# Galatians - Commentaries by Unknown Author

The Remembrancer: 1906, Grace the True Source and Support of Practical Righteousness (6:7-11)

AL 6:7-11{

for

It is well for us, therefore, continually to bring our souls to this standard. Let us keep fast holiness. The more we value grace and seek to understand it—and I do not think it is possible to over-estimate the importance of it, both of the knowledge of it and the desire to know it more—even because of this it becomes us so much the more to take care that we never sacrifice the moral principles of God's dealings with every soul of man, and with ourselves in particular because of the mercy that He has shown our souls.

But here is a passage now before us that sometimes startles many a soul not founded in grace; a passage which those who are unacquainted with grace wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. They say, There, you see, it all depends upon what we are—how we overcome self, and how far we are changed men: call depends upon our being thoroughly spiritual and entirely devoted. I need not stop to prove that such a statement is altogether false; that the only foundation on which we can stand at all is Christ: " other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ." That foundation is not the work of the Spirit in us, but of Christ for us; it is a work entirely outside us, on which we stand forever before God. But as surely as we do stand on that foundation, there is a work of the Spirit in us, and a constant and serious work. I do not say it may not he eclipsed from time to time and interrupted. There may be sad checks to it; but I do say that God never allows such a thought as that a child of His, blessed with Christ, should not be subject to the present care, and government, and discipline of His heart and hand in our ways and conversation, so as to produce a moral conformity to His own will. He would cease to be God if He did, and He would treat us as bastards and not as sons; for " if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."

Thus, though it may seem strange to those who little understand the ways of God, and it will be thought strange wherever there is carelessness, and anything allowed in our wars that is contrary to God, yet it is most wholesome and needed for our souls that we should remind ourselves of such a Scripture as this: " Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap," It is, be assured, universally true, whether of the unbeliever or of the believer—" whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." The unbeliever sows to self and nothing but self, and reaps the judgment of God on self-and of self where there is not a single good thing-nothing will stand before God. But what about the believer? There is where the difficulty comes in. The believer has the mingled crop of good and evil. For just as we know with Christianity; the field where good seed was sown and where there was good soil, yet all was not good seed-tares were sown by the enemy; so Satan may take advantage of the unjudged evil of our hearts in order to lead into sin. It may not be always a question of gross sin; but it is the lawless evil of our nature, that prefers a little present gratification of self to the service, the uniform obedience and glory, of Christ. But do we gain by it? Can you tell me of a soul that ever departed from the will of God that did not suffer in that very thing in which he pleased himself? Can you look back on any one thing in which you went contrary to God, that gave you satisfaction as a Christian? Wherever we indulged ourselves, in that itself God dealt with us. The very thing for which we spare ourselves becomes the keen rod for our correction. And let us thank God that it is so. " God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

God, then, does carry on this discipline with His people at the present time. As sure as God lives and we live, what is contrary to God must be judged. Now if we judge ourselves we shall not be judged; but if we neglect self-judgment, then He takes it up, and when He does so we are chastened of Him, that we should not be condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11). Therefore no matter what the thing be (what some might think a matter of little moment), it is impossible that God should pass over a little sin: impossible that He could have communion with anything that is not of Christ. What a mercy that now is the time when God deals with what does not flow from His Spirit! It may have to be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ another day, when we shall receive the things done in the body according to that we have done whether good or bad.

And let us not think our Father hard. Can any one thing too hard come from such a God—the God who gave His own Son to die that we might know our sins forgiven and ourselves sons of God with Christ forever? Now such we know to be our place, as it is of all real Christians, let them say what they may. Nothing can alter God's truth. But a vast deal depends on our practical state and conduct as to the dealing of God with our souls in the present time. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." This does not mean anything necessarily shocking, though the very worst evil may be its end. Of course any kind of indulgence of the flesh must be dealt with by God and by God's children. But there may be that which children of God do not see. Does God pass over that because others do not see it, and we may not think much of it? Impossible that God could sanction what is contrary to Christ. And let, us thank God for it. It is a part of the scheme of His perfect goodness towards us. It could not be otherwise. And we should prove ourselves to be little worthy of the name of Christ, if we wished it to be otherwise.

May our desire be that Christ be formed in us in everything; not only that we should have life everlasting, but that our hearts should be according to His heart—our spirit, our ways, our walk, according to the mold Of Him to whom we belong. This is what God has before Him; and it should be the object of our souls. "Therefore let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Christian Friend: Volume 2, Cross, The (6:14)

“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”—Galatians 6:14.

I would say a few words on the entire end of self in THE CROSS—the nothingness to which it reduces us. How little do we know practically of this. Let us look at Jesus, and then learn how very little our souls have realized its power in thus setting ourselves aside.

We see in Him one who had all human righteousness, and one too in whom “dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;” yet what path did He take What was THE CROSS to Him? To what did it reduce Him? The entire setting aside of all this human righteousness, of all this divine power. The perfect strength of His love was proved, not only in that He “did not please Himself”—though “in the form of God,” and thinking it “not robbery to be equal with God,” that He emptied Himself, and “being found in fashion as a man,” humbled Himself to take the place of our disobedience—but that in this place of love He was content to be utterly rejected! to be reduced to nothing, that love might shine out!

The flesh in us is subtle, very subtle: if we show love, we expect that it will be felt; but if otherwise—if, when we have rendered a kindness, we get no return, not even a kind word—our hearts grow faint and cold in the exercise of love. Do we know what it is when our hearts have gone forth in love to meet with that which we read of in Corinthians, “Though the more I love you, the less I be loved;” to find that the only consequence of humiliation is to become thereby less respected, more humbled still. Thus it was with Jesus; full of patience and tenderness, He exposed Himself to the power and malice of Satan. But what did He find in us when doing this work of love? Man took occasion, by His very lowliness, to treat Him with the utmost scorn. He was “the reproach of men, the despised of the people.” They kept Him in on every side: “Dogs have compassed me about: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.” “Many bulls have compassed me about: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round: They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.” He looked for comforters, but found none. One of those with whom He had “taken sweet counsel” lifted up his heel against Him; and even that, disciple who had been most forward to declare his adhesion, “Though all men should forsake Thee, yet will not I,” denied Him with oaths and curses.

There was no outlet to His grief, no comfort from man; and here we see the meaning of that, “Be not Thou far from Me, O My God!” Cast out by the scorn of those whom He came to in love, pressed upon, closed in by those whom He came to save, His soul turned to God: “My God, be Thou not far from Me!” But God had hid His face from Him; “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” He now found the darkness and wrath that came upon Him to the uttermost; there was no response on any side: the deep hatred of man around, and from above darkness also; everything was set aside but the power of love. “I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I come into deep waters, where the floods overflow Me.” The waves and the billows went over Him; all was lost in the waves but love: it was that which sustained Him; love was greater than all; and it was set on us.

When we see what He, as emptied, was, we come to the depth of love. If He emptied Himself of everything else, there was still the fullness of love, for He is God, and “God is love.” We, dear brethren, have found the fullness of love in Jesus, and that shall be our everlasting portion—we shall know, shall taste this love forever.

When Jesus was “going about” here, it was as “doing good;” He could not restrain His power, though ever so lowly and humbled, when good was to be done; He was obliged to show it. Thus in the life of Jesus, in His actings here, there was something which the natural heart must own, must approve: we like to have our diseases cured; and when they saw the dead raised, they could rejoice in having their deceased friends brought to life again: but in THE CROSS there was no putting forth of this power, there was no miracle—nothing but weakness and degradation—He was “crucified through weakness.” Trial from man, temptation from Satan, desertion from God—there was nothing to be seen but love—the depth, the fullness, the riches of that love which will be our happy, blessed portion forever.

The natural heart in every one of us hates the power of THE CROSS. We want something for the eye to rest upon, we seek a little honor here; THE CROSS stains all the pride of human glory, and therefore we like it not. Let us test ourselves, beloved. Are we really content to take THE CROSS in this its power, and to say, “I want nothing else”? “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! May our souls rest in this blessed confidence—Jesus is our everlasting portion; to dwell in Him is to dwell in God, and “God is love.” Many Christians are cherishing those things which keep them from knowing the full power of this love in their hearts. We cannot enjoy love and pride together. Whatever nourishes self, no matter what—honor, talents, learning, wealth, friends, respectability—anything, everything which the natural man delights in, nourishes pride in us, renders Christ less precious, and the enjoyment of His love less full.

The Lord give us to know what it is to be “crucified to the world.” Let us, beloved brethren, bless God for everything that puts down self.

Christian Friend: Volume 12, Galatians 6:2 (6:2)

The only question to be considered in this passage is as to the meaning of the law of Christ. It is generally said to be the law of love, and this is true; but is it not possible to be more precise? The preceding verse enjoins the spiritual to restore a fallen brother in the spirit of meekness, “considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” That is, as we understand, the spiritual man, remembering his own liability to fall, is to go in all gentleness to him who has been “overtaken in a fault” or offense, and in grace so identify himself with his condition as to take his burden of sin and sorrow upon himself, with a view to his succor and restoration. Now this is exactly what Christ Himself has done—only perfectly—both in life and in death. Thus the evangelist says, “He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” (Matthew 8:1,6,17) This was in His life, and concerning His death Peter says, “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree.” (1 Peter 2:24) He was thus, in life and death, the great burden-bearer; in life taking our infirmities and sicknesses in grace in order to remove them; in death

bearing our sins in substitution, as made sin for us by God, when He endured for the glory of God all that was clue to us on account of our sins, that He might take them away forever. There is a great difference between His burden-bearing in life and in death; but still He was in both the burden-bearer. And this is the law of Christ: “Bear ye one another’s burdens,” and so fulfill the law of Him who was the pattern burden-bearer. Love was undoubtedly the motive of; for, as the apostle says, “He loved me, and gave Himself for me;” and it is certain that we shall never go and take the burdens of our brethren on ourselves, unless we are under the constraint of the love of Christ. But this is motive, ‘and the power, through the Holy Spirit, for fulfilling the law, rather than the law itself.

E. D.

Bible Treasury: Volume 13, Spirituality (6:1)

Gal. 6:1

Those who have received the Spirit are not for that reason spiritual as here meant— “Ye that are spiritual.” All the Galatians had received the Spirit, as we know from chapter 3, where the apostle asks them the question in verse 2, “Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”

They were being enticed back to the law after having the Spirit, which they did not receive by the works of law. It was retrogression, thus seeking perfection in the flesh. But they had the Spirit, and the way that they received Him was by the hearing of faith. What had Paul preached in the regions of Galatia?

Was it not Christ crucified which he had “set forth amongst them?” The Holy Ghost can testify to nothing else, in giving liberty and a sense of sonship, and by this truth, namely, “Christ crucified,” preached amongst them and believed, they had received the Spirit, and knew that they were sons. Blessing was by the hearing of faith, as curse by the law.

Yet were they not for that reason all spiritual—at least we may say when he wrote to them. The power and source of spirituality they had by receiving the Spirit. But some needed restoration, and it was not anyone who was able to restore such, even though they might not as yet have been overtaken in a fault themselves; they were in a feeble state of soul, and had not wisdom nor strength to assist others who had sunk below feebleness into a fault.

The spiritual only had ability to help; the Spirit could work deliverance and restoration for others through them, fit instruments for His work, when others were not. How, then, comes this, when all had received the Spirit as believers at the first? It is from this; that there was another power in them besides the Spirit, and other influences brought to bear upon them than what were from Him, the “Spirit of truth,” who testified of Christ. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other; in order that ye may not do the things that ye would.” (Chap. 5:17.)

It is plain that thus the flesh had hindered. They had not “walked in the Spirit,” and, because they had not, the lusts of the flesh had been fulfilled. At first they had run well, but they had been hindered through having turned back to the flesh by the law, and thus manifested the flesh, and not the Spirit, in their state and ways. Hence the apostle has to make the selection. The spiritual alone could help when the general state was low, and some had been overtaken in a fault. These (the spiritual) had walked in the Spirit. He ungrieved not only dwelt in them, as He had sealed them, but ruled them, and was listened to; and the flesh was not yielded to: this made all the difference in their state, and thus, in this state only, they could help others who wore needy, and lift up those who were fallen. This is our individual resource, and the resource of the church, when things are low and in confusion. The Holy Ghost, though often grieved and discarded, has not returned to (heaven (and what a mercy and comfort this is, and an unfailing power available to us!) leaving all to man's will and way.

Who, then, are the spiritual? I suppose that by their fruits we are to know them. Neither is this difficult, nor far to seek. The apostle had just before written, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.” The law was on the side of the spiritual: though it had not made them to be so, yet it approved of them as such. The command to love God and our neighbor, given by the law, did not give the power to do it, and thus the law was weak through the flesh. The Spirit, working through faith in Jesus Christ and Him crucified, produces love by a new nature, which the law never gave. Now the moment that love is there, the law is fulfilled; for “love is the fulfilling of the law,” and we love God and our neighbor. Those who have the Spirit have this, and it is the bags of all. “We love him because he first loved us,” and “love worketh no ill to his neighbor.” The first three fruits mentioned are the individual state, and enjoyment of “the spiritual,” that which ought to continue in everyone without interruption. But it does not always, as we know. “Thou hast left thy first love,” as is said by the Lord. And here, in the Galatians, it had not continued, though they had started well, having received the Spirit.

The spiritual had gone on well, and the fruits had continued to be manifested in them. The power was with all, and they all ought to have gone on well, and might too. Alas, how often is this the case! We cannot guarantee spirituality always in any. Peter was spiritual on the day of Pentecost, as on many more occasions; but he was not “when certain came from James,” and he dissembled because of them, refusing to eat with the Gentile believers (as given in this same epistle), beloved Barnabas (that “good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith") being carried away also with their dissimulation. Paul, pre-eminently faithful, purposed in his own spirit to go to Jerusalem, and carried it out, though “the Spirit forbad him.” (Compare Acts 20:22; 21:4.) If then these, so eminent as servants, and in whom the Spirit wrought so mightily, thus (through nature and associations, with even true zeal for the Lord's glory, as Paul) failed to be ruled by that Holy Guide who dwelt in them, how much more we in these last days of evil, sorrow, and weakness! Solemn truth, that to have the Spirit is not necessarily always to be spiritual!

The apostle would not write thus to his beloved Thessalonians: “Ye that are spiritual,” for such they all were, as manifested in their “work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.” With joy of the Holy Ghost,” their

faith to Godward was spread abroad, so that we need not to speak anything." The fruits of the Spirit in them were manifest to all. They were walking in the Spirit, to the praise of the Lord, and so were all spiritual. Neither in such a state did anyone need restoration. It was not so with the Galatians as a whole; and thus he falls back for restoration upon those through whom the Spirit could work, those Christ could use, in whom His voice had been listened to, who bore the fruits of the Spirit instead of the works of the flesh.

Love was their state, and "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." (1 John 4:13-16.) Joy and peace, too, were the fruits of the Spirit, and the experience of the spiritual. They rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh. (Phil. 3:3.) They had His joy fulfilled in themselves (John 17:13), besides boasting in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Horn. v. 11.) They had peace with God; and "the peace of God which passeth all understanding keeping their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus:" the "peace of Christ ruled in their hearts," for they had Christ before them. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." Such were the spiritual personally; and, being such, they could be used, and they only, to bring others into the sphere in which they themselves lived and moved, or to bring back such as had fallen from it—to restore such.

Now the manner of this is shown next by what we may call the relative fruits of the Spirit, characteristic of the spiritual, those by which they are known, and the character of their operation towards others; for spirituality is ever active in lowly love for the blessing of others to God's glory.

Spirituality then is shown, first, in a passive form "long-suffering." What more needed in helping saints, or in the Lord's service towards the world, as in the daily walk of the saint, than long-suffering? God is "long-suffering and gracious;" so are they who have and walk in the Spirit. Difficulties are many, and the opposition great—the contradiction—of sinners, the waywardness of saints, the enmity of Satan, and the working of the flesh. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind." It must be patient endurance, the labor of love, and if the Spirit works in us it will be, for such are the spiritual. "The God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus." As God is patient, and Christ also, so the spiritual are long-suffering and patient.

Next we have "gentleness." This is relative too. The spiritual are very careful to be considerate, not of and for themselves, but of others. Is overbearing, or abruptness, of Christ? Is harshness of Christ? The gentleness of a nurse cherishing her children is that by which Paul illustrates his manner of caring for and helping on the saints. "To the weak he became as weak," &c., and this to win. A stern or short way, which stuns or snubs, is not of the Spirit, but unspiritual.

"Goodness." As long-suffering is not stoical, things endured because they cannot be avoided, so gentleness is not assumed as an exterior polish, the fruit of education, and because roughness would be considered bad manners. Beneath both, and that which acts by both, is goodness—a "good and honest heart." There is a difference between a righteous man and a good man. The former is upright, strict, and scrupulous as to his obligations to others, but requires from them the same in return. He does his duty, but looks sharply after others that they do theirs. A good man will do much more, without expecting returns. A righteous man may be respected; a good man is loved. He is a truly philanthropic man in God's sense. For God's philanthropy has appeared to us in Christ. (Titus 3:4.)

A good man is like God in this, and is called to be His imitator. So Eph. 5 exhorts us to be "followers of God as dear children, walking in love." Such is the real thing at the bottom of the spiritual man's heart, and characterizing him; and this to all persons, evil and good, and in all circumstances, and thus he is "perfect, as his Father in heaven is perfect; who causeth his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." This goodness of the spiritual flows out to all, irrespective of circumstances or claims. Being reviled, he can bless; being persecuted, he can suffer it; being defamed, he can entreat; and though he be not loved, yet can he still love.

Then comes "faith," not for the soul's salvation, nor that by which they received the Spirit by believing the gospel of "Christ crucified," but trust, or reckoning in God by which they live, as it is written, "The just shall live by faith;" and by this they stand. The spiritual man has been taught to cease from man, and to confide in God, who is above all circumstances. By this he is led to be active, or by it to be passive; standing still or going forward as this living precious faith connects him with God in everything. In their measure the spiritual walk in the path of Him who began and ended a perfect life of faith (Heb. 12:2); and they look to Him as the only perfect one in it, though a great cloud of testifiers there had been from the beginning who had trod that path. To faith difficulties are unknown, or, if felt, do but give occasion for its exercise. God hath delivered, doth deliver, and faith says that He will still deliver—yea, from all and every evil work. This confidence in God is a lever to remove mountains, to lift up and restore fallen saints. So the "spiritual" reckon.

Yet is there no ostentation. It is not demonstrative in the way of human strength. If faith brings in God, it shuts out man, and thus can afford to take a low place in His presence, and in the presence of man too, shown in "meekness." The "spiritual" have not only come to Christ, who gave them rest when laboring from a guilty conscience, but they have "learned of him who was meek and lowly in heart;" and this in the face of "the contradiction of sinners against himself." He did not cry nor strive; neither must the "servant of the Lord" strive, but meekly instruct those who oppose themselves, that thus peradventure God may give them repentance. We know one who lost his characteristic meekness, and said in haste, "Ye rebels, shall we bring water for you out of the rock?" and by it lost a place in the promised land. In the spiritual love abides, and "doth not vaunt itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked." How these moral traits, as fruits of the Spirit, seen and manifested in the "spiritual," dovetail one into the other! The links are one inseparable chain produced by the Holy Ghost in those who "walk in the Spirit."

This divine power works thus in man, and produces what man was a stranger to, and what the world had never witnessed till the Holy Ghost came down on the day of Pentecost, and made them all of one heart and one soul, leading them to meek and quiet testimony in the face of trial and persecution. Low thoughts of self the spiritual would have in the Lord's service towards others, seeking their profit in meekness, "in lowliness of mind, esteeming others better than themselves." (Phil. 2) So, if any desired to oversee and look after the church (1 Tim. 3) "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."

It is a good work to be occupied in the well-being of the saints; but there are qualifications needed, amongst which we find, "No striker but patient, not a brawler." And why so? Because such will find in serving the saints that their patience is amazingly taxed, and, if not kept in the spirit of meekness, they soon become irritated, and striking or brawling is the result, when, instead of gaining any that may need restoration, they but make bad worse. So Titus 1:7, "Not self-willed, not soon angry, no striker." Such were the bishops (overseers) to be, and if not such,

how could they “take care of the church of God?” If not such, they were not “spiritual,” and could not help nor restore any. The Spirit did not act in them, but the flesh.

Lastly, “temperance” is given as a fruit of the Spirit. The spiritual would not act rashly or hastily.

He that believeth shall not make haste.” They would be preserved from excess. They, as to the feelings and judgment, would keep the mind evenly poised and unbiased. The loins of the mind being girded up, they would be sober. So Titus gives us, as needed for an overseer, “sober, temperate.”

Thus the “spiritual,” having the mind unbiased by temperance, have not the judgment warped. “He that is spiritual judgeth all things,” and this by the word, as in 1 Cor. 14:37, “If any man think himself to be spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that we write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.” And thus are we preserved from error by the word. A person might suppose himself to be spiritual because he had by the Spirit a great gift; but this did not follow at all as a consequence, as we see at Corinth: the moral fruits of the Spirit were lacking there, and this because they were not walking in the Spirit, but walking as men, and carnal. It was not Christ and all in relation to Him, but man and things in relation to him. They were not spiritual, but carnal. The thing lacking was God's love working in them, as we see in chapter 13. Tongues might be there, prophesying there, the understanding of all mysteries; and all knowledge, and even faith to remove mountains; yet all was nothing if love were not there. “Knowledge puffeth up; love buildeth up.”

They had forgotten God's ways in grace by His Spirit, forming them morally like Himself, like Christ, who walked according to God here; they were using the power and knowledge which they had received for their own aggrandizement; they were puffed up, and had lost the sense of what God required in the place where His grace had put them. Spirituality, then, is not knowledge intellectually held, but is primarily a thing of the heart and affections, the Spirit of God forming these according to Christ. The believer, by grace, having God to dwell in him, and he in God, manifests it in every way, as Christ walked and manifested God in grace to man. The new man is also “renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.” (Col. 3:10.) And the mind is renewed, “that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Rom. 12)

Thus does the Spirit of God work still, and by these fruits are the spiritual ever known. The Holy Spirit is still here thus to work: may it be ours to know His working, and leading, and transforming power, through occupying us with Christ, having all that opposes set aside in our hearts and minds; and this for our own joy and strength, and for the lifting up and blessing of the saints of God, to His praise, who only worketh thus to His glory!

Bible Treasury: Volume 12, Israel of God and Abraham's Seed, The (6:16)

The expression of the Israel of God, as being the whole body owned of God in heaven and earth, has been repeated so very frequently, that the hearer will have got the habit of using it in this sense in his mind, and so lose the sense that it is quite unfounded. The expression is used once in scripture, and with no. possible connection with the subject, or the millennial state at all. It is found in Gal. 6:16, where, false teachers having sought to introduce Judaism among Christians, the apostle (having closed his reasonings and exhortations on the subject, and shown what was really valuable, namely, the new creature) says, “As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God” —evidently in contrast with fleshly Judaism, which the false teachers were seeking to introduce. But they were those then and there owned of God as His Israel; and there is not an idea of the millennium, nor any gathering of all into an Israel of God in heaven and in earth. Such a thought is never found in Scripture anywhere.

And then what is the proof? Why, that Jewish things are used as types, or symbols as the author calls them. And what then? Who denies it? Why does the use of circumstances of the fleshly Israel prove that the church is a constituent part of another Israel? We keep the paschal feast typically or figuratively. Well, and what then? I repeat. What does that prove? “Sons of Aaron.” We are priests—everyone owns that; and if it be merely that, in the whole creation, to all on earth, and I add even ostensibly to the unconverted during the millennium, we hold the place of priests; nobody will deny that. We are the children of the heavenly Jerusalem which is above. And what does that prove but just that we are a separate people, having a Jerusalem of our own? As to children of Abraham, and branches in the Abrahamic olive-tree, it has been already considered. It is of more importance than the others, which really are of none.

There is one general principle, owned of all who believe John 3, that for earthly blessings as well as for heavenly, a man must be born again, must have the new creature. But it does not follow thence that, if this be necessary for all association of man with God, even in the lowest place, there can be no special place of glory. It would as much set, aside degrees in glory as anything else, and I should pretend to be necessarily as exalted as the Apostle Paul, because I was born again. But this is not so. The principle is quite false. There is a difference, and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor, though all be saved and born again.

