHER in Heaven does not grieve when His children fail to trust Him as they ought?

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.” Too many ill-instructed believers agonize and plead for the HOLY SPIRIT to come into their hearts, not realizing that as Christians they already have the SPIRIT dwelling within them, else they would not even be saved, born-again children of GOD. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom 8:9). Our birth in GOD is proof of our worth to GOD, not because of what we were in ourselves, but because of what He wrought for us and in us to make us His children.

“... crying Abba, Father.” “Abba” was the Aramaic word for father. Used with “FATHER” in this way, it is suggestive of a tender and joyous response to GOD on the part of a child of His. If we could but realize more fully how our heavenly FATHER loves us, our hearts could not contain the love and joy we should find in Him. The ecstasy experienced by an earthly father when his little one first cries, “Daddy!” is a faint but touching picture of the happiness that must flood the heart of GOD when a new-born babe in CHRIST first prays, “Dear FATHER.”

“Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son then an heir of God through Christ.” Not only have we been delivered from bondage, but we have become sons of GOD, not mere children. The word for “sons” is expressive of the rights and privileges belonging to those who have entered their majority. From the penalty of sins to the legacy of sons - what an amazing transition! But let us never forget at what price our inheritance in CHRIST has been made a reality; then shall we prize it more highly and use it more wisely in this life. Although we’re no longer slaves but sons, let us ever bear in mind that blessing means duty, and that privilege entails sacrifice. Let our heirship in CHRIST prove an airship in which we soar above the regions of storm into the peace of GOD that passeth all understanding.

Memorize Gal 3:24-26; Gal 4:4-7.

## 1.07. Doctrinal Exposition - Ch 4:8-20

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Doctrinal Exposition - Ch 4:8-20 Gal 3:1-29; Gal 4:1-31 Apostasy from Faith Deplored (Gal 4:8-20) Subjection to the form (Gal 4:8-11) In Gal 4:8-11 of this fourth chapter of Galatians Paul deplores the fact that the readers, after professing to have entered into the new life of fellowship with GOD are, at the solicitations of the Judaizers, referring to an observance of empty forms.

“Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now... “ What a somber contrast the sin described in Gal 4:8-9 presents to the glowing privileges suggested in the verse immediately preceding! Paul is at a loss to account for his readers’ turning their backs upon the treasures of grace for an eager pursuit of the husks of legalism. Prior to their conversion they had, in common with pagans everywhere, devoted themselves to idolatry and the worship of false gods - in which category are to be included demons and deified men as well as idols. In man there is an instinct for worship which in the absence of a knowledge of the true GOD, will, like vines cumbering the ground, fasten upon false and unworthy objects of adoration. This principle is applicable, not only to heathen sunk in the grossest superstition but to many highly respectable and intelligent people who would be insulted if anyone were to classify them as pagans. Men who reject the Son of GOD are worshipping gods of human fabrication and not the GOD of divine revelation (John 5:23; John 14:6).

They make idols of wealth, fame, science, reason, pleasure and many other things. We are enslaved by what we adore. Scorn of the best makes us slaves of the worst. It would be well for society at large if some of our worldly-wise writers of best sellers would turn from their futile “debunking” of God-made men to a desperately needed “debunking” of man-made gods. What treasures of time and talent are wasted upon counterfeit gods in our day!

“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?” Paul injects the words “or rather are known of God” to forestall any pride his readers may be tempted to take in their having come into a knowledge of the true GOD. They would never have found GOD if GOD had not first found them. And must we not all say that, apart from the grace of GOD in CHRIST who sought and brought us, not one of us would or could have entered into a saving knowledge of the LORD? He who seeks business leadership or social preferment is most diligent in cultivating the acquaintance of “the right people,” for to know and be known of them is an advantage not lightly to be esteemed. How vastly more needful in the light of eternity to know GOD and be known of Him as His blood-bought children! Many a worldly reputation will go up in smoke before the flashing eyes of the LORD at the Great White Throne. It matters not how many celebrities we know or how many of the great of earth smile favorably upon us if we know not CHRIST.

“How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements... “ Paul alludes here to the many rites and forms of works-righteousness whereby Jew and Gentile alike sought to hide from GOD.

Poles apart in many respects, Judaism and heathenism stood in one common plane of impotence to provide materials for building a bridge of reconciliation across the gulf of separation that sin had dug between GOD and man. All of man's efforts to save himself are truly but "weak and beggarly elements" that leave him weaker and poorer in the sight of the LORD. And yet how many men and women seem never to have grasped the elementary truth that man can never save himself by his own good works! And as for dependence upon ceremonial rites, formalism makes religion a farce instead of a force.

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years." The Galatians had evidently so yielded to the false teachings of Judaizers as to celebrate various Jewish holy days and special seasons; and Paul was deeply grieved over this lapse into a legalism on their part. They were doing all this, no doubt, in the expectation of obtaining extra merit and special favor for themselves. (The middle voice of the Greek verb for "observe" brings out this meaning). Does this mean that Christians are not to celebrate special days in the church year such as Christmas and Easter? Can it be quoted in support of the position maintained in some circles that Christians are under no obligation to keep the first day of the week sacred since every day should be regarded as holy unto the LORD? We must answer both of these questions with an emphatic negative. Our observance of holy days, however, must not be with a view to winning merit before GOD. The Lord's Day is His gracious provision for us, an oasis in the desert for the refreshment of our spiritual lives. Do we keep the first day of the week holy in order to gain merit for ourselves or to pay tribute to our LORD? Motive governs in the things of the spirit.

"I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." Well can we appreciate the fogs of disappointment that swept over the soul of the great apostle as he learned of this growing departure from the Gospel of grace on the part of these Galatians of whom he had expected so much. His past labor among them was a fact; the fruitage therefrom was dependent upon their loyalty to the truth. He had planted the seed; it was for them to drive away the thieving crows of error, particularly the deadly legalism which the Judaizers were trying to foist upon them. Paul doubtless was fearful of the effect upon his work elsewhere of a wholesale turning from the Gospel of grace on the part of the Galatian churches.

Desertion of the truth (Gal 4:12-16) "Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are." Dr. Keen in his very helpful commentary on Galatians throws real light upon this exhortation of the apostle as follows: "He appeals to them: 'Be as I am' (free from the law) 'for I am as ye are' (actually saved by grace),' Or we could paraphrase it thus, 'Be like me in ignoring the law; for I, though a Jew, have come like you Gentiles - without the law.'"

"Ye have not injured me at all." The reference in these words is somewhat obscure. Various explanations have been offered by outstanding New Testament scholars. The following view advocated by Hogg and Vine seems plausible: the apostle is anticipating a possible objection that the vigor of his language is due to some personal grievance. Other commentators advance the theory that Paul is referring to a contention of the Galatians that they had a perfect right to supplement what he taught them with further instruction from other teachers. This right Paul grants, with the observation, however, that the toils of legalism in which they are entangling themselves will work injury to themselves rather than to Paul.

“Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.” These words cannot very well be understood without some knowledge of their background. Evidently the apostle had been overtaken by illness and while under a great physical handicap had proclaimed to the Galatians the Word of Life. The attack of sickness may have been the barrier interposed by the SPIRIT whereby Paul’s plans for going into the province of Asia and later into Bithynia were frustrated: “Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not” (Acts 16:6-7). As to the nature of the malady we are left in uncertainty. It was probably the thorn in the flesh alluded to in 2Co 12:7, “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.” Speculations without end have been offered covering this thorn in the flesh. What was this thorn? The most likely guesses are that it was a peculiarly aggravated form of ophthalmia, an eye disease caused by Paul’s temporary blindness following the appearance of CHRIST to him on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:8); or else that this thorn in the flesh was in the form of recurrent attacks of malaria, an ailment very prevalent in the region of Tarsus where the apostle was born and brought up. Either one of these maladies, or both of them together, would make the victim an object of aversion during the period of a severe attack. This physical repugnance was undoubtedly what Paul had in mind in the reference to the temptation which was in his flesh. But instead of turning from him in disgust, as might have been expected, the Galatians had given most earnest heed to Paul’s testimony for JESUS and had accepted the SAVIOUR with an enthusiasm that knew no bounds. They received Paul, prostrated with pain and weakness as he was, as an angel of GOD, as the personal representative of the Son of GOD Himself. How ingloriously, then, did their present apostasy contradict their early zeal for CHRIST! And this is not unrelated to current situations, with reference both to preachers and hearers of the Gospel. Paul, as we have tried to make clear, was greatly hindered in his work from time to time by an unavoidable physical affliction, whatever it may have been. And as in the case of the great apostle, the LORD again and again has richly blessed the ministry of devoted servants of His who have been beset by bodily infirmities that humanly speaking would seem to constitute insurmountable barriers to effectiveness in the work of the MASTER. Names of such saints thus used of the LORD despite crippling physical limitations will no doubt come to the minds of the readers. We think, for example, of George Matheson, Robert Hall, Charles H. Spurgeon, Fannie Crosby, and Annie Johnson Flint. But while GOD in His sovereign mercy and wisdom may crown the ministry of such afflicted saints with multiplying fruit to the glory of CHRIST, we are not thereby warranted in the conclusion that the LORD will similarly bless the service of men and woman laboring under bodily handicaps that could have been prevented by a common-sense observance of the rules of health. The fact that GOD sometimes uses pain and weakness to augment the spiritual power of his workers by no means justifies servants of JESUS in carelessly and willfully neglecting their health. But when Physical ailments do overtake us in the course of our service for the LORD, we must be careful not to exaggerate them to the point where they are made an easy excuse for failing to discharge our Christian duties. What trifling trials in the flesh are allowed to play havoc with our service and witness for the LORD! The unsaved, furthermore, will do well to profit by the example of the Galatians in giving earnest heed to the message of the Gospel even

though it may come to them through messengers who have little of attractiveness in person or delivery to commend the truth they advocate. Be it remembered that the wrapping does not lower the value of the contents. Diamonds done up in brown paper are no less precious than when they repose in a silver box lined with velvet.

Regardless of the unattractiveness of the preacher or the personal worker, the Gospel is still the one and only key to salvation and eternal life. Shortcomings of the messenger will afford the sinner who has rejected the Word of Life no shelter when he stands before the judgment bar of GOD. But while the appearance of the preacher does not excuse the sinner for spurning the offer of salvation, the Christian worker has no right to prejudice his cause by carelessness in dress and by refusing to overcome repellent mannerisms.

“Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.” Whether these words can be quoted in support of the view that Paul’s thorn in the flesh was eye trouble is at least open for question. It is more likely that the latter part of the verse was a current proverb expressive of unbridled sympathy. But at any rate, the apostle refers in unmistakable terms to the eager reception given to the Gospel by the Galatians, which throws their present abandonment of the doctrine of salvation by grace alone into darker hues than ever. It was a reenactment of the parable of the seed sown in stony places where there not much depth of earth: “Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth... But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended” (Mat 13:5, Mat 13:20-21). How often these same conditions are duplicated in our day! Emotion is not devotion. The zeal and loyalty of too many professing believers resembles the transient torrent following a cloudburst rather than the deep, broad river fed by perennial springs and tributaries. Feeling good is no substitute for being good or doing good.

We must rest in CHRIST to be blessed by CHRIST.

“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” How typical is this reaction to wholesome admonition of the attitude of men and women today! Regardless of how much he may need it, the average person resents correction. But the religious leader must not take counsel of his fears when faced with the duty of administering a much needed reproof.

Danger does not dissolve duty. The servant of CHRIST dare not change his course with every shift in the wind of popular favor. Some pulpits, it is to be feared, are too much like the drugstore that specialized in candy, soda and almost everything else, to the neglect of its medical supplies.

They who resent being rebuked for sin and error by their leaders need to learn that scorn for storm warnings is powerless to ward off the impending tempest. The story is told of a man who received from a mail order house a barometer that he had purchased from them. Opening the package he saw that the barometer read “hurricane.” In anger he sent the instrument back accompanied by a scorching letter charging the firm with selling merchandise under false pretenses. Then he went downtown to his office. When he returned home at night, his house was no more - it had “gone with the wind.” The application is obvious. Why gamble with eternity by scoffing at God’s warnings

as to the consequences of sin?

Acceptance of the False (Gal 4:17-20)

“The zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.” These Judaizers, Paul writes, are actuated by ulterior motives; they are seeking, not your good, but their own gain. They are unscrupulous exploiters. They do not have your best interest at heart. Therefore steer clear of them. Beware of their wiles. The Pharisaic party is courting you in a selfish spirit; they want to shut you out of your rightful inheritance in CHRIST that they may reduce you to their law. Would that men and women who today are being hard pressed by false teachers would take the time and trouble to examine the motives of their spiritual seducers! Selfinterest is a major factor in the majority of false cults. It is significant that they go, not after outsiders, but after church members. They do not pray for the Church; they prey on the Church.

They thrive on sheep-stealing. We who are charged with the responsibility of spiritual leadership should extend a welcoming hand to teachers - Bible conference speakers, for example - who are divinely qualified to lead Christians into a fuller knowledge of the truth and a deeper fellowship with the LORD; but we should set our faces like flint against imposters with false Gospels, notwithstanding all their brilliance of intellect or winsomeness of personality.

“But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.” It is good to be zealously courted in a good cause. No, Paul says in substance, I am not jealous of other teachers who come to you with the truth. I pray God’s blessing upon all who come to you with a message that will help you grow in grace and in the knowledge of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST (2Pe 3:18). The thing that really matters is the triumph of the truth in your lives. But these Judaizers are seeking your spiritual undoing, and that is why I oppose them. Let us be sure that opposition to rival spiritual teachers is actuated by zeal for the truth, with no admixture of personal jealousy. Wounded pride may confuse superior insight into the truth with departure from the truth.

“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you...” This is a bold figure that Paul uses here, one that is wrung from his heart under great stress of emotion. The apostle represents himself as the mother suffering birth pangs over them. The metaphor is that of the embryo-developing into the child. The Galatian believers were Paul’s spiritual children. As he had travailed to bring them from idolatry into a new life in CHRIST, so now he is laboring to deliver them from the Judaizers so that the Christ-life may be fully formed in them. In passing it might be observed that CHRIST would be born and grow in more hearts today were there more of this Pauline passion for souls on the part of the rank and file of Christians in our modern churches. Any legalism rolling in like a fog into the soul of the believer hampers the work of the HOLY SPIRIT in manifesting CHRIST through him in His beauty and attractiveness.

“I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.” Paul yearns to be able to go and speak to them instead of writing to them. He could put his heart into his voice. The pen stands as a barrier between them. It is a nonconductor of the emotions, powerless to move their hearts. Were he in their midst he would know better what kind of words to use, whether tender or severe, to bring them back to the path of truth. The true Christian worker will neither delight in severity for its own sake, nor will he refrain from it when the situation

requires. In fact, we may even go so far as to say that the effectiveness of a needed rebuke is often in direct ratio to the disrelish, not to say pain, experienced in administering it. As iron must be melted to be poured into a mold, so unwelcome truths may be put into other hearts as a corrective when molten with tenderness.

Typology of Grace Unveiled (Gal 4:21-31) In the closing section of the doctrinal portion of the epistle, the apostle makes use of Isaac and Ishmael, one the son of a free woman and the other of a bondwoman, to set forth in type the relation of the law to grace. Paul by no means questions the historicity of this Old Testament story; nor does he mean to say that the allegory was designed by the narrative. But under the inspiration of the SPIRIT he unearths a rich typical lesson enshrined in the simple narrative (See Gen 16:1-16; Gen 21:1-21).

Among the Jews the bondage of the mother determined that of her child. Hagar and Sarah are identified with the two covenants, the Sinaitic and the Christian. The characteristic features of the two are slavery and freedom. The children of the old covenant are, like Ishmael, in bondage to the Mosaic Law; the children of the new covenant are, like Isaac, free - freed in CHRIST from the dominion and penalty of the law.

Christians, both Jew and Gentile, are children of the promise, as Isaac was. Even as Ishmael is reputed in Jewish tradition to have shot arrows at Isaac, so, the apostle implies, the Jews in bondage to the law are persecuting the true children of Abraham who have found freedom from such bondage through acceptance of salvation through JESUS CHRIST. Thus Paul sums up his teaching in the doctrinal portion of the Epistle to the Galatians.

## 1.08. Practical Application - Ch 5:1-15

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Practical Application - Ch 5:1-15 Gal 5:1-26; Gal 6:1-17 Preservation of Freedom in CHRIST (Gal 5:1-12) Faith in CHRIST precludes trust in works (Gal 5:1-6) With this chapter we enter upon the third main division of Galatians, which deals with the practical bearing of justification upon the daily life of the believer. For Paul there was nothing incongruous in the coupling of theology and ethics. Nor should there be for us. The loftiest doctrines may be harnessed to the lowliest duties. Particularly is this the case with the great truths of salvation. The very fact that men are saved by grace, justified by faith alone, lays upon the Christian an imperative and inescapable obligation to live in such a way as to justify the faith that justifies the soul.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” An understanding of what it cost GOD to make available for us that freedom which we enjoy in CHRIST should result in a higher evaluation of it. We shall prize it too highly to sell it for a song at the bidding of those who offer us a substitute gospel of works. Furthermore, the fuller use we make of it, the greater worth shall we find in it. Enjoyment of freedom stiffens resistance to bondage and sharpens perception of the subtlest infringements upon it. Keeping communion with JESUS will make us increasingly intolerant of hindrances to such blessed fellowship.

“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” The righteousness of works and justification by faith cannot coexist. We must choose one or the other. CHRIST brooks no rival loyalties. Divided dependence forfeits claim to His enabling grace. He is of benefit only to those who rely upon Him alone for their standing with GOD. Paul is speaking in this verse, however, not of his readers’ standing in grace, but of the method of living the Christian life and of growth in that life (K.S. Wuest). And how we need to keep in mind that legalism is a short-circuiting of spiritual power that paralyzes service for CHRIST! We nullify in our lives the grace we seek to amplify by our works. Because of its severing of fellowship with CHRIST and its quenching of the SPIRIT, dependence on works as an aid to salvation means the destruction of works as a fruit of salvation. The grace in which we rest measures the grace by which we live. We must lean on our SAVIOUR to live for Him. Motive governs outgo for GOD. The only works GOD values in the believer are those which spring out of love and gratitude for His divine grace that is freely bestowed and wholly unearned.

“For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law.” We put ourselves under the government of the state in which we choose to live. We submit ourselves to the course of the ship on which we embark. To depend on works is to subject ourselves to the penalty of the law. To seek to add to what CHRIST has done for us throws grave doubt upon whether we have really understood and appropriated the grace made manifest and available for sinners on the Cross of Calvary.

“Ye are fallen from grace.” Probably few statements in Scripture have been more misunderstood and twisted than this one. These words do not, as so many seem to think, militate against the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer. Paul is warning the Galatians that they have slipped from the doctrine of grace. To lose our hold upon the precious truths of grace entails, of course, the most serious consequences in our Christian living. While nothing can destroy the believer’s relationship with GOD, if he has truly been born again - once a son, always a son - much can injure his fellowship with GOD and cripple his usefulness for GOD. The doctrine we adopt governs the practice we pursue.

If a believer has temporarily lost his hold upon the doctrine of grace, his progress for the LORD and in the LORD come to a dead stop. The car will not move an inch until the operator puts the trolley on the electric wire again. To fall from the truth of CHRIST is to fail in a life for CHRIST. Increased productiveness for GOD will follow upon a renewed grasp of the great truth of salvation by grace alone.

“For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.” It is hardly needful to remind the student that this verse is woefully misconstrued if it is made the basis of a “hopeso” rather than a “know-so” salvation. The “hope” referred to is not a hope that sometime in the future we may be made the recipients of a righteousness from GOD that will serve us as a passport into heaven. On the contrary, it is a hope for the future resident in the grace possessed in the present, just as the sign “Seeded Ground” is indicative of the hope that will find fulfillment in the garden abloom with flowers of variegated color and fragrance. How careful we ought to be to let nothing encroach and trample upon the seed plot of the SPIRIT in our hearts and lives! While the righteousness obtained through justification by faith is a present possession, its future fruition is an object of energizing and directive hope: “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (2Ti 4:8); “For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel” (Col 1:5); “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1Pe 1:3); “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Mat 13:43). It is to be feared that not a few of us fall short in our present work for CHRIST through failure to draw upon our future hope in CHRIST. The righteousness of faith bestowed will be evidenced by faith in righteousness fulfilled. It will be noted that it is “through the Spirit” that we wait for the fulfillment of this hope of righteousness by faith. We must put our trust in the SPIRIT if we would bring forth fruit for the SPIRIT rather than for self. What men see of the SPIRIT in us depends upon what we sow in the SPIRIT. Can it be doubted that we shall labor more fruitfully when we fasten our hopes upon the eternal harvest of what we let the SPIRIT work in and through us?

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” Note the statement that in CHRIST “neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision.” There is such a thing as bondage to freedom from form. We are saved, not by our freedom from form, but by our freedom in CHRIST. It will do us no good not to put trust in our works, whether moral or ceremonial, if we do not put trust in our LORD. It is only in JESUS that we find salvation from enslavement to sin.

“... but faith which worketh by love.” Love is the principle of the works that follow justification. And let it be observed that works of righteousness are as consequent on justification as righteousness of works is impotent for justification. Furthermore, the law of love is a much more powerful incentive to holy living than the love of law. Faith-motivated love - do we grasp the full significance of this challenging phrase? Just as steam-propelled machinery is operated by steam produced in boilers subjected to the terrific heat of fires that must be constantly stoked, so the productiveness of our lives is conditioned by the motivation of our love for CHRIST, which in turn is largely governed by the intensity of our faith in Him.

Therefore let us continually feed the fires of faith with the fuel of prayer and meditation upon His marvelous grace.

#### Warning Against Judaizers (Gal 5:7-12)

Having shown his readers in the six opening verses of chapter 5 how legalism will deprive them of the unspeakable resources for Christian living that are theirs in CHRIST, Paul now exhorts them to withstand the Judaizers who seek to rob them of their liberty in JESUS.

“Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?” This, of course, is a rhetorical question, the answer to which is perfectly evident. The apostle probably had in mind the illustration of a race in which a competitor deliberately tries to crowd an opponent off the course. Do not let these legalists defraud you of your rights and blessings in the LORD. You have nothing to gain and everything to lose by accepting the counterfeit substitute they offer you. The need for such exhortations to preserve our freedom is no less urgent in many quarters today than it was in those Galatian churches. Beware the man who pries you loose from your prize.

Legalism ever hampers progress in spirituality. Resist those who seek to rob you of your freedom in JESUS. Think of what CHRIST has meant to you, of what you have found in Him; and evaluation of your gains in CHRIST should serve to offset and counteract treacherous temptations to fall away from your LORD. And yet so many of us are more prone to feel resentment at what stops our having our own way than at what blocks our progress in the liberty for service that is ours in JESUS CHRIST.”... that ye should not obey the truth.” How readily we seem to overlook the fact that acceptance of the Gospel involves submission to the Gospel! Advancement in any field of worthwhile endeavor calls for a mastering of and an obedience to its governing principles. This holds true in art, in music, in literature, in science, in business. Just so, we must live in obedience to the truth of CHRIST, “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:2), if we would make progress in that most glorious of all creative arts, living the CHRIST we love.

“This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.” This is a most effective bit of understatement, a brilliant use of the figure of speech known as litotes, that is to say, the affirming of a fact by denying its opposite. Far from being the will of the LORD who has called them out of darkness into light, their present drift into legalism, Paul in a solemn fashion implies, owes its origin to satanic motivation. Therefore, flee your impending captivity before it is too late. Why do Christians in our day respond so gullibly to siren voices that would lure them away from the One to whom they owe everything in time and eternity? A keener discernment of what is involved in our vocation as Christians will post warning signs at deceptive bypaths. There would be less falling from the work to which we have been called if there were more calling on the One by whom we have been called.

Gratitude to GOD for our privileges in CHRIST will lead us to make a sacrifice for them rather than a sacrifice of them.

“A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” This very likely was a common proverb in Paul’s day expressive of the rapid spread and corruption of evil and error. The apostle has reference not to the number of false teachers, but to the fermenting and pervasive power of their false doctrine. A little legalism, he says in effect, when mixed with the Gospel, will spread rapidly and contaminate the truth beyond recognition. Therefore, give it a wide berth; have absolutely nothing to do with it. And we need to be more mindful than many of us are of the expansiveness of expansiveness when it comes to the corruptive power of false teaching. Too many otherwise intelligent Christians seem to have a blind spot when it comes to recognizing false teaching.

They overlook the fact that truth and error will not mix. What would happen if chemists were as ignorant of the possibility of harm from an improper mixture of chemical ingredients, as if druggists were as careless in the compounding of prescriptions written by a competent physician? We need to wake up to the leavening power of false teaching. In matters where the understanding and acceptance of eternal truth are concerned, an ignorance of tolerance is preferable to the tolerance of ignorance.

“I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.” Paul is confident in the LORD that the Galatians will be enabled to break through the meshes of legalism in which they are being ensnared. But he pronounces judgment upon their deceivers, the Judaizing teachers. And spiritual teachers today, like Paul, to treat tenderly those who are being led astray, but to rebuke with severity those who are poisoning their minds against the Gospel of grace. Beware the sentimental tolerance of the false that constitutes a fundamental compromise of the true.

“And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution?” In these words the apostle indignantly answers the charge of his opponents that he preached circumcision elsewhere when it suited his purpose. And yet the very policy of conciliation that Paul so scorns to pursue is the common practice of not a few professing Christians in our day. They are chameleons wonderfully skilled in changing their color to fit their surroundings, that they may not be conspicuous targets for ridicule and persecution. In this interest of freedom from adverse comment and attack, they pretend to approve what deep down in their hearts they know to be wrong and false. But since when has danger dissolved the duty of witnessing for the right? How long since has the policy of protective blending received sanction from above? The silly smile of tolerance is a poor substitute for the righteous wrath of loyalty, “I would they were even cut off which trouble you.” But while Paul feels intense concern for the Galatians converts, he feels that the sternest measures should be adopted toward their seducers from the Gospel of grace. We need to guard against such a tender regard for the feelings and good will of false teachers that we leave babes in CHRIST exposed to dire moral and spiritual peril. Perversions of Gospel truth call for drastic measures. External applications of glycerin and rosewater are of no avail when a major surgical operation is necessary. The coddling of adders is a perilous pastime. Pet lions revert to savagery at a moment’s notice.

Love - The Fulfillment of the Law (Gal 5:13-15)

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” The blessing of freedom in JESUS is not an incentive to indulgence of the flesh. How prone we are to forget this! Our calling into the freedom of CHRIST precludes falling into the bondage of sin. The care we take of our liberty in Him shows the wealth we find in it. The goal of grace is not freedom to sin but freedom from sin. We are saved from death to live for GOD. The proof of our calling for the LORD. We are justified on the basis of the Saviour’s finished work for us, which, in turn, is the basis of the Spirit’s finished work in us, which, in turn, is the basis of the Spirit’s finished work through us. We may even go so far as to say that he who makes grace an excuse for sin has not found release from sin through grace. Let us never forget the fourfold aspect of the righteousness of GOD as (1) revealed to us, (2) required of us, (3) bestowed on us, and (4) fulfilled in us. Freedom from the guilt of sin will be marked by a hatred of the stain of sin. How can one claim to be free from a bondage to which his whole life shows that he is fondly devoted? GOD never issues a license for license. The very fact that justification comes by faith makes it imperative for us to justify the faith that justifies.

Alas, if others remain in bondage to sin through our misuse of freedom in CHRIST!

“... but by love serve one another.” The apostle would have his readers replace the love of bondage with the bondage of love, the love of legalistic rites with the rights of Christian love.

Love is an ever flowing river for the transportation of cargoes of service. True love, like the gift of painting or poetry or music, ever seeks creative expression. He who writes the love of CHRIST in hearts may be no less deserving of honour than he who writes the truth of CHRIST in books. Or, putting it in still another way, we may think of love as the garden plot for the fulfillment of God’s commandment, the perfecting of God’s perfect love in the hearts and lives of His children: “No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us” (1Jn 4:12).

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” It is hardly necessary to enlarge upon the truth enshrined in the enunciation of this great and comprehensive principle. Love makes us want to do what once we felt we had to do.

Outward compulsion yields to inward impulsion. After falling in love the boy no longer has to be forced by parental pressure to comb his hair and wash his hands and shine his shoes. Practice on the piano ceases to be a form of cruel servitude after the pupil has come into a real love for music with the out-flowering of his inborn gifts. The law of love is a far more potent deterrent from sin than the love of law - in the sense of enslavement to legalism. Furthermore, love injects that something which, by purifying the motives, alone insures the sort of obedience that finds acceptance with GOD.

“But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.”

What a contrast between the fruitage of love and the wreckage of wrath! The love of law as fostered among the Galatians by the legalists was evidently fomenting dissension and strife in their midst, a result at the farthest pole from the devotion and harmony flowing from the law of love. That backbiting and bickering in a church are destructive of peace and disruptive of unity goes without saying. It is a pouring of vinegar into cream, the unleashing of a hurricane, the kindling of a fast-spreading fire. Backbiting provokes biting back. Mutual depreciation is as

destructive as mutual appreciation is constructive. The church that does not keep the peace will go to pieces. Alas, when the members of any church prey on one another and do not pray for one another! Praying and preying cannot coexist. Of necessity one must yield to the other. Which shall it be?

## 1.09. Practical Application - Ch 5:16-26

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Practical Application - Ch 5:16-26 The Struggle of the Two Natures (Gal 5:16-18) In these verses we have clearly depicted the struggle between the old nature and the new nature which is the common experience of Christians everywhere. And this conflict is a war to the death. There can be no cessation of hostilities until we are called home to glory. A truce is out of the question. Appeasement policies are futile. We may as well recognize the situation at the outset.

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” Herein lies the key to conquest - not through the terrors of the law, but through the SPIRIT of the LORD will victory over the flesh be won. The spirit of the law and the law of the SPIRIT are poles apart. The injunction to walk in the SPIRIT implies power of choice on the part of the believer, whether to submit to the bondage of sin or to enter into that freedom in the SPIRIT which is rightfully his as a child of GOD. True, the old nature has not been eradicated, but its power over the soul which is trusting in CHRIST for salvation has been broken. Putting it figuratively, the dogs have been chained; they are no longer at large; but if we fail to keep our distance, and carelessly or deliberately give occasion to sin, we have ourselves to blame for the consequence.

We have the privilege of walking in the SPIRIT; but we are not compelled to do so; it is a voluntary matter. Approaching the subject from another angle, many a follower of JESUS fails of living a truly victorious life because he tries to study and prescribe for his own symptoms instead of giving the HOLY SPIRIT the right-of-way in his life and letting Him minister as only He can in the treatment of hidden roots of moral and spiritual ailment.

It is to be noted that in the main the way to triumph over the old nature is not so much a matter of negative repression as of positive possession of the boundless resources of grace available through the SPIRIT. Thomas Chalmers once preached a sermon entitled “The Expulsive Power of a New Affection,” and the reverberations of its challenging message still ring out. We turn the hose on dirt. We let in the pure air to drive out the foul. Tuberculosis is held at bay by a changing of climate. Need we enlarge at great length upon the application? There is no more effective way to fortify ourselves against the hurts of the flesh than to walk in the SPIRIT day by day and hour by hour.”For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” Nothing is to be gained by denying or minimizing this mutual antagonism. The acceptance of CHRIST into the heart will inevitably provoke a bitter and determined resistance on the part of the old sinful nature which hitherto has had everything its own way. Nor will the flesh be put to sleep by the fond delusion that it is dead and buried. It is imperative for our spiritual growth that we grasp the fact that the old nature is not removed or reformed at regeneration. Failure to understand this elementary fact frequently plunges the new convert into needless bewilderment and even despair of his standing before GOD when, after a peaceful period of triumph and fellowship with JESUS, he stumbles into the old sins and faults he fancied had been vanquished forever. With older Christians this error often operates to effect quite different results. Persuaded that they cannot sin,

adherents of the heresy of sinless perfection will deny that those practices are sinful which the Word of GOD plainly denounces as sinful. He who thinks he has reached perfection is the victim of an illusion indicating that he is desperately in need of a new pair of glasses to forestall threatening blindness. At the same time, we must not allow false claims to perfection on the part of some to make us unmindful of the true goal of perfection for all followers of the LORD JESUS. We are to claim and win victories over the flesh in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT. To forget that the old nature has no right to rule us will but increase its might to worst us in the battles of life. Beware the peril of insensibility to the terribleness of sin. If my heart can feel comfortable under sin, my soul is critically ill. We are most hurt by sin when we are least hurt by it. Numbness may be recognized by the trained physician as the forerunner of paralysis or even death itself. Turning to the brighter side of the picture, it holds gloriously true that the more we say yes to JESUS the easier will it be, until finally it becomes a fixed habit. Precious and weighty, then, is our responsibility for cultivating response-ability to JESUS. The works of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21) Having reminded his readers that a relentless warfare between the old nature and the new nature is inescapable, the apostle in the remainder of this chapter draws a picture of the sharp and vivid contrast between the works of the flesh and the fruits of the SPIRIT. We turn to his comprehensive catalogue of the sins of the flesh in Gal 5:19-21. It may be well to remind ourselves again at this point that the word "flesh" here indicates not the body - although that is included - but the natural man, the old nature.

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest..." Let us pause right here. "The works of the flesh are manifest" - that is to say, they are going to be shown for what they really are, in all their naked hideousness. The Word strips of glamour the sins that the world clothes with glamour. We do well from time to time to gaze upon the loathsome picture of sin which Scripture paints. But the average man pays more heed to the world's light estimate of sin than to what GOD says about it, blissfully unmindful of the fact that the sins which men call smart will smart throughout all eternity unless they are washed away in the penitently accepted blood of JESUS. Our souls are the more easily tarnished by the sins that are varnished. The fashion of sin is not changed by making it fashionable. Changing the label on the bottle does not convert poison into a harmless beverage. Would that men could see that the exciting currents of sin upon which they so gleefully launch their lives are but carrying them to the cataract of eternal ruin where the mirth of each gives way to the gloom of doom!

Let us now turn for a brief survey of the sins enumerated in the three verses before us. Dr. Clarence Keen, in his helpful little book on Galatians, make the following threefold division: (1) sensual works of the flesh, (2) religious works of the flesh, and (3) social works of the flesh. We could classify them as sins of impurity, idolatry, hostility and revelry. In any event, the list of moral offenses here given by the apostle is suggestive merely, and by no means exhaustive. All of us, it is to be feared, are prone to let our freedom from certain types of sins blind us to our bondage to other kinds no less hateful, and perhaps even more hateful, in the sight of the LORD. Are sins of the mind less revolting to Him than those of the flesh?

"Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness..." Never, perhaps, has there been a day when it was more difficult to live a clean life than at this present time. Appeals to the flesh abound on every hand. Indecency is brazenly flaunted before our eyes. The vileness in our current magazines know no bounds. If it be true that "as goes the home, so goes the nation," then there is grave cause for concern as to the future of our beloved country in the steadily mounting divorce

rate and the trail of broken homes from one end of the land to the other. Sensual sins of all kinds are frightfully prevalent in all strata of American society.

“Idolatry, witchcraft...” That man is incurably religious and will worship false gods rather than none at all, the non-Christian religions of the world abundantly prove. But in so-called Christian lands hosts of men and women, who would never sink to such depths of ignorance and superstition as to bow down to images of wood and stone, are nevertheless worshipers of idols wealth, pleasure, power, fame. These they set upon the throne of their hearts which none but GOD has a right to occupy. How much better off the world would be if man-made gods were to give way to God-made men! As for witchcraft, it is an all too-familiar fact that many people who boast of being too intelligent to accept the Gospel are daily victimized by fortune-tellers, clairvoyants, spiritualistic mediums, and all sorts of religious imposters who prey upon the credulity of the followers.

“Hatred, variance, emulations...” Estrangement from GOD is a fruitful source of all manner of enmities and quarrels among men. What else is to be expected but that, in the absence of the restraints which a true faith in GOD imposes, unbridled greed and selfishness should break loose and work havoc in human society?

“of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” The word “do” means, the habitual practice of such things. The Bible bases its estimate of a person’s character, not upon his infrequent, out-of-the-ordinary actions, but upon his habitual ones. To live in sin as a settled choice and principle of life is a far more serious matter than to fall into sins through weakness and carelessness. Far from loving and clinging to sin, the born-again child of GOD loathes and shrinks from it as from deadly poison; and when he does yield to temptation, he is in misery until he has confessed his sin and found forgiveness through the merits of the shed blood of his REDEEMER: “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1Jn 1:7-10; 1Jn 2:1-2). And as for the unregenerate man, even if he were admitted to heaven at death, he would be wretched beyond words in an atmosphere and environment so utterly alien to his unredeemed nature. As well expect a fish to live on dry land as to imagine for a moment that a sinner could ever be happy in Heaven. Since everlastingness is an indestructible property of the soul in the image of GOD, the only possible alternative to eternal fellowship with GOD is eternal separation from GOD - and that is hell. The Fruit of the SPIRIT (Gal 5:22-26)

“But the fruit of the Spirit is...” The use of the singular “fruit” instead of the plural “fruits” is instructive. It suggests the common root and interdependence of these several spiritual graces mentioned. They can be produced only in a life that is rooted in the SPIRIT; they cannot be hung outwardly upon a life like the toys and ornaments on a Christmas tree. Fruitage in the Spirit requires rootage in the Spirit. As it has been well put, “Christian character is CHRIST’s excellency reproduced by the SPIRIT in a renewed life.” To bring forth the fruit of the SPIRIT is not only the

Christian's happy privilege; it is his bound duty as well. In a soul born of the SPIRIT there is to be fruit borne in the SPIRIT. The fact that we could do nothing to earn our salvation is by no means to be interpreted as implying that, having been saved by grace, we can do nothing to show our gratitude for the salvation we have received. Dare we be unmindful of the words of our SAVIOUR to the effect that our heavenly FATHER is glorified when we bring forth much fruit: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (John 15:8)?

Limitations of space prevent more than a few fragmentary comments on the several kinds of spiritual fruit referred to in Gal 5:22-23. May our all-too-brief observations serve to quicken deeper and richer reflections in the minds of our readers.

"Love." The love of GOD cannot but evoke an answering love for Him from the heart of the believer. "We love him because he first loved us" (1Jn 4:19). This love has been shed abroad in our hearts by the HOLY SPIRIT (Rom 5:5). Needless to say, this love of GOD is bound to overflow in love for our fellow Christians: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1Jn 4:7-8).

"Joy." Joy is more intense than happiness and is not, like it, dependent upon outward circumstances or happenings. The difference may be illustrated by a river that flows steadily and continuously onward as compared with the transient hillside torrents produced by cloudbursts.

There is no joy to compare with that which flows from a deep, rich and sweet communion with JESUS CHRIST.

"Peace." We cannot have the peace of GOD until we have made our peace with GOD through Him who is our peace (Eph 2:14). But being reconciled, we have the peace which passeth all understanding (Php 4:7). If we abide in JESUS as we ought, there is in our souls a calmness that no outward hostility can upset: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isa 26:3). For the Christian surrounded by foes there is ever open a secret passage to the heart of GOD.

"Longsuffering." There are men and women who masticate their dislikes thoroughly, make allday suckers of their wrongs, and magnify every little pin-prick into a sword thrust. The temperament manifested in such conduct and attitudes is far removed from the longsuffering included in this cluster of spiritual graces so highly commended in Scripture. Irrigations of grace wash away the irritations of life as of negligible consequence. In passing, we might observe that there is not infrequently a vital connection between the enduring of injuries from the world and the bestowing of benefits on the world - like destructive floods disclosing to view rich veins of gold.

"Gentleness." This is the spontaneous overflow of love in the heart. It is the spirit that would rather be hurt by others than hurt others. Would that more of us were as tenderhearted as we are thin-skinned, as impulsive in kindness as explosive in anger. We need to cultivate resourcefulness in kindness, to gain proficiency in the artistry of applying Christian love to the hearts and lives of those with whom we come in contact in the multitudinous activities and relationships of life.

"Goodness." The real meaning of this word is generosity in things material and things spiritual.

Niggardliness impoverishes while liberality enriches the soul; or, as Scripture puts it, “The liberal soul shall be made fat.” In the realm of the spirit we lose what we keep and keep what we lose for JESUS’ sake (Mat 16:25).

“Faith,” which can also be seen as faithfulness. Probably capable of a double meaning, of trustfulness and trustworthiness. The one who is led by the SPIRIT has an unswerving confidence in GOD and reliance upon His words of promise; at the same time he manifests dependability in the discharge of the responsibilities which the LORD sees fit to lay upon him.

Having faith in GOD involves keeping faith with GOD. We trust Him. How far can He trust us?

“Meekness.” It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that meekness is not weakness. It is strength held under control, power kept in reserve. Steam does the most work when it makes the least noise. Not a few of us need less noise and more poise. Things need not shatter to matter. There is more might in the sunlight falling silently upon a small patch of earth than in the crashing of thunder and flashing of lightning in a terrific storm. We do well to store up the capital of quietude against the day of need.

“Temperance.” By temperance is meant self-control in the broadest and fullest sense of the term. We need to go into training for CHRIST and to keep ourselves spiritually fit at all times, for we never know when a critical test may come or a golden opportunity arise that will call upon our spiritual reserves. To this end we should be prepared to give up whatever mars our witness and hinders usefulness in the Master’s service. Attaining to the best may necessitate abstaining from the rest. The lesser must sometimes be sacrificed to the higher good.”Against such there is no law.” And yet many Christians live and act as if there were, if one judges by the meagerness of spiritual fruitbearing in their lives. Law can neither produce nor prevent the fruit of the SPIRIT mentioned in these verses. Legality, however, militates against the vitality so essential to their production. Memorize Gal 5:22-23.

“And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”

Positionally we died to sin with CHRIST on the Cross: “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” (Gal 2:20). Is this great truth of identification with JESUS in His death a mighty pulsating dynamic in our lives? It should prove a stimulant and not a sedative for holy living.

“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” The word, “walk” in this verse means “to march in rank or keep in step with.” This teaches that compliance with the will of the SPIRIT is no less important than reliance on the grace of the SPIRIT. If we expect to win major victories for CHRIST in the crucial battles of life, it is imperative that we obey the Spirit’s bidding day in and day out.

“Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.” We need not labor the point that self-assertion makes for a divided church, whereas self-effacement makes for a united church. But the trouble is, in many churches there is an over-eager willingness to let a very small minority have a monopoly in the exercise of selflessness. Were the majority of members actuated by humility and unselfishness, how vastly different and how much more

harmonious church life would be! Like frozen glue or mortar, self-centeredness needs to be softened into the selflessness commanded in Php 2:5, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” before much can be accomplished in the building of a truly unified church, knit together in love.

## 1.101 Practical Application - Ch 6

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### Practical Application - Ch 6 "Bear Ye One Another's Burdens" (Gal 6:1-5)

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." What a world of difference would be made in the life of the average church if these words of counsel were really put into effect! Too little consideration is shown the weaker Christian who stumbles. It is much easier to blame than to help. When a brother falls, those who are spiritual are to put him on his feet again. Those who are living in close fellowship with JESUS will be more eager to restore than to condemn. They are more given to undergirding with prayer than to overloading with reproach and scorn. It is to be feared that in some churches, at least, there is more preying on those who have fallen by the wayside than praying for them.

"Restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Our ministrations to the erring brother are to be rendered in a spirit of gentleness and humility if they are to prove effective. A pharisaical attitude toward the one who has yielded to temptation may jeopardize his spiritual recovery. Carelessness of treatment often results in lasting injury. Many well-meaning but tactless Christians would profit by a course in spiritual first aid under the direction of the HOLY SPIRIT. Prayerfulness makes for carefulness. A modest estimate of one's own attainments is a real asset in nursing back to health and strength those who have been worsted in the battles with sin. Due recognition of our own shortcomings tends toward a better understanding of the one we are trying to help in a moral and spiritual way.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." If you are so bent upon carrying heavy loads, why not get under the burden of love instead of the intolerable weight of legalism which the Judaizers are trying to saddle upon you? Such in substance is the apostle's exhortation to his readers. Replace the fetters of law with the bondage of love. Let the love of rite give way to the right of love.

How ready are we to give one another a lift as we travel together over the hills and valleys of life? Let us be on the alert for such opportunities. Forbid that our own troubles should make us indifferent to the trials besetting our brothers and sisters in CHRIST. (Memorize Gal 6:2, Gal 6:7-9, Gal 6:14).

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." The egotist is constantly overdrawing his mental, moral and spiritual checking account. He is given to overestimating his reserves. It may even be that he is loaded down with much worthless stock.

Few of us appreciate our indebtedness to others for whatever success we may be fortunate enough to achieve. We fail to take into account the contributions of heredity, environment, home, school, friends and many other factors. With this in view, the boastful man reminds us of the fable of the mouse and the elephant. A mouse and an elephant, so runs the fable, walking along together came to a bridge. The bridge shook and trembled under the heavy tread of the elephant.

When they reached the other side, the mouse turned to the elephant and said, "We sure did shake that thing, didn't we?"

There are Christians who have far too exalted an opinion of themselves because they have but the remotest conception of what GOD and men have a right to expect of them as professed followers of the LORD JESUS. Our obligations are not governed by our limitations. When we view our assets in the light of the responsibilities the LORD lies upon us, then we humbly cry to Him for replenishment of our woefully depleted and inadequate stores of strength and wisdom.

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (Jas 1:5). A prerequisite to being able to do all things through CHRIST (Php 4:13) is to see that apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). Like zeros preceding the numeral one, every time we put our worthless selves first and CHRIST last, we progressively diminish our output for Him; but when, on the other hand, we give Him the place of supremacy, then we find an increase of production for our LORD with every additional realization of our own insufficiency - like the zeros that follow rather than precede the numeral one.

"But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." Candid self-examination will put us in the place where GOD can and will minister to us richly of His bounty. And yet, as we have already suggested, too few of us are willing to analyze our holdings from the standpoint of what GOD has a perfect right to ask of us in the way of service. We dread the spiritual red ink of divine correction. We prefer a fool's paradise of fancied attainments to a revelation of our serious defects and shortcomings.

Furthermore, let us ever bear in mind that our true cause for rejoicing lies, not in what we do for GOD, but in what GOD does for and through us. What we are able to give to GOD is necessarily dependent upon what we are willing to let GOD give to us.

"For every man shall bear his own burden." This verse is not, as some may be inclined to think, a contradiction of Paul has just written in verse two. The fact that Christians are to share one another's burdens does not warrant the individual believer in getting out from under the duties that devolve upon him personally as a follower of the MASTER; nor does it afford him ground for laying the blame for his own sins of omission and commission upon the shoulders of other Christians. Alas for those who never give others a higher grade than D, nor themselves a lower grade than A in the school of life. What we have just said in the forgoing paragraph is not however, to be understood as justifying churlish spurning of proffered helps from fellow believers when we are sore pressed and are in need of a helping hand. Such churlishness betokens proud self-sufficiency rather than true lowliness of spirit. Be Faithful in Your Stewardship (Gal 6:6-10)

"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." Contrary to surface impressions, this text has no reference to students' being able to contribute richly to their instructor's store of knowledge and wisdom. No, but rather do these words of the apostle bear down hard upon the duty of the Christian to give adequate material support to ministers and other spiritual leaders. We need not enlarge upon the familiar but lamentable fact that many church members fail miserably in the discharge of their financial obligations to the church. What we put into the offering plate is, after all, a very good indication of what the church really means to us. It is sheer mockery to express appreciation of blessings received from the

church and at the same time to contribute little or nothing to the expenses of the church and the support of the pastor.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Although commonly given a much wider reference, these words have to do, in their context, with the principle of stewardship in material things. The fact that the giving of one’s self to the LORD must precede any acceptable giving of one’s means to Him is not to be construed as implying that consecration of our temporal possessions will not follow the dedication of our lives to Him. Living for the LORD means giving to the LORD. CHRIST becomes increasingly precious to us when the gifts we make to Him represent sacrifice on our part.

“For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Mat 6:21). And where our hearts go our treasure will follow. Torrents of money for pleasure, dribblets of pennies for JESUS - what a sad commentary on the present state of apostasy resting like a blight upon so much of the professing Church! Are we, individually, giving to the LORD as we ought? Praying without giving is like trying to sew with an unthreaded needle. Of what worth are prayers for the spread of the Gospel that are not backed by gifts to that cause? He who spends much money upon the flesh and little upon the LORD is stuffing his body and starving his spirit. In money matters, as well as in other respects, we must sow in the SPIRIT, if we expect to reap a golden harvest of spiritual enrichment.

“And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” The word “weary” as used in this verse refers to weakening of will, and “faint” in relaxing of powers. We need more stick-to-itiveness in Christian living and in our service for JESUS. We miss many a reward because we give up too soon. Rugged trails of devotion lead to sunlit peaks of achievement. GOD will give us all needed strength for the climb, if we but let Him. As we have had occasion to observe in another connection, the grace of continuance issues from the continuance of grace. We may get weary in the Lord’s service; but if we get weary of it, something is radically wrong with our souls. In passing, it might be remarked that too many Christians get weary of the Lord’s service because they do not work hard enough at it to get weary in it.

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Note the positive emphasis in this exhortation. It is not how little harm but how much good we may do that is set before us as an objective. Figuratively speaking, our concern should be, not how many plants we may refrain from uprooting, but how many seeds of kindness we are able to scatter along the way as we journey through life. We are to do good, not simply to feel good. The latter is no substitute for the former. Emotion is not devotion.

Intentions are not achievements. According to K.S. Wuest, furthermore, the “good” referred to here is that which is the work of the SPIRIT through the saints; this clearly implies that only as we live in the LORD can our lives bear fruit in that kind of service which will remain throughout eternity. But while we are to do good to all men, we are in a very special way obligated to confer blessing upon the hearts and lives of those who are the children of GOD, fellow believers with us in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. How earnestly do we seek to measure up to such opportunity and responsibility? The life of the church at large will be strengthened and sweetened by the fruit of the SPIRIT brought forth in our lives.

## Glory in the Cross of CHRIST, Not in the Works of Law (Gal 6:11-17)

“Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.” From this it would seem that the apostle had departed from his usual practice of dictating his epistles and had written this entire letter with his own hand. Some believe that the apostle wrote this in “large letters” to allude to his impaired eyesight from which, according to many New Testament scholars, he had suffered ever since his blinding vision of the LORD JESUS at the time of his conversion.

“As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.” These Judaizers, Paul claims, were actuated in their zeal for fastening the fetters of legalism upon the Galatians by a dread of suffering at the hand of their Jewish brethren if they took a stand for the Gospel of grace. By contending for the necessity of circumcision, they escaped being molested. And how frequently in our day opposition to the doctrine of justification on the part of those who pose as great religionists can be traced to a desire to curry the favor of the world! To ensure a smooth trip in many waters, one need only propagate a gospel of works that flatters rather than flattens human pride. Only he who has been truly conquered by the Cross is able and will to suffer for the Cross.

It might help us to take a firmer stand under fire for our faith if we could realize how often zeal in persecution of the truth is prompted by fear of persecution for the truth. Alas, when freedom from temporal danger means a forfeiting of spiritual safety in JESUS!

“For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.” These zealous Judaizers had evidently forgotten that the LORD called for obedience rather than sacrifice. A rite can never take the place of the right. But greed for domination as well as fear of persecution motivated these proponents of a works-righteousness. They who reject the freedom of grace for themselves are all too prone to move heaven and earth to bring others under the bondage of works. They launch attacks of withering scorn against those who take a stand for the Gospel of free grace that they themselves lack the courage to take. Let them beware, for laughter at the Cross converts it from a vehicle of mercy into an instrument of judgment.

“But 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.” Here we have one of the greatest personal testimonies to be found on the pages of the New Testament. The very wording of this statement by the apostle suggests that there are many things other than the Cross of CHRIST in which men commonly glory, and in which, from a purely human standpoint, he himself might be expected to glory. May all of us learn to glory, not in the toys of earth, but in the Cross of CHRIST; not in the allurements of the world, but in the atonement of the LORD; not even in what we do for CHRIST, but in what He does for us.

Well may each one of us ask prayerfully in the presence of GOD, “Do I glory in the Cross of CHRIST?” We do not glory in the Cross for which we are not willing to suffer, if need be; nor can we truly suffer for the Cross in which we do not glory. We must know what the Cross has done for us personally to glory in it intelligently. Conquest by the Cross is prerequisite to conquest in it. So far as its power in our lives is concerned, we cease to own the Cross we fear to own. One of the consequences of fearing to take a stand for the Cross will be to lose the joy of the Cross. May we

never lose sight of the fact that our victory in the LORD has come by way of the tragedy of the Cross. Calvary is the great spiritual watershed of all time. Rejection of the Cross spells eternal tragedy; acceptance of the Cross means eternal victory. Calvary makes all the difference between tragedy and victory. On which side of Calvary are you standing, reader? In the night of tragedy through rejection of the atonement there effected, or in the light of victory through acceptance of the saving merits of JESUS' blood?