But, branches in the olive-tree and Abraham's seed? Well, how are we Abraham's seed? By being in Christ: that is, that we take the place of the promises down here, as Israel especially will hereafter, and therefore succeed them, and they us, as heirs of promises down here. Yet still God had reserved some better thing for us. We do so in virtue of being in Christ, who is in the highest sense Abraham's seed. But we are in Him in a way that makes us His body, His bride, as His own flesh. And it is quite clear that the principle alluded to has nothing to do with our highest privileges, because it is, as has been already remarked elsewhere, the own olive-tree of the Jews, the seed according to the flesh, loved even in their unbelief for the fathers' sake.

Further, it is a principle which is false in another way. It is only their own olive-tree as descendants of Abraham specially called out as father of many nations down here before God. Now all the saints before Abraham will, I doubt not, be in glory. Yet they were not of this olive-tree, or else the Jewish question never could have been raised. The question of Rom. 9; 10; 11, is the Jewish question, and so in Galatians, and to which the Israel of God evidently alludes. That the saints will be in a certain relation to Israel yet dwelling in the earth, everyone who has received the doctrine of the Lord's pre-millennial advent believes. But then the reader is left here to draw some important conclusion from it

as to his system: whereas it proves exactly nothing, and is believed as much by those who utterly reject the system, and believed more accurately and more scripturally: that is all. But it is true of all the world as of Israel. Yet here again this does not put Israel in the same place down here with all the world, because all saints will be born again. Nor does this latter truth set aside the special distinctive promises made to Israel, any more than the far more important distinctions which are true about the heavenly church.

When it is said, Israel will not be of the earth any more than the church of the first-born, it is partly true and partly false. Israel, as Israel, will be of the earth, and Isa. 65 proves that some will be wholly so, though such will be cut off when manifested. But the spared remnant, and all who really enjoy millennial blessedness, will be born again, and that life which they receive will not be of the earth. It will be the new creature, But it is true of everyone else then and now, and has nothing particularly to do with Israel. But the very passage (if passage were needed) which specially proves it calls this whole state of things earthly, in contrast with heavenly things which belong to the church; and therefore, though, they have a life which is not of the earth, their whole condition and state will be then earthly, in contrast with what is heavenly.

Nor is it at all true that the moment when the church receives its actual, Israel will receive its virtual, deliverance. There is no connection in scripture between the actual placing the church in its heavenly glory, and the quickening of individual Israelites, which is their virtual deliverance; nor is this latter the placing Israel as a nation or a body in the place of their earthly glory as purposed of God. The statements we have already considered as to the Jews—Ezek. 20 as to Israel, Isa. 66—all prove the contrary, as indeed do Ezek. 36; 37 It is never said that Israel are to be individually horn again at the coming of the Lord to receive the church; nor all individually born again at the same time; nor all restored at the same time, if public manifestation be referred to; but the contrary in the chapters I have cited. That they have their life from Christ, I do not doubt. That the resurrection of Christ secures to them the sure mercies of David, we are expressly taught in Acts 13. But it is never said they are, of the one body, nor the bride of Christ in glory. They are not His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.

That all things will be headed up in Him in earth and heaven, all admit, and thus far they will have one center; but so will all creation; and earthly and heavenly are definitely distinguished in this very passage—we having part in the heavenly.

I do not believe that the passage applies to the post-millennial state, which cannot properly be called a dispensation, for it is eternity; and the heading up all things to be administered by Him in whom we have received an inheritance who have first trusted (or pre-trusted) in Christ (that is, before His manifestation in glory), evidently speaks of the special time of Christ's administration as the glorified Man, and our association with Him in that glory. The fullness of times itself is not an expression for eternity. That would not be called “times” or “seasons” (καιρῶν), and the heading up all things in the man, as administrator, is not God being all in all, and the Son subject, as in 1 Cor. 15, Rev. 21; and this view of the passage is completely confirmed by verses 22,23. That Christ will be the center of all in heaven and earth in the millennium is clear: but this does not hinder the church being in the proper, special, peculiar place of the bride, the body of Christ, the fullness of Him who filleth all in all when He is in glory. Israel, moreover, has its place as Israel, distinct, and in many respects in contrast.

Nor is it ever said that Israel will govern the earth at all. That they are the favored glorious nation on the earth, where the government of Christ is placed which extends over the earth, is true; but they do not govern nor judge the earth. It is the heavenly saints who do this. They are governed by Christ, who will be “great to the ends of the earth,” and “all nations call him blessed.” That they will celebrate the ways of God in justice and judgment, I fully believe. But what then? There is nothing at all like the knowledge, the anticipative knowledge, of the mind of Christ, and of His glory, which we find in verses 9-11. When the things are accomplished, they will understand them and celebrate them.

But the peculiar character of the church's place is to know and celebrate them before by faith—not to know The justice and judgment merely which are the habitation of His throne, but His counsels and thoughts. The “mind of Christ” is more than the works or the ways in God in judgment. It is all His counsels in Christ. Who hath known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God.” Thus it is we have the mind of Christ; as: Joseph yet unexalted was the interpreter of the revelations of God. And Christ is the wisdom of God, and the power of God. Power will be displayed hereafter; we have but samples of it now, the display of which confirmed faith. But Christ is made unto us wisdom: and if in infirmity we know only in part, still, as regards the object of knowledge and the source of knowing, the whole wisdom of God is in Christ, and we have an unction from the Holy One and know all things—we have the mind of Christ. But it is never said that Israel has the mind of Christ. They will see the displays of His power, recognize and celebrate them. But is this having the mind of Christ as we have it? The Egyptians knew what Joseph knew, when the things came: but had they the mind of Joseph?

The Holy Spirit will be poured out on all flesh in the millennium. They will prophesy and see visions; but, though the lump is holy, it is not that separate consecrated first-fruits. The Holy Ghost will enable them to enjoy, but will not in identity with the sufferings of Christ make saints the vessel of the outgoings of His heart in the sorrow of a groaning world, nor in the joy of its deliverance by power, as the day when their love is answered. They will profit by the answer themselves, but they will not as in the love which has thought of others, though in itself “according to God” —this place they will never have, they can never have. It is reserved for us who have gone before the day of His power, and fore-trusted in Him. Blessed privilege! If sovereign grace has given it us, shall we disown or depreciate it?

Echoes of Mercy: Volume 13 (1903), Mocker's Doom., The (6:7)

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” —Galatians 6:7.

IT was the Club day in a certain English village, on which occasion the villagers made a general holiday, and a time of friendly greetings and family meetings.

A Christian lady, endeavoring to serve her Master, was busy scattering broadcast the good seed, in the form of gospel booklets and tracts, to those who on such occasions thronged the village for pleasure. Among many others to receive one of the “silent messages” was the Club

doctor, who was a man without the fear of God before his eyes; who openly scoffed at God, the Creator of all. After receiving it, his first impulse was to tear it to atoms, and cast it to the wind; but on second thought he decided to take it to the Club that evening, thinking it might be a source of amusement to the profligate members.

Night came; and the doctor was in his accustomed place at the Club, reveling as usual in sin, ridiculing with his ungodly associates the tract, the giver, and the contents: what did he care, if the tract were entitled,

The god of this world had blinded his eyes, so that this life and the pleasures of sin were all he cared for. Vain man! how little he realized that his life had almost flickered away; as he laughed, sneered, and jested at the contents of that tract, forgetting that the all-seeing eye of God was upon him, as he drank and reveled in his own folly, mocking at the statements of the One who gave him life and breath and being. We fain would draw the veil over such a scene of man's depravity, in that midnight carousal: for their glory was in their shame.

When morning dawned, as the sun shed its glorious light and rays across the serene country, making the landscape appear even more beautiful than before, a laboring man was wending his way earlier than usual to his daily toil, and, turning a bend in the road, he noticed a pony and gig standing without a driver; upon further examination he saw to his horror, that by the pony's side was the lifeless form of a man; that man was none other than the mocker of the night before, the Club doctor.

Upon further inquiries, it transpired that he had left the Club at an early hour that morning in an intoxicated state, and it was supposed that on his way home he must have leaned forward, and fallen from the trap over the shafts, thus breaking his neck, and causing instant death. What a change for that mocker, from that drunken stupor to the miseries of the lost world. Never more would he mock at God; for

"A mere accident," our readers may say. Yes, doubtless it was an accident, but was it not something more? Was it not the hand of God, meting out judgment to a high-minded rebel? For sin is a terrible thing in God's sight, and man cannot sin against God with impunity; sooner or later his sin will be punished, and his rebellious career will be ended.

"Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."

O mocker, continue not your evil course, lest in the coming great day, God mocks when your fear cometh; but, before the judgment of God overtakes you, throw down your arms of rebellion, and sue for His mercy. Remember that it is through the goodness of God that you have not been cut down in your wild career, as many have been.

In conclusion, we would remind you that sinners of the deepest dye have been pardoned by our God. Hearken to His loving voice speaking to you, rebellious, and profligate though you may be. He not only warns you by saying, "Be sure your sin will find you out," but He also calls to you, saying, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" for he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He gave His only begotten Son to die in your stead, that now, in perfect righteousness, He might offer you His great salvation.

"Stay, poor sinner, stay and think before you further go; Do not sport upon the blink of everlasting woe."

A. G.

Edification: Volume 4, Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ., The (6:14)

WHAT a mighty wonder is the cross! What a place it has in the Scriptures! Well might the Apostle Paul cry out, "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" (Gal. 6:14). Well might Sir John Bowring sing,

It is the spirit of Paul's outburst the spirit of Bowring's hymn, that is the irresistible motive force of Christianity. It is that motive force that has led men and women by the thousands to forsake the amenities and luxuries of life in order to devote themselves to the spread of the Gospel. No cross, no Christ. No cross, no Christianity. No cross, no crown. Without the cross there is nothing but cold, blank Unitarianism, and that comes from the bottomless pit, and leads to it.

We need to raise a warning note today. The enemy seeks to empty the cross of its true meaning. Turn the rugged cross into the crucifix, cover it with gold, adorn it with gems and pearls, and it has lost its power. The cross is never the emblem of what is worldly and fashionable.

We are told today that the cross is not atoning, propititiary, sacrificial. If it is not that, we have nothing; we have no cross at all. Any person who can aver that the cross is not atoning, and limits it to the setting forth of an example, is an apostate from the faith. A school boy reading the Bible can see that the Scriptures, from one end to the other, present the cross in its atoning value.

Let us put the subject under the seven heads suggested by a gospel preacher, long since departed.

The cross of Christ is

The Maximum of Man's Guilt.

Men have committed terrible crimes in the history of this world, but wickedness rose to its utmost height, when the Lord of glory was gibbetted upon a cross, and put to death. Perfect love was answered by terrible hate. Divine light came in all its splendor, and the darkness could not endure it.

The blessed Lord went about “doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil,” preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, and — they crucified Him.

The leaders of the nation were clamorous for His death. The Roman Governor knowingly and grossly perverted justice, and condemned the Innocent. There never was in the history of the world a crime of such magnitude. The world is verily guilty of the murder of the Son of God, and the day of reckoning will assuredly come for every member of the human race, who having heard the gospel has refused it. Woe betide the man or woman, who takes side with a world, whose hands are stained with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But we have another side to the cross of Christ. What constituted man’s greatest sin has become the occasion of untold blessing. The cross of Christ is

The Manifestation of God’s Love.

Human love is the one thing that keeps any measure of sweetness in the relationships of life. But what shall be said of divine love; love that would not shrink from expressing itself, even at the cost of the death of the Son of God under the wrath of God? What a message to give to poor fallen man that GOD IS LOVE!” (1 John 4:16). Search the writings of the ancients, and you will find that none of them in their searching after God rose to the height of the fisherman John from the shores of Galilee’s lake, when he penned these sublime words. Surely it was the revelation of God in Christ that brought him to this knowledge.

There was man’s side of the cross, a crime of the greatest magnitude: there was God’s side of the cross, the manifestation of His love. If the cross had been an example of devotedness, which we are called to follow simply that and nothing more, what then was the meaning of the bitter cry wrung from the depths of the heart of the Son of God, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Surely God would not have forsaken His faithful Servant in the hour of His supremest need. The martyrs have ever testified to wonderful, upholding, sustaining grace in the hour of their need.

The truth is that Christ suffered to manifest God’s love in bearing our judgment. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:9, 10).

Why then was the cross necessary as the expression of God’s love to men? Why could He not express His love without it? There is a school of theologians today, which teaches that God being love, He can never put any creature of His into an everlasting hell; that somehow or other all will be eventually blessed, some going so far as to deny the very existence of hell, though, the Son of God solemnly affirmed its existence again and again. This school teaches a maudlin sort of love that is derogatory to God. It is an evidence of the advance of the apostasy that is prophesied of in the Scriptures.

This brings us to our third head, that the cross of Christ is

The Maintenance of God’s Glory.

God in His wisdom passed the sentence of death upon the sinner. It is evident therefore, that nothing short of death can expiate the sinner’s guilt. Further it is evident that the One, who atones for sin, must Himself be sinless, or else He would be under the penalty of death on His own account, and therefore incapable of dying an atoning death for others.

The Lord Jesus was the Holy One who died as a propitiation, and thereby God declared His righteousness “for the remission of sins that are past [this referring to the sins of the Old Testament believers] through the forbearance of God; to declare... at this time His righteousness: that He might he just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom. 3:25, 26). Could anything be clearer than this When our Lord Jesus uttered on the cross the words, “IT IS FINISHED,” divine justice was satisfied, atonement was made, God’s righteousness was vindicated, and grace now reigns “THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 5:21).

Now we go on to the truth that the cross of Christ is

The Means of the Sinner’s Salvation.

Not by our efforts, or striving, or religiousness, or church membership can we be saved, but only and altogether through the atoning death of Christ. So the message comes, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Many more passages could be quoted, but let these suffice.

The cross of Christ is

The Measure of the Believer’s Separation From the World.

We get this in the text that began this article. It is possible for a believer to rest content in receiving the blessings of the gospel, rejoicing in the knowledge of sins forgiven, and the assurance that heaven is his ultimate abode, and yet remain on friendly terms with the world that crucified his Lord; so to hide his light under a bushel or a bed as to be a persona grata among worldlings. With such there can be no right testimony, no power to reach others, no sense of the danger the unbelieving world is in.

The fact is, the condemnation of Christ is really the utter condemnation of the world, and the place they gave Him is really the place the true believer should give to the world. Did they crucify my Lord, from whom all my blessings flow? Then the world is crucified to me.

Further, if they condemned the Lord of glory for all that He was and did, the world will condemn His followers, for the traits that are in them are the traits that His; followers have derived from Him. If they hated those traits in Him, they will hate them in His followers, and so if they crucified Christ, they will morally crucify His followers. Thus the Apostle could say, that he was crucified to the world.

The Apostle James puts it just as strongly. “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

Well may we sing, if the power of the cross is in our hearts,

The cross of Christ is

The Motive for Christian Service.

It is through the cross of Christ that the love of Christ is supremely manifested. So we read, “The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again” (2 Cor. 5:14,15). Every fervent servant of Christ is one that is marked by a true sense of the meaning of the cross of Christ, the motive power to self-denying service in His name.

Finally the cross of Christ is

The Melody of Heaven.

So we get the outburst, “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood” (Rev. 1:5). Again we read of the holy city, the church of God in the millennial administration, that “the glory of God did lighten it, and the LAMB is the light thereof” (Rev. 21:23). Never throughout the unending ages shall the cross of Christ be forgotten. Never shall the burst of melody die down. The unnumbered ransomed hosts shall ever adore Him, who once hung on Calvary’s cross for their redemption.

May the cross of Christ have its due place in our estimation in these latitudinarian days.

A. J. Pollock.

Dorothy Conference: 2022, Galatians 6:7-18 (6:7-18)

Reading

283. 283. Our richest king without. The love. I forgotten. All our. Crime. All right. Things that join us, the souls. Sacrifice. To your face. From his side is nothing to say. Sorry. I love God. Make Love. And there's such a smile and sorrow. Is hard horns come all the time. Where the whole ground? Of nature. I'm afraid to swallow what that transcends. Our violence. Our deep hands are so hard. We just pray. Should we go on with Galatians chapter 6? I think we're down to maybe verse 7. Galatians chapter 6, verse 7. Be not deceived, God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth that shall, he also reap. 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. And let us not be weary and well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. You see how large a letter I have written unto you with my own hand. As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised only, lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised to keep the law, but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the word, the world was crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, and as many as walk according to this rule. Peace be unto, peace be on them, and mercy and upon the Israel of God. From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, Amen.

So right in the center of this section about. Giving. Which began with verse 6. Communicating to the one who teaches and ends. In verse 10 with doing good. To all really sewing, it's it's it's not just giving money, but sewing whatever it might be that is good. The apostle brings out then this principle, sowing and reaping has, as we saw, both a positive and a negative side, and he takes this opportunity to. Point out again about the flesh and so we have the flesh and that was taken up and some length in chapter five with the flesh and the spirit there and the works of the flesh and the fruit of the spirit and now he's making the point that. It's not just a matter of giving in these other things, but we can also be giving or sewing in our own lives, and we can sew in a good way. We can sew towards that which is of the Spirit, or we can sew towards that which is of the flesh, and these things then have. A reaping. There's it's a principle, spiritual principle and the things of God that there is a reaping for what we do. Very important that we realize that because. Sometimes we're apartment to think that we can just go on and do things and they're hidden away in our lives and it's not going to have a consequence. But the teaching of Scripture is that there is a reaping in our lives here on earth and so is Christians. We have to be very aware of that and take care to live our lives for the Lord. And so to the Spirit says in Romans 8 that if you. Live according to the flesh, he shall die. That's the idea of spiritual death that goes on. And here it's reaping corruption. But then if we so do the spirit or live according to the Spirit, he says you shall live. And so there's a life and and a reaping that goes on that increases for the Christian and we can go one way or the other. I would take it too in the context that the sewing to the flash is more the thought of selfishness and living for myself than the sowing to the Spirit is more to what we had in verse six and again in verse 10. Because verse nine goes on says let us not be weary and well doing. And so this is the idea of giving, which is what the gospel is and what we have in Christianity. It's grace. It's what the law didn't do, The law demanded, but it didn't get. And as Christians by grace were given all things, and we are to according to that. And there is this idea of sewing out Brother Rob whispering before us very vividly the need to sow the good seeds. The gospel, and this goes along well with what He's saying. Let us not be weary and well doing for due season. We shall reap if we faint not, or maybe we won't see it here in this world, but something that we sowed for the Lord is going to be reaped and we'll find out about that in eternity. That's the Lord's work, His business. And how many times has that been done? And maybe we haven't seen anything, but eventually there's going to be that realization of the reward. We have the same expression, not deceived. In Corinthians in a couple of places and I won't, we won't spend time looking at that, but just for meditation, particularly for parents and the point I want to

make about. Being deceived, it says be not deceived. But the whole concept of planting and harvesting it takes time. So you put the seed in in the spring, you get a crop in the harvest at the end of the summer. There's a period of months that go, go along. And we can all relate to that. We have all of us who have a garden, we understand that if we put squash seeds in and and may then in September we might see some squash that we can harvest. So there's a result that happens, but it takes time. And so we all make decisions, particularly as parents.

How we raise our children, what we allow and the things that the exercises that we have today will result in a fruit down the road. We can't see the end of the story now. That's why it says be not deceived because it can look like it's not important or look like a little thing, but what's the end result going to be? And so. Those of us that are a little bit older, we've seen the consequences that people have made that have affected their families years. And so we can benefit from the word of God by being exercised before the Lord as to what we sow. In our lives because there's going to be a reaping. And so, yes, there is a positive side. We've talked about that. But this is, I think, a negative thing because none of us likes to be deceived. And if you look in Timothy, you'll see that it says the woman was deceived, doesn't mention her name. We talked about that he was the responsible, but it says the woman was deceived. And so none of us want to be deceived. We want to sow good things. We want good results. We want blessing, we all want those things, but we need to be careful. And that's why verses like this are very important, because they get to our hearts because that's what the Lord wants. He wants our affections. He wants us to make investments now for Him. Result in an increase later. The world has a standard. And. In the the country that we live in, there's this thing called the American Dream. And you come here, you work hard and you can become very prosperous and get a lot of money and then you can live life to the fullest. And that is the American Dream. And what is in this world oftentimes, if we're honest, permeates into our hearts, becomes us. It takes up a very similar subject to what we find here. About amassing treasure. And there is a danger of looking at the culture that we live in and saying that is truly life and following after that trying to amass treasure, treasure, trying to amass the enjoyments of this world presently. And in regards to spiritual things, spiritual giving, like we have in context right here, we're stinging and what what will that result in? Well, that will result in having treasures where a thief can come in and laws can destroy is only for this present life and what is truly life is found in. Being diligent and divine things, not being stingy with our money. There's a difference between being. Frugal. And being stingy, it's good to be frugal. It's good not to just live to, to excess, but it's good not to be stingy with our brethren and, and, and living and not being stingy and, and giving money to those who minister, giving money to the Saints, being hospitable, you're going to have less money in your bank account to do the things that you might want to do. But there's going to be a future reward, and that's his point here. You can either enjoy present difficulty, present corruption, or you can enjoy future gain. And that game deals with eternal life. So it's something that we enjoy presently, but in a future day, it's going to be realized in its fullest. And then he goes on in verse nine. And let us not grow weary. Doing good for in due season. If we're looking for a reward now, we're going to grow weary and that reward is going to fail us because we're not going to. We're not going to give joyfully. We love the tearful giver. So if we do it and don't grow weary in it, then there's something in the future that the Lord is going to reward us and He will be no man's debtor. But we have to have our eyes there. Our eyes are here. Then we're going to just read the corruption. But Joe, it takes faith to believe that. It takes faith to to act on that proverb that tells us a little more about that. There is that scattering and yet increasing.

Wow. You wouldn't think so, right? Say you're throwing your money away, you're throwing your time away. There is that scattereth and yet increases, and there is that withholdeth more than his meat, but it tendeth to poverty. This is how God looks at it. Because the Lord said. And so it is with those that are not rich towards God, not the way other people see things, but the way God sees things. And it takes faith to understand that and to act God. Would I be right to conclude that we don't have the option of stalling nothing We're going to be doing one or the other. I think there's a basic principle here too that. Along with what brother Paul was saying that when you. So it involves death. The seed dies and there may be things that we have to die to. We are primarily sewing ourselves and that's what the Lord did, Set the corn of wheat fall onto the ground and diet and fight it alone. Either diet bring it forth much fruit. And so there was a tremendous reaping, but only as a result of what He did and sometimes what we have here. Perhaps all the time, maybe require that entire giving up of that which we want in the flesh so that we can. Read that which is spiritual. I, I think there's mutually exclusive things that way as well, Rob that. It's not just doing one or the other, but the one actually. Ends up being death to the other and. It says we'll, we'll reap if we faint not in the Lord Jesus went all the way through with it at the cross, didn't he, till he gave his life. And as a result of that we all have life. And for us it could be many things in our lives, things that are dear to us that we cherish, that we have to give up. Maybe for our family, our wife, maybe for the Lord, it's the assembly and then there's blessing that comes. So if we selfishly hold on to that, it's going to. Result in a loss. I think the comment that you made, Henry, about the requirement for faith is important to this discussion. I think of the words of Jim Elliott, who gave his life in Ecuador for the sake of the Gospel, who said he is no fool who gives that what she cannot keep for that which cannot lose. And. You think of Abraham, who left everything he had in her of the calise, to wander in the deserts. In the land of. Canaan for a promise that he didn't really receive. He was searching for a city whose foundation and maker was gone. Dwelt in tents his whole life. Will he be rewarded for what he did? He's already counted the father of the faithful. He's counted as a wise man and as a good example. And after leaving an eternity, that it will show that his decision to obey God and give up what he could see, what he could lay his hands on for a promise. Of millions when he only had one. With an act of faith. And I think that that's very relevant for this discussion because I know in my own heart the appeal of things around us and what I possess is huge. And the reality of eternity doesn't always seem that real to me. Even though in my head I know that the eternity is much greater and yet when making a present decision. Very often the things that are. In the here and now way much bigger than that which is far off and I can't see very well.