There is need for fuller instruction in the meaning of the Cross, that it may become a greater force in the lives of Christians. A strengthened grasp of the Cross will issue in a stiffened stand for the Cross. The world will lose its hold on us when we get a real hold on the Cross. The more we find of the treasures of the LORD, the less will we be drawn to the pleasures of the world, until we can say with the apostle that we have been crucified to the world, and the world to us.

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” Neither bondage to form, nor freedom from form, can save us, but only mercy in CHRIST. This is an elementary truth of which all too many people seem to be in total ignorance.

Some depend upon their observance of ritual and regular church attendance to get them into heaven, while still others rely on their nonconformity to tradition and convention to give them credit with the LORD. And there is many a man who thinks that he needs only turn over a new leaf to be assured of life beyond the grave. Reformation by the power of will is no substitute, however, for transformation by the power of grace divine. What GOD does for us in CHRIST is as priceless as what we can do for ourselves is worthless.

“And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.” We are to live in and for Him who died for us. In fact, what we let CHRIST do in us is the best demonstration of what He did for us on the Cross of Calvary. We must send our roots deep into the soil of truth and grace to find a wealth of peace in CHRIST. And we who know the peace of the SAVIOUR will want to keep the rule of the Gospel. It is sheer presumption to expect to have the peace of the LORD, if we refuse to do the will of the LORD.

We must abide in the climate of grace if we hope to enjoy the blessings of CHRIST. Spiritually, where we make our residence shows where we find our real happiness.

“From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” Paul rejoiced in his suffering for JESUS and regarded the wounds he suffered as landmarks of CHRIST's ownership of him. And how many such marks there were upon the body of the heroic apostle who had faced such dangers and gone through such hardships for the sake of the LORD who was his all in all! In the church of today, it is to be feared, there are too many battle-scared soldiers and too few battle-scarred soldiers of the Cross. Too few are prepared to stand for the MASTER at all cost. Something is seriously wrong if we are ashamed to own Him who owns us. The Lord's ownership precludes the world's ownership of us.

## BENEDICTION

“Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.” And so this Epistle comes to a close in a gracious benediction. Like a quiet and lovely sunset at the end of a tempestuous day. What more can any soul want in time or eternity than the wondrous grace which GOD made

manifest and available in JESUS CHRIST, our LORD and SAVIOUR forevermore?

## 2.00.1. Right in Romans

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RIGHT IN ROMANS Studies in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans by  
C. Norman Bartlett

## 2.00.2. Preface to the e-Sword Edition

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Preface to the e-Sword Edition When I first discovered the amazing power of e-Sword, I was connected to the internet with a 56k fax modem. My enthusiasm for the program and its plethora of resources motivated me to stay up all night downloading its riches. I spent the next several days exploring the amazing variety of study material. As a busy pastor, I've tried to assemble a classic research library. As a busy pastor of a small church, I've tried to inexpensively assemble a classic research library. E-Sword immediately added many valuable assets that I hadn't yet purchased; and those resources that e-Sword duplicated were much easier and faster to use than the paper versions.

Since that wonderful first week, I've discovered many more treasures through Google searches. Then one day I realized that I owed a debt. I made a contribution to Rick Meyers (Rick - you are the modern day Gutenberg; should the Lord not return in the near future like I believe He will, you will do for Bible study the next 100 years what Gutenberg did in the 1500's), and then started looking for public domain resources to convert to .topx files. And so my personal journey has come full circle: from the excitement of discovering e-Sword to the excitement of creating .topx files for others. Like Rick quotes from Mat 10:8, "freely ye have received, freely give."

Thank you, Michelle, Jeremiah, Isaiah & Micah, for understanding my debt and graciously tolerating my near compulsive computer use for hours on end. My thanks to the creator of e-Sword, Rick Meyers - [www.e-sword.net](http://www.e-sword.net). Thank you, C. Norman Bartlett, for converting your studies to eternal print. Thanks to OMLB of module builders and proofers (Ed, Jason, James & Miss Pamela!) - you folks are a great team to work with. Special thanks goes out to Mr. Virgil Butts at [www.BaptistBibleBelievers.com](http://www.BaptistBibleBelievers.com) (make sure you visit his site!). Virgil is the one responsible for painstakingly bringing the paper text into the digital world. Virgil, thanks so much for sharing access to your hard work! And of course - most importantly - my thanks to the Lord Jesus who saved my soul for all eternity. This Edition There have been no changes to Bartlett's work, except for the following:

Scripture references have been converted to Scripture hyperlinks using the "Format Scripture ToolTip." The ToolTip Tool does not handle partial references like this: 7:14b-16. Bartlett subdivided many verses like this; many of the "b's" have had to be removed.

A few obvious Scripture reference errors have been corrected, as well as some obvious spelling errors.

The copy and paste process has unfortunately removed most of the italicized print. While the words have not been changed, some of Bartlett's emphasis may be missing. It is with regret that I have not taken the time to correct this. The sense is still accurate. [By the way - would you understand this paragraph without italics? Of course!] Also, the italicizing of the foreign words have been lost. It is my hope that the reader will be able to follow the flow regardless of these flaws. They - the flaws - are mine, not Bartlett's.

I am quite sure my edition of Bartlett's work is rather imperfect. I pray that, nonetheless, it will be productively useful in the study of God's Word.

Finally Feel free to contact me with comments. You can reach me via e-mail at [DoctorDaveT@gmail.com](mailto:DoctorDaveT@gmail.com)

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Dr. David S. Thomason

Florida, USA

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## 2.00.4. Table of Contents

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## 2.01. Romans In Outline

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### Romans In Outline

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## 2.02. The Setting of the Epistle

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### The Setting of the Epistle

CHAPTER TWO THE GREATNESS OF THE EPISTLE THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS stands pre-eminent among the writings of the Apostle Paul. It is without question the most important production of his pen, if we except Ephesians which is as mystically sublime as Romans is logically profound. No other writing of his has so powerfully influenced the thinking of the Church. Down through the centuries it has proved to be a veritable cornerstone of the Christian faith.

### AUTHENTICITY

We have the strongest grounds for claiming that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans. The Pauline authorship is attested to by a wealth of external and internal evidence. We are safe in saying that the Pauline authorship of Romans is confirmed by practically unanimous tradition ever since his day. It has been recognized in the Church as long as the apostle's writings have been in existence. This letter, furthermore, is the most thoroughly Pauline of all the writings that bear the name of the great apostle. It is fragrant with his personality. It fairly breathes his spirit. It is saturated with his most characteristic phraseology. It is surcharged with his dynamic convictions in matters of faith and practice. That Paul was the author of this work is evidenced by the whole tone and contents of the letter.

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING As to the date of the Epistle, while there are some who put it several years earlier, it is the general consensus of opinion on the part of competent authorities that it was written from Corinth in the winter of A. D. 57-58, while Paul was spending several months in comparative leisure in that city toward the close of his third missionary journey just prior to the visit to Jerusalem, which was to eventuate in his arrest and later imprisonment in Rome. The treatise-for it is really that, rather than a letter-was composed in the home of Gaius, a wealthy merchant of Corinth. As Paul's stay in the city was drawing to a close, he learned that Phoebe, a Greek Christian woman, was on the point of visiting Rome; therefore, he decided to trust her to take this precious Epistle to the church in the capital city of the Empire. What if Phoebe had proved careless or unfaithful to her trust? The loss to the Church would have been simply incalculable!

Truly God does commit priceless treasure to earthen vessels. Who knows what eternal consequences may be wrapped up in the faithful performance of our simplest duties to Christ?

### THE PURPOSE IN WRITING

Why did Paul write this Epistle to the Romans? He planned to visit Rome and then proceed to Spain which was the westernmost frontier of the Empire. To give in advance a full statement of his Gospel would greatly facilitate his labors after his arrival in the imperial city,

The strategic importance of the church in Rome invited a systematic presentation of the great essentials of the faith-although as a matter of fact the Epistle treats of only two of the major

doctrines-sin and salvation. With his letter before them, the leaders of the church at Rome could judge of Paul, whether he was an imposter and a dangerous upstart, as his enemies claimed, or whether, on the contrary, he was indeed a trustworthy apostle with a living message from God.

Furthermore, it was needful for Paul to make clear the relationship of Christianity to Judaism because of the Jewish and the Gentile elements in the church. Nor are we in danger of going far wrong if we assume that the apostle with his statesmanlike vision foresaw the momentous advantage to the entire future of Christianity if the church at the very fountainhead of influences radiating out into the whole known world could be put in possession of a thoroughgoing treatise on basic Gospel truth. THE CHURCH IN ROME

There can be no question that this letter was written to the Christians in Rome. Such references as those found in Rom 1:10-13 and Rom 15:23-24; Rom 15:28 fit no other city.

Even thus early the church in Rome was undoubtedly distinguished throughout the Church at large for the strength and purity of its faith. Moreover, the church must at the time of the writing of this masterly Epistle have been a very large and important one because when the frightful persecution under Nero broke loose the Christians were an "immense multitude."

The origin of the church in Rome is largely conjecture. That the nucleus of the church in Rome may have been comprised of men and women won to Christ on the Day of Pentecost, believers who fled to the capital city in times of persecution and converts of Paul on his several missionary journeys is at least a plausible explanation of its beginning. THE EFFECT OF THE EPISTLE A careful study of Church History discloses that practically every great revival and reform movement has been kindled and kept burning by a return to the Scriptures, a rediscovery of the Word of God, an opening of the draughts of inspiration from on high; it furthermore reveals that in this indispensable return to the Bible, the Book of Romans has again and again come into a place of prominence.

We can readily see why this should be so, because in this letter, as perhaps in no other, we find a full and exhaustive treatment of such basic questions as the reality of sin, the need of redemption, justification by faith, the efficacy of the atoning death of Jesus, regeneration, the new life in the Spirit, and the future glorification of believers.

A return to a close study of Romans as a reservoir of Christian doctrine is desperately needed in our day; for if there is one thing above all others that characterizes much of our current weak-tea variety of Christianity, it is an inadequate conception of the awfulness of sin and of the utter inability of man to find salvation apart from the redeeming grace of God in Christ. THE STRUCTURE OF THE EPISTLE In bringing this introductory chapter to a close, a word or two with reference to the structure of the Epistle may not be amiss.

After a rather lengthy, but by no means irrelevant introduction, the apostle launches forth in 1:18 upon an exceedingly close-knit and logical argument to prove that man cannot be saved by works, but only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who gave His life a ransom for sin. There is a sense in which the fit eight chapters constitute a unit in themselves.

Had the letter ended with the close of chapter eight, we should have had a complete treatise on the doctrine of salvation under the following natural and logical divisions:

I. Condemnation for Sin (1:18-3:20)

II. Justification by Faith (3:21-5:21)

III. Sanctification of Life (6:1-8:39)

Chapters nine, ten, and eleven are a sort of excursus dealing with the knotty problem of the relationship between the truth of redemption by grace and the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel.

In 12:1-15:13 Paul devotes himself to a discussion of some of the practical fruits of salvation in everyday life. The concluding chapter and a half consists of miscellaneous postscripts, last-minute articles tucked into the trunk before it is locked and strapped.

We might go so far as to say that the content of Romans can be epitomized in the single phrase made right.

When God provided in the death of Jesus Christ a sovereign remedy whereby He might save men from sin without doing violence to His own infinitely holy nature, He made right what otherwise would have constituted a divorce between His holiness and His love.

In justification by faith man is made right in state; in sanctification of life man is made right in life through the indwelling presence of the Spirit.

In the digression in Chapters 9, 10, and 11 the apostle shows how in the future restoration of Israel through a general acceptance of Christ as their Messiah and Redeemer the apparent failure of God's promises to His chosen people will be made right. The following three chapters show how those whose souls have been made right before God positionally can and must be made right for God through bearing abundant, practical fruits of consecration.

Justification by faith is the planting of the seed by the Lord, sanctification through the Spirit is the growing of the seed in the soil; but the believer must co-operate with God in a fullness of dedication if all of God's gracious purposes for him are to be realized in his own experience-if he is to be made right by God and for God.

## 2.03. Introduction - Rom\_1:1-17

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### Introduction - Rom 1:1-17

CHAPTER THREE A. SALUTATION (Rom 1:1-7) THE INTRODUCTION IN ROMANS is longer than that any other of the Pauline Epistles. And yet every sentence and phrase is so weighty with meaning that we can ill afford to glide over the passage hurriedly, for if we do so, we shall miss a good deal of treasure.

#### 1. The writer (Rom 1:1)

“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ . . .” Paul is ever aware of the fact that he belongs to Christ, that he has been bought and is owned by the Saviour. For us, too, redemption involves surrender. We are the possession of Him who has purchased us. And the keener our consciousness of Jesus’ sacrifice for us, the more fully will we yield ourselves to Him as His property, and His alone. Our Saviour becomes our Master in very truth. His will and ours are one.

“. . . called to be an apostle . . .” Paul never lost sight of the fact that his was a divine vocation. He had not sought the work for himself, he had been thrust into it by the Lord. This assurance gave tremendous driving power to his service. He was ever impelled by a divine imperative.

Unless Christian workers today are mastered by the conviction that they are under commission from Christ, their labors will be but the firing of blank cartridges. We are bound to fail in our calling, if we forget that our calling is from God and not of man.

“. . . separated unto . . .” Separation is here regarded as God’s act. Paul had been ordained by the church, but that was not enough: his real ordination was of God. The laying on of hands in any ordination service is but a hollow mockery except God has first laid His hand on the candidate, separating him from the world to His own holy service.

“. . . the gospel of God.” What we see in the Gospel governs what we do with the Gospel. The Gospel is not of man, it is of God; it must be embraced as a revelation from God to effect a revolution in life. We shall get far more fruitage from the Gospel when convinced that its rootage is in God and nowhere else.

#### 2. The message (Rom 1:2-4)

##### a) It is foretold in the Old Testament (Rom 1:2)

“. . . which he promised afore by his prophets in the holy Scriptures . . .” As Augustine has so succinctly put it, the New Testament is latent, or concealed, in the Old; and the Old Testament is patent, or revealed, in the New. This being so, we ought to read the two Testaments, each in the fuller light shed upon it by the other.

##### b) It concerns the God-Man (Rom 1:3-4)

“. . . concerning his Son . . .” The living Word is the key to the written Word. Unless we know that the central message of the Bible is Jesus Christ we cannot hope to understand it.

“. . . who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh . . .” The Greek word translated “was born” denotes transition, change from one state of being to another. It is a clear statement of the Incarnation, the Son of God become man.

“. . . declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead . . .” The rising of Jesus Christ from the dead made it abundantly clear that He was indeed the very Son of God. God wants men to know that Jesus Christ is His eternal and only-begotten Son; and men need desperately to know Him in that relationship.

“. . . according to the spirit of holiness . . .” is a description of Christ ethically, even as the phrase “according to the flesh” describes Him physically. Jesus Christ was, and is, holy.

“. . . Concerning . . . Jesus Christ our Lord.” Does He who revealed God master me? Do I make the Lord my Lord in each and every experience of life?

### 3. The mission (Rom 1:5)

“By whom we have received grace and apostleship . . .” The mission of the apostle was to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles at large. There is rich significance in the connection between these two words “grace” and “apostleship.”

Paul knew that his apostleship was his one and only work in life, and that he could not hope to fulfill that mission apart from the ever-available grace of God. And not only so, but he felt that the very possession of this grace constituted in itself a summons to service. All this has an intimate bearing upon our own lives. Talents involve labor. Gifts are calls. Blessings entail duties. The treasure that we have in Jesus means service for Jesus. Springs of inspiration are to overflow in streams of dedication. We are bound to live for Him who lives in us, whether or not we have been called into full-time Christian service. Regardless of the work whereby we earn our daily bread, our real calling as Christians is to live so as to glorify our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

“. . . for obedience of faith . . .” What is meant by this phrase? Nothing less than the obedience which faith inspires. Works are at once the proof and the fruit of faith. If we believe in Jesus with all our hearts, we have to obey Him; we cannot do otherwise. The way to bear more fruit for Christ is to have more faith in Him. Faith gives strength to see and to do.

“. . . among all the nations, for his name’s sake.” The more complete our knowledge of Jesus is experimentally, the more potent will His name prove to be as a motive for Christian work, and for the support of missions at home and abroad. The revelation of God in Christ should result in dedication to God through Christ. Widened vision bears fruit in strengthened service.

### 4. The readers (Rom 1:6-7)

“Among whom are ye also . . .” Paul here reminds his readers that they, too, have been made the recipients of the blessings of the Gospel. They were a branch of the Church of Christ which was rapidly spreading throughout the known world.

Local churches need to be brought to see their vital connection with the Church as a whole. And yet there are churches that do not believe in missions. Where would the churches in our own country be if missionaries had never brought to our distant progenitors a saving knowledge of Christ? Churches born of missions with a scorn for missions-what an anomaly!

“. . . called to be Jesus Christ's . . .” The apostle would not have his readers unmindful of the fact that they have been called to be the peculiar property of the One who redeemed them. We are Christ's and Christ is ours. Jesus is precious to us, and we are precious to Jesus. Each one of us who owns His name should be able to pray from the bottom of his heart, “O Jesus, Thou art mine, and I am Thine, forever and forever.”

“. . . to all that are in Rome, beloved of God . . .” Rome was by no means a heavenly city. It was a sink of iniquity. Wickedness abounded. And yet, Paul calls to the attention of his readers, living as they did in an exceedingly pagan and sinful environment, you are the objects of God's infinite love, “called to be saints,” that is to say, God's own personal and priceless possession.

The night of sin has settled heavily upon our generation. If we be in Christ and Christ be in us, we can shine, and we must shine for Him like the stars, no matter how great the outer gloom may be.

“. . . called to be saints . . .” The source of the love governs the goal of the call. Because God loves us, He calls us to be His and to be like Him. Election means possession for God's own purposes. A visualization of our calling aids in the realization of our calling. We need to see what we are called to as well as what we are saved from. “Saints” is a term descriptive of position in Christ, not necessarily of attainment in grace. Nevertheless, we should seek to become experimentally what we are positionally. And the best way to achieve saintliness of character is to realize the high and holy ties that unite us with Christ. We are to look not inward at self but upward to Christ. To recognize Christ's ownership is to experience Christ's craftsmanship. We need to live very close to Jesus. We must be held tight to be made right.

“. . . Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ . . .” Even a casual reading of Paul's letters will disclose how habitually he links the name of Christ with that of God the Father on a plane of equality. The apostle's belief in the deity of our Lord can be incontestably established from a reading of no more than the salutation in his letters.

“Grace . . . peace.” The source and sum of our blessings as Christians is peace rooted in grace.

We cannot know the peace of God apart from the grace of God. Acceptance of His grace in Christ is the one and only way whereby we can have peace with God and consequently know the peace of God which passeth all understanding. As the atmosphere of the earth is necessary to the diffusion of the light and warmth of the sun for the benefit of mankind, so it is only as we are in Christ that we can experience the grace and peace of God made manifest and available in Him.

**B. PAUL'S PURPOSE TO VISIT ROME (Rom 1:8-15)** 1. The church in Rome, a radiating center for the faith (Rom 1:8)

“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all . . .” Such expressions of gratitude to God for the spiritual progress and fruitfulness of believers is very characteristic of the great apostle. If the churches he planted or had peculiar interest in for one reason or another were prospering in grace, it mattered not what he himself might be called upon to undergo in the way of opposition,

danger, and sacrifice. Do we have as much of that spirit as we should?

“. . . that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world.” Rome was the capital city of the Empire, and so the church in that center would, other things being equal, have a wide influence for good or ill by virtue of its strategic position. The greater the prominence of a church, the heavier is the obligation resting upon it to see that its light of witness be undimmed by any removable flaw or weakness.

How many churches covet fame for purity in faith and love as feverishly as they seek more worldly kinds of distinction?

## 2. Paul's yearning to visit Rome (Rom 1:9-10)

“For God is my witness . . .” It is not uncommon with Paul to call upon God to witness the integrity of his purpose, the sincerity of his motives. He kept his heart open to his Maker, flooded with the sunlight of truth. How well can our inner life stand up under such scrutiny? The world sees the flowing of the stream, the Lord beholds the feeding of the springs. Outward fruitfulness for the Lord is conditioned by inward faithfulness to the Lord.

“. . . whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son . . .” “in my spirit” refers to the organ or instrument of service; “in the gospel of his Son” is the sphere of service. Our souls are Christ's tools, the instruments upon which He plays and through which He makes His message known. What sort of care do we take of them? Costly tools must not be exposed to rust and ruin. The musician guards his precious instrument against all possible damage.

Do we appreciate the fact that our souls are so priceless and invaluable in the work of Christ that only He Himself can preserve them from loss and injury? Furthermore, let us not neglect the cultivation of our inner life in our zeal for outward service. God must build in us to build with us. Our sphere of service “in the gospel of his Son” should guide us in the care of the spirit. We shall forfeit many a precious opportunity to serve our Lord if we are careless about being kept in His hand.

“. . . without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.” The apostle devoted many a long hour to intercessory prayer. How faithful are we in this sacred privilege and obligation? God judges us by how we pray as well as by what we do. What we ask of God for our fellow Christians has a great deal of effect upon what we see in them and do for them.

The effectiveness of our witnessing to the unsaved depends greatly upon the intensity of our prayers in their behalf. Neglect of intercessory prayer, like a protracted drought, is retarding the progress of Christ's kingdom.

“Always in my prayers making request if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.” Paul's way lay in God's will.

Through much arduous and painful discipline he had come to learn the value and necessity of absolute reliance upon divine leading. Disappointments that make us rest upon His appointments are blessings in disguise. Are we as concerned about what God wants to do through us as we are in what we want God to do for us? As with the strange combinations of circumstances that finally brought to full fruition Paul's dreams of visiting Rome, so God sometimes brings us to blessed

goals by way of bewildering and arduous detours.

### 3. Reasons for Paul's longing to visit Rome (Rom 1:11-15)

In verses Rom 1:11-15 we find Paul giving three reasons why he yearns to visit the church in Rome. And these three reasons throw an interesting sidelight upon his personality.

#### a) That the apostle and the Church may be mutually blessed (Rom 1:11-13)

"For I long to see you that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established . . ." Like an artist whose love of beauty is an incessant urge for him to reproduce in concrete media the visions of loveliness that fill his own soul, so Paul's love for Christ made him want ever to bring the graces of the Spirit into fuller bloom in the lives of all with whom he came into contact. How ardently do we yearn to grow into the likeness of Jesus? What we really want to give of Christ to others is contingent upon what we let Christ do for us. To impart we must first possess. It is only out of a wealthy fellowship with Christ which is a living reality at the very center of our being that we can assist and inspire others to grow in Him.

". . . That is, that I may be comforted together with you." Observe the exquisite delicacy of the apostle. He does not want these Christians to think he is writing from a pedestal. "I may have something to give to you," he says in effect, "but you have it in you to make a real contribution to my own heart and life."

Is there not in this much that is richly suggestive? We can bestow far more upon other people in the way of moral and spiritual benefits when we are quick to perceive what we in turn may receive from them of inspiration and guidance in the higher life. Such receptivity will multiply our productivity in influence.

We must be keen to discern all available fountains of inspiration, ever on the alert to increase our spiritual capital. An attitude of superiority that refuses to learn from fellow Christians will go far toward crippling our influence for God. We need to pray to be kept humbly appreciative as well as fervently aggressive.

#### b) That he might gather fruit from the church (Rom 1:13)

"Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you (and was let [hindered] hitherto) . . ." While we do not know definitely what hindrances Paul may have had in mind, the probability is that the obstacle was evangelistic work elsewhere.

Paul's labors were ever subject to the Spirit's guidance. More than once his well-laid plans were upset by divine interference, or, perhaps we had better say, overruling providence. We who live for Christ must be seen to be led of Christ. This, it might be mentioned, was one secret of Martin Luther's mighty hold upon the people of Germany in the Protestant Reformation. Men trusted him because it was so evident that he was seeking to follow step by step in the path that God was marking out for him. Those of us who are privileged to be spiritual leaders of others, must show in our whole bearing that all of our living and serving is under divine supervision.

". . . that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other [in the rest of the] Gentiles." Paul had fruit because he prayed and planned and worked. Fruitlessness may often be

charged to aimlessness and shiftlessness. There is no such thing in the spiritual realm as a spontaneous generation of harvests. The fruit we reap comes from the seed we plant and cultivate under God. Toiling goes before reaping.

Now this fruit may mean one or the other of two things, or possibly both. It may have reference to an increased number of converts or else to growth in grace and knowledge on the part of those who have already accepted Christ.

We rather think the apostle has both considerations in view. If so, he is sounding a much needed note for our modern church. Neither the extensive nor the intensive work of the church must be sacrificed, the one to the other. The fires of evangelism must never be allowed to die down. There must be no resting on our laurels while strategic positions remain to be won for our Lord.

Feeding the saints must not take the place of seeking the lost. Nor on the other hand, must we allow the evangelization of the lost to make us unmindful of the edification of the saved.

Christians who fail to grow in Christ will lose out in their ability to win souls for Christ. The enrichment of the members of the church must keep pace with the expansion of the numbers on the roll.

c) That he might make partial payment of his indebtedness to the world (Rom 1:14-15)

“I am debtor both to Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise [foolish].” This would mean practically the whole known world in Paul’s time. The Greeks and Romans regarded all the rest of mankind as barbarians. The former were wise, all others were foolish. And who would venture to say that every vestige of racial pride has perished from the earth? There is all too much of it today nourishing the roots of bitterness and fomenting strife and tragic divisions, even within the Church.

We do well to emulate the apostle in his tender sense of indebtedness. Which in our thinking is the major consideration-what the world owes us, or what we owe the world? Forgetting the debts we owe is far more impoverishing than neglect of the debts owed us. Fulfillment of our duties adds far more to our wealth than insistence on our rights. Pride that ignores its receipts from outside sources is a deadly drain upon the capital of the spirit. Our discernment of debt governs our enrichment in grace.

We are no more affluent spiritually than the indebtedness we acknowledge. Our privileges yield us revenue only in so far as we convert them into obligations. Not until we feel and know that our privileges in Christ constitute an inescapable responsibility to serve Him with all we are and have will the fabulous treasures that God has for us in Jesus enrich our souls as they can and should.