So we have time, we have opportunity in verse 10 says, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are the household of faith. So that is the end conclusion of this, that we should take our time to do this good. And the question is what is the good and should we go around trying to make the world a better place and try to help everybody we can with with money, with food, with clothes and make the assembly into it, you know, a good outreach organization to help everybody. And the answer is no, it's not saying that. We want to know how to take everything in this chapter and balance we do, like we do with the rest of Scripture. We look at the Lord and see what He did. The Lord had the ability to go and fix all the rights in the world, to take all the poverty and eliminate it. He had the ability to do that, and he went around doing good. But what was his mission and his objective? It was to tell man about their need. It was to present them with the gospel. It was to actually bring them into the light of God's presence so that they would know. What was important for eternity and all that he did had that goal as the end point. And so there's a balance here, isn't it? Paul went around, he did the same, He helped people, but he spent his time preaching the gospel, teaching the Saints, and really ministering to the greatest need of all. And that was spiritual, but not neglecting the others. So we have to take this in order and we do have opportunity. There are those with. Real physical needs around us, and we've got the ability to help them, and we need to do that, but not to neglect to do the other, and not to get so wrapped up with good works that we're forgetting by far the more important thing, the need of a soul for eternity. Just want to make a quick point about that beginning of verse 10.

Opportunity or or occasion? Just thinking as someone who has lost a lot of occasions or opportunities in my life. The Spirit of God speaks to every believer. Many times. In very particular ways and gives us occasions where he presses on our heart. A need and disturbance, spiritual need and physical needs. But I think more importantly, the Lord puts you in contact with with souls. Maybe even on a daily basis. And each one of them is an opportunity. For you to point someone to the Lord Jesus and you're never going to have that that opportunity again. So to be sensitive to the pull of the Holy Spirit from your heart. When the Lord speaks to you and not just to say I'll take care of that tomorrow because there are many opportunities that are lost because we don't listen to the Lord. Well, the next section we have here goes on to a matter of urgency, which really was at the heart of this epistle, and that was that there were those who were preaching against the cross of Christ, and they were taking up with the law, and they were doing it so that they might glory in others. And this all denied the gospel, and it was to the ruin of the Saints. And so the apostle starts. In verse 11, by saying, you see how large a letter I've written unto you with my known hand. He normally used others to write the letters, but it seemed like there was a matter of urgency that caused him to just go ahead. Forced by the spirit of God and write to them in a large letter, perhaps also emphasizing the points, but. In his own hand and not wait until it could be written out by another and then he goes on to. Bring out these ones who were troubling them, and speak about that again, which he already had earlier in the epistle.

As in chapter 5 verse 12 it says I would that they were even cut off which trouble you? So we see a little bit more of what these ones we're trying to do and going about corrupting the gospel and corrupting the Saints, corrupting Christianity itself. And the apostle urges the Galatians to listen to what this teaching is, what this truth is, that liberty that we have in Christ, that life that we have, the Object, the spirit that we're called to walk in and not to go on with that error. I think this verse gives us this. 11Th verse. 12Th verse. Gives us one of the keys to why we struggle personally. In my life, you and your life, and collectively with recognizing the awful sinfulness of legality. And it says as many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh. Oftentimes when we when we take up with we. Reality it's for. A shortcut to appear godly or spiritual or holy. The two great difficulties that are taken up in Galatians are justification by law, keeping by meriting, or the second thing is trying to gain or merit holiness. Separation from sin through legality. Can the law or can can I do something to make myself holier, more spiritual? And when we look at licentiousness, when we look at the world, when we look at things that are taken up in in First Corinthians chapter 5, we all can see that we all see it for what it is. It's it's a horrible scent. But when it comes to legality, we so often give it a pass because it plays the part. It looks good, it doesn't look so bad, and yet in reality it's far worse than what we have in First Corinthians 5. It's far worse than licentiousness because that never claims to be from God. That never claims to be godly, and yet legality does. And just like licentiousness sets aside the cross of Christ. Legality, as Rob read to us from the 2nd chapter 20 first verse, legality sets aside the cross of Christ. It makes Christ death, vanity and vain. So for us individually and collectively, when we see legality in our lives and we all have a legal flesh and when we see legality collectively. We need to recognize it for what it is not. Don't give it a pass. Help the individual to see the whole point of this entire epistle and why it is written for the benefit of the individual, for the benefit of the Church, the body of Christ, for the benefit of Christ himself. Joe, how do I recognize legality? Sorry, maybe I missed it. What? What is legality? Legality at its core is, is just meriting. It's it's seeking to earn through the flesh a place before God. Either through justification, I can, I can stand before God on my own righteousness. That's that's the Old Testament legality, or I can become closer to God because I'm doing something. And legality has many strengths to it. There can be personal legality. We take those two core principles and apply them to your life as legality. You take those two core principles and try to apply them to somebody else's life. Absent faith, that's legality. You take something that is extra biblical, not in the Word of God, and try to make somebody do that under the assumption that that is going to make them more godly or holy or more loved by God. That's legality. There's there's many facets to legality, but almost all of them come back. I believe all of them come back to those two strains. Justification by faith or seeking to get a little closer to God on my own merit.

Thank you. How about the second part of this question? How do we recognize? Oftentimes we cannot recognize it in somebody else. You could have two people doing something that's the same thing. And one of them is doing it in faith, and one of them is doing it with a legal mind. Sometimes you can recognize it in somebody else, like if somebody is is trying to present extra biblical doctrine as a manner of life, that is obviously very easy to say. Does the Bible say it? If it doesn't, that's obviously legality. So in regards to that first way, what we can do is we can see it for ourselves. What is our spirit? What is our heart? Why am I doing it? Am I doing it because. Brother so and so said I should be doing it. That's not big. Am I doing it because I think that I could be a little more godly if I do this? That's not me. Am I doing it because I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ would have to do that? That's the then. Don't do that. But if it's these other reasons that we're doing something, it rises only to the level of a fair show in the flesh. So legality too is that which gives the 1St man a place is. Says that I as a person have a place before God or before man, according to Meredith, because of what I have done. That's basically what it is and whatever form it takes. And the cross says the first name is no place because we we. Thus judge Paul says in 2nd Corinthians 5 that if one died for all, then we're all dead. That means there was nobody who could take the place of having merit in any sense. We all needed the cross. The Lord Jesus had to die for everyone of us. And so the cross entirely sets aside the 1St man. And wherever the principle of legality is taken up one sense or another, there's a persecution against those who only recognize the cross. That was primarily the primarily the Jews in that day. And that's what he's talking about, the end of verse 12. Only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. And so when they were preaching the cross of Christ, the Jews persecuted them no end, because that meant there was nothing that the law could do for them, and the Jew assisted that it could. And that principals spend there ever since. And that was really, I think, the main teaching, the end of chapter 4, the the bond woman persecuting the child of the free woman, and that. The principle of law and those who take up with it, there's always an opposition to the Pure sovereign grace of God based on the cross of Christ. And so these ones didn't want to suffer persecution. And so they weren't taking up with just the cross of Christ. Whatever part they recognized, they were taking up with the principle of law. And lo and behold, they found the Jews had no problem with that, and neither than anybody else who was taking up with this principle. But if we're going to be faithful to the Scripture, we go down. And verse 14 but God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has crucified them to me and I into the world. And so first of all, the cross of Christ is put me away. It showed that I was dead, but it also completely separates me from the world and all of its principle. And there's no compromise there. The law has to do with the world and Christians taking up with the law. It's a worldly principle. But he says no, we take up with the cross. That shows that I have no standing before God and myself. Neither does anyone else. All that I have is in Christ. All of my hopes are based on what he did on the cross, and that's an offense to the first man. But we have to take up our identification with that. Cortana takes up the the underlying reason why men take up with legality, and it's because there is a satisfaction to the flesh when you can get somebody to conform to your standard.

So these ones would say that you need to get circumcised. And the apostle Paul points out that they're requiring stringently that you do XY and Z and yet they don't keep the law. And the reason that they were requiring that you do XY and Z is so they could sit back and they could be. Your the ones who had dominion over your faith. And it was for the satisfaction of flesh, which is what this polar pistol takes out the flesh

and the world to save us from this present evil world. The 1St chapter verse four presents. So when we take up with law and we get to the bottom of our motive, this is the this is what the Spirit of God presents to us as the bottom of our motor is a desire to have dominion over flesh. To enjoy or have satisfaction in the flesh over once conforming to my standard. Henry, part of the question, part of the answer to the question that I asked is how do you tell? It might be in verse 13, and if there's an inconsistency in Application for the Pharisees, it came out as hypocrisy that they would apply to other people and not do it themselves. And I suspect that is a consistent characteristic because the flesh doesn't like doing hard things unless it's getting glory from it, so it'll excuse itself where it's unpleasant and thinks it can get away with it. Very happy to apply to other people. So the whole principle of the world's religion. Is do started with pain? That which he did with his own hands, and it's been so ever since. And of course the principle of Christianity is done. The Lord Jesus said it is finished. Nothing more could be done. And that separates everything. So he takes that up as well. It's helpful to see that in verse 14. It's not just the flesh there, but he's speaking about the world. The the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom the world is crucified unto me. It was that world that hated what the Lord said that put him on the cross. They did away with him. I said we won't have that. They wouldn't have the remedy of the cross either. But he says I'm crucified, that the world is well, he said. And so far as I identify with the world, they would want to put me there with him. And then as far as I'm concerned, the world is crucified to me. He said, they're the ones who put my Savior there. I want nothing to do with that. And so the cross completely separates us from the world. Now, we may not live that way. This verse may be very condemning, but we need to look at it. And this is a reality. We're identified with Christ, and that's where, as far as this world is concerned that the career of the Lord Jesus Christ ended was at the cross. They never saw him again, and we're connected with him. Our life is bound up with His. His life is now in heaven. We're hid with Christ in God. And if we're truly going to identify with the Lord Jesus Christ, what part do we have with this world? It's exactly as His first says. It's something every one of us needs to consider as to how. Far we actually take our place with the one who died for us. Define the world. It's not the world as the earth or the the. People that live at the gospel or the message that evangelist preaching the gospel to the world. So what? What is it? The world here that is? It's a world system, isn't it, Brother Phil? That which came, went out and did is He made himself happy away from the presence of the Lord, and set up things that would be for the pleasure of man away from God, and that has existed ever since. He meant again after the flood, because that's where the heart of man is.

But. Yeah, I think that's an important distinction. Thank you. What you have in First Giant chapter 2. Right there for a second. Speaks there first, John two of. Verse 15 Love not the things. Love not the world. This isn't John B16. I also love the world, is it? That's the point you're making. And God loved all the people in the world so much that he gave his only begotten Son. But this is the world system that is talking about love, not the world, neither the things that are in the world. And they love the world. The love of the Father is not in Him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. But he that doeth the will of God abided forever. And so it really is that system of things that exist here apart from God and his Christ, to make man in the flesh happy. The cross is the great common denominator, the answer to this entire epistle. It's what puts every believer on a single plane, and there's not one believer who God loves anymore or any less than any other one, and there's not one believer who can do anything more to earn favor before God. Everyone can come back to this cross and this cross alone and say Jesus did it, Christ did it, it's Christ in the cross, and anything that I attained is not me that attained. It is Christ and his work, his life that attained it. And so the believer doesn't glory, doesn't boast, doesn't say look what I've done, look at them. Look how spiritual I am. Look how, look how depraved these, these poor believers are that that's the flesh. The believer says the cross in Christ, that's where he always comes back to. That's his boast. But when we take up with the principle that this epistle is dealing with, it will always segregate. And almost always we are going to be at the pinnacle of that segregation. Now we said that the cross is that what separates us from the world? He also said that it was that would separate or that which shows that the flesh has no standing, no place before God that is condemned and that you get in verse 15. It says for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but and it should be a new creation. You're saying the only thing that avails in Christ Jesus is that new life, the new creation, that which is his own life, that which which we have in Galatians 2 verse 20. That's the only thing that God will accept. The flesh is entirely put away before God and he goes on and says in verse 16 and as many peace be on them in mercy and upon the Israel of God. Now what is this rule? We had a law in verse two and now we've got a rule in verse 16. You might wonder like laws and rules. I thought we're saying we're not under law. Well, in in verse two, as we saw law was the law of Christ and that is that you love one another. And here it's this rule that is the rule of the new creation. It's connected with the end of verse 15. In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation, and as many as walk according to this rule, peace beyond them, and mercy on the Israel of God. And so there is an order of that life. That rule of that life, and that is. That it has the Lord Jesus Christ himself as its object. He's not only the life, but he's the object of that life. And if we walk according to that rule of the new creation life that we have in him, he says, he said there's going to be peace that the law didn't bring. There was no peace under the law. But walking with that life that we have according to the Lord Jesus as our object, there'll be peace on them. And he's speaking mainly to Gentiles, so he says. And mercy and upon the Israel of God, that is the Jews who had believed, that's the Israel of God referred to here.

And so there is peace and there is everything that we seek and and mercy and found in Christ with that new life that we have. We are called off to be of one mind. Flippians 2/5. I think guys in with what you're saying. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Form of God thought not robbery be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation took upon him. The form of a servant was made in the likeness of man. Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. If that's the mind that we have, there will be peace. Not too many of us that can say like Paul said in verse 17, I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. When you read about the number of times he was beaten, the number of times he was shipwrecked. The stoning that he went through. All those different sufferings and the marks that they would have left in his body. There was a goalie once in NHL hockey player. And he invented the first face mask and every time he got hit in his face mask, he would take a marker and he would put a black line and put stitches, stitch marks across them. And his his face got blacker and blacker and blacker because there are more and more places where his face was saved. But he would have had scars and the Apostle Paul would have had a face that looked like that, would have had a back that was scarred and a body that was scarred for the sake of the Lord Jesus. And for the sake of the cross of Christ. And the apostle points this out because. These false teachers were trying to put marks in the bodies of the Christians. And it was so they would escape persecution. Paul says, don't trouble me. I've identified with Christ. And that's why I actually bear marks in my body. And if you're going to be faithful to the Lord, you're not going to have the cutting off of circumcision. You're going to have some actual scars for him. And Paul just points that out because they could make no such claim. There's a reality to Christianity. The other is completely false. And so he brings this in at the end. And then he says in verse 18. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your Spirit. And this is what we need as well, because. These subjects that we've been talking about, there can be a lot of contention and we could take up these things in the wrong spirit. And really do a lot of damage to the truth. But we need the grace of the Lord Jesus to be with our Spirit so that we can take it up in a right way.

First of all for ourselves and then for the benefit of others. We sing #47. May grace, free grace, inspire our souls with strength. Divine every thought to God. Inspire and grace can serve design. Praise. Wandering things to tread the heavenly world. And do surprise each Caribbean walk around. Turn off towards grace. I gave my still alive. New all by burning stuff. For our souls with straight divine. Every thought you thought.

That God will marry his grace for God till we have one a day. May pray, grace and start our souls and strengthen God. May every thought you've gone aside. And service shine. We pray God and our Father, we thank you for that free grace that found us and all of our deed and lifted us up to thee. We thank thee for the Lord Jesus Christ who came here into this world of sin and woe and and this place died. At the cross gave up everything so that we might live. We thank you for that grace. It has come because of His work. We pray our God and our Father. That is, we have considered it again here, that it would have more of an effect in our hearts and lives, and that our eyes would be more characterized by it, that we would become more like the Lord Jesus Christ. And so we thank you for this time that we had together. We further commit our time to Thee. Just give thee thanks to. Or the the meal that were to take off shortly, thanking thee for the food, for the fellowship and all thy mercies to us, our God, we give thee thanks in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen. Amen.

Dorothy Conference: 2022, Galatians 6:1-6 (6:1-6)

Reading

Thing #212. All from above heavenly men by birth, once we're both the citizens of Earth as pilgrims here seek a heavenly home. Our portion and the ages. And it's all. Over the sun. Shall be. You're always involved. I've had cherry all everything. Snapshot. Gambling. Morris Way. There is no law. There are sovereign grace. Now what the Lord breathed by the unveiled, unveiled, unveiled. You are a stranger. Where we do not pray. Oh my God. Which gave everybody.

The process. Every twice when it spelled us here. So far, Treasurer. Writer's spirit. Let's pray. I'd like to suggest for our consideration Galatians chapter 6. It's a book, so that. Wakes up some dark subjects. The Book of Galatians. But the six chapter is very practical, and it takes off in particular some good practical instruction as to how we can. Can walk, as we've considered, together. Pilgrims here in this world, heading towards home with the particular enemies that we have of the flesh in the world. Those two in particular are there. And I just suggested is something that may be helpful especially. For all those of us who are older, but there's many younger ones here as well. Galatians chapter 6, verse one. 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, bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. 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. And let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. You see how large a letter I have written unto you with my known hand? As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh they can. They constrain you to be circumcised only, lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised to keep the law, but desire to have you circumcised, that they make glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is circumcised. Is by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, and as many as walk according to this rule. Peace be unto them, and mercy and upon the the Israel of God. From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, Amen. I could also suggest something. You take up the Book of Galatians there. Can easily be a tendency to take up the negative side of it, and there's much here that is very negative in particular. The law and the gaudy and the world. But against that dark backdrop, we have some very, very bright things in this book of Galatians, and I think it could be very encouraging and uplifting if we maybe consider more of that side of it. And that which would be a real help for each one of us in our Christian life. And just to say by way of introduction of that regard. There are two things presented to us in particular in this book of Galatians that help us as Christians, those things that we absolutely need. One is a life and an object, and we get that in Galatians chapter 2 and verse 20. That verse we know so well, but if we can look at that for a moment.

It says there I am crucified with Christ and 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. You have those two things there. The 1St is the life that I now live in the flesh, and that is Christ living in me when you and I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. We got a whole new life and it was his life. It's eternal life. It's a life of Christ. And that we need. That is the life that can please God, but we need an object too. And he says I live by the faith of the Son of God. That doesn't mean by his faith. It means that faith which has him as an object. That is our faith looks to Christ and according to the life that we now have, which is his. We are enabled with him as the object to follow him. And so we have a life and an object in the Lord. And then we also have the spirit. Now we get primarily in a number of places. Let's say chapter 3, verse three, it says you've begun in the spirit, which is true. Every one of us when we got saved, we began in the Spirit. But then in chapter five, he says in verse one, stand fast. Therefore in the liberty we're with Christ that's made us free and be not entangled again with the oak of *******. And he goes on to speak about how we do that is to our walk. And that we have. In later on in that chapter. Verse 13 You've been called unto liberty. Don't use liberty for an occasion of the flesh, but if I love serve one another and how? Verse 16 this I say then walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Verse 18 if you be LED of the spirit and not under the law. And so now we've got a power, not just a life in an object, but there's the power to walk accordingly. To that light that we have in Christ and these things are presented by the time we get to chapter 6 so that when we come to the. Practical exhortations of this chapter We already find the resources that we as believers need to be able to take up with the instructions that we find here. Our first verse begins with the word. After it says brethren, it says if. And we'd like to talk about that a little bit in the context of what Tim just brought before us. There's a very powerful concept, and those of you who've been in my Sunday school class in Rio Ferry will recognize what I'm going to talk about. Galatians chapter 2 and verse 20, that Brother Tim was just looking at you. Look at the word I as you go through this, the first one, I am crucified. You're crucified. You're quite dead. And then the next

expression is I live and Tim is bringing that out that we have a new life in Christ. And then it says not I. Does Christ liveth in me? And then it says I now live and and it's in the flesh, in your body. You live by faith. And that's what Tim was bringing forward in connection with. The object that we have and the faith and the Spirit of God working inside us, but. What I want to emphasize and bring out is that this eye in Galatians 2 and 20 has decisions to make. One is to recognize I is crucified, another is to recognize I has a new life, and the third is to recognize that you're going to live by faith in Christ. Decision is to make crucify what you were I is to recognize my new life is in Christ, and then the third is to recognize you live it by faith. And then if we turn over to the fifth chapter of Galatians. We understand. I has a decision to make and if you look in Galatians 5.

And verse 17. Says the flesh lost us against the spirit, the spirit against the flesh. These are contrary 1 to the other. So you cannot do the things that you would. So there's a conflict that is going on and I has a decision to make. All day long, all kinds of circumstances. That are presented before you that you I are in. Are you going to walk and let the crucified what you were come down off that cross and come back to life If it were or you're going to choose to walk in the spirit. There's choices that get made all day long. And the point that in verse 18 of chapter 5 is if you be led by the Spirit. You're not under the law. What is it that enables us to live a successful Christian life? Is it a set of rules? Is it constraints No. What is it that enables us to live a successful Christian life is walking in the spirit I saying yes to the Spirit of God and letting him guide in our lives and so. We're not always successful. And that's what is being addressed first in chapter 6. If a man be overtaken in a fault. I'd like to say this right up front, that Christianity is about when you get knocked down, the flesh gets in control and I makes the wrong decision. The devil gets advantage through a certain set of circumstances that the real life that you have from Christ, the power of the Spirit means you get back up, you say you're sorry to the Lord, you repent, and in the power of that new life and the power of the Spirit, you get back up and start following the Lord again. So Christianity is not a one time decision leading to a failure. If it leads to a failure, and it doesn't have to, you have the power of the Spirit of God dwelling inside you. You have the new life of Christ inside you in conflict with what you were before you were saved. You have the ability to get up. Get cleaned up and carry on following the Lord Jesus. And that's what Christianity is about, if I can put it that way. Verse six, it's about restoration. And the recognition that we need to have is that each one of us is capable. Of fallings, of yielding to the flesh and not walking in the spirits. And so part of being Christian and being is being part of a Christian fellowship. And that is part of helping each other get back up and carry on following the Lord Jesus. And that's part of what we have in the in this first verse starts out with a thing that's a little bit negative, but there's a real positive light in it. Yes, there can be failure in my Christian life. Thank the Lord He's given me brothers and sisters in Christ who can help me get back up and carry on. And thank the Lord that He's given the Holy Spirit inside me to help me give back up and carry on. I think this first verse also. Makes a lot more sense when you consider what the back the dark backdrop was. And that was the law which only condemned So if somebody. With fall, the overtaking in a fall, well, you would be like the priests and the Levite passing by on the other side saying I'm not going to get dirty by that one and not like the Good Samaritan who is our example, the Lord Jesus. And so we're told to be like the Lord here, the man the And it's even clearer in the new translation, says, Brethren, even if a man be taken in a fault, you which are spiritual restore such a one. We're to be like the Lord in that regard. Now, what is a spiritual person say? Who's going to say that they're spiritual? Oh, we can't be like the Lord entirely in that regard because we have the flesh and the Lord didn't have the flesh, but the spiritual one is a Christian who judges himself and recognizes that he has the flesh and judges that before God. And so it goes on to say that the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest I'll also be tempted. This part the Lord could not do, but we must. And if we will do that, then we're going to act in the spirit of grace, which is what we have in in the first part of this verse, that we're going to be like that Good Samaritan to get right down there.

With that one who fell and get dirty with him in the ditch and lift him out of that place, that's what we're called to do. That's grace, and that's what we're called to do in the Christian life, in our path. Rob just mentioned that we have those two opposing forces within us, the flesh and the spirit. And sometimes we don't recognize when the flesh is active in our own life. It's. We're oblivious to it. And our brethren do see it. And So what do we do when we see somebody who is walking in the energy of the flesh? Maybe it is in the context of this epistle. They're walking in law or any other fault or trespass. Fault here isn't like some little white lie, some little incidental thing. It's translated elsewhere. Trespass, trespasses, it's sin. And So what, what do we do? Oftentimes what we say is, well, so and so is so and so, and they'll always be so and so. But that isn't true. And, and what we really are trying to do is to absolve ourselves of responsibility. To take this verse and to say Lord you don't understand this person is just always going to be the way this person is. But this verse doesn't say to absolve ourselves of responsibility. It says to not only to administer self judgment as Tim just said, but then to go to that person in an attempt to have them recognize that sin is sin and to judge it. And then they too will be spiritual and be able to go to the next person and say this is the flesh, this is sent, this is all it is. So we need to be able to not only recognize the flesh, but recognize that that isn't normal to Christianity. And not go and many were here on Tuesday or Wednesday night when they'll mention something in relation to this in regards to. Seeing something or a brother coming to us and confessing something, and not not for the point of hitting the person over the head, but for the point of winning them, as this first goes on to say that that is the goal. But we have to be willing to take God up at His word. A difficult thing to do. And we also need to be willing to recognize when somebody comes to us and says, hey, the word of God says this and you're doing this. That's not right. So we do have a law. And there is that in the next verse. Bury one anothers burdens, and so fulfilled the law of Christ. So what is that law then, if we're not under the law? Well, there's the law of Moses, and this speaks about the law of Christ, and it's a very different thing. And we have that presented perhaps first and foremost. And John 15 just turned there for a moment. It's actually the 1St I was thinking. I believe is in town 13 find it sorry. Verse 34. A new commandment I give unto you. That you love one another as I have loved you. That you also love. Love one another. Another by this shall all men know that you're my disciples. If you have love one for another. So this is really what the Lord gave. It was love, and He showed this by His own example. He came down from heaven to earth. And took our burden on the cross. You couldn't have a greater example than that of what we have in this second verse and so he says we need to go and do that same thing. That's the commandment that the Lord gave us. It's the new commandment. It's not the law of Moses. Love your neighbors yourself would be this summary of the second table of the law. The first would be love God. So love is even the summary of that, but it has all these commandments that were to do this goes infinitely beyond.