In the spiritual realm, if not in the material, we keep what we give and lose what we keep.

“So, as much as in me is, I am ready . . .” Paul was willing, yes, but he realized that apart from God’s help all of his willingness was of no avail. Do we take honest stock of the resources at our command for the fulfillment of our duties, or do we neglect faithful introspection in order to evade our responsibilities? The duties that God requires of us insure supplies from God. He does not send his workmen to their tasks without the necessary tools and resources. But the trouble is, we do not seek and take what God has for us to use in his service.

“. . . I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are at Rome.” Rome-the mighty capital of the empire; Rome- where wealth and pride and education abounded; Rome-where the forces of sin held high carnival; Rome- where skepticism was rampant, and genuine piety was laughed out of court. Rome! Well might Paul, from a human standpoint, have quavered at the prospect of carrying the pure and simple Gospel to this proud and mighty city.

We are often called upon to serve Jesus Christ in places of exceedingly great difficulty where the atmosphere is hostile to the last degree and the situation seems absolutely impenetrable. We are tempted to lose heart and side-step. We are intimidated rather than invigorated by strategic opportunities to witness for Jesus under fire. We must not let the pride that towers in the world freeze the grace that flowers in the soul. We forget that Christ transcends every Rome, that He is greater than all the pride and all the might in the world. If we truly believe that Christ is all-powerful, we will go with the Gospel wherever He sends us. We will not be afraid even to go to Rome for Him.

C. THESIS OF THE EPISTLE (Rom 1:16-17) In verses Rom 1:16-17 of this first chapter we come to the thesis of the Epistle -a clear and strong statement of the great doctrine which is to be established by such irrefutable logic in the succeeding chapters. And what is this doctrine? It is the great doctrine of justification by faith, or, to put it another way, the doctrine of salvation by grace. It was the prayerful reading of these two verses, it may be of interest to recall, that brought Martin Luther out into the full light of a saving faith in Christ.

#### 1. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom 1:16)

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel . . .” Paul was proud of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He gloried in the cross. He made his boast in the atonement wrought on Calvary. Never did he hesitate to bear witness to what he had experienced of the saving and keeping power of Jesus.

May it not be that many people are ashamed of the Gospel because they pay more heed to what the world says of it than to what the Lord does with it?

“. . . for it is the power of God unto salvation . . .” The Gospel is like the forces of nature in that we have to test it to know its power. If we want to understand the strength afforded by the grace of God, we must launch out upon it. Is it not highly significant that those who make the most use of the Gospel have the least doubt of its efficacy to meet all the moral and spiritual needs of men? In view of the multiplying miracles wrought in the lives of men through its agency, it is as unscientific, to say the least, to question the potency of the Gospel as it would be to deny the amazing marvels of electricity in our day.

“. . . to every one that believeth . . .” Electric appliances must be rightly connected before they will work. Just so, we must believe in the Gospel to receive power from the Gospel. Unbelief is a nonconductor of spiritual energy. Faith wires the soul for grace.

“. . . to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” By the Greeks is meant the whole non-Jewish world. The term is virtually equivalent to Gentile. Neither the religious privileges, enjoyed by the Jews, nor the cultural, political and other advantages possessed by people of other races afforded ground for exemption from the need of redeeming grace.

The salvation which God has provided for all must be accepted by all, Jew and Gentile alike.

Mankind is one in its need of what God in Christ alone can do for men and women of every time, place, class and race. Yet how many Christians are indifferent to the Great Commission to carry the Gospel into all the world, or light-heartedly evade the duty of obedience by maintaining that Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and so forth, is good enough for the adherents of these respective faiths.

## 2. Justification by faith (Rom 1:17)

“For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith, as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith.”

Here we have the thesis of the Epistle in a nutshell, namely, that men are saved by believing in the Christ who is the full and perfect revelation of God as holy love. Faith appropriates the righteousness that is in Him. This great truth receives fuller treatment further along in the Epistle. Here we simply state it and pass on.

## 2.04. Part One - Condemnation for Sin (1:18-3:20)

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### Part One - Condemnation for Sin (1:18-3:20)

#### CHAPTER FOUR A. GUILT OF THE GENTILES (Rom 1:18-32) 1. Night for light (Rom 1:18-23)

##### a) God's right to condemn (Rom 1:18-19 a)

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold [hinder, suppress] the truth in unrighteousness . . ." Being holy, God can never condone but must ever condemn every form of sin. It rests with men whether they will experience the love or the wrath of God.

##### b) The light from God is twofold (Rom 1:19-20)

In these two verses we have a clear reminder that the light from God is twofold, namely, the light of conscience and the light of nature-and these two are closely related.

". . . that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them." There is that within man- bestowed by the Creator Himself-which should find enough of the power and wisdom of God in nature to keep him from plunging into the sea of idolatry and worshiping the creature rather than the Creator. Pride blinds to truth. But men are held accountable for the knowable as well as the known truth of God. They are responsible for receiving the truth that God wants to bestow. Conscience is the power of moral perception, a lamp that God has lighted in the soul. Persistent sin will blot out this inner light. "If the light therefore that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mat 6:23).

The magnifying of self rather than the glorifying of God in the works of His hands results in the blinding of conscience.

"For the invisible things of him from [since] the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead [divinity], so that they are without excuse . . ."

We do not really see the visible and temporal creation unless we see it through the invisible and eternal. He, for example, who does not perceive the glory of the ocean, the majesty of the mountains, or the splendor of the sunset, does not really see these scenic masterpieces of nature even though they be objectively presented to his organs of vision. In their pride men allow the world of nature (which God intended to be a revelation to men of His power, wisdom, and beauty) to conceal the Creator from their eyes and remove Him from their thoughts.

##### c) The night of idolatry (Rom 1:21-23)

". . . because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations [reasonings] and their foolish [senseless] heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools . . ." Here we find thanklessness (Rom 1:21

a) issuing in senselessness (Rom 1:21-22), and senselessness culminating in godlessness. The sequence is admonitory.

Failing to thank God for His revelation of Himself in conscience and in nature, it was not long before the heathen fell into abysmal ignorance, and lost the knowledge of God they had once possessed. Error thrives when truth is spurned.

“. . . and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.” Just as a vine, if it be not provided with a trellis to climb, will cling to something else, even so men who will not yield to the truth are bound to fall victims to the false.

What men reject as a way to God they often convert into a way from God. Men today are being destroyed by the gods they have made for themselves. The world today needs fewer man-made gods and more God-made men. It is because of a superabundance of false gods that human society is in such a terrible plight. When men scorn the revelation of God, the tides of truth go out and leave them stranded on the mudflats of degradation.

## 2. A threefold abandonment (Rom 1:24-32)

In these verses Paul describes in lurid colors how the Gentiles having abandoned God for idolatry have been abandoned by God to iniquity. This abandonment is threefold.

### a) The abandonment to carnal immorality (Rom 1:24-25)

“Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves . . .” In the spiritual, as in the natural realm, decay sets in when the source of life is withdrawn. Men cannot turn from God without turning to sin. Divorced from religion, morality, like flowers torn up by the roots, is destined to wither and die.

Man can rise no higher than the object he worships. He must be drawn upward to escape being pulled downward. In the history of paganism idolatry and immorality are inseparable.

“. . . Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature . . .” We abuse the truth we refuse. We emulate what we idolize. There are countless men and women today even in so-called Christian lands who give themselves over shamelessly to the worship and service of the things of sense and to the products of their own hands.

“. . . more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” Paul was horrified as he contemplated the idolatries and iniquities of paganism. His soul felt stifled. The fumes seemed to burn his inmost being. Sickened to the very soul by this contemplation of heathenism, Paul turns to God in an outburst of doxology. Do we succumb to the prevalent idolatries of our day, or do we turn our eyes from them in utter revulsion? The worship of mammon that we behold on every hand should serve only to rekindle our adoration of the true God and cause our zeal for Him to burn at white heat.

### b) Abandonment to carnal abnormality (Rom 1:26-27)

These verses have reference to such depths of carnal abnormality in the heathen world of Paul's day as would be incredible were it not for the fact that in the writings of pagan authors themselves and in uncovered ancient ruins there is a superabundance of confirmation of these frightful moral

perversions to which the apostle refers.

Whereas verses Rom 1:24-25 deal with unbridled indulgence in natural lusts, the following two verses have to do with surrender to passions that are against nature. Yielding immoderately to desires that in themselves are divinely implanted for a beneficent purpose all too often leads into bondage to worse passions, those of sensual abnormality. The appetite grows by what it feeds upon. Sins, like alcoholic beverages, grow tame and call for ever more potent satisfactions.

c) Abandonment to moral perversity (Rom 1:28-32)

This passage is a frightful catalogue of sins. They are sins of the mind rather than of the flesh, and may roughly be brought under the broad twofold classification of hate and pride. Sin comes in when God goes out. Souls not cultivated for God become overrun with all manner of noxious growths. Not to make an exhaustive analysis of the sins enumerated in these verses, let us just touch upon two or three of the most significant phrases.

“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind . . .” A reprobate mind is a mind in which the distinction between right and wrong is confused or lost. But it is to be remembered that such defects of the moral sense do not absolve from guilt. Man is held accountable for living up to the light which he can obtain, not to the light which he actually possesses. Willing ignorance of the truth spells not bliss but doom.

“ . . . haters of God [hateful to God]. . .” It is instructive to note this reference to men’s attitude to God dropped into the list of their sins of pride and hate toward one another. Severance from God frequently leads to injury to men. Godlessness and lovelessness are close neighbors. We are all too likely to hurt men when we do not love God, viewing them as means rather than as ends in themselves.

“ . . . who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit [practice] such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also have pleasure in them that do them.” The apostle here lays his finger upon a very common feature of sin. More is implied in the words than is stated. It is not simply approval of those who share in the life of sin that is meant, but ill-disguised contempt for all who live on a higher plane. One of the terrible results of violating the conscience is that men begin to brag of their sins and try to drag others down to their own low level.

B. JEW AND GENTILE ALIKE SUBJECT TO JUDGMENT OF GOD (Rom 2:1-16) 1. In judging others men condemn themselves (Rom 2:1-3)

In these verses, while Paul does not mention the Jews by name, we may readily infer from the closing part of the chapter that they are the ones he has here particularly in mind.

“And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?”

Paul does not mean that the Jew does the same identical things as the Gentile, but that his conduct is the same in that he sins against the light. In other words, sin is sin although sins differ. And yet freedom from this or that type of sin often blinds men to the presence of sin in their hearts.

Not a few of the Jews of Paul's day undoubtedly felt that the vials of condemnation they poured out upon the wickedness of other men erased much of their own obligation to keep the law. We, too, can be very angry at the sins in the world at large and still have plenty of the poison in our own hearts. Our rebuking sin in others affords no excuse for condoning sin in ourselves.

## 2. Impenitence converts God's grace into wrath (Rom 2:4-5)

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness . . . but after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God . . ." "The riches of his goodness" means the kindness which disposes one to do good. The Jew relied upon his peculiar racial privileges to insure him against divine condemnation. He tended to despise the mercy of God as good-natured indifference to sin. Against such easy-going presumption the apostle inveighs most heavily. Impenitence converts grace into wrath. Electricity is a kind servant but a hard master. An aid to life when obeyed, it means an end to life when defied. Fire may cheer or it may ruin. It amounts to contempt of God's goodness if a man forgets that its end is not to permit him to sin but to lead him to repentance. The divine goodness bestowed on us should make us seek the moral goodness required of us.

## 3. God rewards every man according to his works (Rom 2:6-9 a)

". . . who will render to every man according to his works . . ." God's judgments are unerring because His knowledge is infallible and His standards are inflexible.

God sees truly because He knows fully. His perfect knowledge of what is right involves perfect knowledge of what is wrong. The fount of justice in God is a pledge of justice to man. No man, however, can be saved by his works. Paul is writing of those under the law.

### a) Blessedness for the good (Rom 2:7)

". . . to them that by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life . . ." Blessedness for the righteous and misery for the wicked is not an arbitrary judgment but an inherently inevitable result, God and man being what they are. The objects sought for as mentioned in verse 7 are spiritual and eternal in their nature, namely, the glory of the future life, honor with God, the very life of God in the soul which transcends all the barriers of time and space.

They who truly seek eternal life have it, such is the apostle's contention. The sincerity of man's seeking is shown in his meeting the conditions for obtaining the eternal life that God sets forth.

### b) Wretchedness for the bad (Rom 2:8-9 a)

". . . but unto them that are contentious [factious], and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, indignation and wrath . . ." Those referred to here are the men and women who resist God as wholeheartedly as the righteous obey Him. Sin brings its own penalty.

- It breaks down wholesome restraints.

- It stores the cellars of the soul with bombs liable to explode at any time.

- It poisons the springs of life.
- It pours vinegar into God's cream.

As truly as nature obeys the man who obeys nature, and destroys him who defies her, so surely does God bless the man who keeps His law and condemn the man who flouts it. The laws of the moral cosmos are as inviolable as those that rule in the world of nature. His we are to whom we bow the knee. Rejection of the Saviour is subjection to the devil. Neutrality is out of the question.

#### 4. Jew and Gentile alike fall under the judgment (Rom 2:9-11)

“. . . of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh for good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God.” Men are judged according to their works, regardless of all racial and national distinctions, irrespective of whether they have had, or have not had, the special revelation given to Israel.

#### 5. Men will be judged by the light they have (Rom 2:12-16) a) Jews by the written and Gentiles by the unwritten law (Rom 2:12-13)

“For as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified).” In other words, the basis of judgment is not the hearing but the doing of the law. Men are to be judged not by the law they do not have, but by the law they do have.

The Jews thought that because they knew the law they needed not to worry about condemnation or punishment. They overlooked the fact that education in the law of God is no substitute for dedication to the will of God. There can be no fellowship with God apart from obedience. Wealth of knowledge does not atone for lack of practice.

#### b) Gentiles have the unwritten law of conscience (Rom 2:14-16)

As the Jews had the law written on tablets of stone, the Gentiles have the law written on their conscience (see interpretation of Rom 1:19), and by this law will they be judged.

“. . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.” We must not let the shifting standards of the world blind us to the changelessness of the divine requirements. The fashion of sin is not changed by making it fashionable. Customs do not create ethics. The will of God has been revealed in His Son. God will judge the secrets of men by the Lord Jesus. That is a solemnizing thought. Men may have secret sins, may cherish hatred and all kinds of things offensive to God, which may not in this life break out into open sin; but the time is coming when all hidden iniquity will be uncovered and judged by none other than our Lord Jesus Christ.

### C. THE JEW JUDGED NOT BY HIS HAVING,

#### BUT BY HIS DOING OF THE LAW (Rom 2:17-29) 1. The Jew takes pride in the law (Rom 2:17-20)

##### a) In having the law (Rom 2:17-18)

“Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God . . .” The Jews boasted of having the law, and gloried in God as an exclusive possession. How do we glory in God? Selfishly or unselfishly? Do we think more of how God may advance our interests, or of how we may advance His interests?

“. . . and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law . . .” The Jewish people did know the law; they were well educated in it. They did have ethical discernment. They were highly trained in the principles of religion and morality. But knowledge is not practice. Approvals are not achievements. Instruction is not fulfillment. The Jew knew the law, but did not obey it as he should have done.

#### b) In teaching the law (Rom 2:19-20)

“. . . and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, a instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the Law.” Now it was a highly praiseworthy aim on the part of the Jew that, having the law, he should seek to teach and to instruct those who were unlearned in the way of righteousness. But he did this in an arrogant way, feeling himself under little or no obligation to practice what he preached. The Jews were meant by God to be guides for the Gentiles, for salvation is of the Jews. But this purpose of the Lord had been hampered by their pride of privilege. And we on our part should learn to view our blessings in the light of our stewardship.

#### 2. The Jew sins in breaking the law he teaches (Rom 2:21-23)

In these verses the apostle puts several very pertinent and searching questions whereby he seeks to waken the Jewish conscience to the futility of not living up to their own moral instruction imparted to others. The Jew did not always practice what he preached. There were flagrant violations of the law.

“Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?” The Talmud, which was the book of oral traditions that had accumulated over a course of centuries, charged the crime of adultery to three of the most illustrious rabbis.

“Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?” Not a few of the Jews had been guilty of robbing idol temples in spite of their professed horror of idol worship.

The charges that Paul brings against the Jews can be applied to others. “Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?” It is fatally easy even for teachers of religion and ethics not to take home to themselves the truths they seek to impress upon their students. We who light the way for others must let the Lord keep our own lamps lit. Our language must not outrun our knowledge.

Profession must not outstrip possession. Except we experience that to which we bear witness, our teaching is but empty vaporizing. Wrongdoing offsets right teaching. Riper wisdom brings greater duty in its train. We must do what we know. Our lives must back up our words. How can we hope to commend the truth we fail to obey?

#### 3. Jewish transgression provokes Gentile derision of the law (Rom 2:24)

“For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through [because of] you, even as it is written.” The Jews were so jealous of the holy name of God that they dared not even pronounce it; they were kept from uttering it by a paralyzing superstitious fear. And yet, charges Paul, many of them lived such inconsistent and scandalous lives as caused Gentiles to blaspheme the name of the Lord.

This is a staggering accusation that may well drive us to a most searching self-examination. It is a solemn thought that unworthy conduct on our part may make men despise the faith that their souls need for eternal salvation.

Inconsistent Christian living makes religion appear to be a farce rather than a force. We are to make it a force by affording it abundant channels for working in and through us for the good of men and the glory of God. We need ever to be on our guard lest our departures from the path of Christian probity and rectitude provide unbelievers with excuses for rejecting Christ, excuses that will prove but millstones to drag them down to eternal death in the sea of perdition.

But there is another side to the matter to which those outside the fold do well to pay heed, and it is this: although men may think they are excused from becoming Christians because of hypocrites in the church, such is not the case; every man stands or falls because of his personal faith or lack of faith in Jesus Christ.

#### 4. Transgression nullifies possession of the law (Rom 2:25)

“For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.” We reveal that we do not truly possess what we lightly transgress. Forms, Paul says in effect, are of value if they are indices or outward signs of inward possession. But they are worthless if made a substitute for truth, if they take the place of reality it is their function merely to subserve. They are then like plates without food, purses without money, gangplanks after the ship has sailed. Rites when rightly used may be an aid to grace; when wrongly used they become a means of death.

#### 5. Gentile fulfillment is a rebuke to Jewish transgression of the law (Rom 2:26-27)

“Shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?” A man swimming without water wings is a rebuke to the man who is sinking with deflated water wings. The savage who instinctively obeys the laws of health although he has never seen a book on medicine or hygiene rebukes the learned physician who, with all his medical knowledge, is digging his own grave by constantly flouting the most elementary principles of healthful living.

So Paul would have his Jewish readers see the utter futility of mistaking circumcision for the reality it was designed to express, namely, the keeping of covenant relations with God. The laws of God point the way to the life of God. A signpost is of no value if one does not follow the path to safety. Because of the very nature of God and of man, men must obey the laws of God. Men can no more enter into a transforming fellowship with God apart from obedience to the commandments of God than chemical transformations can be effected without conforming to the inviolable laws that govern the affinity and combination of chemical elements.

#### 6. The true Jew is one who is a Jew inwardly (Rom 2:28-29)

“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly . . . but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly.” This is in line with New Testament emphasis upon the antipodal contrast between formality and reality. The name does not make the man; the man makes the name. Labels name the products; they do not bring them into being.

A true Jew, says Paul, is one who is living in covenant relations with God, not one who clings to the empty shell after the living reality has escaped. May we not see in this a pertinent application to the indispensability of genuineness in Christian living? The cross is not an ornament to be worn, but a principle to be lived. He is a Christian who possesses as well as professes Christ. Cut flowers are lovely to look at, and are fragrant for a short time, but they soon die. We may be able to make a favorable impression for a while, but unless we are living in Christ like the plant in the soil, we may be Christians outwardly, but certainly not inwardly.

#### D. ADVANTAGE OF THE JEW WORKS HIS GREATER CONDEMNATION (Rom 3:1-8)

##### 1. He has the stewardship of revelation (Rom 3:1-2)

“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?” The apostle realizes that the Jew, in view of this terrific indictment, may well ask, if that be so, what advantage do we have? Why have we been made the recipients of God’s peculiar favor and blessing down through the centuries if we are to be condemned with all the rest of the people?

“Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.” What were these oracles of God? Some scholars think they were only the Pentateuch, others regard them as referring to the prophecies; but the most reasonable interpretation is that they comprise the entire Old Testament, which from beginning to end points to the coming One, even Jesus Christ.

The Jews as a chosen people were made the recipients of special revelation in order that through them the truth might be brought to the world. Judaism proved to be a remarkable preparation for the coming of Christianity. After the captivity in Babylon, only about 40,000 returned to Jerusalem. Following the conquest of Alexander the Great, hundreds of thousands of Jews settled in the Greek cities founded by him. Wherever they went they disseminated the belief in one God and the hope of the Messiah.

The Old Testament was translated into the Greek Septuagint, and through it, many Gentiles were brought to embrace the basic tenets of the Hebrew faith and of the moral laws of Moses. Synagogues dotted the known world, and it was in them that the Gospel was first proclaimed in many important centers. So, in a very real way, the Hebrew dispersion served, in the providence of God, to prepare the way for the spread of the Gospel. But the pity and tragedy of it is that when Christ came, the Jews as a nation rejected him.

##### 2. Faithlessness of the Jews a foil to the faithfulness of God (Rom 3:3-4)

“For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?” The point Paul is making is this: The Jews as a people, despite many notable individual exceptions, have refused belief in the Gospel as the fulfillment of the promises in the Old Testament; does this unbelief on their part impugn or call in question God’s faithfulness in keeping His Word? Merely to ask such a question, implies the apostle, is to answer it in an emphatic negative. This question is treated at length in chapters 9, 10, and 11.

“God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.” “He cannot deny himself” (2Ti 2:13). Let us stake our faith upon the fact that God never can and never will be untrue to His own nature as holy love. Apparent contradictions no more destroy the veracity of God than intercepting clouds remove the mountains they hide from view.

3. This fact, however, does not exempt the Jew from judgment (Rom 3:5-8)

“But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance [visiteth with wrath]?” In other words, if sin be a foil for grace, how can God justly punish for sin? If my unbelief does not affect God’s faithfulness, how can I be condemned?

The answer to such questions is that we can be condemned for rejecting God’s faithfulness, for making it null and void in our lives, for hindering its entrance into the lives of others. “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1Jn 1:5).

Men may be unfaithful to God, they may deny His goodness and reject His promises, but all this does not affect the nature of God. Is the sunlight to blame, if a man, refusing to have anything to do with it, insists upon living in a dark, damp cellar, and thereby brings upon himself a deadly disease? By rejecting what God has prepared and designed to bring eternal life, even our redemption effected on Calvary’s cross, we subject ourselves to eternal condemnation-God is not to blame.

“God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?” God could not judge the world, if He were unjust. As judge of all, He must be just to all; whatever philosophies or speculations run counter to this principle must be wrong.

“And not rather (as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil that good may comet whose damnation [condemnation] is just.” The apostle here anticipates the Antinomian error which receives further treatment subsequently in this Epistle and in the pastoral Epistles written several years later.

## E. THE WHOLE WORLD, JEW AND GENTILE,

GUILTY BEFORE GOD (Rom 3:9-20) 1. Jew and Gentile alike under sin (Rom 3:9)

“What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin . . .” Jews and Gentiles are alike under sin. True, the Jews may boast of superiority in point of possession of the law; but, as Paul has already demonstrated, they are judged by their doing and not by their possessing the law. And the Jew, no less than the Greek, is under the bondage of the law and in subjection to sin because of his failure to live up to the moral requirements of the law in which he takes such pride. Possession is not attainment.

2. Universal sinfulness proved from the Old Testament (Rom 3:10-18)

Jews and Christians in Paul’s day had what were known as Testimonia, collections of quotations from the Old Testament strung together for various purposes as proof texts. The passage in verses Rom 3:10-18 may be a ready-made selection, or it may be a series of Old Testament quotations which he put together himself. At any rate, the effect of this assemblage of proof texts is

as if Paul had said, "I can express my opinion in inspired words; therefore it must carry the weight of the truth of God." (This, however, is not to deny that the Pauline Epistles are every whit as much inspired of God as the Old Testament Scriptures.) 3. The whole world answerable to God (Rom 3:19)

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." The whole world is answerable to God. Man has sinned against God and owes Him satisfaction. It is not the offending sinner, but the offended God to whom belongs the prerogative of stating the terms of reconciliation. We are judged not according to what we think God thinks of sin, but by what God says He thinks of it.

4. By the law comes knowledge of sin (Rom 3:20)

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." With this verse it will be helpful to correlate Gal 3:19-22 where the apostle shows that the law was in no sense an abrogation of the promise given to Abraham four hundred and thirty years earlier.

The promise and the law are not in conflict because they have different functions. Sin necessitated the law; grace precipitated the cross. Men had to be brought under conviction of sin before they could become recipients of salvation by grace. The law was a plowing for the seed, the gospel was a sowing of the seed. The law revealed the need of deliverance, while the cross produced the way of deliverance. The law showed sinners what they lacked in themselves; the cross showed what God had for them in Christ. The law was a tutor or pedagogue to bring them to Christ (Gal 3:24).

". . . for by the law is the knowledge of sin." It is to be carefully noted that the law brings knowledge of sin but not freedom from sin nor power for holiness. The law is an X-ray that reveals his sin to the sinner, but is impotent to remove it. It condemns for sin; it cannot redeem from sin. It shows man his utter helplessness and hopelessness apart from God's redeeming grace.

## 2.05. Part Two - Justification by Faith (3:21-5:21)

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### Part Two - Justification by Faith (3:21-5:21)

CHAPTER FIVE A. PROVIDED IN JESUS CHRIST (Rom 3:21-31) 1. Righteousness of God in Christ available for justification (Rom 3:21-24)

#### a) Manifested in Christ (Rom 3:21)

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested . . .” The apostle never minimized the requirements of the law. He was thoroughly versed in the law, having been, prior to his conversion, a Pharisee of the Pharisees. The holiness required by the law was fully realized in Jesus Christ.

But just what is meant by this righteousness of God? Perhaps we cannot do better than to answer this question in the words of an old Puritan divine, “The righteousness of God is that righteousness which God’s righteousness requires Him to require.” And let it never be forgotten that the only acceptable righteousness God can ever find in men is that which He Himself imputes and imparts to them in the person of His Son.

“ . . . being witnessed by the law and the prophets . . .” We know, of course, that the incarnation and atonement were the crowning fruition of the Old Testament revelation, the fulfillment of all that went before.

#### b) Obtainable through faith in Christ (Rom 3:22)

“ . . . even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe . . .” Like Niagara Falls this righteousness of God in Christ is more than a spectacle to be admired; it is a source of redemptive and transforming power to be appropriated through faith in the Saviour. In Christ and in Him alone, we acquire the righteousness that God requires of us. We become righteous in God’s sight through surrender to God’s Son.

Saving faith in Christ is simply taking what God offers us in Him. Trying to scale the cliff of the law’s inexorable demands, we sooner or later inevitably find ourselves helplessly trapped on a ledge. Yet we must reach the top or fall into eternal condemnation.

But one recourse is left to us, and that is, to seize with the hand of faith the rope of redemptive love that God has let down to us in the person of Jesus Christ who died for our sins.

#### c) Indispensable for all (Rom 3:22-23)

“ . . . for there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God . . .” If all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, then it follows that all are in equal need of grace, the least sinful as well as the most sinful. The strongest swimmer is as helpless to swim across the Atlantic as is the beginner. Compared with God’s standards of perfection, the gradations in natural goodness are like the varying elevations of hills and mountains as over against the distance from

the earth to the stars measured in terms of thousands and millions of light years. Man is helpless to lift himself out of sin. None but Jesus Christ can save him.

d) Available for justification (Rom 3:24-25 a)

“. . . being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation . . .” The righteousness of God is made available for justification through the death of Christ. The cross at one and the same time unveils the righteousness of God and provides a righteousness for men whereby they may become justified in the sight of God. The blood of Jesus shed on Calvary signifies His life offered to God for sin and communicated to men in grace. But it is only through faith, as we have already emphasized at some length, that man appropriates the fruits of the redemptive death of the Saviour.

“. . . through faith in his blood . . .” Faith on the part of the sinner is absolutely indispensable to this transfusion of the redemptive love of God. What Christ is to us is inescapably conditioned by what we let Him be for us. He must be seen and accepted as Saviour to be the Saviour of a particular soul. Newness of life results when the objective revelation of the love of God in Jesus inspires subjective appropriation of it, even as food must be taken and digested if it is to give nourishment to the body, or as medicine must be taken before it can prove efficacious in the cure of the patient.

2. Threefold justification effected on the cross (Rom 3:25-26)

In these two verses we find a threefold justification set forth. God had to justify Himself to men, to justify Himself to Himself, and to justify men to Himself. Apart from the first two, the third form of justification would have been out of the question. God could not justify men if He did not satisfy justice. He cannot for any cause abrogate the attributes that make Him God. Men could never be redeemed to a holiness relaxed in their favor.

a) Justification of God to men (Rom 3:25-26)

“. . . to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God . . .” The apostle is here referring to God’s apparent passing over of sins in the Old Testament dispensation before Christ came.

If taken as making atonement for sins, the sacrifices of animals were, of course, ridiculously inadequate; they were, as we well know, but types of the divine Sacrifice later to be made, but this typological significance of animal sacrifices may not always have been realized by those who were living under the Mosaic system, much less by their heathen neighbors. They were like bank notes: of value only when backed by gold in the government treasury.

Now the cross demonstrated that God, far from regarding sin lightly, was prepared to go to the outermost limit to secure its removal. It revealed His infinite hatred of iniquity and His infinite love of holiness. The death of Jesus demonstrated that God counted no cost too great to pay if only sin might be done away with and holiness made a permanent possession in the lives of believers.

b) Justification of God to God (Rom 3:26 b)

“. . . that he might be just . . .” Were God to give Himself to men as less than infinite holy love. He would be untrue to Himself. What God is governs what God does. When sin came into the world, it

precipitated in God the necessity for the reconciliation of two life principles, namely,

- (1) the communication of Himself in love,
- (2) the preservation of Himself in truth or holiness.

And this inner reconciliation within the divine nature necessitated, as the one and only means to its realization, a sacrificial atonement whereby man could be redeemed from sin.

Let us make use of an analogy to make clear how divine love, coming into conflict with human sin, involved Deity in sacrificial suffering. The love of God, like a stream fed by perennial springs, could not but flow irrepressibly onward, but always, in an undeviating and inescapable course of holiness, like a river imprisoned on either side by sheer perpendicular cliffs several thousand feet in height. The sin of man lay directly in the way, like a precipice in the bed of the river. Since the love of God, being infinite, could not cease flowing, and being holy, could not go around sin compromisingly, there was nothing left but for it to plunge over sin in a Niagara of redemptive sacrifice on the cross of Calvary.

### c) Justification of men to God (Rom 3:26 c)

“. . . and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” The object of Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross was not only the justification of God to men, and of God to Himself, but also of men to God. This last is probably the aspect of this threefold justification effected on Calvary to which the average Christian commonly gives the most thought; and yet its integral relation to the other two should not be overlooked. Apart from the justification of God to men, there could be no real reconciliation of men to God. We have already seen that in redeeming man God could not do violence to His own holy nature. In the deliverance of men from the guilt, power, and penalty of sin there could be not the slightest particle of compromise with sin on the part of Deity. But let it never be forgotten that the God whose justice demanded an eternal penalty on sin is one and the same God whose mercy provided in Jesus Christ an eternal remedy for sin.

### 3. Justification by faith, not by works (Rom 3:27-30)

“Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.” How can men boast of what is theirs only through faith? How can a Christian be proud or self-righteous if he realizes the tremendous price paid for his redemption? All other glorying than in the cross of Jesus Christ is shamefully out of place.

“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” Salvation by faith and dependence on works are mutually exclusive. Christ became a curse for us that He might remove the curse from us (Gal 3:13). Surely he would not have had to suffer such terrible things had there been any other way whereby to save us from sin. The costliness of God’s gift of grace in Christ should make ineffaceably plain the costliness of a trust in works on the part of sinners. Dependence on works is rejection of grace and subjection to sin.

“Is he the God the God of Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yea, of the Gentiles also: it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.” The Jew and the Gentile, says the apostle in effect, are one in their need of redemption and one with regard to God’s willingness to save them by grace.

Let churches everywhere get back to the cross and realize the common yet infinite need that Jesus has met in giving "his life a ransom for many." Transcending all the innumerable differences of race; circumstance, environment, aptitudes, temperament, and everything else that divides men, stands the incontrovertible fact that all are in need of that justification before God which can be appropriated only through faith in the crucified Redeemer. By faith we are made one in Christ.

#### 4. Justification by faith confirms rather than destroys the Law (Rom 3:31)

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Faith is unconditional surrender to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Master. Acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer does not nullify, but rather, glorifies the law, because it is Christ alone who fulfilled the law, and it is through Him, and through Him alone, that we can measure up to the law. Christ purified us with His blood that we might glorify God with our lives. The law is honored by the one and only means whereby its fulfillment is made possible; and it is through the cross that souls are saved from the guilt, power, and penalty of sin and enabled to live righteous and holy lives. It is only in Christ that we receive power to live in and for God.

In this verse Paul has in mind, very likely, the charge against his teaching that it tended toward presumption, toward the Antinomian view that men saved by grace might sin with impunity. Few attacks on his doctrine filled him with such horror. Justification by faith is not justification for flouting moral standards. Freedom from sin is not freedom to sin. This point will come up again in chapter 6.

God's law condemns that God's grace may redeem. We must be brought to see that we are naught in self that we may find all in Christ.

**B. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH EXEMPLIFIED IN ABRAHAM (Rom 4:1-25)** In this fourth chapter of Romans the apostle shows how justification by faith was exemplified in Abraham. We shall cover this section somewhat more summarily than we have the subjects gone before, touching upon the highlights.

#### 1. Abraham's belief in God was accounted to him for righteousness (Rom 4:1-8)

"What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God." If Abraham were saved by works, he could glory in self rather than in God, but that was not the case. Paul vigorously contends that Abraham was justified, not by his works, but rather by his belief in God. Abraham is set forth as our father in the faith, if not in the flesh.

It is the privilege of all who come within range of the Gospel message to enter into the spiritual heritage of Abraham which is pricelessly more precious than any material legacy could possibly be.

"For what saith the Scripture?" Do we turn to the Bible as our fountain of authority on the great questions of life? Some people seem to have the idea that confidence in the Bible is a sign of intellectual backwardness. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The use of this Book in sounding the great depths pertaining to God, the soul, and the meaning and destiny of life is no more narrowing than the use of the telescope in astronomy. Far from contracting, it vastly expands the vision. Especially when read prayerfully under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God

will continually unveil to our adoring gaze new worlds of truth, beauty, and goodness.

“Abraham believed God . . .” When it is said that Abraham believed God, what is meant is his personal trust in God, his acceptance of God’s Word absolutely, simply because it was His Word. Such belief implied trust in the faithfulness and power of God to keep His promises, and so it was faith in the fullest sense.

“. . . and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” Faith in itself is not to be regarded as righteousness. It is the condition, not the ground of acceptance. The ground of acceptance is the mercy of God.

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” The faith of Abraham agrees with Christian faith in the characteristic that it is not of works. Justifying faith is not trust in any thing: it is trust in God. Abraham was saved, not by a general belief, but by his belief in God’s supernatural promise.

Faith saves through creating a medium in and through which the grace of God, like water through irrigation canals, enters our hearts to transform them from deserts into gardens. Faith is simply the surrender of self to that which God alone can do in and for us.

“Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute [reckon] sin.” This quotation from Psa 32:1-11 leads us to wonder whether people appreciate as deeply as they should the blessedness of the forgiveness of sins. Does the pardoning of our iniquities seem to be as imperatively needed as the healing of our bodies when stricken by some deadly disease? The real blessing of forgiven sin is the restoration of fellowship with God. The temporal benefits of having roads reopened and telephone lines repaired after a devastating blizzard are but the faintest illustrations on a material plane of the immeasurable blessing of having God’s forgiveness renew our communion with Him after sin has played havoc with our hearts and lives. The more God means to us the more do we hate all that breaks, and the more do we prize all that builds, fellowship with Him.

2. Abraham’s righteousness by faith made him the father of that believe (Rom 4:9-17).

a) Both of the circumcision and the uncircumcision (Rom 4:9-12).

Abraham received the promise of God before submitting to circumcision, the outward sign of his faith, and because of this priority of the promise and consequent belief in it over circumcision, he became the father of all that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised.

Many Jews counted upon their racial descent from Abraham physically to guarantee them against all condemnation and to procure for them against all condemnation and to procure for them eternal blessings, regardless of the manner of their personal living. They thought that because they submitted to certain ceremonial rites, they were immune from punishment for sin. But forms no more make people righteous than dishes produce the food they contain. It is perilous to make the sign a substitute for the reality it is designed merely to represent.

b) Children of Abraham are of faith and not of works (Rom 4:13-17).

“For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.” It was in his belief in God’s promise that God found righteousness in Abraham; and it was this same faith in God that made him the spiritual ancestor of all who should believe throughout all generations to come. He became the father of all chosen people through Christ, who on the physical side was descended from Abraham. It is to be observed that this promise was given to Abraham several centuries before the law was received.

Abraham was impelled to obey God and to set forth into a land which he knew not, on the basis of the promise that God would make him a great blessing to the world. Appealing promises are revealing promises. The kind of promise that has the most attraction for a man shows much as to the kind of person he is. Are we as desirous of becoming blessings as of receiving blessings? The more God means to us the more do we long to have His truth prevail in the hearts and lives of men.

What we let God do for us governs very largely what He can do through us.

We must believe in order to receive. Faith makes us heirs of that in which we believe. What we think God is has much to do with what God does for, in, and through us. Faith is the main trunk line of spiritual commerce between man and God. What we can do for God is conditioned by what we let God do for us. All can believe when not all can achieve (in their own strength). And in a very real sense—because it lays hold of the very power of God—believing is achieving.

### 3. Abraham’s faith a prototype of the Christian faith (Rom 4:18-25)

In this passage the apostle makes reference to Abraham’s faith when he was prepared to sacrifice Isaac as a type of Christian faith. His belief in the spoken Word of God was a prefiguring of belief in the Living Word of God.

He believed that even if Isaac were slain, through whom God had promised to make him the father of millions, God would keep His promise, even if it meant the raising of Isaac to life again by the hand of God. He retained his faith in the goodness and power of God, in the very face of facts that seemed utterly contradictory to such a hypothesis.

“Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed unto him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead . . .” The apostle here very pointedly makes the application of this faith of Abraham as being illustrative of the believer’s faith in God.

Abraham believed that somehow, even if Isaac were slain, God would raise him up again and restore him to life. We believe that we are saved through Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. As Abraham trusted God in the face of seeming impossibilities, we have faith in the God who raised Jesus Christ from the dead. We believe not simply in a man, but in a God-man who has been raised up and is even now at the right hand of God making intercession for us.

Saving faith in God is staking everything upon the assurance that God is true to Himself and to those who put their trust in Him. God has revealed Himself in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and through Christ He has made salvation available to all who put their faith in Him.

“ . . . who was delivered for our offenses [trespasses], and was raised again for our justification.” Because we have no righteousness in ourselves God allowed His Son to be put to death on the cross for men who could never save themselves, that He might declare righteous those who should repent and believe in Him who was crucified for their sins.

In closing this portion of our exposition, one or two points of comparison between the faith of Abraham and that of Christians deserve notice.

- Abraham had faith in what God would do through Christ; we have faith in what God has done through Christ.

- Abraham believed in a Christ concealed in the future; we believe in a Christ revealed in the present.

Is our dedication to God commensurate with this fuller revelation from God?

### C. RECONCILIATION WITH GOD THROUGH

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH (Rom 5:1-11) 1. Peace with God through faith in Christ (Rom 5:1-2 a)

Up to this point the apostle has been building an approach for his main argument, which is this, namely, that we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ. Here in the fifth chapter he comes to grips with this mighty transforming truth. He has set forth the thesis that we are saved by faith and not by works.

He has demonstrated that the whole world, Jew and Gentile alike, is under condemnation for sin. All are helpless to save themselves. Even Abraham was justified because of his belief in God and not by works. And now Paul sets out to prove it is through Jesus Christ that we find justification by faith and have peace with God.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God . . .” Just what is meant by that wonderful statement, “we have peace with God”? The reference is not to the sinner’s changed attitude toward God, but to God’s changed relationship to the sinner. God has pronounced, or declared, the sinner not guilty.

The sinner, in other words, has been acquitted before the great tribunal of God. God Himself has abolished the hostility. He Himself has made peace through the death of His Son on Calvary’s cross.

“ . . . through our Lord Jesus Christ . . .” It is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ through whom this new relationship of peace with God has been effected. Only the One, who was at one and the same time truly God and truly man, could make possible this restored fellowship. Just as a bridge spanning a wide gulf must rest securely on each side of the chasm, even so must the One through whom the gulf of sin is to be bridged, by whom man and God are to be brought together, be both God and man.

“ . . . by whom also we have access . . .” We come to God by Him who saves from sin and bestows the garment of imputed righteousness. Those who want to be introduced to the king and queen in the Court of St. James in England cannot come garbed in whatever kind of dress happens to please their fancy. Yet there are those who have the effrontery, in spite of all that God has said to

the contrary, to come into the presence of God arrayed in the rags of their own self-righteousness.

“. . . by faith into this grace wherein we stand . . .” The bridge of reconciliation between God and man has been built at the cost of Jesus’ death on the cross, but we must walk across this bridge. That is where faith comes in. We must accept for ourselves what God provides in His Son.

## 2. Triumph over trial through hope of glory (Rom 5:2-5 a)

“. . . and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” The hope of Heaven should be very real to us as Christians. It is not self-centeredness to look forward to the glories which God Himself has provided for us in the life to come. Anticipation of life in Heaven affords invigoration for life on earth. Streams that flow from the hills of God should be harnessed to turn the wheels that run the mills of life. Our object of hope for the future should be a fountain of strength in the present.

“And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also . . .” The thought of the apostle is not simply when we are in tribulations, but because we are in tribulations. Paul wants his readers to realize that if they have a living faith in Jesus Christ, they should rejoice because of being in trial, subjected to tests. And we, too, if our faith in Jesus be as dynamically real as it ought to be, can rise on the wings of that faith above the storms of life. Faith makes the reality of Jesus Christ to become vitality in us. It is only in Him, however, that we can thus become the masters rather than the victims of adverse circumstances. Aspiration for Christ and inspiration from Christ are wings that will enable us to ride the wildest gales of trouble victoriously.

“. . . knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience [approvedness]; and experience, hope . . .” The view of a goal is a great help to us in the discernment and employment of means that will further its attainment. As Christians we should rejoice in even the most difficult lessons that God assigns, because it is by mastering these lessons through the power of faith that we come to the place of mastery in presenting Christ to others with an eloquence born of a living experience of His transforming and enabling power. What Christ means to us has much to do with what we make of life.

“. . . and hope maketh not ashamed . . .” Hope, which in its origin is doctrinal, is strengthened by the bracing of character in the conflicts of life. The truths of faith do meet the needs of life. It is when our hopes in Christ are put on trial that they are in the way of becoming more genuinely ours. There is a commercial slogan, “Best by Test” that is most applicable to our Christian faith. It has abundantly proved its transcendency over all religions. Let us, individually, then, welcome the opportunity even through tribulation, to let God demonstrate through us the supremacy of a living faith in Christ. Endurance for Christ strengthens possession of Christ and fortifies our witnessing for Him.

## 3. The love of God in the heart is the spring of hope (Rom 5:5 b)

“. . . because the love of God is been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.” All these Christian experiences and hopes rest upon the assurance of the love of God. This love is “the brimming river of the love of God” which has overflowed in our hearts. Hope flows from the experience of the love of God manifested in Jesus Christ. If God has bought us at such a cost, if He let His Son die upon the cross that we might become His eternal possession, will He not take care of us in all kinds of trouble in life? In all the evils that may beset us, will He not see that

we come through unscathed?

Is it God's love to us or our love to Him that Paul has in mind in this passage? It is primarily God's love for us that Paul is thinking of, for that is his prevailing usage of the terms.

God's love for us is the essential thing, but unless God's love for us makes our hearts burn with love for God, it has proved ineffective so far as we are concerned. God's love revealed to us and bestowed on us must issue in love evoked from us.

#### 4. Christ's reconciling death for us (Rom 5:6-8)

Just as redemptive love must be revealed before it can be received, so, to go a step farther, appropriation of redemptive love is prerequisite to transformation by it. In a blood transfusion it is of no avail for the vein of the healthy person to be opened to impart of its blood unless a vein in the one who is in danger of death be opened to take it in.

The cross that opened the heart of God must open the heart of man in order that the redemptive love in God may, by a process of spiritual blood transfusion, become redemptive life in man. The love of God poured out on the cross of Jesus must be poured into the soul of the sinner to become redemptively operative.

#### 5. Christ's reconciling life in us (Rom 5:9-11)

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." The atonement as an objective reality wrought for us must become a subjective vitality wrought in us. Christ ever liveth to plead for us and to live in us. The atonement is an effect once achieved and ever abiding. The cross was like an immense dam converting a river into a mighty reservoir for irrigation purposes; Jesus' death made available for human salvation the redemptive love in the heart of God from all eternity.

#### D. CONTRASTING HERITAGES (Rom 5:12-21) 1. Heritage of sin and death through Adam (Rom 5:12-14)

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin . . ."

Anthropology, the study of the human race, points unmistakably, according to great authorities in that field, to the human race having come from one primal pair. While there are some who take opposite ground, perhaps through inveterate prejudice against anything savoring of Biblical authority, there are, on the other hand, a great many men well versed in all fields of research, who give it as their reasoned judgment based upon a careful study of all ascertainable facts that we have no reason to question the reliability of the scriptural statement as to the human race having originated in one man and one woman.

That being so, we may well appreciate how the fall of Adam and Eve would affect mankind down through the ages, and would bring death through sin. Men are not condemned for Adam's sin; they are condemned for the sins they individually commit of their own free will. However, they inherit a guilty nature subject to condemnation. All have inherited from Adam the tendency to sin; and there is no record in all human history of a sinless being except Jesus, who was, of course, the Son of God as well as the Son of man. All have sinned through yielding to the germ of sin, and death

came as the consequence.

Through Jesus Christ there is redemption from the power of sin. Not escape from physical death (save for those alive at the time of the Rapture), is promised believers, but rather the promise is for the resurrection of the body and the everlasting survival of the soul in joyous and conscious union with God in Heaven where there is nothing to hamper and everything to promote unending progress in all that pertains to love and holiness.

“. . . for until the law sin was in the world.” The fact of death pointed to the fact of sin. Sin was in the world. Why? Because death had been universal from the time of Adam down to Moses, and the universality of death argues in Paul’s mind (and we know that he was inspired of God in that viewpoint) that all have sinned and were sinners. There was the law of conscience before there was a written law. Man can no more violate the moral law with impunity than he can brazenly defy the laws of nature and escape the consequences.

“Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses . . .” “Death reigned”; the picture here is of death as a tyrant holding cruel sway over a vast domain. Death and sin are very closely related. Death reigned because sin reigned.

In Col 1:13 there is an illustration or metaphor that vividly suggests the dominion of sin. The verse reads: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”

It was the custom in ancient times for a conqueror to transport a whole people into bondage, or at least the cream of the population. That was the case with Israel and Judah when they were taken into captivity in punishment for their sins and idolatry. In this verse in Colossians we have an opposite kind of transportation - souls transported, not from freedom into bondage, but from bondage into freedom, transported from a kingdom of darkness into a kingdom of life and light and joy and everlasting fellowship with God. How tragically unfortunate is it that there are hosts of men and women today who scorn this proffered emancipation, who deliberately choose freedom to sin instead of freedom from sin.

“. . . even over them that had not sinned after the similitude [likeness] of Adam’s transgression.” There are a great many men and women who, because they do not sin in the same ways as other people do, flatter themselves upon the possession of marvelous virtues. We may not commit this sin or that, but we are under the dominion of sin unless we have given ourselves to the control of Jesus Christ.

## 2. Heritage of grace and life through Christ (Rom 5:15)

“But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if by the offence of one the many died, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.” Death has come through the sin of one person, Adam, who poisoned the stream at its source; but Jesus Christ, the second Adam, brings deliverance from trespasses for all who accept Him. The word “trespass” in the original story implies decline, deterioration, a fall from a higher position.

We know that to be a true description of sin. But against the hideous fact of sin stands the glorious fact of God’s grace in sending Christ, and the grace of Christ in coming. The good results of Jesus’

grace far out measure the bad results of Adam's sin.

### 3. Elaboration of these contrasting heritages (Rom 5:16-21)

#### a) Sin and death-Justification and life (Rom 5:16-18)

Because Jesus gave His life upon the cross for the redemption of men, therefore, God has declared "not guilty" all who avail themselves of that pardon. Souls must personally accept the Lord Jesus Christ. Adam's fall was the entering wedge for the sovereignty of death.

The state of those who receive God's gift is far more than mere deliverance from death; it is a new life of victory.

Let us, then, go forth realizing that the Christ-life is to be one of progress, going from height to height, ever growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This righteousness is a gift of God, a gift of possession, and a gift for expression.

#### b) Many made sinners-Many made righteous (Rom 5:19)

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." We are made sinners through inheritance from Adam on the physical and merely on the human side; but we are made righteous if we have entered into the life of Christ. "For to me to live is Christ," as Paul says in Php 1:21. We might well use that verse as a parallel to this whole section.

#### c) Abounding sin-Abounding grace (Rom 5:20)

"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound . . ." We sometimes become discouraged because of the prevalence of sin, but let us remember that the results of the grace of God are immeasurably beyond anything that sin can produce.

#### d) Death through sin-Life through Christ (Rom 5:21)

". . . that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." We know how desperately science is struggling today to gain the upper hand over defiant maladies. Medicine has made conquests in the recent past over certain diseases long regarded as incurable, but science has not yet found a sure cure for cancer, nor been able to find the cause of it. Why are people so indifferent to the means right at hand for the conquest of the disease of sin? Why are they so desirous of the extension of a few years of physical life on earth and so oblivious to the free gift of everlasting life? Let us remember that Jesus Christ died upon the cross that the power of sin might be overcome and that all who believe in Him might have life.

## 2.06. Part Three - Sanctification of Life (6:1-8:39)

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Part Three - Sanctification of Life (6:1-8:39)

CHAPTER SIX A. EMANCIPATION FROM SIN (Rom 6:1-23)

1. Death to sin, life in Christ (Rom 6:1-14)

a) Grace is not freedom to sin (Rom 6:1-2 a)

You will note the horror of the apostle at the very thought of such a perversion of the Gospel. Freedom from sin is not freedom to sin. A great many people, unfortunately, seem to be more interested in freedom to sin than they are in freedom from sin. Away with hoary inhibitions, self-expression at any cost! is the watchword of the hour.

But if we are truly converted, our possession of Christ will be marked by revulsion from sin. We are not saved from the sin we do not hate. Grace breaks the hold which sin has upon the soul. The grace of God streaming from the cross of Calvary melts the imprisoning ice of sin from the heart and life.

b) Death to sin precludes life in sin (Rom 6:2 b)

“How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”

We have here a very striking question. Does Paul mean that Christians are sinless? No. What he has in mind is this: Those who have died to sin, who have been saved from sin, do not continue as a deliberate choice to live in sin. To sin is no longer the purpose of their lives.

A crude illustration may help to make our point clear. A person has been cured of tuberculosis which brought him to the very gates of death; after such a deliverance from the impending fatal termination of the disease, he may have colds from time to time, but the deadly germ has been killed; he has died to tuberculosis that he might not die of tuberculosis.

Christians have been saved from sin; the principle of sin has been slain. They have been saved by grace! They fall from time to time, but when they do fall they ask for forgiveness and they are given grace to grow in grace. They may fall in the road, but not from the road, to Heaven.

Grace transports us into a new realm of being. If we have been saved by grace we have died to sin just as the caterpillar has died to his old life when he becomes a butterfly. If he is a butterfly, how can he any longer be a caterpillar? Just picture butterflies habitually crawling on the ground like caterpillars! If we have died to sin, we can no longer live therein. We die to what we hate and we live by what we love. When we have been saved, we breathe in by faith the life that is in Christ. The true Christian is in the world, but not of it.

c) In baptism we have died and risen with Christ (Rom 6:3-5)

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?” We need to get the meaning of verse 3 clearly in mind. Some people might think that that verse taught baptismal regeneration, but such is not the case. The New Testament writers identified baptism with the faith it embodies, just as when we speak of the flag we mean the country for which it stands. The New Testament writers make baptism stand for the faith that it expresses.