And it's something that can be done in the power of the spirit with that life that we have from the Lord himself is something that's far beyond the law of Moses. And he says having that, having that motive of love that came from the Lord himself, he says that's what you use to bear one another's burdens. And what's the burden that he mentioned already we had once, one overtaken in a fault, one who needs help, one who's struggling with some sin or another. And like her brethren have presented, you know, to go to them and bring before them what the consequence of that sin is, and the way to get back up, the way to get restored to the Lord and help that one that's wrong beside them. And so that's how we bear these burdens, first and foremost. But it's not limited to that. You see somebody struggling with anything in their Christian life. You can go to them and be a help to them. Perhaps I could tell a story that might be a little help. An example of this some of us

are playing hockey when we're a little younger and. One of the brothers in this room that I was playing with did something that I considered to be unacceptable, so I went over and I spoke to him about it and he didn't listen to me. So it says here to consider thyself, lest thou also be tempted. My response was then to do something wrong because he didn't listen to me. It's something to consider when we speak to somebody. We have to consider ourselves too, that we do it in the spirit of meekness, that we don't take offense because sometimes people don't receive what we say. And to to recognize that even when we reach out to help somebody, we're vulnerable as well. So we need to do it in the spirit of meekness, recognizing that's the Lord's strength and it's going to be him that restores. Hopefully we all have that heart 1 towards another to reach out to, one that we see that's hurting or struggling. Speaking of illustrations, Kevin. I've been on job sites with some of the carpenters in this room and. The difference between chapter 6 and verse two and chapter 6 and verse five is interesting. I've seen you all walk on with your own burden in the morning. You're all carrying your own lunch bucket. Some are bigger than others, but all of them are fairly big. It's my observation that you guys. Work for a living. I've been in a situation with you guys and I've seen somebody, two guys carrying something, other people working around them and somebody will realize that somebody struggling with the end of a load. And I've seen you all drop tools and run to help grab that heavy item. Grab a hold on it and start lifting it up. One of my biggest recollections was working on your garage roof and there was a forklift lifting trusses on to the onto the under the roof. And then the Truss started to slip and there was somebody going to go over the edge. And a couple of you guys grabbed a hole that crossed and stabilized that and saved the person from being killed. And that to me, that's an example of what we have in verse 2. Bear you one another's burden. The fact that you all jumped in and grabbed the whole of that trust and kept stabilized. Save the person's life potentially and but none of you help each other carry your lunch box boxes. You all carry your own lunch box. So the same thing works in our Christianity. There are times when you see somebody that's on the verge of failing, and if you can get in there and help them, that's a great thing. And do it safely in the context of what you're just saying, considering yourself. That word is different, isn't it Robin? I understand in the Greek the first one is exactly what you said, a heavy bird, and the second ones a light burden. It really helps to see that otherwise it looks like you have a conflict between. One of the problems that we have, why we don't consider ourselves that we also as we also be tempted is that. We tend to think a lot of ourselves, and that's of course the subject of verse three. If any man thinked himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceived himself. So, so helpful to think about what we are as a Christian. A Christian is one who has an old nature.

That old nature's file, it's condemned. It's a flash, we call it. And we're not taking it to heaven. Christian is one who has a new nature. It's the life of Christ and that life is perfect. And then there's a responsible eye that Rob was talking about whereby we can choose which one we're going to walk in, but it's terms of our natures, we only have those two. And when we really understand that and recognize it, and that's where self judgment comes in, as it recognizes that I have that vile, corrupt old nature, then we don't look at ourselves as better than a brother. He's got the same flesh that I do and he's got the same. Life of Christ that I do, and so does my sister. And when we see that, when we truly recognize that and understand that I myself, I'm nothing as to myself, anything that I have is Christ and that's the recognition of what I am as a Christian, then it's going to be easy to consider ourselves and recognize that we are weak. As far as that responsible eye, we can so easily go straight. We have to stay in that position, close to the Lord, asking for help all the time to act the same way. But we're going to fall just like that other brother, and we really understand that. Then we're in a position to be useful and helpful. If we don't, we're going to have a hard legalistic attitude, which was what the problem was in Galatia. What was being addressed here? Mr. Darby's translation actually is helpful in the. First verse it speaks of, it says there's a little reference where it says restore to it says as mending Matthew 421, which is when James and John were called by the Lord to follow him. And so bending is something that takes effort and skill, but also time and it's a process. You don't amend a ripped pair of pants or shirt or something in a minute. Sometimes it's a long ordeal and just have enjoyed the thought of when we can somebody draws alongside of us and is gentle and meek and mends us with the Lord's Holy Spirit doing the work, then there's real, real benefit to that experience that I think that's why inverse at the beginning of the verse it says brethren. Really a loving expression to encourage us to recognize that we need to be a help to our brethren, our brethren, and we need to really be exercised about being a healthy people. Second and third verse really help us with this definition of spiritual. Sometimes we really have a mystical idea of what spiritual is. And it has to do with a lot of times what is external. And so we try to mimic what we feel looks spiritual. And. For ourselves, we might think I'm quite spiritual. Look, look at me and we might look at somebody else and say that person is quite spiritual. Look at them and it isn't on the internal, it's all on the external. And so when somebody is put into a situation like what we have here on these. 1St 3 verses, it is the supposed spiritual brother going as if they are the Pope having no fault or failure, impossible to fail, impossible to send because they are godly and spiritual, going to give instruction to somebody who is just a lonely Sinner. That isn't what spiritual is and it's not what these verses are presenting. These verses are presenting that we all fail. We we do fail, we do sin, and the person who goes, goes in the recognition of I do fail and I do sin. But there was a recognition that that was sin. And he takes the stuff of touching it and he's seeing somebody else is failing to do that. And so he goes and he doesn't consider himself to be something because he recognizes that he that he fails.

If he goes in that attitude, he deceives himself. Thinks that he is something when he really is not. And I think verse four goes along with this. It's a hard verse for me, but my understanding is this is let every man test, has proved or test his own work. That is, examine it. What's my motive? What am I doing it for? Is it's for the Lord or is it for having some appearance of spirituality over others? It says, Then shall we have rejoicing in Himself alone? If I do something truly for the Lord, there's going to be in the end. A a delight that it was truly of the Lord and for Him. And then it only came from Himself. It wasn't from me anyway. But not. In I think Mr. Darby has here what belongs to another, and that's what we so often do. We often start rejoicing in a way in those things that belong to another. In other words, the other one fell down and I didn't fall. And so I'm rejoicing about that. I did better than them. It's and they that compare themselves, Paul says in Second Corinthians among themselves are not wise. I think that's the gist of what we have here and that's what the hard spirit in us as Christians does it exhaust ourself and put down our brother and we take rejoicing. About how we did better, where they felt. He says no, no, no. If we actually come and test our own work, examine what our own motives are, is this truly for the Lord or not, Then he says in the end they'll be rejoicing. Not if we go and take this other attitude. Just like to point out another thing about verses 2:00 and 5:00. The one case it says they're each other's burdens. The other says it says bear your own burdens. One thing it doesn't say is have others bear your burden. That's not neither verse and sometimes we have a tendency to want that. I want everyone to help me and I'm looking and calling out for help. Whereas the Scripture says the Lord says in Matthew 1128, this is coming to me. All you that labor and a heavy lead now will give you rest Scripture we always have. Where the Lord wants us to go to Him with our burden. That's your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you. I think every case, if you look it up, that's what it is. It never tells us to take our burdens to our brethren. It always tells us to go and help our brethren with their burdens, but there's an order to that, and it's so important to see it. And for you and I, when we get into trouble and difficulty, the point is we need to go to the Lord. That should always be the first place, and if the Lord directs it, others should come in and help us. And He often does. That's His general way. Then leave that to Him. He can put it on the hearts of our brethren. Her brethren aren't

blind either, but to just run out and look for help all over the place. We don't have that in Scripture and the other hand for each one of us. Let's be looking for those needs. We can't miss that. That's here in both verses that we need to first of all. Own burden so that we're not a burden to others and we can be a help to others and then look around for those needs that are around us and try to help with them as well. There's a there's a part of every burden, whether it is this life or whether it isn't the flesh that we have to bear. So even if the Lord does send someone, there's a need to be on our part that we have to address. Our brethren can come and they can be a help to us. They can show us the word of God. They can present to us Christ, but we that I that that Rob was talking about still has to act and the good of that we have to bear that burden. We also say that the flash inside of us doesn't like to be confronted or contradicted. So I've been in that position where someones come to me and maybe the brother came to me with a different, maybe not the best attitude, but I think he had a heart to help me and maybe I wasn't ready to receive it and it wasn't maybe in the state. But I think sometimes you have to realize that even if.

Person coming to help us there, they have the flesh too, right? And they might come out, they might not do it in a perfect way. They might not wash her feet with might be hot water or cold water. But at the same time to have to just try to take it from the Lord and see if there's anything there that the Lord might be trying to show us. That might be for for our health and for the benefit of the body of Christ at large, or for a local assembly. Next section I take it to be a connected thoughts from verses 16 down to verse six down to 10. I should say the subject is sewing and reaping which is a spiritual thought in the middle, but it begins with. Giving to the one who teaches and ends with doing good to all men. So it really has to do with sewing, giving, and this too is connected with the subject of this epistle, where the law really just required. But it didn't have any that overflow to others. And in Christianity we have grace that overflows. It goes beyond the Lord himself who was a great giver who didn't just require, but came here to give all that was needed to give everything. And so that is to characterize this as well, that we're to be ones who are sellers or givers. And of course then it brings out a spiritual principle in connection with it. That the things of God, when there is a sowing or a giving, there's a reaping that goes as well and that has both a positive side and a negative side is is brought out in verse. 8. So verse six would be one of the verses that. Is used for. Scripturally giving to those who labor in the Word. Speaks about let him that is taught in the word that would be most of us communicate or give of your substance is the idea of that word. Communicate doesn't mean to talk. It means to give of your substance, whatever it may be. Material goods come out this day mostly money. Unto him that teaches and all good things. And so there were those like the apostles who went around and they didn't have other means of support. Paul did. He was an exception. He worked making tents and he supported himself for the gospel sake. But others didn't. And today we have those who don't have secular means of support, and they go around and they teach the word and they seek to be a help to the Saints in other lands in this country in many different ways. Some of them are involved in literature work and distribution, and it's right that we who have benefited from that should send money to support them in their work, and this person would teach that. I agree with what you said, Tim, but they just wanted to highlight the first part of what you said. That it says of all good things, by far the I shouldn't say by far the easiest, but often the easiest to do is to write a check or give some cash or Western Union or whatever it might be. For moving money, but I think the other aspect is of all good things if you don't have money to give. The Lord's given you some other things. It's possible for you to pass on the. A good meal or accommodation or fixing somebody's car, Oregon, whatever it is that you're capable of doing, helping them with their house if they happen to live near you. Any of those things that the Lord would put in your heart based on what he's given you that you could pass on and share is included under the all good things sometimes harder to to give to share from things that are not monetary. But it is possible, and I've seen some good examples of people doing that with their I've seen it for everything from their boats to their carpentry skills to their electrical skills, whatever it might be that they're able to share to be a blessing to those who serve in teaching or otherwise. Sometimes it's just time.

That brother might need 10 year. Encouragement. 123. Jesus Spotless. Blood plus all the same by God. We are by the Lord. There is a sweet landing for living, Lord. Let's wait. We are thine.

The Gospel Messenger: Volume 3 (1888), "Be Not Deceived." (6:7)

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”—Galatians 6:7.

VERY sudden death, wasn’t it?”

“Yes, very.”

“And somewhat remarkable that he should have fallen just at that particular time.”

“To what do you refer?”

“Why, did you not see the report? He was personating Mephistopheles, and was in the act of carrying Faust down to the pit when he staggered and seemed to want something to hold on by. So an eye-witness told a friend of mine. And next he fell on the floor of the trap, and died in a few minutes.”

“Yes, that certainly was an odd time in which to die. Some of these religious people talk about seeing the finger of God in it; they, of course, are sure to use a thing of this kind to illustrate their tenets.”

“Oh, yes! there are plenty who will want to point the moral; but no doubt the man had a weak heart or something of that sort, and the extra exertion just at that particular time was too much, and the weak part gave way. Of course, one would not choose to die while in the act of personating the devil—carrying down a man who had sold himself to him for so many years of pleasure to be gone through first—but it has to come some time, and this was that actor’s time no doubt.”

“Of course; but, by the way, did you hear about the scene at the grave?”

“I heard that there was something irregular, but didn’t happen to see the report.”

“Why, the clergyman fainted while reading the burial service, and they say that it was just at the time when he should have spoken that part about the committing to the grave in a sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection; and a fellow-actor had to finish the reading. Of course my religious friends think this a kind of double argument.”

“Oh! of course they wouldn’t overlook that. A pure coincidence, or perhaps the parson had known the man, and was overcome at the suddenness of his death. Anyway, the play goes on as usual, and somebody else is now playing the same part, and he hasn’t died yet, so that will tone down your friends’ judgment’ views.”

Just so, my reader, but “be not deceived, God is not mocked.” We will not offer any opinion as to the point discussed above, but we do say, let it be a warning note to you. You, perhaps, are going on, thinking of nothing but pleasure and amusement. This man died in the act of affording amusement to a large audience. You know that your time to leave this scene must come. This man’s time came just at the moment when neither he himself nor anyone else expected it; yours may come similarly.

Are you prepared to face it? What are you sowing? What yield do you expect from the wild oats of amusement, and the tares of worldly pleasure?

God says, “He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption” (Gal. 6:8). What are you going to reap?

Be not deceived. These are evil days—days in which the devil is busy deceiving; days in which men deceive and are deceived. What is before you? Do you say that the death at such a time of the man referred to above, and the incident at the grave, and so forth, were mere coincidences? We give you no opinion, but we do say that the time comes when God does show His hand, though He is wondrous in long-suffering.

Noah preached for over a hundred years, and there was no sign of coming judgment; but the set time having come, “all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered” (Gen. 7:19).

The sun rose as usual on the morn of Sodom’s doom, but ere evening, “the Lord... overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities” (Gen. 19:24, 25).

Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go” (Ex. 5:2). But the time was not far distant when “Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore” (Ex. 14:30).

Nebuchadnezzar said, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?” (Dan. 4:30). And the predicted “voice from heaven” said, “The kingdom is departed from thee.” Nebuchadnezzar fell.

Belshazzar went on and on, pleasing himself, and by-and-by had a feast if feasts, but in the very midst of it he has to hear the words of the prophet— “Thou hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives and concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver,... AND THE GOD IN WHOSE HAND THY BREATH IS, AND WHOSE ARE ALL THY WAYS, HAST THOU NOT GLORIFIED”... “In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain” (Dan. 5:23, 30).

Eighteen hundred years ago Peter wrote, as inspired by the Holy Ghost, “There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation” (2 Peter 3:4). And we see in these last days plenty of these scoffers, as one of the evidences to us that the last days are here.

“BE NOT DECEIVED, GOD IS NOT MOCKED.” Men are deceived, they think that God is mocked. Be not deceived.

Let this striking incident which has just lately happened within a few minutes’ walk of where the writer now sits, whether a mere coincidence or not, speak to you. God has said that “there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12), but the name of His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who died to save us from that doom, the realities of which men parody for amusement.

Do you believe in this name? Do you know this One? ARE YOU SAVED?

S.

Fragments Gathered Up, Israel of God - Gentile Believers (6:16)

“Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16) seems to be used here, not as a general phrase for every saint, but for the believing ones in Israel—those Jews who had repudiated their own works and found shelter only in Christ Jesus. Two parties are spoken of, and not one only. “As many as walk according to this rule,” are rather the Gentile believers; and the “Israel of God” are the Jewish saints, not the mere literal Israel, but “the Israel of God”; the Israelites indeed, whom grace made willing to receive the Savior. W. K.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Gentiles Now "The Israel of God"? (6:16)

Question: Gal. 6:16. Does this scripture give any sanction to the idea that we, believers from among the Gentiles, are now “the Israel of God”? What is the true force?

X.

Answer: The verse plainly intimates two classes, the general one of the saints who walk as Christians by the rule of the new creation in Christ, and the specified one, not of Israel now no longer for the time God’s people, but such of them as were true to the Christ they were baptized unto (where is neither Jew nor Greek, but all are one in Him), who are therefore designated “the Israel of God.”

The Epistle to the Galatians, Galatians 6:11-18: The Epistle to the Galatians (6:11-18)

The conclusion of the Epistle is before us. "See how long a letter (or, it may be read, see in what large letters) I have written to you with my own hand. As many as desire to have a fair appearance in the flesh, these compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not be persecuted because of the cross of Christ.

"For neither do they that are circumcised, themselves keep the law, but they wish you to be circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh. But be it far from me to boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom (or, which) the world is crucified to me and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but new creation. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. For the rest, let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the brands of the Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen" (verses 11-18, JND).

In two passages, the apostle Paul has told how he safeguarded his inspired letters, in view of Satan's endeavors to injure God's saints (see 2 Thess. 2:2). One of these is 2 Thessalonians 3:17: "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle, so I write"; the other is 1 Corinthians 16:21: "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand." An exception was made of the Epistle to the Galatians, the contents of which it is evident all through weighed much upon the Lord's servant, so that he would not follow the ordinary practice of dictation to one who, as Tertius in Romans 16:22 (perhaps a trained writer) would write down what was given to him for Paul to add his signature.

Bad as conditions were at Corinth, Paul dictated the two Epistles sent there; but so deep were his feelings over the teaching introduced in Galatia, that this letter must be penned entirely by his own hand. Unaccustomed to writing in a day when such work was done by persons trained for it, Paul calls the attention of the Galatians to the unusual fact of his own penmanship, emphasizing the importance of the Epistle. It is also unusual, one may observe, in its entire absence of any personal greetings.

Let us consider with what shameful neglect this Epistle has been treated by the Christian world, so called, and the more so since it is marked with such evidences of special character, special importance, throughout, and at its close! The apostle has revealed the key of the opposition which then was, and still is: It is found in "as many as desire to have a fair appearance in the flesh," and they insist that there shall be no persecution—bringing in mention of the cross of Christ (verse 12). In the apostle's day this opposition was Jewish; now it is Gentile, but the principle it follows has not changed. Religion which has room for boasting in what Scripture calls "the flesh," is not of true Christianity, of course, Wherein then is boasting? The answer is found in verses 14 and 15.

It is only in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ that I can boast, the apostle responds, and then he adds, through whom (or through which, for both are true) the world is crucified to me and I to the world. Shall we seek to simplify the meaning of these last statements? The Christian is the present witness of Christ in the world, and is not of the world, though he is in it. First, then the cross of Christ is that which crucifies the Christian to the world; it puts him entirely outside it, as one saved out of it. Second, the world is crucified to the Christian; thus the world is seen with all its unremoved guilt and ignorance of the Father, notwithstanding the coming of the Son. Accordingly, there can be no common ground between a Christian and the world (W. Kelly, Notes on the Epistle to the Galatians, 1864).

Very important is it for his own walk before God that the believer seek to learn well these lessons about the cross which have been presented to us in the Epistle to the Galatians. Here they are in three easily memorized passages:

1. Gal. 2:20. "I am crucified with Christ, and no longer live, I, but Christ lives in me; but in that I now live in flesh, I live by faith, the faith of the Son of God, who has loved me and given Himself for me."

2. Gal. 5:24. "But they that are of the Christ have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts."

3. Gal. 6:14. "But be it far from me to boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom (or which) the world is crucified to me and I to the world."

In No. 1 The cross of Christ is viewed as deliverance from the law. In No. 2 The doctrine of the cross is applied to the flesh—the old nature. In No. 3 it is applied to the world. How does this touch you, young Christian?

Verse 15. But there is more in what is told here than being crucified to the world. "For in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but new creation." The believer has blessing from God, made good through the cross, and he is in new creation. As another has said, he belongs to a system already set up in Christ in the presence of God. I know what my new nature is, when I think of Christ. I see Him risen from the dead and in glory. There all believers will be; and meanwhile they have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them, the earnest of that coming glory. It is called here the new creation because it is not life only, but new life in contrast with the old, and implying not only the person, but the work of Christ.

Verse 16. "This rule" is the rule of the new creation, Christ himself. The only portion of Israel God acknowledges now, are the real believers among them, those in whom there is faith in Christ.

Verse 17. Let none henceforth trouble Paul about his ministry, for in his body he bore the brands of the Lord Jesus as his Master; scourged and stoned and imprisoned, what mark of indignity had not been put on him for Christ's sake? These, and not circumcision, were the brands of the Lord Jesus. What a condemnation was this of the men who sought to exalt themselves among the Galatian Christians, while pressing their bad doctrines.

Verse 18. Very gracious, indeed, is the close of the Epistle which is according to the divine love which filled the writer, whatever the state of those might be to whom he wrote. But we look in vain for any personal greetings; the apostle's heart turned to the dishonored Christ, and his pen could not spell out a single word of personal regard for those he loved.

The Epistle to the Galatians has been rightly called the death blow to the religious world, root and branch, as it is to a revival or continuance of the same system in our day, the enemy, not of the saints only, but, of the cross of Christ.

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 6:7-10, Reflections on (6:7-10)

Chap. 6:7-10

God looks to see the fruit of the Spirit developed in His own in every way. He is thus glorified in His saints, while theirs is the blessing and profit of it.

The apostle goes on to show that saints in their walk on the earth are as subject to the general principles of the government of God as any. “Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 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” (vers. 7, 8). Our souls are apt to forget this, and to act as if, because subjects of grace, we are free from responsibility. In no wise. Grace can never be forfeited: every believer will infallibly be carried safely through the wilderness and presented in glory; but on the road the unchangeable principles of God's government touch us even as others. Flesh is not to be indulged: they that are Christ's have crucified it with its passions and lusts. It is to be treated as an evil thing—neither place nor quarter is to be given to it. This is our solemn responsibility all the way along.

Alas how many genuine saints have reaped a bitter harvest through the folly of their ways Lot is a solemn instance in the Old Testament. His harvest was unquestionably corruption in many respects, yet was he “righteous” (2 Peter 2:7, 8). Life everlasting is the blessed crown of the life of the Christian, pursued in the power of the Spirit. Eternal life is viewed here as a future thing rather than as a present possession. The latter is more John's line. In his Gospel and Epistles we are assured again and again that eternal life is ours now in Christ. Paul presents to us the other side of the matter. We shall find it in all its fullness and blessedness, without aught to hinder, in the presence of the Lord in glory.

This should encourage the heart of the believer in the midst of all the trials of the present scene. Often now the foot has to be placed on the neck of some cherished object; often has the knife to be applied to what our poor hearts naturally cling to; but the path will end presently in bliss and glory, where the divine life in us can develope itself without alloy. Thus the apostle exhorts; “and let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (ver. 9). The hands must not be allowed to hang down, however earnestly the heart may suggest it; every good work must be steadily pursued until the Lord Jesus comes. The “due season” is not far distant; then joy will crown the servant's toil. We need especially to remind each other of this now. Latter-day service for Christ is often deeply discouraging in many respects, and the worker is apt to faint on the road or give up in despair. Courage, brethren! the Lord is at hand.

The apostle proceeds to define the sphere in which we should do good, with the order in which the matter should be considered. “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” (ver. 10). No doubt temporal good is to the front in the exhortation of this place; but we learn nevertheless an important principle as to all service. The church of God has the first claim. It is the circle of Christ's affections and interest in the earth; and it should be our joy and privilege to serve Him in it in any possible way.

We need to be reminded of this very much in this day. There is a growing tendency in many quarters to make everything of evangelization to the neglect and even disparagement of service amongst Christ's members. This will not do. It misses the mind of God. No doubt there are fewer difficulties in the way of evangelistic labor, and results are apparently larger; but the church of God is the first circle with God nevertheless. It should be so with us. How great the honor to be allowed of God to do good to His own! How highly is it prized in heaven, and with what joy will it be recognized and rewarded' at the judgment seat of Christ!

But our service must not stop short here; “all men” have a claim upon us for what grace has entrusted to our care. The heart of God takes in all, seeking their salvation and blessing. Herein grace differs from law, as we have already observed while examining this epistle. Law addressed one nation only, demanding righteousness from them (alas! finding none); grace on the other hand addresses all alike, offering salvation full and free to all who believe in Jesus. Such is to be the line of our service in this dark scene; first the household of faith, then, as we may be enabled, “all men.”

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Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 6:3-10, Reflections on (6:3-10)

Gal. 6:3-6

THE law of Christ tends to keep the soul subdued and humble in contrast with Moses' law with which the Galatians were so enamored. The sense of divine grace is then deep and real in the soul, and preserves from inflation, to which the flesh is ever prone. Hence the apostle says, “For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself” (ver. 3). Time was when Paul thought himself to be something. Recall his list of legal attainments and advantages as given in Phil. 3:5, 6. He then thought himself the best of men and gloried in flesh to the utmost. But how vast the change when the light of God was let into his soul! How complete the transformation after his memorable meeting with the glorified Christ! The best of men discovered himself to be the chief of sinners; for whom nothing but sovereign grace and mercy could avail. “I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 1:12-16). Never afterward did he “think himself to be something.” The proud haughty Pharisee became the lowliest of men, the closest possible follower of a rejected and suffering Lord. Only grace can accomplish this. Law tends to puff up. It flatters flesh, or at least flesh uses it in this way. Man with the law in his hand thinks himself competent to worship God and to serve Him.

With this humility and brokenness, the apostle connects heart-searching and examination of one's ways. “But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden” (vers. 4, 5). Verse 4 in no way contradicts verse 2. In the earlier verse it is a question of sympathy with one another's infirmities. We are to be helpers of each other, bearing one another's burdens (βάρη). Here it is responsibility where each must stand alone; “every man shall bear his own burden” (φορτίον). Responsibility cannot be shifted to other shoulders; each individual saint will have to render his own account to God. Solemn consideration! We are apt to lose sight of the judgment-seat of Christ where all that we have done in the body will be gone into by the Lord. But to overlook it is dangerous. Grace does not do away with responsibility, but rather deepens it.

The point before the mind of the Spirit here is that everyone should look to his own ways, that in the coming day he may have rejoicing as to himself. The word is needful and wholesome beyond all doubt. The heart is so treacherous that there is always a tendency to be occupied with the ways and failings of others rather than with our own. It is perfectly possible to complain loudly of a mote in the eye of another and be quite unconscious that a beam resides in one's own. A great advantage is thus given to the enemy, which he is never slow to avail himself of, to the sorrow and shame of the saints and above all to the Lord's dishonor. Let us esteem such ways, beloved brethren. While not overlooking evil in others, let us correct our own ways, remembering that each has to answer to the Lord for himself. Beware of mounting the judgment-seat; it is the prerogative of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A word as to Heb. 13:17 may be useful here. There the apostle bids the saints to obey their leaders; “for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not grief: for that is unprofitable for you.” This must not be misunderstood. The verse by no means teaches that spiritual guides are responsible for the souls placed under their care. Such an idea may suit priestly pretenders, but not the Spirit of God. Each man stands on his own responsibility to God, as we have seen. But all who serve among the Lord's saints are accountable to Him for their behavior; and this is what the apostle has before him in Heb. 13:17. The Lord will inquire by-and-by as to whether the diseased have been strengthened, and the broken ones healed. On the other hand, let those cared for look well to it that they cause no unnecessary grief to such as love and care for them for the Lord's sake.

To return to our chapter, we next meet with a word as to the temporal support of laborers. “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things” (ver. 6). If spiritual things are freely sown, it ought not to be a great matter if the temporal is reaped in return. God looks for this from His own. It is not only the due of His servants, but His due, which He never foregoes, though all is on the ground of grace. The apostle's exhortation in this place is purposely general, not local. Suppose in a given place, the saints are served by those who need no return from them, are they free from all responsibility as before the Lord? Assuredly not. The church of God is one, and the laborers are one; in such a case the heart must find vent for its bounty elsewhere. This is an important principle for all to remember. A harvest of blessing will always be reaped where it is acted upon in faith and love.

Christian Treasury: Volume 1, Who Are the "Spiritual" in Galatians 6:1? (6:1)

The place in which this scripture is found throws light on its meaning.

It is not a right condition in a local assembly, whether composed of many or of few, that there is one class who are the "spiritual," while the rest have not attained to that standing, and yet this is often the interpretation which is given to this scripture. To admit that this is the meaning, and that the Apostle is only allowing a common condition, well known among the saints everywhere, as well as in the several assemblies of Galatia, is most disastrous to all fellowship and communion of saints in each assembly. It introduces at once two distinct parties, where but one spirit should animate the whole, of which those who assume to be the "spiritual" are certainly the most guilty, though assuming to possess intelligence beyond the others. The Apostle is correcting an evil, not providing for its continuance. This reason has often been given for not personally visiting a certain failing and erring brother, "Oh, I am not spiritual; that is not my work, so I brought this before brother So-and-so," referring, by thus speaking, to the word spiritual in the passage before us.

Now any one carefully reading the epistle will observe that what is condemned in it is a hard, legal spirit. It is clear that the law exacts and expects something from a man, and is the opposite of the Spirit of grace, which brings all to him, and which is to operate now in all our dealings with each other.

The assemblies of Galatia here addressed were nurturing such a legal spirit. It is not of the Spirit of God, and it is totally condemned by the Apostle. To do so is to fall from grace. It tends to exclude from our minds that ministry of love which should and would flow forth amongst us spontaneously. For love acts (when it is divine) quite irrespective of any deserving in its objects.

The spiritual are those who are controlled and guided by the Spirit of God, and they are in contrast to others who are legal in this epistle. But anything except grace and the Spirit's control is wrong. It is very important to weigh well how strongly the Apostle speaks. He says, "I stand in doubt of you." The very Christianity of those who foster this legal spirit in their assemblies was almost questioned by him, so entirely is it

apart from the leading of the Spirit of God. In the beginning he calls it another gospel, which is not another, and in this last chapter he shows that it tends to shut out all the manifestations of love to an erring brother. It fosters religious pride. (Gal. 6:12, 13.) Legality says, "When he has done something to merit my confidence, then I will restore him to the place he once held in my esteem and affections." Spirituality says, "When he is down is not the time to expect him to do much (except show a willingness to be helped). I will go to him in meekness to do something for him, for I consider myself in him, and that I am exposed to a similar temptation as long as I am in the body." How different!

Consider, too, the word "overtaken" in Gal. 6:1. It means either that I overtake him, or the the fault overtakes him, for we are all running along in our Christian course. In either case he has stopped in his race heavenward. Legality still recognizes the flesh, and the flesh stops a man in his race. I should not have overtaken him, and the fault would not have overtaken him, if he had continued running. But here he is helpless. Am I to pass him by in his distress? Like the legal spirit of the Levite and the priest, am I to take the other side? No I am to imitate the good Samaritan, so-called, who "went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine." Our blessed Lord Himself is before us here, who turns to each of us individually with His own beautiful homely comment on the whole story; "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?" Then He adds that marvelous exhortation, so short, yet so full and pointed, "Go, and do thou likewise." Such is the leading of the Spirit in opposition to legality.

The Christianity of those may well be doubted who take the ground of not being "spiritual," and who act among their brethren in another spirit-on the ground of law and not of grace. They admit that they are legal, that is, they are still in bondage themselves. The Corinthians were not legal, but "carnal." Hence we have a man in one of four conditions now. Either he is natural, dead in trespasses and sins, or he is carnal, allowing the flesh, or he is legal, as the Galatians were, still in bondage, and not in the liberty of the Son, or he is spiritual, under the control of the blessed Spirit of God,* and if so, in all the joy of conscious sonship, as a child with the Father. This last is the only proper Christian condition, and Paul insists on it, and therefore no allowance is made for a class in any assembly who takes the ground of not being “spiritual." Nothing can be more solemn than the strong way in which the Apostle speaks to them in this epistle. However much there may be of the appearance of humility in one who says I am not "spiritual," yet not to be led of the Spirit is a denial of Christ, and is the overthrow of Christianity.

(* "Spiritual" is put in contrast with "natural" in 1 Cor. 2. and with "legal" in Gal. 6:1.) H.C.A.

Bible Treasury: Volume N7, Fragment: The Hope of Righteousness (5:5)

The hope of righteousness is not the hope of getting righteousness, but the hope of glory which belongs to righteousness. God says, You are My children; I have brought you to Myself, and you are going to hear about the glory of Christ, and are joint heirs with Him in it. When I think of the apostles to whom God revealed such things as these, I think how, with such power of God in them, they could go safely. But thus laden with Christ, they could go safely and steadily through the world; they were fully ballasted with Christ.

Have Christ in yourself. Christ everything to us enlarges the Christ in us, and then we can go steadily along. If I have a full Christ in myself, then I can look safely out. If I have Christ as the center of glory in my heart, I can look out and see the glory all around.

J. N. D.

Bible Treasury: Volume 14, Christian Liberty (5:13-26)

The Christian is called to liberty, the holy liberty of the new nature, but yet liberty. It is no longer a law which constrains, or rather vainly seeks to constrain, a nature whose will is contrary to it, to satisfy the obligations which accompany the relationships in which by the will of God we find ourselves—a law imposed, forbidding evil to a nature that loves evil, and commanding the love of God and of one's neighbor to a nature whose spring is selfishness.

Had it been possible to take away Christ's moral liberty—which was not possible—it would have been by preventing Him from obeying the will of the Father. This was the food He ate (John 4). As a perfect Man, He lived by every word which came forth out of the mouth of God. He chose to die, to drink the bitter cup which the Father had given Him, rather than not obey Him, and glorify Him in drinking it. Christianity is the liberty of a new nature that loves to obey, and to do the will of God. It is true that the flesh, if not kept in subjection, can use this liberty to satisfy its own desires; just as it used the law, which had been given to convict of sin, to work out righteousness. But the true liberty of the new man—Christ our life—is the liberty of a holy will, acquired through the deliverance of the heart from the power of sin, liberty to serve others in love. All the law is fulfilled in one word— “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” The Christian can do still more, he can give himself for others; or, at the least, following the direction of the Spirit, he fulfills the law in love. But if they devoured one another in selfishness, contending about circumcision and the law, “take heed,” says the apostle, “that ye be not consumed one of another.”

The apostle here establishes the principles of holiness, of the Christian walk, and brings in the Holy Ghost in place of the law. In the preceding part of the Epistle he had set forth Christian justification by faith, in contrast with works of law. He here shows that God produces holiness, instead of exacting it, as did the law with regard to human righteousness, from the nature which loves sin. He produces it in the human heart, as wrought by the Spirit. When Christ had ascended up on high, and was set down on the right hand of God, having accomplished a perfect redemption for those who should believe on Him, He sent down the Holy Spirit to dwell in all such. They were already children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and, because they were such, God gave them the Spirit of His Son. Born of God, cleansed by the blood of Christ, accepted in the Beloved, God seals them as His own by the gift of the Spirit until the day of redemption, that is, of glory. Having the new life, Christ as their life, they are bound to walk as Christ walked, and to manifest the life of Christ down here in their mortal flesh.

This life, produced in us by the operation of the Holy Ghost through the word, is led by the Spirit which is given to believers; its rule is also in the word. Its fruits are the fruits of the Spirit. The Christian walk is the manifestation of this new life, of Christ our life, in the midst of the world. If we follow this path—Christ Himself—if we walk in His steps, we shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. It is thus sin is avoided, not by taking the law to compel man to do what he does not like: the law has no power to compel the flesh to obey, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The new life loves to obey, loves holiness; and Christ is its strength and wisdom by the Holy Ghost. The flesh is indeed there; it lasts against the Spirit, and the Spirit lusts against the flesh, to prevent man from walking as he would. But if we walk in the Spirit, we are not under the law; we are not as the man in Rom. 7, where, impelled by the new nature, the will desires to do good, but, a captive to sin, he finds no way of doing what he desires; for the law gives neither strength nor life. Under law, even if life is there, there is no strength: man is the captive of sin.

But sealed by the Holy Spirit, the believer is free, he can perform the good he loves. If Christ is thus in him, the body is dead, the old man is crucified with Christ. The Spirit is life, and that Spirit, as a divine and mighty person, works in him to bring forth good fruits. The flesh and the Spirit are in their nature opposed the one to the other; but if we are faithful in seeking grace, the power of the Spirit, Christ by His Spirit in us, enables us to hold the flesh for dead, and to walk in the footsteps of Christ, bringing forth the fruits that suit Him.

There is not really any difficulty in distinguishing the fruits of the Spirit and the fruits of the flesh: the apostle names them, those, at least, which are characteristic of their respective actions. Of the sad fruits of the flesh, he positively declares that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God; but the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, &c. Against such there is no law: God cannot condemn the fruit of His own Spirit. Remark, that the first of these fruits are love, joy, peace. The Spirit will surely produce those practical fruits which manifest the life of Christ in the sight of men; but the inward fruits, the fruits Godward, come first, the condition of soul needful for producing the others. Many converted persons seek for the practical fruits in order to assure themselves that they are born of the Spirit and accepted of God. But peace, love, joy are the first fruits of the presence of the Spirit; the others follow. In order to know what is in the heart of God, we need to see the fruit of His heart, the gift of Jesus.

If I believe in Him, and through Him in the love of God, sealed of God by the Spirit, I have the sense of His love: love shown in the death of Jesus is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Spirit, which is given to those who are washed from their sins through faith in His blood. By that Spirit we have the consciousness of our position before God, and love, joy, peace are in the soul. The fruits which follow are, moreover, the proof to others that my certainty and assurance are not false, that I am not deceived. But for myself, it is what God has done which is the proof of what is in the heart of God; and through faith I set to my seal that God is true. Then, sealed by the gift of the Spirit, I rejoice in His goodness, and the fruits of the new life manifest to others that this life is there.

Moreover, “they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts.” They have not got to die: Christ died for us, and, He who died being our life, we hold ourselves for dead, crucified with Him, as though we ourselves had died upon the cross, since it was for us He suffered. Possessing another life, I do not own the flesh as “I,” but as sin which dwelleth in me, which I hold to be crucified. The faithful Christian realizes this continually. God declares us to be dead with Christ; He looks upon us thus (Col. 3:8). The believer, accepting God's declaration with thankfulness, holds the flesh, the old man, to be dead (Rom. 7); and through the Spirit, if he is faithful, he applies the cross in a practical way to the flesh, so that it may not act (2 Cor. 4); besides this, God in His government sends that which is needful to test the Christian, and to effect this.

The apostle adds the exhortation, “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.” The law nourishes rather than destroys vain glory, for the law makes us think of self. When rightly employed, it is most useful for convincing of sin, not for producing righteousness.

Thus the operation of the law with regard to justification and holiness has been fully examined, and set in a clear light. It does not produce, but exacts, righteousness. It cannot be linked with Christ as a means of justification: “if righteousness is by the law, Christ is dead in vain.” Man ought surely to have kept the commandments of God; but that is not the real question. He has not kept them; therefore upon that ground he is lost. Christ, on the other hand, brings salvation because we are guilty.

Then, as to holiness, it is not God's way to seek to produce holiness in the flesh through the law; for the flesh is not subject to the law, neither indeed can be. God gives a new life in Christ, and the Holy Spirit, to produce fruits which are acceptable to him; and against these fruits there is certainly no divine law. God cannot condemn the fruits of His own Spirit. It is the new creature, the new life with its fruits by the Spirit, which are acceptable to God; it is this new creature which seeks to please Him.

Strengthened by the Spirit, and instructed by Him, according to the wisdom of God set forth in the word, let us seek to walk in the footsteps of Christ, that perfect example of the life of God in a Man which has been given to us.

Lawrenceville Conference: 2000, Galatians 5:8 (5:8)

Reading

Galatians chapter 5 and verse 8. This persuasion cometh nod of him that calleth you a little leaven 11 of the whole lung. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that you will be none otherwise minded. But he had trouble with you shall bear his judgment for revealed. And I'd rather if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offense of the cross sees I would there even cut off which trouble you. For brethren, you have been called unto liberty only use not liberty, for no kids you do the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the laws fulfilled in one word, even in this thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. What if he buoyed and evolved or one another? Take heed that you may not consume one another. This I say then walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh, for the flesh, the lusted against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. And these are contrary, the one to the other, so that you cannot do the things that you would. What if you be LED of the Spirit? You're not under the law now. The works of the flesh are manifest. Which are these? Which all

trees? Fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft. Variance emulation. Wrath, stripes, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, troubling, and such life, of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past that they would do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy. Peace, long-suffering. Gentleman, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law, and they there are Christ have crucified the flesh with the affections and loss. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain Lord provoking one another. Envying one another. DC Willis and his book on this. Group of Dilation speaks out of this book as beautiful Break. All right into the young man to be strong in the gracious right peace. They don't ever find that we're totally strong in the law because the law doesn't work. There's nothing wrong with the law. What's wrong with that? Well, so the. First year faith worketh by love in the end of verse 6 and. And the end of verse 13 it says by love serve one another. What you say is so important, and I had it on my heart this morning because it's grace that teaches us in Titus to live soberly to denying ungodly lusts. We should live soberly, righteously godly in this present age when you see a believer who has that those characteristics in their life, that godly, that practical godliness. There's a Christian who's not putting himself under the law. But one who really understands the grace of God because it's grace that teaches us those things in Titus chapter 2. And this is very important to get ahold of in our souls. Brethren, grace does not give us liberty to live as we please. We do read of those who were rebuked for turning the grace of God into lasciviousness or taking license from the fact that God is gracious, but they really didn't understand what grace was. And so we were singing that hymn that it was grace that taught our feet to tread the narrow way. And I suppose that's why Peter in his epistle could exhort the Saints to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It's a deeper appreciation and understanding of grace that we need. And it's interesting, the contrast in the two, or not the contrast, perhaps, but the development in the two verses that were before us in John's Gospel.

This morning, because there we read, first of all, you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. But there's a further development when it comes to the sun. A few verses later on he says, if you know this, you shall know this. If you know the sun, you shall be free. Indeed. That's a development because it is possible to know the truth and to hold the truth, if I could put it this way, to be clear as ice and just as cold. And we may be able to enumerate the truth, We may be able to put forth doctrinal accuracies, and that's good. We need to have the truth clear before our souls. And we're thankful for those who can set the truth before us in the assembly clearly and concisely in a way that we can understand and grasp it. But if that's all it is, brethren, that's not enough. But why is does he develop it further with the Son, and say He shall be free indeed? Because, brethren, we can't know the Son and not have the heart engaged. We might know the truth and not necessarily have the heart engaged. But if the truth brings before us the sun, and if Christ is ministered to our hearts, and he is real and precious to us, that's true liberty, brother, because if our hearts go out to this one, then our. Going to follow in the path of faith, not because we feel constrained by some outward moral conformity, but because our hearts go out to him. And Brother Chuck mentioned that word legality this morning, which I think sometimes we toss around and perhaps sometimes use it out of context. Let me suggest that legality is really outward moral conformity without the heart engaged. And rather than that, that's going to lead us to problems. Difficulties. But if the heart is really engaged, then those things on the outside will take will take shape without being being legal. It's not that what is on the outside doesn't matter because sometimes people say, well, the Lord knows what's in my heart. Well, that's true, but that's only part of it. But out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh what I say and what I do on the outside. Ought to come from a heart that's responsive to himself. Oh, I just say, let's get a deeper sense of grace in our souls. It will teach us to deny ungodly lusts and to live soberly, righteously, and godly. In this present age, Anika, brother down in Bolivia, brother beloved. Said in a meeting like this one day said. Brethren, there are two ways of being together. One is to be frozen together and the others be melted together. You can understand the statement like that. The Lt. might work a little while, but we don't like to be frozen up. The warmth of love, how wonderful it is. Well, we read here that we are to walk. In the Spirit. Whether word for our. Conscience and for our hearts to realize that. We're in this world and we're traveling. Every day. In the record of every day and every moment is being kept. And God has brought for us here in this chapter. At least twice, if not three times. If we're to walk in the spirit. Well, we know that the love of God is spread in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. And when it comes to worship? And that is to be in the spirit. So in the departure of the Lord Jesus. As he talked to his disciples. The Latin, which would be so important. And the Lord went away from this world, of course, by the cross. What? As he spoke to them, he talked to them about this comforter. A person. We realized that. The Spirit of God is a person in the Godhead, equal with the Father and with the Son. We realize that this person is dwelling in our bodies. You. Control our life. He would bring us into the knowledge of the truth that sets us free. He would occupy our hearts.

With the beloved Son of God. Now the sacrifice he made, the glory that belongs to him. And this blessed One, who is to be the king. I believe it's five times. In the 24th Psalm. Look it up five times. He is the king of glory. The King of Glory. This is the person. That we're concerned. As to how important he is in our lives? And no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. Now they come to know who is Lord in my life? There's power in my life. Directs me in every step. And that is, I am to walk into spirit. Will not fulfill the loss of the flesh only by walking in the Spirit. Will I rise above that flesh which would control me is walking in the Spirit. When we start verse 16, that seems to be where we are already, but verse 16 it begins practical sanctification. And you know there is absolute sanctification. Thank God when we're saved, we've been set apart from this world for God forever. That's absolute sanctification. And that's the first part we had in this chapter, but now we're starting. Practical sanctification. You know, sanctification is merely to be set apart by God for himself as a fight of Christ and every one of us are sanctified. What does it mean? Well, that's what the Saint did, a set apart one for all the Saints we find in the well, I couldn't say the paper but that's why I read it. They make us say after 2-3 hundred years and many things they got to do the attitude and miracles. But I was a straight pop million. I was faith and you're all states just means we're set apart, sanctified for God for his glory, given us as part of the bride to his Son. That's what Romans 17, I mean John 17th part part the Lord merely given thanks to his Father for us. It humbles us to think that's the theme of the prayer of our Lord. But what I want to bring out we're starting practical sanctification walk in the spirit will fulfill the lust of the flesh. The next verse tells us that there's a warfare going on and if you're saying that you're in dwelt with the Spirit of God, there's a warfare going on. The flesh lusts us against the Spirit, the spirit against the flesh, and that's going on all the time, every minute of your life it's going on perhaps even when you're sleeping and dreaming, but that's going on. Satan can encourage the lust of the flame. He can encourage and direct the flesh. And it's only the Spirit of God in you that can help. But you know, you got to recognize we have this warfare as. Thieves and Six tells us. It's a, it's a warfare with heavenly places. It's not down here. It's spiritual wickedness in a heavenly places. Now, if you look at Jeremiah on this, it's very important. Jeremiah, I think 42 or three Jeremiah, I'm Jeremiah. Jeremiah. 40, Probably 242. You know they wanted to know from God. To Jeremiah, where they should be and what they should do. Isn't that the most important thing for us? Where is the Lord's table? Where will the Lord be and each of them? And what should we do as servants of Him? Well, when they told him, the Lord told him. When I would find that verse 10 of 42 applied in this place. Abide right where you are, in Judea, Jerusalem. The place that God has chosen, the place His name there and and all the blessings that will come. What did they say in 4214? I won't read it all. We're going

to go to Egypt. What's Egypt? It's this world. It's this world of sin and all the wickedness in it. That's Egypt. We're going to go there. Why? We'll see no one.