Faith in Jesus effects a spiritual oneness with Him and results in a totally new set of reactions to life in general, and to sin in particular. If a Christian is united with Jesus Christ, he has died to sin. We have died to sin through Him who died for sin, and we rise to newness of life through Him who triumphed over death. Jesus Christ gave His life for the sake of mankind that He might live in us, as the soil lives in the seed; and that we might live in Him, as the seed lives in the soil. It is only as we surrender ourselves to Jesus Christ that we find life in Him. When we give our hearts to Him in faith, the very life of God that is in Jesus Christ becomes ours, and we live in Him who died for us.

Through Jesus Christ we have access to God. Without Him the divine nature is like a sheer cliff, inexorable in its demands; but because Jesus died, we have the glorious privilege of coming into the presence of God, up the gentle slope of faith and trust.

d) Our death with Christ cancels sin’s grasp (Rom 6:6-7)

“. . . Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.” Our old man was crucified with Him. This is a very powerful metaphor to express the great truth of salvation through Jesus Christ. Death cancels all obligations. Sin is personified as a cruel tyrant who taxes his subjects beyond all endurance. The only way some of us can get rid of taxation is to die; that seems to be the only escape. If we have died to sin, we are free; we cannot be taxed by it.

Holders of life insurance policies often exclaim, “You have to die to win.” We can die to sin, through Christ, whenever we choose to do so, and then the riches of Heaven are ours; we need not wait for physical death. When we die to sin, we win Christ and all He means to us. This assurance of salvation should be a mighty incentive to devotion.

e) Dying with Christ means living with Christ (Rom 6:8-11)

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him . . . Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” There is a wonderful truth in these words. Through Jesus Christ we have eternal life. He died to sin and He rose again; and we who live in Him are delivered from sin and have heavenly life. Jesus Christ rose from the dead and lives forevermore; and we who give ourselves to Him shall live together with Him.

This life in Christ is everlasting because it is eternal in quality. It is the very life of God coming into our souls; and that life can never end. The apostle John constantly refers to eternal life as a present possession. This life is eternal because the life of God in us can respond eternally to God as the infinite object of knowledge, of love, and of service. Because the love of God comes into our souls, we can be responsive eternally to God. Do we harness this faith to our lives, or do we merely think of it once in a while, in a sentimental sort of way, as so many do with every recurring

Easter? If we believe in Heaven, how can we help but live the heavenly life here on earth?

f) Let us live for God and not for sin (Rom 6:12-14)

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” The availability of grace means responsibility for grace. If we have this grace to draw upon, we are responsible for using it. We have never done our best for God until we lay hold of the best God can do for us. That which has been wrought for us must be wrought in us. The power plant has been built, electricity is ready for use, but we have to wire our own homes for it. God has put eternal salvation and grace at our disposal, but we must make the connection by faith. We must fulfill the conditions of devotion and trust so that the power of God in Jesus Christ may operate in and through us.

2. An exchange of masters (Rom 6:15-23)

a) Grace is not freedom to sin (Rom 6:15)

“What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.” The repetition of this question, “Shall we sin?” really introduces the second division of this chapter. The first fourteen verses are an unfolding of the truth that if we have died to sin, we cannot live in sin.

In this last section of the chapter we have the contention that if we are freed from sin, we can no longer serve sin. Christian freedom is not freedom to sin, but freedom from sin. Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? God forbid. The impulsion of grace within should be a mightier force than the compulsion of law without.

b) Servants of sin or servants of righteousness (Rom 6:16)

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” Remember the words of Jesus in Mat 6:24, where He brings out that no man can serve two masters. Many people do not realize this. They think that they can play with sin, can indulge in it or let it alone just as they wish. Many a man thinks that way with reference to drink, for example, and then wakes up to find himself in bondage to a habit that he cannot check. When we subject ourselves to sin, we find that we are caught in a mighty whirlpool. Trifling with sin is dangerous to self and treacherous to God.

c) A transference of allegiance (Rom 6:17-22)

“. . . Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” Detachment from sin must be followed by attachment to God (1Th 1:9). Redemption in the heart results in devotion of the heart. If we have been saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we cannot help but seek to grow in Him. We want to make progress in this new life which God through Christ has put into our hearts. If Christ is in our hearts, we shall bend every energy, depending upon God, to grow in our knowledge of Him. We are saved from the dominion, as well as the penalty, of sin.

The bondage of sin has been exchanged for that of love. Since Jesus Christ has bought us from bondage to sin, that should result on our part in the bondage of love. Why should Christians be less zealous in the service of the Saviour than sinners in the service of the devil? Paul says in effect, “Let your spirituality as Christians equal your former sensuality as sinners.”

Christians are to keep spiritually fit. Athletes have to keep in training. What about Christians who break training for Jesus Christ? We never know when some critical contest is coming, some terrific temptation, some challenge, some call for witnessing for Jesus Christ in the face of opposition; and if we have been careless in our Christian life about Bible study, and prayer-if we have broken spiritual training-we will not be ready to meet the foe. Sanctification is both a process and a result.

d) The pay of sin is death, but God's gift is life (Rom 6:23)

Every bondage involves a freedom; we simply choose our fetters. Bondage to one thing is freedom from another. When we were living in sin, we were free from grace, and the law of righteousness had no hold upon us. Augustine, referring to his past life of sin and doubt said, "My life being such, was it life, O my God?" The world glorifies sin as life. The Word stigmatizes sin as death. The world clothes sin with glamour; the Word strips sin of glamour. In our attitude toward sin, are we standing with the world or with the Word?

"For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." The underlying figure of speech in this verse is that of the pay that soldiers receive. Paul, in effect, asks his readers, "Why do men fight for the devil who seeks only to curse and to destroy?" Sin pays full wages. There are no cuts in pay. Not infrequently there are unexpected bonuses in the way of misery. Why not, then, enter the service of God where the reward of grace is eternal life bestowed upon us in Jesus Christ?

What is meant by the free gift of God? It is His eternal life. We might well consider that life from two aspects-quality and quantity. The life which we have through our faith in Jesus is everlasting in duration, because it is eternal in quality. Mere everlastingness would be unendurable. We might regard it under the figure of a musical instrument. Of what use would a costly piano be to one who could never acquire the ability to play it? God gives us His own life through Jesus Christ. This life might be thought of as a gift of spiritual genius which can never be exhausted. Eternal life is the God-given capacity to know, love, and live Jesus Christ with multiplying fullness of joy forever and ever.

**B. THE TRANSITION FROM LAW TO GRACE (Rom 7:1-25) 1. Release from bondage to the law (Rom 7:1-6)**

a) Manner of this release (Rom 7:1-25 :l-4a)

In introducing the next step in his argument, Paul uses the illustration of a woman who is absolved of her marriage vows upon the death of her husband. Just as a widow is no longer under bondage to her husband, so the Christian who has accepted Christ is no longer under bondage to the law. Of course, here we have to be on the watch because the analogy calls for the death of the law; just as a woman's husband dies and she is free, so the law dies and the Christian is free from the obligation of the law. Actually, however, it is the Christian who dies to the claims of the law. The law can never claim the souls of those who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour.

b) Purpose of this release (Rom 7:4-5)

". . . that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Christ is referred to as having been raised from the dead, because we can only belong to a living Christ. Are we conscious of the living Christ? It is surprising how many

Christians do not have the rich and full experience of the living Christ that they should.

We must live for Him who died for us. Our attachment to Christ should be as decided as our detachment from sin, that we may bring forth fruit unto God. The natural result of the seed which is planted is fruit. We plant seed in expectation of a harvest. Why has God saved us? Why does Jesus Christ live in our souls? Among other reasons, that through His living in us we may bear fruit for Him. Do we really think as much about what God wants to do through us, as we do about what we want God to do for us? If we are earnest Christians, we shall be more anxious to have God use us than to use God for our own personal ends.

“For when we were in the flesh, the motions [sinful passions] of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” In the fifth verse Paul brings out a striking contrast. Flesh is not regarded as inherently sinful, but it is subject to sin. There have been a great many people who have held to the view that matter is evil, that the flesh is the seat of sin. Therefore, they practice the severest asceticism in order to find deliverance. Whole systems of philosophy have been built upon that assumption.

People in the Middle Ages mortified the flesh for the sake of the soul. There are multitudes today who mortify the soul for the sake of the flesh. “The flesh” may also refer to unsanctified, human nature, not simply our bodies, but all we are apart from our union with God.

There are some things that can be used for good or for bad. Grain makes bread; also it is used for the manufacture of liquid poison. So the things that are ours in our natural state can be used for our moral undoing, or through being laid on the altar they can be made to burn for the glory of God, “fruits unto death.”

Only death profits by the fruits of a sinful life. People go as far away as possible from one with a contagious disease; they want to get out of the reach of deadly germs; yet how many men and women seem to delight in getting just as close to sin as possible; playing with wickedness, they get on thin ice (and sometimes the ice breaks). We never know what may be the result of giving entrance to sin.

c) Result of this release (Rom 7:6)

“But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” We have died to the old life of sin. We find life now in that to which we formerly were dead. Many a small boy lives in the oldness of the letter with reference to a piano when he is taking lessons: but after his musical gifts have really developed, he comes to delight in what was once irksome beyond endurance. When we become followers of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts and we live in the newness of spirit.

2. Purpose of the law is to bring to grace (Rom 7:7-25)

a) By unveiling the sinfulness of sin (Rom 7:7-13)

(1) The law brings sin to light (Rom 7:7-8)

“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law . . .” Law is not sin, but the law awakens sin. It is something similar to authority in the home. Children

are little angels until a set of distasteful regulations are issued from parental headquarters. The regulations that were established were because of sin. The fire of sin was ready but needed fuel. Lack of fuel does not change the nature of fire, which is to burn.

(2) Sin brings death through the law (Rom 7:9-11)

We need to keep in mind that this whole section is what we might call an ideal biography. In verses 1 to 14 (Rom 7:1-14) Paul is not describing his own experience at the time he is writing, he is looking back upon his past life from the standpoint of his regenerate life; and so he describes what the natural man is apart from Jesus Christ. The law is not an arbitrary commandment. We cannot bend nature to our whims; we have to bend our whims to nature. The law of God in the moral realm is like the law of nature in the physical.

(3) The law is good (Rom 7:12-14)

“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” How can the law be good if it is the occasion whereby sin brings death? Would we care to live in a world where fire did not always burn, where water was not always buoyant, where gravitation did not always operate? When we violate the laws of nature, the result may be tragic, but our violation of them does not destroy the goodness of those laws. We have to adjust ourselves to the laws of nature to find health and safety. We have to learn about what kind of food to eat and to abstain from if we want to keep well. We have to adjust our bodily habits to the physical world in which we live. It is just as important to bring our souls into tune with our moral environment, with the holy laws of God.

b) By revealing the helplessness of man (Rom 7:15-25)

(1) The law precipitates what causes the conflict between conscience and practice (Rom 7:14-15)

The law of God is holy, and if we let ourselves be kindled by the holiness of God, then we know the fullness of life. Paul describes his terrific struggle before his conversion; and under his own experience he is describing the experience of the natural man, the struggle between conscience and practice.

Beginning with verse Rom 7:15, the apostle describes the Christian's experience of conflict between the old and the new natures (cf. Gal 5:16-17). After we become Christians we have a struggle with Satan. We cannot deny that fact. Before we were converted we had conscience, which told us what we ought to do, but we did not have the strength to do it. After conversion, we not only have conscience, but we have the Spirit of God in our hearts. But even as Christians we experience a struggle between conscience and the weakness of the flesh.

Well, how can that be a blessing? Is pain a blessing? Oftentimes it is, in disguise. Sometimes a headache will send a person to the doctor who discovers he has a serious illness. Pain is a danger signal; the same is true in the spiritual realm. The very fact that conscience makes us uncomfortable when we do wrong should be an occasion for thanking God rather than for bemoaning our hard lot. Far better to have conscience stop us than to drift along to death.

(2) This conflict witnesses to two things (Rom 7:16-20)

(a) The goodness of the law (Rom 7:16)

“If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.” In other words, the fact that a man knows that he ought to do a thing is witness to the fact that the thing is good, that is, if his conscience is instructed through the revelation of God. Illuminations are of little value if not followed by dedications; they are like unthreaded needles.

(b) The weakness of the flesh (Rom 7:17-23)

“Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” Paul is not excusing himself in these words. No, our obligations are not governed by our limitations. The weakness of the flesh does not destroy the claims of the moral law.

c) Victory over the lower nature can come only through Jesus Christ (Rom 7:24-25)

“O Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Paul knew by experience that victory could be won only through Christ. The pain of struggle may end in the peace of triumph through Christ. The law brings sin to a head where it can be cured. Sinners must be brought under conviction that they may find assurance in Jesus Christ; and we as Christian workers need to keep that constantly in mind. It is more natural for some of us to extol the grace of Christ than to denounce sin, but we must speak out against sin if we hope to bring people to the Saviour.

C. THE LIFE OF SANCTIFICATION IN THE SPIRIT (Rom 8:1-39)

1. Its origin (Rom 8:1-4)

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Verse Rom 8:1 refers back to the triumphant note in Rom 7:25. Condemnation is out of the question. Being in Christ, the believer has been delivered from the claims of the law. If a man moves into another state, he is no longer under the laws of the state in which he formerly lived. When we take Christ as Saviour, we pass from the state of law into the state of grace.

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” The law of the Spirit is the rule that the Holy Spirit has over those who belong to Jesus Christ. We need to be reborn to see and to enter the kingdom of Heaven (John 3:3; John 3:5). The Spirit who brings the new life also brings a new law for our lives.

It is just as if a person were to be suddenly endowed with a gift of painting; he would immediately come under the law of artistic production: he would have to work in obedience to the laws of perspective, color, harmony, and many other principles of art, or he could not make progress. No more can we succeed in this new life in Christ without following definite spiritual principles; we are under the law of the Spirit whereby we are enabled to reproduce upon the canvas of life with the brush of daily influence the beauties of Jesus Christ which the Holy Spirit unveils to our enraptured gaze.

“God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh . . .” Here is a clear statement of the deity and humanity of Jesus. He was both God and man. Only One who is God and man can reveal God to man, or redeem man to God.

If a man is to translate a classic from one language into another, he must be master of both languages. One who is to reveal God to man must be perfect God and perfect man. He must know God and man absolutely. Jesus Christ as the God-man revealed God to man. Only One who is both God and man could bring man to God in redemption.

To refer to a previous illustration, a bridge has to rest securely upon both banks of the river; so if man is to find his way to God, it must be by the One who is both God and man. Jesus Christ is the perfect Mediator. Man's search for God would be fruitless apart from God's quest for man.

“. . . that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” The object of justification is sanctification. We are to bear fruit for Him who died for us. The cross removed the barriers to the fruitage of holiness. The spirit of man can be renewed only by the Spirit of God. It is only in the Spirit that we can live for the Spirit.

## 2. Its antithesis (Rom 8:5-8)

“For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.” Darkness is the antithesis of light. Heat is the opposite of cold.

In connection with verse Rom 8:5 read Gal 5:19-23, dealing with the fruit of the Spirit. The outer life conforms to the inner life. We order our lives by the goals that govern our hearts. Those who have beauty in their souls seek beauty outside. Those who revel in sin are keen to seek for the bad and are blind to the good. There are people who would rather explore the refuse piles of life than roam around in the flower gardens. We seek in the world what we have in our hearts. We can gauge our spiritual life very largely in that way. Our inward possessions determine our outward attentions.

“For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace . . .” The death referred to is both future and present. Those who live the life of sin are planting the seeds of death in their souls. For those who are in Christ, He is the source, the course, and the goal of living. The life of God is in those who believe in and love Jesus Christ. To be spiritually minded is life because it is the right adjustment to the moral and spiritual universe in which we live. The secret of good health is to govern our physical lives in accordance with the laws of nature. What is the secret of spiritual health? It is to draw constantly upon the life of God, available for us in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

“. . . Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” This does not mean the sinner is not responsible or that he cannot be saved. Redemption can be ours in Jesus Christ through the Spirit. God waits to forgive all who will turn to Him in penitent faith. We are responsible not for what we do have, but for what we can have in God, and so while the sinner cannot please God, while he is powerless to save himself, he can lay hold of the grace of Jesus and be saved through faith in Him. It is important to get people to see that. “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Many people trust in their own good works and try living according to their conscience. We need to be very careful, lest we, as Christian workers, be deceived by outward appearances. It is easier to tell some than to tell others that they need Jesus.

It takes more courage to witness for Christ to a man of power and influence than it does to bring the same message to those who come to the mission halls. Souls out of Christ are lost, rich or poor, learned or ignorant; we must bring men to see this. Failure to do so results in many unconverted people coming into the church.

### 3. Its motivation (Rom 8:9-11)

“But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit . . .” We cannot be in the Spirit unless the Spirit is in us, just as we cannot be in the air unless the air is in us, and the air cannot be in us unless we are in the air. Faith is the lung capacity of the soul. The Greek word for Spirit is the same as the word used for air or wind. The more deeply we breathe in God’s Spirit, the more strongly can we work for God.

“. . . if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” We cannot have God’s Spirit in our hearts without living lives that are Christlike, without showing the righteousness of Jesus Christ in our daily conduct and experience.

“And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.” Physical death and spiritual death both come with sin. Paul says that because of this inherited sin, the body will die; but the spirit is life. The spirit inherits eternal life. The body will perish, the spirit never. We know we are to have resurrection bodies. These new resurrection bodies will be perfectly adapted to the new heavenly life.

“But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [give life] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you” (See Eph 1:18-20). It is only as the Spirit of God lives in our hearts that we will share in that great resurrection day. Rom 8:11 is one of the best passages in the New Testament involving the doctrine of the Trinity.

### 4. Its obligation (Rom 8:12-14)

“Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh . . .” Destinations govern obligations. The goals we seek are the laws that rule us. Our objectives are our incentives. The thing that we earnestly seek spurs us onward, determines largely how we live. Unfortunately there are Christians who pay heavy tribute in time, strength, and talent to the world which has no claim upon them. We are duty-bound to live for Him who died for us.

“. . . for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die . . .” This death is the final doom in which there is no hope. Those who live after the flesh are out of adjustment with the moral and spiritual universe. We live spiritually by what we feed upon. The spirit can no more thrive on sin than the body on poison. Deeds of sin are seeds of death.

“. . . but if ye through the Spirit do mortify [put to death] the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” Sin is a deadly cancer which calls for drastic treatment. How foolish people are to let the dregs of sin rob them of the joys of Christ! But it is only in the Spirit that the deeds of the body, that is, of sin, can be put to death. My spirit needs to be emancipated by God’s Spirit.

Visualize a boat on a mudflat; it is stranded, helpless. In comes the tide; the boat is lifted and makes its way out to sea without any trouble. And so it is with us-in ourselves we are helpless, but

the Spirit of God can lift us above that which imprisons us.

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” The word for sons in this verse in the Greek implies in addition to the natural relationship of child to parent, the recognized status and dignity and privileges that are reserved for the son. We are the sons of God. Do we live up to the level of our privileges? The Spirit-filled life is the fruit of sonship, and sonship is root of the Spirit-filled life.

It is both our duty and our privilege to be led by the Spirit. Do we, as Christians, appreciate the wonderful blessing that is ours in having God's own Holy Spirit as our private Teacher in holiness? It is an even more thrilling opportunity than it would be if any one of us could have for our instructor the greatest living master in some chosen calling, like painting, or music, or writing.

To have the Spirit of God teach us day by day, hour by hour, how to grow in the likeness of Jesus Christ-it is simply wonderful to realize that that privilege is ours as children of God through Jesus Christ. Our obligation to God can be met only through inspiration from God. That is to say, only as God's Holy Spirit lives in our hearts can we fulfill the duties that we owe as children to our Father in Heaven.

#### 5. Its heritage (Rom 8:15-17)

“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear . . .” The verb “received” refers to the time when they were baptized into a new relationship with Jesus Christ. Now the Spirit of God, the third Person in the Trinity, coming into our hearts should banish the spirit of fear as a state of mind. As Christians, instead of shrinking from God in dread, we now cling to God in love and trust; and yet how many Christians do not enter into the full blessedness of their filial relationship with God. How an earthly father is grieved when his child distrusts him! What about our heavenly Father, when His children do not trust Him as they ought?

“. . . but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” What we feel our heavenly Father to be has much to do with what we ask our Father to give. There are some things that we would feel free to ask our father to do for us that we would hardly feel free to ask of our friends or teachers, because of the intimate relation between father and child. If we could just see what our heavenly Father has to give us in the way of wonderful spiritual treasures!

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God . . .” The Greek word for children lays stress upon the reality of the filial nature of our relationship to God as children. The consciousness of this relationship is here referred partly to the Spirit of God moving and prompting us, and partly to ourselves. “The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.” The closer we live to God in obedience, the stronger will be our assurance that we are His children.

Do we always appreciate, as gratefully as we should, how much we owe to God's own Holy Spirit for the joy, for the peace, for the assurance in our souls that we belong to God through Jesus Christ for all eternity?

It is God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that this is so. This suggests that the best defense against the rising tide of doubt in the world outside of us is to build up a richer world of experience inside of us. We need to have a fuller experience of God's love in Christ. The average Christian

perhaps is not competent to meet with scholarly arguments the attacks that are leveled against his faith by critics; but if he will take pains day by day, hour by hour, to live in close contact with the Lord Jesus Christ, then he has an inner defense that is impregnable.

What we prize lightly we sell cheaply; and the more we value those blessed privileges that are ours in Christ, the more tenaciously will we cling to our blessings. We will realize that only God can guard them for us. No matter how fiercely our souls are besieged, we can drink of the water of eternity, as it arises in God Himself. We can always find a secret passage to the heart of God for strength.

“. . . and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ . . .” Here we have a wonderful hope set before us: an assurance that if we are children, we are heirs of God.

We think of how some people make their lives miserable wondering when a certain rich relative is going to die. How eager people are to get an inheritance of money and property, and yet how utterly indifferent and callous many of these same people are to the inheritance of eternal life through Jesus Christ!

We cannot all be born into a wealthy family for the purpose of inheriting a fabulous fortune; but the way is open for each one to be a born-again child of God, and thereby enter into a heritage which is eternal and incorruptible. We win eternal life when we die to sin. Having received such a heritage, how careful are we of it? Only God can keep that heritage secure (2Ti 1:12). If we have committed our souls to Jesus Christ, we know that He will keep that treasure for time and eternity.

“. . . if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” These words were accepted without question at that time because so many Christians had that experience of suffering for Christ. Be simply willing to lose all for Christ if need be. Does Jesus Christ mean so much to me that I will suffer anything rather than let Him go out of my life? If we are not ready to die rather than deny our faith in Jesus Christ, do we really have Christ? It is our readiness to do, dare, and die for the name of Jesus, if need be, that counts.

#### 6. Its expectation (Rom 8:18-25)

##### a) Present trouble contrasted with future glory (Rom 8:18)

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Paul has just burst forth in praise over the wonderful privileges that belong to Christians as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. But he no sooner gives expression to that glowing tribute to God's goodness in this regard than he thinks of Christians who are called upon to endure and suffer. Then, he says, “These sufferings, terrible as they are, are nothing compared with the destiny that God has for those who put their trust in Him.”

So often we allow temporal adversity to make us forgetful of our spiritual prosperity. It is easy when things go hard to forget the treasures we have in Jesus, which are pricelessly more valuable than those things the world counts dear. We may draw upon the capital of our future hope to meet our present tests. We are to look forward to what God has in store for us.

Pain is often the path to greatness. We have to suffer to conquer. Rugged trails of devotion lead to sunlit peaks of attainment. This is true in many realms, but particularly in Christian living. Let us thank God for the buffetings of life that open the way for the comfortings of Christ. Even here in this life the darkest afflictions for the Christian may be but eclipses that reveal new aspects of the glory of Christ.

In connection with a recent eclipse of the sun, the astronomical societies sent out invitations for laymen to report their findings during the eclipse; by way of response they were bombarded with letters from men and women who had seen the “coroner.” What the writers meant, of course, was the “corona,” the wonderful glory that streams out from the sun when it is blotted out by the moon.

That is just the mistake a great many people make in life. Trouble seems only to bring the coroner who pronounces death on their hopes and dreams; they do not see the corona, a new aspect of the glory and beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul is referring here to the coming glory which Christians are to enjoy in Heaven. Let us not, however, forget that our experiences with Jesus in this life are a foretaste of what we shall see in Him after we have been called home to glory. b) Prospective redemption of the world of nature (Rom 8:19-22)

These verses have been a source of difficulty to a great many Christians; and there is a good deal in them that is puzzling. It may be of help to bear in mind that Paul is speaking poetically. He is personifying nature, representing physical creation as groaning in anguish, and looking forward to the new creation. Yet there is more than poetry in it.

“Cursed is the ground for thy sake” (Gen 3:17). We cannot explain how or why this should be; it is beyond the power of the finite mind to grasp. It is evident that in some mysterious way the sin of man has affected the physical cosmos. Men who are versed in science have observed that practically all the voices of nature are in the minor key—tides, winds, thunderstorms, and a great many other sounds. We know that, according to the teaching of the Bible, this present physical order will pass away, and a new earth and new heavens will be created.

c) Destined glorification of the bodies of Christians (Rom 8:23)

“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body,” These resurrection bodies of which Paul is writing will be perfectly adapted to the new environment. Take the illustration of water in its various forms. As ice, water is immovable and opaque; we cannot see through it. When ice melts, the water flows in a stream; heat it, and it turns into steam, and rises as vapor. So we are to have the same bodies; but they will be glorified with powers and capacities they do not now possess.

d) Hope that is seen is not hope (Rom 8:24-25)

“For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Faith rests in the love of God; it roots itself in what God is. Faith plants the seed; hope sees the fruit. “Hope that is seen is not hope.”

It is better to trust a present God than to break a sealed future. Many people want graces of character without the necessary conditions. Spiritually they want lovely snowflakes with tropical

temperatures; they want the beauty of the virtues like hope, patience, and all those things without enough of the cold severity of life to make those virtues possible.

A story is told by Henry Ward Beecher of a certain woman who prayed for patience and the Lord sent her an inexperienced cook. She had to have something that would develop patience.

#### 7. Its undergirding (Rom 8:26-27)

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Paul spoke about struggling in prayer, agonizing in prayer. Martin Luther went through that experience. Real praying is work. Often we cannot express what we really mean. Paul says the Holy Spirit will pray for us, will lift us up in prayer, will quicken our minds and hearts. Some of us when addressing an audience have felt as though we were empowered with a force greater than ourselves. If it is important when we preach to men that we be transported out of ourselves, how much more important when we speak to God is it to have the Spirit quicken within us a sense of our need and of the wonderful things God wants to do for us!

The Spirit, being God, can bring us into touch with God in the time of prayer. Do we as often as we should begin our prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to enable us to pray to God acceptably and effectively? How we do need that help of the Holy Spirit! We may not always realize that the Holy Spirit is working within us.

There is a painting of a fisherman, stalwart, rugged, and weather-beaten, and a little girl possibly six or seven years old; they are in a dory and the sea is rather heavy; in the distance a fog is coming in.

The little girl has her hands on two oars, but obviously the fisherman is pulling on those same oars with all his might and main. The little girl does not realize she is not doing it all, and so it is when we pray. The Holy Spirit prays through us, inspiring our thoughts and quickening our consciousness of God’s presence; how thankful we ought to be for such divine enablement!

#### 8. Its consummation (Rom 8:28-30)

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” We do not need to be reminded that verse Rom 8:28 is one of the best loved verses in the entire Bible. “To them that love God”-that part should come first. It is only those who love and trust in Him who can claim that promise.

Things in the process of making often bear but the slightest resemblance to the finished product. Many things work together for good. Some of us may have tried to eat a dinner without any salt. A great many people would like to get along without the salt of life’s trials. They might enjoy their own experiences, but how flat, insipid, and unpalatable would be their characters!

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” We are to be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. This is a wonderful proof of the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Think of the millions of

Christians down through the centuries who have been transformed into the likeness of Jesus, and yet without any sacrifice of their own individuality! There are as many different varieties of Christlike character as there are flowers in the woods and fields, and yet all of these thousands of Christians who have been brought into Christlikeness are but so many reflections of the beauty that is in Jesus Christ Himself. Think of the beauty of holiness in Jesus Christ, so great that all these thousands of Christians growing into His likeness are but drawing their beauty from Him!

#### 9. Its inexhaustibility (Rom 8:31-34)

“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” The fear of God lifts above the fear of man. On the tombstone of John Knox are these words, “Here lies one who never feared the face of man.” Why? Because he feared God so supremely.

“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?” We find that when God gave us Jesus Christ, it meant that Christ came into our souls through the Holy Spirit.

It is just as if a man had the ability to bestow a gift of genius upon his son, and then provided him with all the equipment necessary for giving creative expression to that genius. When God has given us Jesus Christ to live in our hearts, will He not with Him give us all needed spiritual gifts for living the Christ we love?

#### 10. Its indestructibility (Rom 8:35-39)

This love of God is as indestructible as the force of gravitation. Just as the sun keeps the planets in their course, just as everything in this physical universe is held together by the power of gravitation, so, if we are Christians, absolutely nothing in time or eternity can separate us from that love of God. It holds us in Him.

What a comforting thing it is to realize that this love of Christ is as strong and deep as the heart of God!

## 2.07. Part Four - Restoration of the Jews (9:1-11:36)

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### Part Four - Restoration of the Jews (9:1-11:36)

#### CHAPTER SEVEN A. GOD'S REJECTION OF ISRAEL (Rom 9:1-29)

Paul, as he reaches the great heights of truth in the field of Christian privileges in Christ, has his thoughts turned to the condition of his own people, and their state of unbelief. Their plight fills his heart with sorrow and presents a very real problem to him; and so for three chapters he deals with this very urgent question. We find in the opening part of chapter 9 one of the greatest pieces of genuine pathos and sorrow to be found in Scripture.

##### 1. Paul's grief for the Jews (Rom 9:1-5)

###### a) Depth of grief (Rom 9:1-3)

In reading the verses we are brought into the presence of a mighty spirit writhing in pain. Note the solemnity of the statement, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost."

He calls upon his conscience, upon the Saviour, and upon the Spirit to bear witness to the truth of what he says. Paul weighed his words. He was absolutely sincere. He did not give utterance to what he did not feel in his soul. Can we, like Paul, call God to witness the genuineness of our spoken or written word?

Note the intensity of sorrow. "That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh . . ." We see there a wonderful outflashing of Paul's profound passion for souls.

The apostle was no less fervent in heart than he was brilliant in mind. His spirit was a furnace of emotions. He had a most earnest love for souls, and this was no small element in his power. We need a greater passion for souls. Many work weakly for the Lord because they feel feebly for the lost.

###### b) Cause of grief (Rom 9:4-5)

". . . Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises . . ." Paul had a natural affection for his own people. He was gravely concerned over their future as he beheld their impending doom. This penalty looms the more darkly against the bright background of the privileges that the Israelites enjoyed.

"The saddest words are these, 'It might have been.'" Something of that feeling filled the heart of the apostle. The Israelites were the recipients of God's special favor. To them belonged the covenant, to them was committed the law. Before their eyes gleamed the promise. From them, on the human side, came the Messiah; and now in unbelief they turn their backs on all this. They

refuse to reap the harvest and gather the fruit. They will not enter the Promised Land. The priceless privileges the Jews forfeit by their unbelief, makes their unbelief all the more perplexing.

“. . . Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.” Not only have the Jews been united to God by so many ties, but the very purpose for which they have been selected has been fulfilled in the life and death of Jesus. Through physical descent on the one side Christ has come of the Jews. Of course, His spiritual descent is different; as we know. He was the eternal Son of God. We can say that Jesus Christ is the fairest flower on the stock of humanity. Many go no further in their estimate of Christ. They gladly admit that He was the best and noblest man that ever lived, the moral and religious genius of the human race, the one perfect example; but they refuse to go beyond that, and confess Him as the second Person in the Godhead. In Him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells, as we read in Colossians; and this Christ, the eternally begotten Son of God, the Israelites reject to their own eternal loss; and this fills the heart of the apostle with indescribable anguish of soul.

## 2. Rejection of Jews no reflection on God (Rom 9:6-13)

### a) God's Word has not failed (Rom 9:6 a)

“Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect.” The phrase “word of God” in this case does not mean the entire Old Testament, but the promise of God with reference to His chosen people.

It is not that God has rejected them; they have rejected God in rejecting the Redeemer. That is no disgrace to God, as we can readily see. It is as if a man had put several thousand dollars in the bank for his son's college education. When the boy becomes of age, he decides he does not want to go to college. That does not change the fact that his father has provided for him to go to college. He cannot say that his father has not kept his word.

So, Paul would say, the Israelites cannot charge God with unfaithfulness, because God has fulfilled His promise. They refuse to avail themselves of that which has been provided for them in Jesus Christ.

### b) Promise to spiritual, not physical seed (Rom 9:6-8)

“That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” We are reminded of our Lord's words to Nicodemus, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). Neither because they are Abraham's seed are they all children (Rom 4:11-12; Mat 3:9; John 8:39). In all those passages the same thought is emphasized, that the Jews who rejected Jesus Christ were not the spiritual descendants of Abraham.

To many of the Israelites in the past, God's ministry of mercy had led to presumption of spirit, rather than to devotion in service. They failed to recognize their stewardship. They claimed for themselves, as the physical descendants of Abraham, promises that belonged only to those who were Abraham's spiritual seed. Incidentally, we might mention that there are people in all the nations who allow pride of birth, of wealth, and so forth, to shut them off from the grace of God.

### c) This fact is borne out in the case of Jacob and Esau (Rom 9:9-13)

Neither Jacob nor Esau were of particularly admirable character. Jacob's conduct was nothing short of contemptible. Paul refers to Jacob and Esau to show that while both of them were the physical descendants of Abraham, only one of them was in the line of spiritual descent, that is to say, the inheritance of the promise.

In verse Rom 9:13 the reference is not to the individual, but to the nations descended from them. We know that the Edomites were among the greatest enemies of the Jewish people. They were a wild, barbaric race. Esau despised, while Jacob valued the birthright and the promise. Jacob got by fraud what Esau lost by scorn. Men are always forfeiting the heritages that they despise.

### 3. Election to grace no reflection on God (Rom 9:14-18)

#### a) No injustice with God (Rom 9:14)

We have noticed again and again in this Epistle how Paul makes just such a statement when some problem arises. He says in effect, "I cannot solve this perplexing problem, but I am sure God is absolutely holy, righteous, just." Paul stakes everything on that statement.

There is something that we may well learn from such an asseveration. We might make it a rallying point for philosophy and theological thinking. If, when we reach the place in Christian theology where we can go no farther, we can say, God is perfectly holy and just, then we can leave it with God.

In the question of election, we can take this along with other passages in the New Testament and thereby be assured that it is God's desire that all shall be saved (John 3:16). The human will, however, can reject and spurn the proffered grace of God.

#### b) God's sovereignty in mercy and in power (Rom 9:15-18)

What God is governs what God does. We have a God who is as good as He is great, who is as rich in grace as He is strong in might. His mercy and His power are both rooted in holy love and perfect wisdom.

"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Paul never says or implies that God has created man for the purpose of damnation. He created man that men might love and serve Him, but man went astray, turned his back on God's goodness, and fell into sin. What Paul is saying is this: "God reserves the right to deal with man on his own conditions, and not on man's. It is God who sets the terms. God does not stoop to man's tastes; man must bend to God's will."

### 4. Rebellion at election no reflection on election (Rom 9:19-24)

Man rebels at the doctrine of election. Too often he does not grasp the meaning.

#### a) Such rebellion may be natural (Rom 9:19)

"Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?"

The apostle referring to what he has just brought out in the preceding verse (Rom 9:17-18) conceives of someone asking, "If God is behind all, where then does human responsibility come in? If God has mercy on His chosen objects, and if, on the other hand, He hardens the hearts of

others, how can we say that man has any responsibility left? How can we reconcile absolute divine sovereignty and freedom of will?" Not a few thinkers who have plumbed the depths of philosophical and theological thought have reached the conclusion that to reconcile these two doctrines is beyond the power of the human mind. That which is conformable to divine reason may not always be explainable by human reason.

b) But it is presumptuous in man (Rom 9:20-21)

"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? . . ." What Paul is saying here is this, that man has no right to dispute the justice of God's dealings. To do so is impious and blasphemous; it shows the utmost irreverence for man to question God's dealings. We must remember that Paul is dealing here with humanity that is fallen into sin; he does not refer to man in his original creation.

Man, in other words, has no claim upon God, because all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Men have no right to say, "Thou shalt do this, and thou shalt not do that." Men are God's property. God is absolutely Sovereign. We are not to question His dealings. Man has no rights before God; he cannot make demands upon Deity. However, this is not to say that God acts capriciously. Nor does it mean that God is not governed by right. What God is governed by right, as we have stressed repeatedly. We have revealed to us in Jesus Christ a God of holy love. In all His dealings with men God is governed by infinite holiness, love, and wisdom.

c) Election a reflection of God's glory (Rom 9:22-24)

". . . and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory . . ." Here we have the stress laid on the mercy of God. God bore with man's sin. He was patient and longsuffering. He withheld the full outpouring of penalty. Not only that, but He provided Jesus Christ as Saviour. "That he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory" does not say God prepared vessels for dishonor.

". . . Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" Sinners, then, have no rights before God, no claims of their own. All is of grace, and God has made provision for all. But God cannot do violence to His own nature in order to save men. Only through the sacrifice of His Son is such salvation possible.

5. Reflections of election in prophecy (Rom 9:25-29)

a) Hosea (Rom 9:25-26)

Hosea is prophesying that God will call to Him a people from among the Gentiles, those who shall believe on His name.

b) Isaiah (Rom 9:27-29)

"Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: or he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth, And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha."

## B. ISRAEL'S REJECTION OF GOD (Rom 9:30-33; Rom 10:1-21)

We might say that this whole section develops one outstanding point, namely, that God's rejection of Israel is due to Israel's rejection of God.

That is the essential truth running through this part of the letter to the Romans. The reference is to the nation as a whole and not to individuals. As a people, the Jews turned their backs upon the Gospel of redemption: God's offer of grace was spurned. Of course, we know there were not a few among them who, especially upon the day of Pentecost, did accept Christ as their personal Saviour.

### 1. Reason for rejection broadly stated (Rom 9:30-33)

In these verses Paul gives us a summary answer, and then in chapter 10 he goes into particulars and elaborates.

#### a) The question stated (Rom 9:30-31)

Paul says to them in effect, "The fact is that the Gentiles have attained to righteousness, although they did not seek it; and the Jews failed of righteousness although they did pursue it earnestly." Why should this be?

#### b) The answer given (Rom 9:32-33)

"Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." Israel had sought righteousness not by faith, but by works. What faith gained for the Gentiles, lack of faith lost for the Jews. What must be received as a gift cannot be obtained as a right. The essential thing was a real union by faith with God, and that could not be achieved through self-righteousness. Faith is the essential requirement.

Perhaps we might illustrate it in this way: Faith is the lighting of the lamp; and works, as practiced among the Pharisees and Jews at large, and other groups, in the hope of securing salvation, is like trying to light a lamp by polishing it on the outside—that is not the way to get the lamp lighted. The wick has to be brought into contact with the flame; and so salvation was to come only through faith in God.

"For they stumble at that stumblingstone . . ." The cross is the unlimited source of salvation freely offered; and yet we do not need to be reminded how that same cross through the centuries has been a stumbling block to a great many people. In pride they bury fountains of grace under mountains of scorn.

### 2. Israel failed to see Christ as the end of the law (Rom 10:1-4)

We note that each of these three chapters begins with a warm, personal testimony of Paul's pity for Israel.

"For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." There are those who try to find God while spurning the revelation of God, and ignoring the Holy Spirit. They are engaged in a futile quest (cf. John 14:6).

### 3. Israel failed to see the free character of salvation (Rom 10:5-11)

a) Description of righteousness of faith (Rom 10:5-8)

The teaching of these verses is that man, if he had really kept all of God's laws, would have had salvation; but no one has kept the law, and no one can keep all the law.

The reference is to the incarnation and the resurrection of Christ in verses Rom 10:6-7. Paul is referring to a passage in Deu 30:12. In the Old Testament reference Paul brings out the fact Moses is looking forward to the time of the New Covenant, when Israel would have available means of forgiveness and redemption. God was addressing Israel, not on the grounds of the law, but on the basis of faith. He was looking forward to the New Testament fulfillment of that for which the Old Testament story was a preparation.

What Paul means is that the incarnation and the resurrection of Jesus Christ were the acts of God. They were divine miracles, beyond human power; and men could never attain for themselves that which God alone could do in and through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

However, that which is not obtainable by human effort has been made available by divine grace. The source of the New York City water supply is away up in the Catskill Mountains; and the building of the aqueduct, the means whereby the water could come down to New York City, was an enormous feat of engineering, an extremely costly piece of work.

Suppose all the people in New York City had to walk to that reservoir to get water. It would be simply impossible; but by means of that aqueduct this water is ready to be used, and all they need to do is to turn on the faucet. What man could never procure for himself has been put at his disposal through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. The redemptive love of God was from all eternity, but the cross was the dam that made the mighty reservoir of that love available for all the needs of mankind.

b) Salvation through the righteousness of faith (Rom 10:9-11)

“. . . That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved . . .” Salvation has been prepared, but possession is another thing. Here is a bridge built across a river. The bridge is there. But of what use is a bridge to one who is afraid to trust it? Salvation is free, but we must possess it by a direct act of will, by believing in our hearts. We must commit ourselves to Christ by faith.

4. Israel failed to see the universality of the Gospel (Rom 10:12-21)

a) Universality of the Gospel proved from the nature and promises of God (Rom 10:12-13)

“For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.” There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all. It is as much the nature of God to love as it is for fire to burn, or for light to shine. The sun in the sky is rich in warmth and life to all that call upon it, to the flowers, to the rooms that are open to it; and so it is with the love of God, but it is a matter of receptivity to God. God's promises spring out of God's nature.

b) Universality of Gospel shown (Rom 10:14-15)

Advertisers today use every method to force their products upon the attention of the public. Everything is done to make people believe in the product; and yet do we show anything like that enterprise in making known the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Why exploit people for gold and not for God? People of every race, nation, and class need Christ as the one and only Saviour.

c) Universality of Gospel scorned (Rom 10:16-21)

The Israelites held the Gospel in scorn. The rejection which characterized the Jews throughout their history culminated in their rejection of the Messiah. They valued the material blessings of God, and their privileges, but did not value the spiritual implications of all that God had done for them.

C. RESTORATION OF ISRAEL (Rom 11:1-36) 1. Rejection of Israel not complete (Rom 11:1-10)

a) Exemption of true Israel (Rom 11:1-2 a)

"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." Paul, though a Jew, has been converted to Jesus Christ, which is proof that not all Israel is rejected. Because Israel was God's chosen people, not all individuals can be cast off.

The promise, as was brought out in an earlier chapter, is not to the physical, but to the spiritual seed of Abraham. Some think this refers to the entire nation, but it is more probable that Paul is thinking of the spiritual seed of Abraham. Paul brings out later that he has reason to believe that in the future Christ will appear in such a way that vast numbers of living Jews will be willing to accept Him. b) Instance of remnant in time of Elijah (Rom 11:2-4)

There is a rather close similarity between the experience of Elijah and that of Paul at the time of writing this letter. In the case of Elijah it seemed as if the whole nation was carried away into idolatry, although seven thousand remained true. To Paul it might well have appeared as if the whole nation had rejected the promise; but Paul knew by experience in his work that not a few had accepted Christ and entered into the promise. Some people who live in the city see nothing but smoke. Some read the newspapers and see nothing but the smoke of sin; but if we read the Bible, we see promises behind the blackest cloud of sin, and we know that God rules, and that eventually His righteousness will prevail.

c) Mercy for the elect, justice for the hardened (Rom 11:5-10)

In verses Rom 11:5-7 a the thought is of God's mercy for the elect. The fact that there is a remnant who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ, at the time Paul is writing, is proof that God has not cast off His people; but Paul makes it clear that this is of grace, not works. No man has the right to demand salvation of God. It is of God's mercy alone that man is saved. It is only through meeting God's conditions that salvation is possible. To find life in God, salvation through Jesus Christ, we must appropriate what God has provided. This is true of redeemed Israel, as it is of redeemed Gentiles.

In verses Rom 11:8-10 we learn that the Jews have not failed because they have been hardened, but that they have been hardened because they failed. Privileges not accepted as obligations are likely to become a source of injury rather than of benefit.

## 2. Rejection of Israel not final (Rom 11:11-24)

### a) Rejection anticipated (Rom 11:11-16)

Paul says, in effect, that the rejection of the Jews has made for the salvation of the Gentiles.

When the Jew refused the message of the Gospel, the apostle turned to the Gentiles, and many of the Gentiles accepted the Saviour, and so the rejection of the Jews did result in the benefit of the Gentiles.

If this is so, then, the fulfilling of the Gospel, in the sense of the Jews accepting it in the future, will result in the greater blessing of the Gentiles. Paul is looking forward to the time of the return of Jesus Christ and the setting up of His throne in Jerusalem, when there will be a wide-spread acceptance of Him by the chosen people. Then, by their acceptance, will come greater blessing to Gentiles.

He is convinced that in God's own time and way there will be a widespread turning of the Jews to Christ as their Messiah and Saviour. Their continuance as a people down through the centuries, remaining a distinct people, does point to their being preserved by the Lord for a divine destiny. The Jews returning to Palestine, we feel, is the setting of the stage; but we cannot be blind to the fact that many are returning in irreligion. By "the firstfruits" Paul means the patriarchs, the founders of the nation, and they were holy in the sense of being consecrated to God-so the whole nation is set apart to God. Paul turns from this to an address to the Gentiles.

### b) Admonition to believing Gentiles (Rom 11:17-22)

Critics have sometimes said Paul did not know much of agriculture because it is inconceivable to speak of a wild olive being put into a good olive tree; but in the East when an olive tree becomes old it is not uncommon for a wild olive to be grafted into the old tree, and so the wild olive gives new life to the old tree.

The old olive tree is Israel. The wild olive is the Gentiles. Paul says the wild olive branches have no right to glory over the old tree because it is through the old tree that they get their strength. Today we, as true Christians, deplore the anti-Semitism in the world. There is a vital connection between Christianity and Judaism. Christianity is the flowering of the law.

"Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." If Gentiles depart from Him they will be cast off, just as unbelieving Jews were cut off. Paul warns Gentiles against boastfulness (Rom 11:17-18), pride (Rom 11:19-21), and presumption (Rom 11:22).

In other words, do not presume upon the fact of being Gentiles-do not think that because of that, we shall have special favor from God. Only by accepting Christ as Saviour can either Jews or Gentiles find acceptance with God.

### c) Restoration for believing Israel (Rom 11:23-24)

We cannot but see in these words a setting forth of a confident hope, on the part of the apostle, that in the future, by the providence of God, by some special revealing of Himself, there will be a

wide-spread turning back by the Jews to God and the acceptance of Christ as Messiah and Saviour. Neither Gentiles nor Jews have any claim upon God by virtue of anything in self, but only by grace as it is found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

### 3. Salvation for all (Rom 11:25-32)

#### a) Full restoration for Israel (Rom 11:25-27)

##### (1) When the fullness of time for the Gentiles is come (Rom 11:25-26 a)

When Paul uses that phrase, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant," he indicates he is going to bring out truth of great importance. He would not have his readers ignorant of "this mystery."

Just what is meant by "mystery" in the New Testament? It really means that which has been concealed, but is now revealed. The mystery of the Gospel had been hidden in the mind of God until its unveiling in the life and death of Jesus Christ; and Paul here has reference to a particular phase of Gospel truth, namely, the final restoration of Israel as a people. He brings out further in this chapter that there will be a wide-spread turning of Israel to the Redeemer.

The Gentiles are rebuked here in this passage. Paul is referring to Gentiles who drew the conclusion that Israel had been rejected henceforth forever, and that they (the Gentiles) had been put in their place; and so these Gentiles had become full of pride.

There are those today who, not informed on scriptural teaching, hold to that error, and they tend to become proud and overbearing toward the chosen people of God. We do rejoice in the fact that the Gospel has been brought to the Gentiles. We are living in the age of grace, but let us not presume upon our privileges. Blessings from God should make for lowliness of heart, rather than for loftiness of pride.

What is meant by "the fullness of the Gentiles"?

The phrase does not mean when a predetermined number of converts have been won among the Gentiles, but it means that when the Gentiles as a people grafted with the Jews have come to the fullness of their strength, then there will come the power which is to provoke Israel, God's chosen people, to jealousy.

According to the teaching of Scripture, the time is coming when the Jews will be so moved by the blessing that has come to the Gentiles, that they will be moved to seek that same blessing for themselves.

##### (2) Prophesied in Isaiah (Rom 11:26-27)

Paul is thinking here of Israel as a Christian nation, that is, as a people after they have turned to an acceptance of Christ. The prophet quoted foretells the conversion of the Jews. This is in the future, and we cannot go into detail, or know exactly how this is going to be brought about. We should rejoice in it. We ought to be happy in this prospect that is in view for God's chosen people. We must bear in mind that the reference here is not to a political, but to a religious restoration of the Jews, who as a people shall be brought back again to their God who has manifested Himself in Christ. Here is a real motive for evangelization of the Jews.

There is a tendency among liberal groups not to evangelize the Jew, but to pare down the Gospel, reducing it to a mere ethical system; but we will never win the Jews, or any people, to the Gospel by stripping the Gospel of its essential features. The conversion of the Jews will not be achieved by a perversion of Christ, by reducing Him to the level of a good and great man, by removing the crown of deity from His head.

b) Israel's dual status (Rom 11:28)

"As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." Because the Jews have refused Christ, they are passively the enemies of God, just as any who refuse Christ are the enemies of God. Because of the Jews' refusing Christ, the apostle turned to the Gentiles, and so the Gospel was brought to them. However, on account of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with whom God made an eternal covenant, God will not desert His chosen people.

c) God's election to mercy irrevocable (Rom 11:29-31)

God will not go back on His Word. His promise is indestructible. In verses 30, 31, Paul is putting the argument in this way: You Gentiles were once disobedient and living in sin, as described in the opening chapters of Romans, but now, in the mercy of God, you have been brought to Christ.

If the Gentile world which, for centuries had been lost in sin, has had the Gospel given and many have accepted it, is it impossible that the people of Israel, in God's good time, will be brought to the Gospel? This has not been fulfilled yet. There have been thousands of Jews who have accepted Christ, and become devoted followers of the Saviour. All this is but a foretoken of what lies beyond the veil.

d) Ultimate purpose of mercy to all, Jew and Gentile (Rom 11:32)

"For God hath concluded [shut up] them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." That does not mean, of course, that God ordains sin when He says, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief," but rather that He will overrule that sin. In spite of sin, God made His grace known. God's purpose is that all shall be saved, but the fulfillment of that purpose is contingent upon man's accepting what God provides.

4. Doxology (Rom 11:33-36)

a) God's providence unfathomable (Rom 11:33)

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Paul bursts forth into a rhapsody in praise of God. God's judgments are unfathomable. It transcends the power of the human mind to grasp the mind of Deity. Take the subject of astronomy. We have not begun to explore the universe yet. The new 200-inch telescope on Mount Palomar promises to expand the visible universe a thousandfold. Even then we shall probably not reach the outer confines of creation. So we try to build ever more powerful telescopes that we may see farther into space and may have unveiled before our view certain sublimities of this universe which we cannot see now. In God love and grace are absolutely without limit. With divine help we ought to have our hearts and minds made more powerful telescopes so that we may be enabled to comprehend more and more of the illimitable worlds of

truth and grace that abound in the triune God.

“The riches . . . of wisdom.” The knowledge and the love of God are absolutely inexhaustible. We need to be mastered by that mystery, and to feel our own smallness. Humility is not futility. Truth is as powerful in our hands as we are powerless in its grasp. When we are simply overpowered by a sense of greatness of God's truth, when we are awed by a sense of the mystery of God-the wonders of His redeeming grace-then it is we can be mighty for God. A realization of greatness is dependent upon a visualization of smallness. We must feel we are small before we can be great. We must know that we can do nothing before we can do anything. “Without me ye can do nothing.” “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” We achieve mastery with truth to the degree we feel it transcends mastery. We must be possessed by the truth, we must be gripped by the grace of God to be used for Him. “O the depth of riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God.”

b) God's providence self-determined (Rom 11:34-35)

God is governed by His own holy nature. Our God is one of perfect, holy love; and God will not, and, we say it reverently, cannot do that which violates His own nature as a holy and loving God. We have a God who is as merciful as He is powerful. We ought to rejoice in that. We cannot coerce God to grant our mistaken prayers. God loves us too much to do, even in answer to prayer, that which is not for our own highest spiritual good.

c) God's providence all-inclusive (Rom 11:36)

“For of him, and through him, and unto him, and to him, are all things. To him be glory for ever. Amen.” (See Col 1:16.) In this reference to Jesus Christ, we see Him as the image of God, as God's only begotten Son through whom God has created the universe and sustains it.