We'll see no war, and I'll tell you, it's really soft. If you want to leave where the Lord would have you be, you will have less warfare. That's true. You'll see no more war because there's nothing there to fight about. You blend in with them. In Christendom, there's no warfare. Everybody agrees to the same thing, whatever you like to. There's no warfare. The warfare is when you're gathered right here, it's the greatest warfare there is with your. Papers and relatives, we don't fight them, but there's that warfare always because of what we stand for and how we talk next. And so it says here in our chapter. Let's see, the flesh losses against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and these things are contrary one to the other. So you cannot do the things that you would, you know, if we let the flesh have. Any response in us, we're not going to be able to do what that new nature, the inner man, wants to do. We can't. Satan takes over even on your mind, if you start reasoning your own thoughts instead of the word of God. Satan loves to take over. He makes the mind a plaything. There's a warfare to stay in that. I think this is the important part of walking. You know, we have to face that. That there is. Always an opposition to the spirit, always an opposition to the spirit. That's the devil, and he's clever and he can bring in any kind of temptations to get you to leave the path that you should be on. Like people to know that we have a guide in this world that we live in very sure guide the Holy Spirit of God, one of the persons of the Godhead that dwells in us. This is a reality. I don't know if we could just get a hold of it in a more real way and he's there to guide us. We live in a world that. Teaches us to be controlled by our desires, especially in our country. Our culture is is geared that way, advertising appeals to the desires, our own desires, and maybe not necessarily bad desires, but if we're going to be guided by our desires, brethren, that is not what we have here. It's being guided by the Spirit of God and he specifically with us with that in view. And I'd like to read that verse in John 16. Brother John Curry mentioned, but it's so clear there in the 13th verse of John 16, albeit when he the spirit of truth is come. He will guide you into all truth. Isn't that wonderful? He will guide you and we need to train ourselves young people. And us who are older as well, to be guided by the Spirit of God to walk in the Spirit. It's exercising ourselves to walk in the Spirit. When I act, am I doing this because of some desire of my own, or is it the Spirit of God that is guiding me in this? And something that is a check for us all. Is that the Spirit of God will always guide according to the word of God. If you think, you say you feel. Some nice people go so much on their feelings. I feel this is the Lord's mind for me. But sometimes you can show a verse that distinctly contradicts that and people will say, well, I just feel this is the Lord's will for me. Don't go by your feelings. Go by the Word of God. It will never let you down and the Spirit of God will never guide you contrary to the word of God.

It's so wonderful to realize it in a world that is so contrary. We have a sure guide to get through this place, but word for that we would have real trouble. But we have a sure guide. Another verse I'd like to leave for the young people because it's been such a blessing and my own soul is Psalms 32. The Lord can guide you in every aspect of life. As to a job, as to who you're going to marry, the Lord is there for us, and His Spirit dwells in US to guide us. According to True. Psalm 32 and verse 8. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye. Be not as the horse or the mule, which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bitten bridle, lest they come near unto thee. Of times were guided by the Benton Brighton bride. Thank God in his mercy. He doesn't let us go the way we might think to go. He puts the bed in and He guides us. That's guidance without understanding. But God wants to guide us with understanding, and that's what it means to be guided by the Spirit of God. He guides us in the light of Scripture with understanding. And that's what is true Christian liberty to be. By the Spirit of God in our lives, but it's something we need to be exercised about forever. Something that will just fall into place without any exercise on our part. It's walking. I'm going to walk down the road. I've got to exercise myself, and walking in the spirit means that I have to be exercised about things. This is a practical exhortation. Robin that also what the meaning of Ephesians 433 years and a ring. Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. No brother used to say this verse means. Is shown out by a child. Walking according to the truth of God as guided by the Spirit of God. And there are two exhortations that are so concise. For us on that. And they are, you might say, negative. Grieve not the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, or by your seal. And the other is quench not the Spirit. What grieves the Spirit is the allowance of the flesh. We're not to do that. We're not to grieve that spirit, and quenching the spirit is hindering his action in myself or in another. Spirit to teach us and guide us. Well, we certainly should keep, you should endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Another exhortation of Ephesians is. Be filled with the Spirit. That's a responsibility that comes home to our own souls. Be filled with the spirit sometimes. Say, if you have a glass half full of dirt, how are you going to fill that glass with water? You've got to do some emptying before you can fill it with water. And sometimes, brethren, there's things in our lives that hinders the Spirit from filliness. It's our responsibility, that exhortation. Well, it's not just individual, but I know this subject in our chapter is individual, but it's collective. The Spirit of God teaches and guides collectively, and I think that's so important. If you go back to John's Gospel 14 and verse 26. John 1426, where we have been quoted in John it was individual, but I believe here. It's so important, but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things. Now that can be individual, but let's remember he's the teacher of the Church collectively, the assembly. And that's where we really learn truth. Individually we learn truth, but you never learn truth like you do go into the.

Meeting or the assembly meeting, that's where you learn truth that's needed for you in that assembly individually. Thank God it's true, but you're missing a lot if you don't go to the assembly meetings. That's where the Spirit of God has liberty to really teach. The church never teaches, but out in Christendom all the churches so-called are teaching. But of course we know. The Spirit of God is the teacher now and he teaches in the assembly, and I think that's precious. Each one of us can enjoy that truth that comes out in our assembly. You can't do it can enjoy it if you're not there. I've always said there's something for everybody in every reading meeting, and if they don't come, they just don't get what's for them, that's all. That's sad, isn't it? But there's something, and if you really pay attention, you're going to find what it is for yourself may be different than for others, but there's something for you at every reading meeting. What we have here in Galatians is an error so serious that it takes one off of the ground of Christianity altogether. Amen. And that's the principle of law. The circumcision, all all that Paul had to do. To escape his persecution and the opposition of the established community of Judaism was to circumcise the Gentiles. That's all he had to do. Verse 2 Behold, I Paul's hand to you, if he be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. You you've abandoned Christian ground for Jewish ground. That's what you've done. When you're circumcised, I testify again to every man that is circumcised. He's a debtor to do the whole law. He's taken himself off of Christian ground, which is grace, put himself under law. He may not realize that. And then he goes on and in verse 11. And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution then? Is the offense of the cross ceased? The Jews thought themselves superior to the Gentiles because they had the law. They had the promises, they were the circumcised, the Gentiles, the unclean dogs were uncircumcised. They were trying to elevate the Gentiles in in the church up to their level. Their thought was absolutely wrong because there aren't 2 levels in the church where all members one of another and there is none that is superior to the other. Whether you're a Jew or a Gentile makes no. We're all rotten to the core. That's how we began. And then he saves us and gives us a new life in Christ.

And all those distinctions that existed in the Old Testament are obliterated by the cross. He's taken it out of the way, and now we stand in an altogether new relationship to God, and that's in grace. And by virtue of the finished work of Christ and circumcision is something if I submit to that on the Gentile and I submit to that. Then I'm on a higher level, a higher level of Christianity. Now we can promote that kind of thing amongst ourselves, not insisting on circumcision, but but we can have an idea that this group amongst us is is a more spiritual group than another. And we can promote that kind of thing that is absolutely unscriptural. And it administers to the flesh. If we're circumcised, he says in the 6th chapter verse 12, as many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. Paul refused circumcision for Gentiles because that would that would deny the ground upon which they stand before God. Which is great, he says. And she working if I can find the verse. I. Verse Verse 12 of chapter 4. Brethren, I beseech only back up a minute.

Of verse 9, but now after that she have known God, he's talking to the Gentiles, or rather are known of God. How turn me again to the weekend beggarly elements where until you again desire to be in *******. They were in ******* to a system of their religion. They had a religious system worshipping false gods. They were never worshipping the true God as the Jew was. They were never under the Law of Moses, but they had their laws, their regulations, what they could do, what they couldn't do, how to offer their sacrifices to the gods they worshipped, and all that they were in bonding. Now the Jew wants to put them in principle under the same kind of religious ******* by putting them under law. Same kind of thing. In principle. Of course, it's not the same thing because the one was the worship of the true God, Judaism, and the other was the worship of false gods, but in principle. Me doing something after a ritualistic fashion to gain favor with the deity that I'm worshiping. That's Judea. That's the principle of law, he said. He says verse 10. You observe days and months and times and years. I'm afraid of you. Now Christendom has got that today. They have days and months, times and years. They've got Christmas, they've got Easter. The Roman church has a lot more than that. They've got 7 official holidays through. Year, all of which is supposed to make those that submit to those things that are Christians give them a higher standing before God. That's a total falsification of the truth of Christian position, which is solid grace, pure grace, and it's God bringing us into favor based upon the finished work of Christ. Not based upon anything that I could do. I always used to wonder in Leviticus 13 and 14 where you have the the leper. There was one case of the leper. He was totally covered with leprosy. He considers many cases where a sore brings out, comes out in an arm or in the forehead or someplace in the body, and they have to look at it and see how deep it is and whether it grows or so on. But there's the one case where the whole man is full of leprosy and it says he's clean. Now what is that a type of? That's the type of a man who couldn't say, couldn't roll his sleeve back and say there is some good flesh. I'm not completely covered. I'm not completely bad. I've got some good in me. There's a piece of good flesh. But the man that was completely covered with leprosy had to see himself as vile, as totally leprous. Then he was clean. That's a picture of one who has judged himself before God. As being totally sinful and when we come to that, that's the denial of self. It's not not self denial, not putting off this or that thing to make me better in the flesh, but it's the denial of self denial of all that we are in the flesh. We're no longer in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwells in US. Circumcision is something that we could do, that we might glory in the flesh. And if there's anything that we can glory of Indiana the flesh, we're off Christian ground. And totally. And that's what we've got to get a hold of. They just wanted Paul, just Paul, we're asking is that you circumcise the Gentiles, that's all. And Paul says if you do that, you're you, you, you have, you're guilty of the whole law. You have to keep it all. If you offended one point, you're condemned by it. You're off the ground of grace and you're on the ground of law. It's the principle of law that is deadly. It's not the law. The law is holy and just and good, but it's the principle of law. And we're not under law, we're under grace. And to get a hold of that, Mister Harvey says the hardest thing for us to get ahold of is grace. Grace. Even those seven beasts, they call them sanctifying graces. And so our eighth verse. They mix it up. And so on our eighth verse, it says that this persuasion of the plausibility of this cometh not from him that calleth you. And so there's a certain plausibility to that. And so you say you belong to a certain organization and every organization has rules connected with it. And if you keep those rules, you're in good standing. And there are exterior things. Circumcision was an exterior thing. You could see if somebody was circumcised or not. And so there's a certain sense in which we can follow along even in the current rate of those gathered to the Lord's name. And we don't do certain things, and we do certain things and we're in good standing with the brethren. But that's not what grace is, is grace is living to please the Lord, and that's what he's bringing out down here. It's characterized by submission and obedience to the Word of God. And it soon becomes manifest because a person may go on along a very long time.

Avoiding gross outward things and there's a great plausibility to this argument that we were just have certain rules that you follow and if you follow them, you're in good standing. But that's a completely different thing than grace because we've been brought now we've been given a new nature, a power of that nature and the word of God to guide us. And so then things come up and they manifest itself that am I really walking in submission and obedience to God? Am I really walking. Communion with the Lord. It's a pathway that it's impossible for the flesh to to walk in. In Judaism, there were a great number of rituals, and if a person followed those rituals, they were in good standing, but they could follow them without having an ounce of life. But in Christianity, it's a pathway that's that's marked out by the Spirit of God, and it's in a pathway that's impossible for the flesh to walk in. Compared to Judaism, really, the outward rules of the Brethren are pretty simple. But it's apparently that's impossible for the flesh to walk in because it's LED of the Spirit of God, and God will manifest whether we're walking according to the Spirit of God or whether we're just walking in order to please men. What do you mean by the rules of the brethren? Well. If I may say that people, if you ask your neighbor and you said, well, Clem Buchanan, he doesn't do this and he doesn't do that and he doesn't do the other thing. And he can and, and they may look at it in terms of simply exterior things, but you know, I, it came home to my own soul at, at teachers college. They tried to clarify situations and they brought people up to explain why. I've told this before, but it really struck me. They brought people up to 10 people, They called them out of a class of 350. I wasn't there. The professor described it to describe why they did what they did. And there was a moral. Question and two took a very moral stand, and the first one, he said. I don't do that because I'm in the Salvation Army and it's forbidden by my marching orders. There was a girl there and the professor said, you know, we need to respect people's religions and the tenets of their religions. And then this girl, she didn't lift her head. She just said, she said, I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. To do such a thing now you've got the standard would dishonor the Lord. Now you got the standard, you got Christ. That's the standard. Well, we don't talk about rules among us. Never. It's the word of God and it's a commandment sometimes. And if you love the Lord Jesus Christ and his word, it isn't a rule to do it or to follow it, that we don't ever want to get it under that thought when they left from Toledo, the last thing they said. And I don't mind telling you, write your rules on the board and we'll do them. But we have none. I couldn't write 1. I said I can't put the whole Bible up there. And so when they went together as a group to open brethren, they individually had to sign 21 rules. God is not mocked, be not deceived, but we have no rules. This is hard work. And you know when he gives us a request this do in remembrance of me. If you love him, it becomes a commandment. He didn't make it that way. We do. It's not a law. Take a team of horses to keep a believer who loves him from that table. That's not a law. Isn't it wonderful, the patience of God to teach us that the flesh probably

nothing? He says in the 6th of Genesis the end of all flesh is come before me and God is still testing. He's got one more 1000 years to test back to proof that the flesh thought there's nothing. It is the spirit that quickeneth the flesh prompt with nothing. The first brain that God put forth in the Bible I believe. In Exodus 17 and briefly it says.

That God would have war with Amalek from generation to generation, that is. And I say the young people, sometimes the only people, you young people is you're just like your parents. And Adam be going to send in his own likeness and image, and every person that's been born in this world has been born with that sinful nature. Born in sin, says David. And we have to learn that. And the only way that God has is to put us on the standard of a new man. And that's the liberty that we're talking about, the liberty of grace, that perfect law of liberty to let that new nature of innocent. But we got to watch out for the old one because he's still there. The. Of the Spirit, just the opposite. The Spirit always brings fruit for the Lord and for God, but flesh is always worth not fruit ever. So there we have it laid out nicely. Like to point out something that has been a help to me too in verse 17. Reading it as you see it in Mr. Garveys translation, the the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. These things, these are contrary, the one to the other. And he puts it so that he should not do the things that he would. It's not that he cannot do it. Yes, we can do it if we're led by the Spirit, but it is that there are contrary principles, and if you give place to the flesh, you will not. Allow the Spirit. If you allow the Spirit place, you do not allow the flesh. There are two contrary principles, and I think all of us have felt the battle that goes on so often in our human breast because of these two principles. The flesh and the spirit. Remember in South America, one of the Indian brothers said English to brother Eric Smith one time. There's two dogs in my breast and they're always fighting. One is white and one is black. I think brother Smith asked him who's winning the battle. And the Indian says the one I feed the most. But if you turn to Romans 7, you'll see the. Full blown example of this. It's one who's quickened, has life, but is not living in the spirit. He hasn't saved yet. Even there's a difference between being quickened or having life and 9 being saved. But verse 18 For I know that in me that is in my place dwelleth no good thing. Well, that's one who's quickened. He couldn't know that without the Spirit having quickened him. For the will is present with me. But how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would do, for the good that I would, I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more that I do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. He's not saved yet. I find that a law that which I would do good. Evil is present with me, for I delight in the law of God after the inward man. No one could delight after this precious Word unless the Spirit of God has saved him and brought him into this blessing. But he's not there yet. He's still letting the flesh rule in his life, yet he's quickened. He wants to please God. You can't do it when you let the flesh have his way. That's the full, I think the full example of this. Seems to me that Peter gives us a standard and an example. Power. How to do this in first Peter? 4 verses 1 and 2. First, Peter. 4 verses 1 and 2 for as much then as praise. Has suffered for us in the flesh. Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind. For he that has suffered in the flesh has.

Feast from sin. That he made no longer. That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh. To the lusts of men, but to the will of God. Very practical and simple. When we. Deny the flesh that must rise up and do something, and we don't let it have its way. It suffers and we don't sin practical that way. The divine life has no power of itself. And I think it's important to realize that the power for the divine life, the new nature, is the Spirit of God. You might have a vehicle in the parking lot and you might have the very best engine. In that vehicle, you say, I've got the best engine that technology can provide. But if you don't put gasoline in that engine, you'll go out and turn the key and it's not going to fire up. There's going to be no power. You say, why? I've got the best engine that GM or Chrysler or whatever can provide for me. Well, there needs to be something put in that engine to give it power, to make it fire up. There needs to be gasoline. And so the power for our lives as Christians is the Spirit of God. And that's already been brought before us. And I don't want to belabor the point, but just in connection with walking in the spirit, perhaps what we've been saying is summed up in a little illustration back in the book of Deuteronomy, which brings these principles perhaps together by type and illustration. And it's important to see these illustrations. They help us to grasp the truth perhaps more clearly in our souls. And I was thinking in Deuteronomy chapter 33. Of the blessing of Asher. Deuteronomy chapter 33 and verse 24 And of Asher he said, let Asher be blessed with children, let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days so shall thy strength be. Well, we notice here that there's power because. Asher was to dip his foot in oil. The feet speak of our walk. The oil is often used in scripture as a type of the Holy Spirit. I think we can see that it corresponds with what we have in Galatians in connection with walking in the Spirit. But there are several things that are brought out here in connection with this. First of all, it says let Asher be blessed with children. That's what we might say is bearing fruit. We often hear about bearing fruit for God's glory. Do you want to bear fruit for God's glory? It's only going to be as you walk in the power of the Spirit, as you dip your foot in oil. Later on in our chapter, he speaks of the fruit of the Spirit and the characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit, but it only comes from dipping our foot in oil. So let him be blessed with children. Then there's an interesting statement. You know, brethren, the Bible is perhaps the only balanced book there really is in the world. Every other book you read, you're going to find that it's slanted some way or another. But the Scripture is so balanced, perhaps before we comment on that, that expression, let them be. To his brethren, we'll just go to an expression in thought in Corinthians where Paul said, which has been brought out. He said, We labor that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. That was Pauls desire. That was the first motive of his life, that in his service for Christ he would have the Lord's acceptance and approval. He was misunderstood by the Corinthian brethren who questioned his authority as an apostle questioned his. Treated him miserably weren't perhaps supporting him the way they should have. He said that's OK I'm laboring for the acceptance of the Lord That's my first motive. But brethren when we're when we walk in the spirit and I don't want to tear down or take away from anything that's been said because I heartily agree with what's been said about in connection with not just looking for acceptance with our brethren and trying to live a certain mode of life that's. To the brethren, I understand the context in which those comments have been made, but here's something interesting. When one dips his foot in oil, let them be acceptable to his brethren. Young people, there is a path of service and faith where you can walk, where you will have if you are in the path Misunderstanding. Yes, Paul had that criticism. Yes, Paul had that. But in a sense too, you will have the acceptance of your brethren. And I say that as.

Careful balance. We don't want to do things that rub our brethren the wrong way and purposely do something that we know is going to grate the teeth of our brethren. If meat offend my brother, I'll eat no more of it so long as the world shall stand. Yes, our first motive is Christ laboring for His acceptance. But I also suggest that when the Lord has something for you to do and you're walking in the path in the power of the Spirit, then he's not going to let your brethren stand in the way. He'll even work in their hearts so that they will have fellowship with you in what you're doing. Just a safeguard. Don't step out, feel you need to step out of the assembly to serve in a broader path. No, it's true. It's good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth, but. Of Asher, let him be acceptable to his brother, let him dip his foot in oil, and then what's the result? His shoes shall be as iron. That's power. You want power for your pathway. It must be your pathway walked in the power of the Spirit. You've got to dip your foot in oil. Let his feet be as iron. And then something else, brass, that would perhaps speak of endurance. Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. It says in Hebrews chapter 12, the Christian pathway is not the Sprint. It's not the 100 yard

dash. It's the marathon. It takes endurance to go on day after day. The enemy's busy, as we've been saying. The flesh is active. If we let it be so, and these things are against us in that way, are we going to have endurance for our pathway? Let him dip his foot in oil. Then he goes on. We won't read it, but he speaks about the happy man and the man who has corn and wine, and the one who experiences the everlasting arms about him. But I believe the hinge is that it's a man who. Foot in oil, he walks in the power of the Spirit. There's two conflicts that are mentioned in Scripture, and we've had our attention called for the one in Romans 7, Romans 7. The things that I would, I do not the things that I would not, that I do, or wretched men that I am who shall deliver me. That's the conflict between the two natures, the old and the new nature. In the in Romans 82 it says the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death. Which is what brought me into ******* in Romans 7. Romans 7 more describes the state of the Old Testament Saints before the Spirit was given. In Galatians, that portion we're looking at the conflict is between flesh and spirit and there's victory. The Spirit of God is power. It's the it's the gasoline in the engine. In Roman 7:00 you got the engine, but in in Galatians, you got the engine filled with full of gas and that gives the power. But the new nature is. Does not have power over the flesh the flesh is going to win there but he's given us more than just the new nature he's given us the Spirit of God Christ interceding for us on high the spirit here below we have everything that we need to to walk pleasing to God we draw the analogy between the Spirit of God and gasoline and. It's helpful, but to bring the comments back to what Brother Bob said. Is that the Spirit of God? Is, is a person of the Godhead and intelligent and leads us intelligently into the truth of God. And so that's what the Spirit of God is doing. And that's the means by which we're led by the Spirit of God is by reading the Word of God and getting hold of the truth of God. And the Spirit of God will never lead us contrary to the word of God. It's very important because people often talk about displays of power and there's evidence displays of power like burning. If I may say that, but it's not the Spirit of God at all, because it's contrary to the Word of God. And there's a very simple test to that and just reiterate that. It won't support application of the verse that was read in John 16 to the Spirit of God guiding us into all truth. I believe has a direct reference to the truth of God revealed in the epistles. There we get the intelligence of the Spirit of God to walk in the Christian pathway. In Ephesians chapter 4 where we get to walk not as other Gentiles walk, and it just delineates the behavior of those Gentiles. Then it goes on to say, but you have not so learned Christ. There is where we learn the truth. I am the truth. But then it goes on to say in that same context.

If not so learned the truth as it is in Jesus. We have the life of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Gospels as a model for our behavior and our pattern of life. We have Him in the glory as the object of our faith, empowering us and leading us on in the pathway of faith so that we become like Him in the pathway, the light, the the truth as it is in Jesus. We see everything that man should be to God. And we see everything that God is to man. And so we have the epistles to bring us into Christian teaching and understanding of what a Christian is. And we have the pathway of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospels as a pattern for our behavior down here. So we have every resource in order, as we had before us in our chapter, that we should not do the things that we would we. Allow these things that dishonor God and that are not acceptable according to the standard of the Lord Jesus Christ. But the Spirit of God enables us to not do those things. And so we have it all summed up as Christ, the new standard, and the Holy Spirit to empower us to follow Him. What was characteristic of the Gentiles was that they followed dumb idols as there was number intelligence to what they did. But what is characteristic, as you pointed out, the truth into which the Spirit leads us is what is our reasonable or intelligent service. And so to bring it back to what Brother Jim said, we may not always understand why the brethren do what they do, but don't criticize it and abandon it, but get into the Word of God and find out, because God has preserved. To the truth. Let's just read a verse in connection with that, because I'm glad he pointed that out. And it was my experience, if I'm allowed to say that coming into the assembly, I disagreed with what the assembly there taught the first time I came into the assembly. But it says that if one that is unlearned. Help me find this in First Corinthians. 14 First Corinthians 4 First First Corinthians 14 and verse 24 verse 23. If therefore the whole church become together in one place and all speak with tongues, and they're come in one that is unlearned or unbelievers. Well, they not all say that you're mad, but if all prophesied and they're come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all, and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, so that falling down in his face, he will worship God and report that God is in you of a truth. And so when the Word of God is opened and it touches the conscience, that's what prophecy is. There's the acknowledgement that the Lord is there and that the Lord has maintained a testimony. And if we don't have intelligences to why things are done the way they are done, where the Lord has preserved a testimony, we need to get into the Word of God and we need to find out why not just throw things out. So the order of the book of. Romans. You don't get instructions as to exhortation and behavior till you get through all the doctrine of the 1St 12 Chapters. And 1St 11 Chapters and then the first verse of the 12, He says, I beseech you therefore, President, by the mercies of God, that he present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable intelligence service. He teaches us how. And then he asked us to do it. He has abounded unto us in all wisdom and intelligence. It tells us in Ephesians 1, and it's in contrast to the service in the Old Testament. If you had come along to one of those priests or Levites and ask them why they did things in certain ways, they wouldn't be able to really tell you intelligently. We look back and we see why the crop and the feathers had to be taken out and why the sacrifice was killed in a certain way and certain things were done. We take it up intelligently. In the light of what is revealed in the New Testament and we know that it all speaks of Christ. But they carried on that service because it was required when they'd have an Bayou didn't go by the what they the regulations why and offered strange fire why they were slain. And so as we said this morning, it was a service of fear, not a service of intelligence. But we have now an intelligent service to render to him. And if you'll just allow me to say this too, I.