## 2.08. Application in Life (12:1-15:13)

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### Part Five - Application in Life (12:1-15:13)

#### CHAPTER EIGHT A. A CHURCH UNIFIED IN LOVE (Rom 12:1-21)

After the Excursus of three chapters on the relation of Israel to the Gospel, Paul now turns back to his main theme-that of salvation by faith-and enlarges upon some of the practical fruits that should be cultivated in the redeemed and sanctified life.

##### 1. A call for consecration (Rom 12:1-2)

###### a) Motivation in grace presented (Rom 12:1)

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." There we have motivation in the Lord presented. The apostle appeals to his readers, in view of all that they have received at God's hands, to give themselves in surrender to His service. "I beseech you by the mercies of God." We need to turn mercies into motives. What we have received from God should impel us to give of our utmost to Him. Memories of past benefits should be like fuel that we put into the fires of consecration to make them burn brighter.

But Paul has especially in view the wondrous treasures of redemptive grace that are ours in Christ Jesus. We do well to think far more than we do of what we have in them. There would be more motivation from the cross if there were more meditation on the cross. If people thought more about Jesus' sacrifice for them, they would not be so negligent in their devotion to Him, and in their willingness to go where He bids, and to do what He asks.

"To present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." Paul bids his readers abstain from fleshly lusts, to shun all sins of immorality, because they belong to Jesus Christ. "Ye are bought with a price." As Paul writes in Corinthians, we are also warranted in thinking of our bodies as the instruments for the Spirit; and so Paul bids his readers yield their lives, their time, their strength, and talents to the service of the Lord Jesus. "Can you give less than your best to Him who gave His all for you?" is substantially what Paul challenges, the Roman Christians with in this opening verse.

###### b) Conformation to the world forbidden (Rom 12:2 a)

"And be not conformed to this world . . ." Many Christians, alas, seem to be more interested in being conformed to the world than they are in being transformed by the Lord. The chameleon changes color very easily for purposes of protection. Some Christians are very skillful in adapting themselves to whatever situation they happen to be in. "When in Rome do as the Romans do," is a most dangerous policy to follow. Paul says, "Be not conformed to this world." We must be more interested in being in tune with the Lord than in being in style with the world. The world will never be transformed by a church that is conformed to the world.

c) Transformation by the Lord commanded (Rom 12:2 b)

The caterpillar knows nothing about the beauty of a higher region, but the butterfly proves the virtues of a new order of life. So Paul says, "But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Some people will not taste to see that the Lord is good; they are not willing to try out the glorious possibilities of the new life. Doing the Lord's will means wings for the soul. Some men and women think that it is hard to commit themselves absolutely to God's will. They are afraid of hard things the Lord will ask them to do, forgetting that one never does God's will without being lifted higher.

2. Plea for co-operation (Rom 12:3-8)

a) Vanity of self (Rom 12:3)

A great many men like to look at themselves through magnifying glasses. They see their powers vastly enlarged as they gaze into magic mirrors of conceit. The exaltation of self may lead to exploitation of men. When we exalt ourselves more highly than we ought to, we are likely to think of other people less highly than we ought. Immanuel Kant said, "So act as you would be willing to have your principle of conduct made the principle of the universe." Or, in other words, treat men as ends, not as means. Do not make them simply instruments for advancing your interests.

". . . according as God hath dealt to each man the measure of faith." When we stop to think of it, misuse of gifts for self is a robbing of God. If God has given us our talents and our strength to be used for His glory and His service, and we just use those powers for ourselves, is not that spiritual embezzlement? "Will a man rob God?" (Mal 3:8) That is a reference to holding back temporal treasures, but if all of our material possessions belong to God, what about our resources of mind, heart, time, and life?

b) Unity in Christ (Rom 12:4-5)

The Church is the Body of Jesus Christ. He indwells it through the Holy Spirit. Life results in unity in the body. Death means dissolution and decay.

It is life that gives unity to the physical body, and is it not truer spiritually of the Church of Jesus Christ when His life animates the Church? When there is consciousness of devotion to Him, there is bound to be unity, but when the Spirit of Christ is not given the right of way in the hearts and lives of individuals, we have all sorts of friction and misunderstanding. Loyalty to the Lord is the key to unity in the Church.

c) Ministry of gifts (Rom 12:6-8)

Notice the diversity of gifts. Not all of them are intellectual talents. Traits of personality are included - generosity, hospitality, sympathy, and so forth. So often we overlook that kind of gift. If a person is gifted with a winsome personality, if he has the power to sympathize with others, let him use those gifts for Jesus Christ.

We must not let what we lack blind us to what we have. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee." Suppose Peter had just thought of the fact that he did not have any money. Perhaps we are not overburdened with money, but we have the riches of Jesus Christ. Are

we using what we have in Him? We are to be using all of our gifts for His sake. If we do not stir up the fire and open the drafts, the fire will go out; so we need to ask God to make clear what gifts he has bestowed upon us, and then to cultivate those gifts to the full, depending upon the quickening power of God's Spirit.

### 3. Practice of love (Rom 12:9-16)

#### a) Sincerity (Rom 12:9-12)

Insincerity in love spoils that love. If there is anything that suggests insincerity, it destroys our power to influence others. If we truly love, we shall try to show others their faults. We shall seek to bring out the best in them.

True love is creative art, especially Christian love; and if the Lord Jesus Christ means more than anything else in the world, is there anything that we can more earnestly desire for people with whom we come in contact than for them to grow in the righteousness of Jesus Christ? True love seeks only the best for its object.

“. . . fervent in spirit; serving the Lord . . .” “Fervent in spirit” means boiling over with zeal. There is a real connection between intensity of spiritual life and real Christian love. When our love for Christ grows cold, our love for fellow Christians diminishes. Zeal for Christ promotes love for man. Fellowship with Jesus results in continuance in love.

#### b) Generosity (Rom 12:13-14)

Hospitality meant more in those days than now because men traveling were more dependent upon it. If a Christian came from another town, believers in that town would see that accommodations were afforded him. They would provide entertainment for overnight. They would open their doors to entertain him even though it meant real sacrifice.

“Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not.” These words are an echo of one of the beatitudes. We are to forgive our enemies. We should see that hate is a disease in the soul of the one who hates, and should ask help of God to conquer it by the power of love.

#### c) Sympathy (Rom 12:15-16 a)

“Rejoice with them that do rejoice; and weep with them that weep.” It is more difficult to rejoice with people that rejoice than to weep with those that weep. We are so likely to be jealous. It takes more real Christianity to rejoice with people that sail on the smiling seas of good fortune than to sympathize with those who have been wrecked on the rocks of disaster. When we do rejoice and share other people's joys, we transplant into our own hearts a slip from the plants of joy in other lives. We may thus grow gardens of unselfishness, if we will, for the delight of our own souls.

#### d) Humility (Rom 12:16 b)

“Be not wise in your own conceits.” Do not despise those on a lower plane than you are. Such admonitions are needed in some churches today. Pride is utterly foreign to the spirit and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. Pride really punishes the one who is proud. Pride puts out many a cheering fire in the soul. The proud person is terribly poor in his own inner life. Pride's scorn is love's loss. When we have scorn for others we lock our own hearts against them. We cut down our

own riches by closing to ourselves many a potential market of inspiration. When, on the other hand, we are sympathetic, when our interests are wide, when we see the good in people, then are our own souls on the way to enrichment.

#### 4. Conquest of hate (Rom 12:17-21)

##### a) Pursue peace (Rom 12:17-18)

Why do many people seem to take more enjoyment in promoting strife than in pursuing peace? The real harm done by our enemies, after all, is the hate that they succeed in injecting into our own spirits. The resentment gets into our souls as a poison. We need to keep a generous supply of spiritual antidotes on hand so that if someone does an injury to us, we may be able to treat that thing as we would poison, and pray God to give us grace to conquer the unchristian feeling that has come into our hearts. Some people are too sensitive; they are so sensitive that the least little upset is like a spark that starts a fire. A Christian ought to be above such smallness.

##### b) Postpone wrath (Rom 12:19)

“Avenge not yourselves . . .” Let fires die down for lack of fuel. It takes two to start a quarrel, but one can stop it. Some people revel in their dislikes and hatreds. They masticate their antipathies thoroughly. Revenge is a two-edged sword, it cuts the one who wields it; and the person who practices retaliation is injuring himself a good deal more than the one to whom he shows it. Harboring resentment is like walking on a broken ankle for the purpose of feeling the pain. c) Outwit hate (Rom 12:20-21)

“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” The church should be a spiritual fire department, putting out fires of strife and bitterness and misunderstanding. The church should do everything possible to apply the Gospel of Jesus to the hearts and minds of men, so as to put out the fires of hatred. Christians should constitute themselves members of a fire brigade to extinguish incipient conflagrations. Churches would be in a healthier state if more of their members were to devote themselves to such a beneficent undertaking. And we must look to God to keep our own spirits fireproof.

#### B. THREE COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELS (Rom 13:1-14) 1. Be law-abiding (Rom 13:1-7)

##### a) Civil powers ordained of God (Rom 13:1)

We may find it somewhat difficult to understand the injunction in this verse in the light of subsequent history, and in view of present-day world conditions. We get the key to it when we lay emphasis upon the phrase “ordained of God.”

There is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Paul was living under Roman rule, which at that time was outstanding for justice. He had frequently benefited by it, and he realized the importance of stable government and the need of obedience to it, and this is a principle that holds good at all times. Without obedience to law we have chaos, confusion, insecurity. But man’s laws must be rooted in God’s laws.

A government that defies the laws of God is heading for disaster. Paul most assuredly would not advocate blind obedience to a government brazen in its defiance of religion and morality. Paul is

laying down the general principle that the security of society rests upon stability of government, and that, of course, requires obedience on the part of the subjects. But we repeat; man's laws must be rooted in God's laws.

b) Lawlessness is resistance to God (Rom 13:2)

"Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Lawlessness is essentially Godlessness, and one leads to the other. In the latter part of this verse the apostle is referring to judgment inflicted by civil powers; furthermore, disobedience to the law brings further penalties that originate in God (that is, providing that the man-made laws are not at variance with God's moral laws).

Breaking the law imperils the social structure. It is playing with the controls of society. Rulers should themselves be governed by the laws it is their solemn duty to enforce. When the rulers themselves break the law of their country, they are tampering with stabilizing forces, and there is grave danger ahead.

c) Rulers a blessing to the good, a terror to the bad (Rom 13:3-4)

Many men blame the law for the result of their own sin. If a man drives through a red light and meets with trouble, it will do him no good to smash the light. The light is not responsible. It was his disregarding of the light that caused the trouble. The law is for the purpose of protecting the good and of resisting the bad. It is a terror to the evil-doer.

We might say that love of the bad within breeds fear of the good without. If a man loves his own sin more than he does good government, then he will fear the police officer. The best way to receive good from the state is to become good in the life, providing the state is good and sound in its government.

"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." Lawlessness results in fearfulness in two senses.

Fearfulness is often used in the sense of terrible conditions, a state of affairs that breeds terror; and it cannot be denied that lawlessness does result in fearfulness in that sense. Then fearfulness also means a spirit of fear. We speak of a person being fearful, living in dread of someone.

The man who breaks the law is simply storing the cellar of his own inner life with bombshells of dread. Those who go forth upon careers of crime, live in perpetual fear of the law and of their rivals in crime.

d) Be submissive for conscience' sake (Rom 13:5-7)

Paul has no words of comfort for chronic tax dodgers. He probably would not be very popular with people who try to get things into this country without paying duty. People who bring in treasures from Canada and England without paying duty may keep the treasures of jewelry, but they lose the treasure of a clean conscience.

". . . for conscience' sake." We multiply our compensations as we elevate our inspirations. We can raise our own spiritual salaries at will. We may transform compulsion at the hands of men into devotion to the will of God. That suggests Jesus' teaching about the second mile. The best way to

get rid of the pain involved in doing a disagreeable duty is to do it in a spirit of love to Jesus Christ. Taking Col 3:17 as our life motto will make for a fabulous increase in our spiritual wealth.

## 2. Be love-fulfilling (Rom 13:8-10)

### a) The principle stated (Rom 13:8)

“Owe no man anything, save to love one another . . .” Love is the fulfillment of the law. Read 1Co 13:1-13, and also the passage in Col 3:12-15 where love is so matchlessly glorified. What Paul means is that love is the girdle that holds all these other things together.

It is true that as we grow spiritually rich, the heavier grows our sense of indebtedness with respect to love. True love keeps no credit accounts. Self-centered people think about how much others owe them, and not about how much they owe others.

What is our dominant attitude? Do we magnify our rights and minimize our duties, or do we reverse the process?

### b) The principle illustrated (Rom 13:9-10)

Man is not likely to deface a picture in his home that appeals to him. That which he prizes and cherishes he takes care of to the best of his ability. If we are loving others, we are not going to go out of our way to injure them.

## 3. Be light-revealing (Rom 13:11-14)

### a) Wake up to light (Rom 13:11-12 a)

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep . . .” Paul here is referring to the coming of Christ, whether it be the end of the world, or at death. With the individual the two are equivalent because, whether Christ comes while we are alive and we are caught up to meet Him in the air, or whether it be at death that we are taken immediately into the presence of our Saviour, we are to be ready to meet Christ when the call comes.

“ . . . let us therefore cast off the works of darkness . . .” The world exalts sin as life, but the Lord condemns sin as death. The world talks about sin as being life, but that is not God’s point of view. Why is it always thought smart to break the law? Would that we might popularize these three slogans:

- It is smart to be good;
- It is smart to do right;
- It is smart to serve God!

It is a triumph to do right and serve God. Christians should be alert; they should be on fire for Jesus Christ.

### b) Dress up in Christ (Rom 13:12-14)

“ . . . let us put on the armor of light. . . . But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ . . .” The Christian life is a battle. For the Christian to be well dressed is to be well armed, fighting the battle of

righteousness. We have all seen copies of the Pilgrims going to church with guns over their shoulders for protection in the event of an Indian attack. If more people came away from church spiritually armed, we would find a much better state of affairs in the church.

### C. THE STRONG AND THE WEAK (14:1-15:13) 1. Mutual consideration enjoined (Rom 14:1-6)

These verses deal with the question of meats and days as these two problems bear upon the great principle of mutual consideration.

In verse 1 Paul has reference to one who has not entered into a full understanding of the doctrine of salvation through trusting in the atoning merits of Jesus, who has not entirely broken away from the idea that the doing of certain works has a part to play in the winning of security. Paul does not say that those who hold that position are right, but he bids his readers who are strong in the faith not to coerce those who are weak. Do not drive them to the truth. You cannot thus convince them. Do not force them to go against their conscience in the matter of eating meats or observing certain days.

This has a pertinent bearing upon Christian tactics today. We cannot nag people into the truth; we must seek the guidance of the Spirit that we may be able to persuade them, to pray them into the light. In other words, do not knock the crutches from under the lame man, but try to strengthen his limbs spiritually. If a person has not come into the full light, try to help him into a fuller realization.

Verses Rom 14:2-4. Let the strong beware of scornfulness, and let the weak steer clear of carping criticism of those who have different standards. It is so easy for us to laugh at those who entertain ideas that perhaps we think are childish or stupid. It is also too easy to pick flaws in those who have gone beyond us.

What Paul says is this—that every Christian is responsible to his Lord. Our duty is to try to bring others into a closer fellowship with the Lord Jesus.

“Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.” The important thing is not so much for us to dictate to people just what they must do, or not do, with reference to particular applications of Christian truth, as it is to inspire them to seek God’s will for themselves through the study of the Bible and through earnest prayer. That is the imperative procedure. The Master’s will may not be the same for all. He may have one plan for you and another plan for me.

“He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord . . .” Paul then proceeds to bid his readers to be considerate in the matter of observing days, because there were some in Rome that were more or less under the influence of Judaism. The observance of days is in itself a matter for the individual to decide. This, however, is not to be construed as license for Sabbath breaking.

The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. It was designed to contribute to man’s spiritual enrichment; it was not given him for the purpose of desecration. We may say that abstaining from breaking the Sabbath is not enough; we must give ourselves to keeping the Sabbath; we should take advantage of every avenue for coming into a more real and vital fellowship with God, for learning more about the Bible, for worshiping with God’s people.

### 2. Common accountability to God a motive (Rom 14:7-12)

a) We are in Christ in life and in death (Rom 14:7-9)

“For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.” We live and die unto the Lord. If we are Christians our lives belong to God. He is our Master; He has the right to direct our way. He is the one we serve; we are responsible to Him. We are Christ’s in life, and in death. Our Saviour is our Master. Paul is not referring to Christ’s earthly life, but he is referring to His death and risen life. Jesus Christ was crucified and rose again; the resurrection was the climax to the crucifixion; it proved the efficacy of Jesus’ death upon the cross.

The Christian life can be summed up in just two phrases, “Christ for us, and Christ in us” (A. H. Strong). Christ who died in our behalf lives in us through the Holy Spirit. He wanted us for His own, and He paid the price with His own life; and to the degree that we sense how Jesus did suffer the cruel death upon the cross, the more willing will we be to give Him full control of our hearts and of our lives.

b) Therefore we are not to judge (Rom 14:10-12)

Paul says in effect, that if every Christian is responsible to God, then others have no right to pass judgment upon him, because the believer must answer to his Lord. That does not mean, however, that we are warranted in condoning sin in those who come under our influence by saying that it makes no difference whether they do wrong or not. We should seek to bring those who have gone astray to realize their relationship to God through Jesus Christ, and to persuade them to seek God’s forgiveness.

It is not important that we get people to do just what we want, but it is highly needful that we get them to do what they feel, after prayer and study of the Scriptures, God wants them to do. It is very easy for parents to overlook this very simple fact. Are we content to give our views to those who come to us for counsel, or do we lead them to look to God for His direction? We ought to bring them into that relationship with God where they depend upon Him.

Paul is dealing here with the vexing question of the eating of meats offered to idols, and of the observance of days. Do not be bound, he enjoins them, by scruples, by mere forms, but enter into the spirit of the Christian life, into a deep and true relationship with God. Of course, that would apply to Sabbath-keeping today. Seek to lead people to realize the priceless privileges at their command to replenish their depleted resources. Keeping the Sabbath is not a work of law, but a means of grace.

3. Stewardship of influence a motive (Rom 14:13-23)

a) Meats harmless in themselves are sinful if a stumbling block to others (Rom 14:13-16)

“But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.” Paul says that if a thing is a stumbling block to others, it is a borderline wrong.

If we are close enough to the Lord, indulgences should lose their attractiveness for us. We must keep others in mind, to see that our liberty does not injure those for whom Christ died. The thing that is all right for us we are not to use in such ways as will harm others.

b) Right transcends rites and rights (Rom 14:17-18)

Paul says that the essential thing is not going through certain rites, conforming to definite forms, doing this and not that; the essential thing is to live a life of vital fellowship with God and to follow His will to the very best of our ability. If that is so, then we are more than willing to forego certain rights. We may wave our rights in pride or we can waive our rights in love (1Co 8:1-13).

c) Waive rights that harm the weak (Rom 14:19-23)

If one does something that is against his conscience, even though that thing may not be wrong for others, it is wrong for him. Some people see everything just black and white. We need greater skill in the discernment of shadings.

4. Obligation to help the weak a motive (Rom 15:1-7) a) A duty in imitation of Christ (Rom 15:1-4)

Paul reminds his readers that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, left His throne, the Son of Glory laid aside that which was His right (Php 2:1-30), and took the form of a man. Why? That He, the strong Son of God, might help fallen man, might save sinning man and open for him the gates of Heaven.

If the Lord Jesus Christ were willing to forego His divine glory in Heaven, we ought to go to the utmost limit in self-denial.

b) Edification of the weak a glorification of the Lord (Rom 15:5-7)

Go without some of your rights, Paul counsels his readers, if need be, if you can bring these weaker Christians into a fuller knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; and as you help others to grow in Him then you are glorifying your Saviour.

What a noble motive we have in the realization that we are actually glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ when we seek, at the cost of some self-denial, to build up our weaker brethren in the faith!

5. Christ for Jews and Gentiles a motive (Rom 15:8-12)

Paul reminds his readers that Christ came for the salvation of Jews and Gentiles alike. He came for the benefit of all who put their trust in Him. If Christ was willing to do this for the salvation of the Jews and Gentiles alike, ought not we His followers, to be willing to do all that we can to bring others into a closer fellowship with the Saviour?

Paul quotes from the Old Testament to show how this grace granted to the Gentiles had been provided away back in the Old Testament dispensation.

6. Benediction (Rom 15:13)

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Ghost.”

There is no such joy and peace in all the world as that which comes through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Belief in the heart involves a surrender of the will.

## 2.09. Postscripts (15:14-16:27)

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### Postscripts (15:14-16:27)

CHAPTER NINE The Epistle to the Romans regarded as a doctrinal treatise really comes to a close with the benediction in 15:13. What follows in the remaining chapter and a half may be regarded as a short series of postscripts containing matters of interest and importance to the readers which lie, however, outside the argument whereby Paul has established his great thesis that justification is by faith and must, if genuine, issue in sanctification of life. We shall, therefore, pass somewhat hurriedly over this closing portion of the Epistle, just indicating the general contents of the successive postscripts and touching upon a few of the more salient and suggestive points.

#### A. The Nature of Paul's Ministry (Rom 15:14-21)

In verse Rom 15:14 the apostle reminds his readers that they are deeply appreciative of the Gospel and have a rich understanding of its contents so that they are able to help one another to make progress in the truth. How is it with the rank and file of members in the modern church? Do they take pains through availing themselves of the means of grace at their command to feed the springs of their inner being so that their lives may overflow in streams of blessing to others, particularly to their fellow Christians?

In verses Rom 15:15-16 Paul next refers to the fact that the writing of this letter to the Church at Rome was part of his larger service as a divinely appointed apostle to the Gentiles. Therefore, he seems to say, if we read between the lines correctly, they should give most earnest heed to the message that he has been inspired and led of God to write to them. It ill behooves Christians in our day to ignore or despise the weighty teachings of this immortal treatise that so clearly set forth the foundations of the Christian faith.

Verses Rom 15:17-21 are an upwelling of Paul's sense of stewardship with regard to his lifework. He is deeply cognizant of the greatness and glory attendant upon the Gospel ministry. But he realizes that he is only a humble instrument in the hands of Jesus Christ to whom belongs all the honor for whatever he has been privileged to achieve under His direction and with the endowment of His power. Those of us who are engaged in full-time Christian service need to be very careful to glory not so much in what we do for Christ as in what He does through us. Let us boast not of ourselves; let us make our boast in the Lord whose we are and whom we serve.

#### B. The Apostle's Plans (Rom 15:22-23)

In the paragraph comprising verses Rom 15:22-23 Paul outlines his plans to visit Rome after going to Jerusalem with the contributions for the church in that city which he has gathered from Gentile churches in Europe and Asia Minor. But he is apprehensive as to the fate that may be awaiting him at Jerusalem, and so he entreats his readers to intercede with God in his behalf that the cause of the Gospel may not be unduly hindered by his enemies, and that he may be spared to see the fruition of his long-cherished dream to visit Rome and then to carry the Gospel to the westernmost confines of the Empire.

C. A Word for Phoebe (Rom 16:1-2) In the first two verses of chapter 16 we find the apostle commending to the Church in Rome Phoebe, the bearer of the Epistle. He urges that they look after her wants and take the best of care of her, especially in view of her great helpfulness to others. One can but wonder if Phoebe realized what an immortal treasure of truth for the whole Christian Church throughout the centuries to come was entrusted to her hands.

D. Miscellaneous Greetings (Rom 16:3-16) With several notable exceptions, little is known concerning those to whom Paul here sends greetings save the bare mention of their names. But though otherwise unknown to fame, they are not unknown to Him whose eye misses not the tiniest bit of service for the kingdom rendered in his name. The world views the mighty river; the Lord beholds each and every obscure and hidden tributary. The newly built 200-inch telescope-the largest ever built by men-is powerful enough to catch the light of a candle flame 50,000 miles distant! If the inventive genius of man is capable of constructing so potent an aid to vision, surely the eye of Jesus Christ will not over-look any life that shines for Him in even the remotest corners of earth.

E. Warning against false teachers (Rom 16:17-20) The enemy of souls has evidently been busy trying to sow tares in the Church at Rome by the promulgation of error and fomenting of dissension. False doctrines ever make for division and disruption in the Lord's work. And not only so, but they plunge their victims in dire peril that may issue in eternal separation from God when they take the form of spurning the redemptive death of Jesus upon the cross of Calvary. Those who have souls committed to their shepherding can ill afford to welcome and encourage wolves in sheep's clothing that work such deadly damage to the Church of Christ.

F. Further Greetings (Rom 16:21-23)

Here we have greetings to the Church at Rome from several of Paul's fellow laborers, from Tertius his amanuensis, from Gaius in whose home the letter was written, and from Erastus the treasurer of the city of Corinth. The friendliness among believers and between churches was an outstanding characteristic of apostolic Christianity.

Never ought the fires of sympathy and fellow-feeling in the Church of Christ to be allowed to die down, for the eternal bonds that unite all true believers in Jesus are of such immeasurably greater value and importance than the accidental temporalities that divide.

G. Concluding Doxology (Rom 16:25-27) With reference to this concluding doxology we can perhaps do no better than to quote the comment on it by William Sanday in his masterly exposition of Romans in the International Critical Commentary:

"The doxology," he writes, "sums up all the great ideas of the Epistle. The power of the Gospel which Paul was commissioned to preach; the revelation in it of the eternal purpose of God; its contents, faith; its sphere, all the nations of the earth; its author, the one wise God, whose wisdom is thus vindicated-all these thoughts had been continually dwelt on. And so at the end feeling how unfit a conclusion would be the jarring note of verses Rom 16:17-20, and wishing to 'restore the Epistle at its close to its tone of serene loftiness,' the apostle adds these verses, writing them perhaps in those large, bold letters which seem to have formed a sort of authentication of his Epistle (Gal 6:11), and thus gives an eloquent conclusion to his great argument."

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