What this all shows, brethren, that is the things we have been Speaking of this afternoon in this reading meeting. It shows that we can go on and live for God's glory even in in the year 2000. I just want to say that on a practical note because maybe there's young people here and you're saying, well, these are difficult days. You brothers don't know how difficult it is out there at school and at work sometimes. Well, perhaps we don't, but I like that verse in first in second, Peter 1. Says, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, and some of those things have been enumerated here this afternoon. We have the very life of Christ. We have the Spirit of God for that life. We have the word of God as light and instruction for our pathway. We have the word of God as food for the new life, because the new life not only does it not have power. Its dependent life and so it needs food and refreshment. Here in this world we have all things that pertain unto life and godliness. And when we stand at the judgment seat of Christ, are we going to be able to offer some excuse for failure in our lives? Some excuse for compromise or giving up of the of the truth or some aspect of the truth. He's going to say I gave you everything. Everything was at your disposal, all the resources and not only that, but myself living at the right hand of God as your high priest and advocate to preserve you and to restore you in the path of faith and service. And it's nice what it says later on in that chapter in second Peter, it says, wherefore I will not be negligent. Put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know them, and be established. Now notice this little expression in the present truth. This book we hold in our hands, brethren, is sufficient guidance and direction even for the year 2000. It's sufficient to guide us in our personal walk. It's sufficient to answer every problem and difficulty and question in the family

circle. It's sufficient guidance and direction for. Go on collectively as the people of God gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus. It's the present proof. Was it relevant in in Peters day? Indeed it was. That's why he was bringing it before them again and again and stirring them up. We've had things before us in these meetings that aren't new to any of us. Perhaps we've heard these things over and over. Some of us by the grace of God from the very days of our childhood. Do we need them again? Yes, because it's the. Truth. This the truth of this book, brethren, is as relevant as when it was penned by inspiration. And so this is a very, very, the very, very practical side of things. We can go on with the resources that we have in Christ provided by God himself and in the truth that is the present up-to-date word of God. Tell us about the picture of the way the Lord appeared to Joshua. When they were going to go in and possess the promised land. And the difference between that and the way he appeared to Moses. When he was going to send him to bring them out of Egypt. You give us a thought, brother. Well, Moses comes first. Both of them are on holy ground because they were in the presence of Jehovah. And Jehovah was showing to Moses. There's a Bush over here. And it's burning. And it doesn't burn up. Telling Moses and telling the children of Israel. That that one was going to be able to carry them through the afflictions of the wilderness. And when they left Egypt, they got in the wilderness and they had the affliction and they were consumed, but they were not burned up. They were burned, but they weren't consumed. You count the number of them. It's almost the same going into the wilderness as coming out of it. Now they were going to get into battle. When they got into the promised land. And when, brethren, Christians get into the possession of the heavenly places and walk in them, the battle gets fiercer and fiercer. How did Jehovah appear to Joshua?

Captain of the Lord's Host. With a drawn sword in his hand. If the battle is the Lord's, it's not ours, it's the Lord. That's important, isn't it, because the real conflict didn't start with Israel until they went to possess the land, which speaks to us in type of all that is ours in Christ. It's true, as you say, they had a skirmish with Amalek in the wilderness and so on, and there were difficulties of the way. But in the measure in which a believer seeks to practically enjoy and walk in the good of all that is his in Christ, the enemy is going to be right there to seek. Us up and rob us of that enjoyment and it's remarkable with Israel when they went in to possess the land as long as they remembered that the captain of the Lords host was going before them to fight the battle they were they had victory over the enemies. Why they went up to Jericho and there was a great victory won. They didn't have to raise a sword, but the the walls came tumbling down and there was a great victory because they went up in the strength of the captain of the Lord's host. But then they said, oh, we'll just go up and we won't even send all our men up to AI because it's just a little city and we won't have a problem. Why look at the great victory we've had here at Jericho. Why they were soundly defeated. God teaching his people that they couldn't possess their inheritance apart from they do it in the realization that they were it was there was one going before to fight for them and brethren, we're no more. We're no match for any situation. We're no match for the enemy, whether it's. City or a big city, but we can go up in the strength of the Lord. We can walk in the practical enjoyment of the precious truth of God. We can walk in the power of the Spirit, not in our own might, but because we have one who's going before, who fights for us. We're no match for the enemy, but the Lord Jesus said that greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Why did the Lord say to Moses at the burning Bush? Remove thy shoes from off thy feet. We know it was holy ground. But why did he say to Joshua? Loose thy shoe from off thy foot. Why feet? With Moses and foot with Joshua. I heard Brother Chuck give a good answer to that. Could I ask him to give it again? I was just going to thank you. Exodus is the book of redemption feat because it gives us our standing before God and Christ. Joshua is every foot that you, every piece of land that you put your foot on should be yours. That's the land of inheritance. So it's foot in Joshua, it's feet in Exodus. I have sort of thought with the Exodus it was the I am. It's holy ground because of who he is in Joshua. It's because of what he's going to do. A little difference there than the I am, isn't it? But it may be. I like your idea too. I'd like to ask us to have a little bit of teaching from 2nd Corinthians 6. About the. Contest the trial. That we have, and our young people pointed out, as to walking with God. And where the power is. And who it is that gives the help? Would somebody read from? Verse 14 to the end of 2nd Corinthians 6. I want to read that to John. 2nd Corinthians chapter 6 and verse 14. Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part has he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God. And as God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.

That the Lord Almighty. Next Verse. Next Verse. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness and fear of God. That wonderful statement. Saith the Lord Almighty. It is unusual. And the contest? The Battle of the Saints of God today. Is probably the hardest battle that God's people have ever had to fight, but who do they have to do it? Like to suggest in the chapter we have here in Galatians 5, perhaps it relates more to the battle in the wilderness that was mentioned between Amalek and Israel where Israel was. Or Joshua was down in the planes fighting Amalek, which is a picture of Satan's efforts on the flesh, and Moses was up on the mountain and he had his hands extended. And as long as his hands were up, Joshua won the battle. And that seems to be what relates to our chapter here is the blesh and the Spirit. Whereas what has been mentioned, the conflict in the land, it's a very real conflict as well. It seems to what relates more to Ephesians, where we have what relates to Canaan. And the conflict is not so much with the flesh there as it is. Spiritual wickedness and high places. It's the devil. That is the source of problem there. And just like to going back to our chapter Galatians 5 there. It's been mentioned already and I think it is perhaps if we could touch on the works of the flesh verse 19 in contrast. With verse 22, the fruit of the Spirit. There's a definite difference. Works is something that involves activity. It's the activity of the flesh and if the flesh is active, this is what is going to be produced. And it's a pretty awful list that is mentioned here, but I think it's important to understand what this list involves and it's sexual immorality to begin with and then it goes on to. Spiritual wickedness in idolatry, In witchcraft. That's that's a very real thing in our society today. I'm shocked. In the stores you see games that are sold right along with good games perhaps, but that lead directly into witchcraft. The Ouija board is on sale there, and parents need to be aware that these things are there. There, and our kids are exposed to it and if they don't realize it. They're going to get sucked into those things, their works of the flesh. And then there's things that have been mentioned. Brother Don mentioned variance. And that's something that is very common in our world today. Just to be different and the spirit of wanting to be different and always saying something different is, is not good. It doesn't mean that we're always exactly think the same thing, but to have that spirit of variance, it's the work of the flesh. But just wanted to draw attention to the verse 22, the fruit of the Spirit. And if you look at the list of nine things that are mentioned, none of them in themselves are actions. They're all passive. They are fruit. They are what is produced. And you might ask, how does a Grapevine produce fruit? Does it have to wave its branches around so that fruit will come on it? No, all that has to do is that the branch has to remain well connected to the main trunk of the vine, and the SAP flowing up through that main trunk down the branch will automatically produce fruit. And sometimes you see people that are laid on beds of sickness absolutely can't get off that bed.

But they produce beautiful fruit, love, joy. Peace. What a beautiful thing. It's the life of Christ in the believer. And as we live in fellowship with the Lord Jesus, those fruits automatically will be produced in the believer.

Lawrenceville Conference: 2000, Galatians 5:1 (5:1)

Reading

Galatians, chapter 5. Stand fast therefore in the liberty were with Christ have made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of *******. Behold, I fall say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I justify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ has become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law. You are fallen from grace, for we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith, For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision avail of anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by law. Ye did run well, Who did hinder you that you should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven, loving of the whole lung. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that you will be none otherwise minded. But he that troubles you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. And I brethren, if I be, yet if I yet be circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offense of the cross seas. I would they were even cut off which trouble you. Poor brethren, you've been called unto liberty only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another for all the laws fulfilled. In one word, even in this thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Or if you buy it and devour one another, take heed that you do not consume to one of another. This I say, then, walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh, For the flesh lusted against the Spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. And these are contrary, the one to the other, so that you cannot do the things that you would. What if you led the Spirit? Ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest. Which are these? Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry. Witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation. Wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such life of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time half the day which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, but the fruit of the Spirit is love. Joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness. Faith, meekness, temperance. Against such there is no law. Neither Christ have crucified the flesh with the affections and loss. We live in the Spirit. Let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. My dad used to say to us, when God speaks, it's time to listen. It is. Speaking to us through this work. This blessed person. We're reading of in the verse one. Christ has made us free. But a place of liberty. We have to be in as those who belong to Christ. We're not in Christ, we're in our sins. Under the terrible reality. The judgment of God. Is hanging over us. Letting Christ. Any man be in Christ is a new creature. He belongs to new creation.

And because of resurrection. Blessing lies ahead for us, for those of us in Christ. Christ has made us free from the law, which we could not keep. Which never could deliver us, but Christ has made us free person. Glorious person who lives, who died in the cross of Calgary for us, but who lives in the glory of Christ Jesus our Lord. What is freedom to a Sinner? You know, I was the Sinner, you were a Sinner, and then we're made free. What is freedom? It's the freedom to do His will. We never had that as a Sinner. We couldn't. Not one thing we did could be according to His will or pleasing to Him. Now, by the grace of God, we have freedom to do that. Not freedom to do our will, but for the first time when you're saved, you can please the Lord. That's the reason you were born. That's first. That's Revelation 411. You were born to give pleasure to the Lord. Wonderful, isn't it? There's purpose in our being here, but you can never achieve that purpose or give one ounce of pleasure to the Lord until you're made free by Christ. Free from Satan's old and from sin can't do one thing. And I was just thinking if you turn to Romans 8, Romans 8 verse 2. 8/2. For the law of the Spirit, capitalist of life in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law of sin and death. They're really not laws like the commandments. Isn't that thought? It's really a natural principle. It's something that can't change. It's something that's absolute. Like the law of Newton. When you throw it up, it'll come down. That's a law and and it can't be changed. God, of course, can change his natural laws, but this is the law of the Spirit. It's always the same. If the Spirit has liberty. He will occupy us with Christ. One way or another. It'll be occupied with Christ to the glory of Him. And if we're not in the Spirit, then it's going to be the law of sin. It can't be anything else. You're going to be controlled by the sin that's in you. Not you in the sin, but the sin that's in you if you're not controlled by the Spirit that's in you. That's freedom. That second verse of Romans 8, it's helpful to read the word law there as constant tendency or a fixed principle, a fixed principle of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that made me free from the fixed principle of sin and of death. It's not referring to the law of Moses there at all. It's referring to the the constant tendency, the principle. Of the Spirit working, I was thinking that in Christianity we have two things that are essential for this liberty that we've been talking about. The one is a new nature which we have in Christ been born again, and the other is the Spirit of God is the power of that nature operating upon it to set us free from sin and death. Romans 7 is a struggle between the the two natures that man has. If he's been born of God and he fails. But in Galatians 5, the struggle is between the flesh and the spirit, and then there's victory because the Spirit is the power for holiness. Tell us, Brother Chuck, what occasion the writing of the Epistle to the Galatians, just to set this whole chapter in perspective, what was the real problem there that the Apostle Paul was having to try and correct? Here was the. The Jews. The Judaizing. Tendency in the early church to put the Gentiles under law. And this, this epistle is written to, to show that we're not under law, we're under grace. Romans 2 also shows that. But this addresses that issue particularly, doesn't it? And the Gentiles were never under law, and the Jews were, and they always thought that they were superior to the Gentiles because they had the law. And.

They certainly had. A revelation from God, and so far as he had given it in the Old Testament, which was very superior to anything that the Gentiles had. But the principle of law, it's not law that's bad. The law is holy and just and good. It's the principle of law that I have to keep it in order to have God's blessing, but I have to keep it to be in in good favor with God. On that principle we're all lost because we have a nature that will not keep it. But now He's given us a new nature and the Spirit as the power operating. Nature to enable us to do what the law said. Everyone of the the 9 commandments that the the one commandment which was ceremonial, which is keep the Sabbath day, but the other 9, they're all found embodied in the New Testament. But we're not under law as a principle, but we're under grace and the Spirit of God is the power operating on that new life so that what the law required is now produced by the Christian. But not because he's under it. But he's under grace. That's exactly what tells us that in order we might fulfill the righteous requirement of the Law, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The law could not produce life. The life Law had been given by which life could be received in Christ died in vain. But what the Law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh God sending His own white Son and the likeness of the flesh of sin. In order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in US, walking not after the principle of the flesh, but according to the Spirit of God. So

what we had in our chapter, if we walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfill flashes lust. Well, Paul had a habit in writing epistles of always commending all he could before he got into the rebuking or the teaching or exhorting. And you take the Corinthians where so much was wrong. I couldn't begin to list it here. It was terrible, let's face it, but it was moral. Moral. You call it. Well, not evil it was. Doctrinal air, air and moral air. Now we've got doctrinal air. Foundation Truth. And Paul didn't commend the Galatians at all. What he did say is I'm afraid of you. That's what he said to them. I'm afraid of you. And what did they do? They said we have to have more than Christ. We have to have something from ourselves. Rather, Paul said, I know that in me, that is my flesh is no good thing. You can't add anything to our standing in Christ, nothing. And that's the problem here. And the basis of this epistle was that Paul was so taken back to what they were listening to from these false teachers. They were, they crept in among them just for that thing, Satan's emissaries. And you know, that's what's going rampant today in this world, Prisoner. It's that very thing. They like to have the flesh fed. They like to feel they're doing something. And once they leave, you take Demas when he left. False. Paul loving the present world, and I believe it was the religious world. I don't think Demas went into this evil world. We don't hear of demons again, ever. We'll see him in glory, but he lost his life for Christ and brethren, that's everything. We have this life yet here and he lost it for Christ. Nothing could be said for demons once he left false doctrine. Bill, you had a comment. Well, only just to have this point, and perhaps I could make it, I trust with humility because I have encountered it so often, particularly in places where I have visited. But I know it's rampant in North America here too. And that is that it doesn't seem that the Galatians had any question as to the salvation purely on the grounds of grace.

They had begun in the spirit. They had recognized clearly that they could do nothing. In terms of their eternal salvation. But then the enemy took that occasion to introduce the principle of law as the rule of life for the Christian. And how easily I say we can all fall into that. How easily the devil introduces that and perhaps allows, well, all right, you had to be saved by grace. You had to come into the good and blessing of the work of Christ purely on that. But now, in order to live the Christian life well, we need some rules and regulations, and we need more, as our brother Bauman has expressed, than Christ. We need more than the Spirit of God and the energy of that new life and. So I would suggest that that is the particular error that's being dealt with here by the Apostle Paul. Is that correct? Yes, it's it's the old error of having confidence in the flesh. And I was just reading last night and it's very important to get this distinction. A lot of people practice self denial in the time of Lent. They'll deny themselves eating certain foods or drinking certain beverages or. Doing certain things that they've been used to doing that are. Not commendable. A lot of self denial, but that's not the same as denying self. It might be helpful just to go back to the first chapter. I'm sorry Chuck, Denying self is a very vast difference from self denial. Self denial is a practice of what the Galatians were doing. They were denying this and that in their life, but not denying self, which is a complete deliverance from self having no confidence in the flesh. And that's that's true Christianity, isn't it? And. The The common thought of man is to have confidence in something my mother used to say to me. Chucky, you mean there's no goodness? I said no, that's not what I mean. That's what God means. That's what God says, that's what's the word of God. I'm giving to you that there's no good in US, and that's the hardest thing for man to get ahold of. That man is bad. That he's a Sinner. Yes, everyone will admit that he's a Sinner, but that he is incorrigibly evil and there's no good in him whatsoever. From the crown of the head of the sole of the foot, there's nothing but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. That he will not admit. I said to my secretary once, if you can't come to the point where you say you are vile, as Joe did, you'll never get there. You'll never, you'll never get saved, She said. I'm not vile. I'll never admit that because man has such a high opinion of himself. He thinks there's something good in him. He admits he's got bad in him, but there's something good in him. And this is the only book that teaches us that truth, that there's nothing good in man. I'm finished that's. Important to see, very important to see because the law was a schoolmaster up until Christ and showed man that he committed sins. And most men will admit that they sinned, they've lied, they've taken the Lord's name in vain. But when the Lord Jesus Christ came, he showed that man was completely lost and helpless, that he was a Sinner. And that's why he says if he had not come, they had not had sin because it showed that not only had man contravened. The law of God, but that he was a helpless Sinner, because here was the perfect perfection. Of in man and they said away with this man, we will not have this man to reign over us. And so this law was a schoolmaster up until up until Christ had showed man, but it could only condemn and when man takes up the laws of moral code, it is it it does give man somewhat to glory because a brother Chuck can say, well, I've kept seven of the commandments and I can only say I've kept 6. And so he can glory. For me he doesn't, but that's the principle of law, that man is better. But it's that wasn't what the law was given for. It was to show. It was to come to condemn. It could never deliver man and it could only show me that I had a nature that was in opposition to God. Because that's what Paul concerning the commandments, outwardly he was blameless, but there was one commandment that said thou shalt not covet, but that couldn't deliver Paul because he saw things that he wanted them, he covered it.

And so the law condemned. And so the whole principle of law was something that could not deliver man, but Christ delivered us because this has been pointed out, were brought into new creation, a new life and a new power of life that desires to please God and that again. And if there's the desire to please God, then against such there's no commandment, there's no law. Seems to me that the book of James answers this first verse pretty well if we read into James. 1. Verse 25. We're talking about liberty here. What is? James 125 whoso looketh into the perfect. Law of Liberty, and continue at therein. He being not a forgetful hearer, notice that. But a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. That is that when we get saved, born again, we have a new nature, the very life and nature of Christ. And that's the only place where we're going to find this liberty. And that new nature does do what Christ wants. It doesn't. That's the only way we'll ever get liberty. Any law that I put on myself is condemned. The flesh can't do it. I thought the idea of the Promise Keepers was so ridiculous. Because God tested man the first time with one law. They couldn't keep one promise, he couldn't keep it, and it's still that way. So there's a little danger of saying they trusted in Christ, but then they want to do something and so they're saved there. Paul says they're not. There's a real problem here. Look at verse 2. Behold, I Paul, say unto you that if you be circumcised, if you put yourself back in place under the law. Doing good Christ prophecy do nothing, nothing, nothing. Listen, there's a lot of professing Christians out there, and we have to take them on that ground. But by their fruit, you know, And if they're not walking in Christ and realizing they can't do anything themselves, there's a question mark, you know, when they set aside Christ. They set aside salvation. When they added to Christ, they say he wasn't enough. Let's don't sugarcoat it with saying they stopped saying what? They're doing something now under the law. I know many are deceived that way. That's true. But there's the warning Paul makes, like he said to the Corinthians, examine yourself if you're even in the faith. I mean, there's a real problem, brethren, and let's watch it ourselves if we. To move about in the flesh, glory in the flesh, we have to wonder, you know. The next chapter here puts it very strongly Galatians 6 and simply to understand. Verse 4. Verse 3. But if poor if a man think think himself to be something when he is nuts EDC with himself. How clear that is, Christianity. We have a new nature and it's a nature that cannot sin. So there was there is no real need for any. Legal system of laws to control it because it cannot sit. But at the moment we take up the law as a principle of life. We are recognizing the existence of something that needs to be controlled and that is the flesh. And immediately when we recognize that, we bring ourselves into *******. That's not Christian position. Christian position is recognizing what God has done now and giving us a

new life, and it does not recognize any longer what we are as men in the flesh. We are gone before God, we're dead, we're buried, and that's gone completely gone before the eye of God. What God recognizes is what's new, and I think it's important for young people to.

Otherwise, when we speak about liberty that we're talking about the new nature. It's liberty for the new nature to express itself. Look at down the chapter to verse 13. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. In other words, liberty is not to give occasion to the flesh. That's the way it's interpreted. Many times remember in South America and brother Eric Smith was down there. He talked about the question that was raised. Well, if you don't have to keep the law, then you can do just anything you like. And the answer was given, if you're a real believer, you wouldn't want to do just anything you like. You would want to do what pleases God, and that's real liberty. That's what we're talking about. There's a new motive in Christianity as well, and that's brought out here, and that motive is love, because in the Old Testament they kept the law not generally out of the motive of love. That's not to say there weren't those whose hearts truly responded to Jehovah. That's true, David said on one occasion, I love the Lord. But it summed up perhaps in the verse that says who through fear of death. Were their whole lifetime subject to *******? Why did a man not go out and pick up sticks on the Sabbath day? Why did he carry out certain rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic Law? It was generally because of fear. There were stiff penalties if a man broke the law and didn't, did or didn't do certain things on certain days. But brethren, is that the motive in Christianity? No. The Lord Jesus said if a man loved me, he will keep my commandments. He said my commandments are not grievous because when the heart is engaged, it's not that there's a need for. Restraint, but love. Love reaches out. It's just that you get it again in John 10 where you have in the Old Testament there was a fold because when you think of a fool, you think of restraint. You see sheep and a sheep fall and there's a restraint around them. There's a wall or a hedge, and that hedge keeps those sheep together in their proper order in place. But the Lord Jesus said there shall be 1 shepherd and notice. Darby's translation in that verse not one fold. There shall be one flock, because now there's a person and our hearts go out to that person. And what constrains us to follow him? The love of Christ constraineth us, not because we're under certain creeds or laws or whatever, but because our hearts go out to that one. And when our hearts go out to a person, then it's not hard to please that person. I'd like to just say this too, not to go back, but I think it's. To realize that the law in the Old Testament was never given as a passport to heaven. If man could keep the law, which of course he never did, but if he could have kept it. He was promised endless life on this earth, not as a ticket to get to heaven. And how misconstrued that has become people putting people under trying to put people under the law to get to heaven. And if you just allow me to go back to the first chapter for. I think it kind of ties up what Bill said and what Chuck has said and others in connection with the context of the this writing. Chapter 1 and verse 6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel which is not another. Once you notice that expression because the Gospels good news. Isn't it good news to be able to tell lost sinners that while it's true they can't or don't have to keep the law, yet they can come by simple faith in the Lord Jesus owning their need? Receive full and abundant burden, receive the gift of God, which is eternal life. They're indwelt by the Holy Spirit. That's the good news of the gospel. But Paul said you've gone back to something that isn't another gospel because it's not good news to tell people that now they're saved by the grace of God. They have to keep the law, shall I say it, to maintain their salvation. And that's really, I believe the thought here, brother, it's not.

Not the law to get our salvation. They understood the grace of Christ that had reached out to them in their need, but it's it's the law to maintain their salvation. And the reason I bring that up is because our young people today as they go to school and operate in this world, they are bombarded with this kind of doctrine that yes, we're saved by the grace of God, but now we have to maintain some certain level of moral level in our lives to. Our salvation Now, perhaps in our grandfather's day they preach the gospel of works to obtain salvation, but I don't think that's so much the case anymore because most people just don't care. My grandfather's generation, they had some concept about and concern about getting to heaven, albeit maybe a misconstrued idea about being how to get their work through the law or whatever. People don't care today. They're so indifferent they're just going on to a lost eternity without any thought. So the enemy comes along and he says, well, you don't need the law to get your salvation, but you need it to keep it. Now both are wrong and there's no liberty in this where that's not that's not liberty to think that we have to be under some kind of. Set of code of rules like that to maintain our salvation know by grace are you saved through faith and not not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. And not only that, it's grace wherein we stand. Are we going to be preserved to the end? Yes. Everyone of us who know Christ as our Savior are going to be in glory. Why? Because we maintain some rule of life or moral standard in our lives. No, it's all going to be based on the work of Calgary. And so the redeemed gathered around the land, they sing only of the blood of Christ, and they're occupied with the Lamb freshly slain. No, let's remember in verse four of our chapter, Christ has become of no effect under you. This is really positive. Look at mark 713. Mark 713. I'm sorry. Yeah, that's it. Verse 7 I'll be it. In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines that commandment of men, For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men, and now look at versa 13. Making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition. Which you have delivered. You know it's much worse in God's sight for those preaching and teaching this out in Christendom because they're leading them astray and they're not bringing salvation to them. Even the ones that come in for the first time in some edifice out there, they don't get this. What we have foundation, truth. This is our standing brethren. That can't change. They don't preach that they they really give this and they're more responsible. They make it a lie, make the truth a lie and notice the verse seven. He did run well. That's right. They started with a good perfection. We hope it was real. Paul knew some were real, but they're being tempted to to let the flesh work. He did run well. Who did hinder you that he should not obey the truth? And brethren, that's the the key, the truth. All of them out there are preaching the Word of God, one translation or another man's thought of what God meant when he wrote it. Truth is the Spirit of God teaching the church what the word of God is according to God. And that's what we want. And they didn't obey the truth. And I'll tell you, they have itching ears. And there's many that let us pray like that. And Satan's a deceiver. Just about 10 years. Ago, you know what happened, and I never heard such words as those that left. We've never been so free. We've never had such liberty. Can you imagine Satan's trickery? What freedom did they have now? Flesh to do what they like? Brethren, this is serious. And let's remember, this is our standing Christ and the truth. And that's it. So grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. That's right down to the root of it.

Are we not guilty, though, brethren, of putting ourselves under law? Oftentimes we have this law. Don't do this, don't do that. And it's the law of brethren or the law of this group. And when those get out of that. And say now we're free. We're free from that ******* that we were in. Are we not doing what we're not doing because it would, it would go against the group I'm with. It's it's not according to their doctrine or because it would displease him. And are we following him? Are we following the Lord whether we're whether we're in this ecclesiastical group or this one? If we're following the Lord in our life, that's going to settle every question. It's not what group we're in and I think that's behind some of that that you were talking about. A you know, we always like to point the finger at the other person. They're the one that's at fault. But what about me? How much legalism has been in me? And as I look back over my early days, a lot of zeal and a lot of legalism and I'm guilty of. Of

that very thing. And that drives people away, doesn't it? So we have to search our own hearts, consciences. Is, is the principle of the assembly there where you are locally? Is it 1 where you kind of you kind of as you walk in, you kind of get shivered up because you're afraid you're going to do something wrong that doesn't meet with the approval of the group or are you there in in a happy liberty? Where you're enjoying Christ and it's quite different and I know as I visit different places I can feel the atmosphere is different. Here than it is over here and so we have to search our own conscience. I wanted to ask Jim. Jim, you said no ones ever kept the law. How do you know that? Well, they would have lived endless endlessly on this earth, is the answer. They've all died. Well, I don't want to get the impression, especially the young people, that if you let the flesh act, if the flesh acts in you, you're not saved. That isn't what we're getting at at all. What rules your life? What? What is your practice? What is customary with you? That's your walk now. We all let the flesh act. Don't advocate ourselves about that. You know, I pride myself. I don't send Christmas cards, but I can't wait to get a hold of the leaven sheet in the morning. And never I I love to read the paper. That's just flesh. I may break myself someday, or the Lord will do it for me. But we all let flesh act. Let's face it. But that isn't what we're talking about. What's the paramount thing in your life? That's it. And that isn't the paramount thing in my life. It's Christ, and you know, we shouldn't allow flesh to act. I'm not saying that either. But don't let any of you who are saved think that you're not saved because you got their warfare, which we're going to read about. The flesh works against the Spirit, and the Spirit warth against the flesh. And many times I get to the dessert table and Satan wins. That's the flesh. Yeah, I can't. I can't do it anymore. I saw a doctor two days before getting here. He says you're fat. I'm under a raw rule now. I can't take that now. So Christ won there. But we have flesh in us. Let's don't deny it. But it doesn't mean you're not saved. We're not talking that way. Well, nature does have a place though, doesn't it? Scripture doesn't say that we're dead to nature. We should reckon ourselves as dead unto sin. But nature does have a place, but it needs to be guarded, or it can become an occasion for the flesh, right? Let's go back to the third verse to take up what Brother Chuck was saying about legality. He said in the Philippians, beware of the concision. And perhaps that's a more precise term than legal because it describes really what is happening. And I think if we understand the truth of the third verse, we'll understand what the concision is with the law. It's all or nothing. It's not 99.9%, it's all or nothing. And if we take up with the principle of law, we destroy the.

Authority because that's what he's saying and if we put ourselves under law, we are debtor to the whole law. So he's standing in the gas Bay there they were to keep within their own gate for themselves and the stranger and then there was the ties for the Levites. He said don't tell my pastor that that's 30% not ten but but I'm just saying that to show if you get taken up with to illustrate the point if you get taken up with the law, you're. Do the whole thing. And the reason that we see in these Christian lands that it's disintegrated into lasciviousness is because man has destroyed the authority of God's word by taking up with it as a principle. And so the fourth verse says Christ has become of no effect because as a lost Sinner the law condemned me because I wanted to steal. And the law said, thou shalt not steal. It said to me, thou shalt not covet. And I had a nature. To covet. But Christ died for sinners and he gave us a new life that doesn't want to steal and doesn't want to speak about the things of God in a vain way that doesn't want other people's things. It wants to give. That's the nature we've received. So why would God give us Christ if this law was going to help us? So he gave us the nature. And so that's why it's saying Christ has become of no effect. Why would God give us the very life of Christ? When Christ, who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory. A life that say, I do always those things that please my Father. Why would he give us a life like that? If we're to go back to a set of rules, we like rules because usually we pick the rules we can keep. You know, we usually pick the rules we can keep and we glory in those. And as our brother was saying, perhaps we mark out certain things, and if you do certain things like that, you're going to be kept in good standing with the brethren. There's a danger of that, but we need to live to please Christ, and there needs to be that atmosphere in the assembly and the fear of God and the assembly that when we come there that it's the authority of God's Word and that there's a life to please Christ. And that's what we did. Why he gave, why Christ died is because there was no other remedy other than the death and resurrection of Christ for sinners, because we had a nature that was opposed to God here and unsuited for heaven. According to Nature, I look at two things that we've been talking about here. And our brother has mentioned one thing about that which sets us free, which is the truth. Could we just go back? Because we all want to be free, we all want to be liberated. And I'd like to read from John's Gospel, chapter 8. The Gospel of John, chapter 8. And verse 32. I have in my hand something. It's the word of God. And I'm told in verse 32 The. John 8 And ye shall know the truth. And the truth shall make you free. Many years ago. As in Toronto and a brother there that lived past the 100 bar. And I quoted this first to him. He was in the nursing home. He shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. He came back with this verse, which is verse 36. If the Son if, if, if the Son therefore shall make you free, he shall be free indeed. What comes between those two verses? Reverse the end of verse 34. I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin, So every one of us in this room. We want to come under *******. We allow our own nature, we allow that which is to be dead to direct us, whether it's in lust or whatever. He that committed sin becomes a servant of sin. It happens and it can happen in the child of God. I believe it'd be better, practices said.

I don't think commit is right because I commit sin and I'm not a servant of Satan. Is that right? I do believe it'd be better to get that thought across to the young people special practices, but what I'm speaking about is what delivers us from self. You know, I like to live for self. I'm selfish, naturally. I have that nature. But I can get deliverance from that. By doing that which is right in the eyes of God. And God is light. And God, because he's like, he reveals what I am. That God is love. And love delivers me from selfishness. So the truth delivers me from the darkness and the darkness and ideas of men. And Christ makes me free. What a blessed thing to walk in communion with a person who never changes. He lives, He delivers. We've experienced that. Christ will set us free. If we allow the flesh to act, brethren, the law will condemn the acting of our flesh. And I think we need to recognize that, just not that we are free to make a few mistakes here and there. And because we're not under law, but the moment I allow flesh to act, the law condemns that. And I think that is what we have in First Timothy chapter 1. Is helpful to see it there is a lawful use of the law. We know that the law is good if a man used it lawfully. How is it to be used lawfully, Not for the righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly, for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murders of mothers, for manslaughters, for ********** for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men Steelers, for liars, for perjured persons. There be anything, any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God just committed to my trust. So there is a lawful use, and I think it acts on flesh and it flesh is allowed to act. What is going to bring that simple act to an end? It's the law that condemns it. And what does it condemn it to? Death and when death comes in it ceases to act and that's where we start in Christianity and recognizing that we're completely guilty and we come to God now on a completely new basis, on the basis of a new birth in God's family, a new life completely. So it's there is a lawful use of it and we must recognize that the. The Word of God, it's not something we're under, but it's to bring to an end that activity of what is the flesh, so that death can put an end to it. And it has in the work of Christ, brethren, but we have to recall and remember each one of us, if we're saved, are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God. And the Holy Spirit of God, his first office with one who's saved, is to bring Christ to him. We're already brought to Christ, but to bring Christ to him for the Sinner, his office is to bring him to Christ. But the Spirit of God will never be inactive. And if we let the flesh act, we're out of communion with

God. We're out of communion with the Lord. Even the Spirit of God then is not inactive. He'll wrap on your conscience until you allow him again to bring Christ to your hearts and you're back in fellowship or. But let's remember the Spirit of God now, unless your conscience becomes seared, that's the real thing that brings you back, the Spirit of God. You can have a seared conscience. The law won't bring me back. You know, I know it'll condemn me. I mean, you shall not steal. I know that. And but that isn't the thing that brings me back to Christ. It's the Spirit of God in me that'll bring me back. Always.

I'd like to comment on what you said, Brother John from John 10, because it's really the secret of liberty and it really shows us what is the use of the word of God, the whole word of God. Brother Bob referred to the law. She shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. Is that we now have a nature that delights to please God. We have a power for that nature. The Spirit of God. But now we need intelligence for that nature, and we get it from the word of God. And it's in becoming acquainted with the truth of God that we find this liberty as a Christian. So we face many situations in life and we don't know what to do. There's a desire to please the Lord. We have the power to please the Lord, but we don't know what to do. And so you open the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation, and you find principles that are going to help you and that are going to leave you free to serve the Lord and to please the Lord. So under the law, there was an unintelligent service. They knew that if they had a vessel in a place where there was leprosy, and it was. That the vessel was defiled and so they were to put a tight covering on it and it wasn't to file. But now we have a reasonable or an intelligent service and so we can get help from that. And we say the children, we send the children, maybe some of us off to public schools and there's leprous things there. We put a tight covering on the word of God and they hear these things at school and they recognize them from the time. To be nonsense. And so we get help. It set them free. They come, they go to school and they see they're trying to get them to go along with this and with that and the other thing. And we open the pages of God's word and they see what God thinks about some of these gross and awful things. People said the book of the Old Testament wasn't suitable to read the children because it mentioned such vile things, but they read about these things. In the word of God, and they're protected from them. The world protects them by putting warnings up everywhere. Warnings in the bathroom, warnings on the highway, warnings everywhere. The kids, we open up the Word of God and they find out about these things and they're protected. And so it sets them free because now they can live to please the Lord. We wonder what to do in a situation and we get down before the Lord about it and we open up the pages of God's Word. We find the truth of God and it tells us what we should do when we're free. We're not in ******* to a set of rules. Well, I'm not going to do that because brethren don't like it. As Brother Chuck was saying, but we see a principle in the Word of God. That would guide us according to God, and if we're all LED of the Spirit, He's not going to lead us in a way that's contrary to each other. We're going to be able to go on in communion with each other. So that's the activity of the truth. And his brother Bob said there may be a time when the law has to come and it has to condemn what I'm doing. But in a larger sense, going back to what brother John, in quoting John 10, is that by acquainting ourselves with the truth of God, we're set free to. Lord, you have the nature, we have the power, and now we have the intelligence by the Word of God to know what we should do and how we should do it to the finest details. And that's why we have the Old Testament and the fine little pictures of every little detail. We won't face a situation in life that that the Word of God does not meet. Verse 8 In our portion This persuasion cometh not of him. That calleth you who called you? Of course it was God through the Holy Spirit. But what's he talking about? Persuasion. He's talking about those Jewish ones who crept in among them and are giving them this false doctrine. And he did say in that first chapter, we didn't go far enough, but no use going any further if any man or even an Angel. Preach another gospel to you. Let him be accursed. Pretty strong, isn't it? Let him be accursed. But but here it says this persuasion. They were being persuaded that it isn't Christ alone cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. Now we're into assembly. Truth, aren't we? Because Paul is reading to an assembly, he's writing to an assembly. And brethren, we're all lungs. Each assembly can be leavened. Let's don't ever forget it. We have a responsibility, both moral responsibility and doctrinal, and I think the doctrinal is the more important. Believe it or not, we can't neglect either.

But the doctrinal is this chapter is this book And didn't he say? In verse 10. No. Verse 11 of chapter 6. You see how large a letter I've written unto you with my own hand? That was not the practice of Paul. Paul put the last bit of it in his hand, so he sealed it that it's his letter. But he didn't write them, He dictated them. But here in his own hands, there's only two epistles. That were written in his own hand. Philemon and Galatians and Philemon because. It was so important that he wanted that personal touch with the slave owner when he sent a believer back who once was his slave. But here it's so important because it's doctrinal air and brethren, it can leaven the whole lump. That's the whole assembly. And let's don't neglect these precious truths that are coming out here.

Fruit of the Spirit: August 2024, Faith Which Worketh by Love (5:6)

The world cast out the Son of God in the day of His tender, personal diligent love, waiting, as He was, on all the need and sorrow that were around Him. For His love they were His enemies. They also took the occasion which His humiliation afforded them, (a humiliation assumed for the salvation of sinners,) to cast reproach and indignity upon Him. “When He came,” as another has said, “to reconcile, to display, the tenderness of His sympathetic love, then nothing would do but they must get rid of God. When He comes into the very midst of the sufferings and woes of a world lying in wickedness, they refuse to have Him. They used the opportunity of His humiliation to heap indignity and scorn upon Him.”

Since this was so with the children of men, and this was what the Lord of life and glory had to find in the world, the faith which apprehended Him was the more grateful to Him. And we have good reason to know that it was so — blessed be His name. He not only relieved the need that was brought to him, but He took delight in the faith that brought it.

Strong Faith – Weak Faith

That faith, however, distinguished itself differently. It worked by different passions of the soul. It worked at times, I may say, as by a spirit of reverence, at times as by a spirit of liberty. For it was not only that the Lord met instances of strong faith and of weak faith; He met faith having very different characteristics in its approaches and appeals to Him.

For instance, that faith was forward in the company that brought their palsied friend to Him; it was reserved in the woman who touched Him in the crowd. In Bartimaeus, it was marked by a strong, unquestioning apprehension of grace; in the centurion it worked by a worshipping

apprehension of His personal glory. Bartimaeus knew Him in the grace of the Son of David, who was to make the lame to walk, and the blind to see; he would cry, and cry again, and make his sorrow to utter itself aloud in the ear of Jesus, in spite of the multitude. The centurion, on the other hand, judged himself unworthy to approach Him, and his house unworthy to receive Him; and would scarcely allow his sorrow to be heard above the measure which necessity put upon it.

Diversity of Style

Here surely was a difference. The one was all forwardness, knowing the grace of Christ; the other all reverence and reserve, knowing His personal glory. And yet we cannot say which was the more acceptable to Him. Each of them, with like sureness and readiness, gets the blessing he needed; and evident it is, from the whole style of the narratives, that He was refreshed by the faith of each, though it made its approach and appeal in so different a spirit.

And we see this diversity among the saints now. The spirit of reverence, like the centurion's reserve, prevails in some, the spirit of liberty, like the boldness of Bartimaeus, in others. We, through infirmity, may misunderstand one another because of such differences, but happy is it to see that the Lord, after this manner, can and does appreciate each and all.

Moved With Fear

But if faith thus worked in the presence of Christ in His day, it had worked by other passions of the soul before that day. "By faith Noah ... moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house" (Heb. 11:7). The word to which Noah listened and which he received was such as naturally awakened fear. Faith in it worked by fear: it brought solemn tidings to his ear, and fear of God and of His word was the fruit of faith. Rahab tells the spies of Joshua that what her nation had heard of the doings of the God of Israel for His people had caused a panic, and she, believing the tidings, received the spies. This was another instance of faith working by fear.

All this is so. A spirit of reverence, a spirit of liberty, fear, and other passions may be the form of that power in the soul which faith works by. But the apostle speaks to us of love, as being the due power by which it now works. As he says, "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love."

Confidence and Liberty

If faith, at this day, takes up fear, it has taken up its wrong instrument. The Lord can comfort the feeble mind, and meet the tremblings and uncertainties of the heart, but let us confess them as unworthy of His grace in Christ Jesus. He would be sullying the brightness of His own way, if He could admit that faith in Him could work by fear. When God is apprehended, as His glory shines in the face of Jesus Christ, He must inspire confidence and liberty, and that is faith working by love. The Epistle to the Galatians reads for us the title of faith to work in this way. The Son of God has borne the curse of the law that we might get the blessing of God. The Son of God was made under the law, that we might be brought from under it into the adoption and liberty of children. Confidence, liberty, the conscience and heart at ease, love answering love, must be the fruit of faith in such facts as these. It is, therefore, but the conclusion of all this to say, that "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6).

Blessedness and Religiousness

But I must add a little on the fruit both in the soul and in the life of this fine principle, this "faith which worketh by love." And here I say, what a difference between blessedness and religiousness! Sadly, the Galatians had passed from the first to the second. Sad, dishonorable journey! In their first estate, they would have plucked out their eyes for Paul, the witness and minister of Christ among them, just because they were so happy in Christ. In their second estate, Paul stands in doubt of them, and fears they might, through biting and devouring, go on to consume one another. They had become much more religious than when he had known them before; but they had lost their blessedness. They were observing days and months and times and years, but where were the eyes that were once ready to be plucked out for others?

What a difference! And so it is today. We know souls who are in the sweet personal enjoyment of Christ, and by which they gain a state of strength and victory. Yet the whole scene around us bears witness to the easy natural combination of religiousness and worldliness; of the observance of ordinances, and yet of full subjection to the course of this present evil world.

Faith that Worketh by Love

Now, "faith that worketh by love" is the spring or parent of this state of "blessedness," of which we are speaking, and which the apostle describes in Gal. 4:15, "Where is then the blessedness ye spoke of? for I bare you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me."

The apostle himself, as the same epistle shows us, had experienced this same blessedness. When he first received the gospel, he went down to Arabia. He did not need Jerusalem or apostles, or anything that all could do for him or give him. He had his treasure with him; the Son was revealed in him. So afterward at Antioch, he did not fear. Peter, the fellow creature, however honored or above him in some sense, did not command him; his happy spirit was feeding on the love of the Son of God. In keeping with this happy enjoyment of Christ's love, love, as the first "fruit of the Spirit" listed in chapter 5, was Paul's response. These are touches of the spirit of the apostle, indicating indeed that state of "blessedness" which waits on the "faith that worketh by love."

The Hebrew saints give us another sample of the same. In the day of their illumination or quickening, they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and became the willing companions of them who suffered and were reproached for Christ's sake. The church at Jerusalem in Acts 2 shows us the same. The saints there were together and had all things common. No man called anything he had his own. They ate their bread with gladness, praising God. And so the eunuch in Acts 8. He went on his way rejoicing, able to lose Philip, because he had found Christ. Surely these knew the "blessedness" of the "faith that worketh by love." But time would fail us to tell of all such cases then those days, and now in our days — blessed be God for it!

Girdle of Truth, Vol. 3 (adapted)

[Probable author J. G. Bellett]

Fruit of the Spirit: August 2024, Flesh and Spirit (5:13-18)

## Flesh and Spirit

Reflections on Galatians 5:13-18

Up to this point in the book of Galatians, the Apostle has been insisting on the absolute freedom of the believer from the law in connection with his relationship to God. Now he shows that it is in no way the rule of the Christian's practical life and walk. Law has no place with the believer either for justification or for sanctification. This is of very great importance to understand. Many earnest souls are confused and in error here. Quite a few in Christendom would strongly repudiate (and very rightly) the law as a means of justification before God, asserting that faith in Christ and His accomplished work can alone avail. But the same persons, in many cases, quite believe that the Christian should take up the law as a rule of godliness. This is a grave mistake, and its results lower the proper standard of Christianity.

Law was given to men in the flesh to test flesh, but the believer is not in the flesh (though the flesh be in him) but in the Spirit. Heavenly men need a different and higher standard, and this we shall find in the passage now before us.

### Liberty

"Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Gal. 5:13-15). The Galatians sought power against the flesh to keep it down, and they had turned to the law for it. But with what success? What was the practical outcome? Such a low and contentious condition that the very law condemned them, for if it did not teach men to serve one another in love as Christ, the law said at least "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This the Galatians were evidently not doing, but the opposite; hence the Apostle's earnest word of warning. As Romans 7 shows, law, instead of subduing flesh, provokes it and draws out all its badness. The law is thus the strength of sin, not of holiness, though in itself holy and just and good (Rom. 7:7-13).

Where then could the Galatians, or where can the Christian now, find power? "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit and ye shall no way fulfill flesh's lust. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these things are opposite one to the other, that ye should not do those things which ye desire" (Gal. 5:16-17 JND). Here is the secret of power. The believer now receives from God the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is one of the great characteristic blessings of Christianity, the value and importance of which no one can duly estimate. And having given the Spirit to us, God looks to us to walk in the Spirit. This is to allow Him to dwell in us ungrieved that He may be free to act and carry on His gracious work of conforming us to the image of Christ in glory. If this is true of us, if we not only live in the Spirit but walk in the Spirit, flesh does not act; its lusts are not fulfilled. We do not engage in the works of the flesh, but rather produce the fruit of the Spirit.

### The Flesh

It is important to see that the Apostle regards both as existing within the believer. It is quite a mistaken notion that flesh has been removed, though some have been betrayed into this fallacy. It is equally false that it is in any way improved. It is incurably and hopelessly evil, and it abides until the change at the Lord's return. Its natural tendencies remain unaltered. It desires even to gain power over the believer and to lead him into sin and folly, as the Spirit, on the other hand, desires to lead in the ways of holiness and truth. But faith holds flesh for dead and refuses to give it sanction or to lend an ear to its suggestion, and for this the indwelling Spirit is divine power.

In verse 17, it should read "may not" or "should not," instead of "cannot." This mistaken reading in our KJV perverts entirely the meaning of the passage. Many suppose the teaching in this place to be substantially the same as in Romans 7, whereas, in fact, it is the direct opposite. In Romans 7 we have the struggles of a quickened soul who has no knowledge of deliverance, and there "cannot" is quite correct. When good is desired, evil is found to be present and all-powerful. But this is not the teaching of Galatians 5. Here the Apostle is showing the power which the believer really possesses. We have the Holy Spirit of God, and He acts within us in order that we may not do the things that we would.

This removes all necessity for the law as regards those who are in Christ Jesus. "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (Gal. 5:18). It is impossible to be under the power of two principles. We do not need two guides at one time. It is characteristic of the believer that he is led of the Spirit; to such the law has nothing to say. It is thus altogether unintelligent to place believers under law in any shape. Those who do so understand neither what they say nor whereof they affirm. It was not made for the righteous but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane (1 Tim. 1:7-10). God holds the believer righteous through the death and resurrection of Christ. All such have the Spirit as power, and Christ as life and object.

Bible Treasury, Vol. N1

The Evangelist: Volume 6 (1872), "The Works of the Flesh." (5:19-21)

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditious, heresies, envying’s, murders, drunkenness, revelling’s, and such like: 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.”— Galatians 5:19-21.

How few think that those who are practicing “the works of the flesh,” whether looked at in their coarse, immoral character—such as drunkenness, and the like—or in their more quiet and refined activities—as idolatry, emulations, and heresies—are both alike exposed to the solemn doom pronounced in the divine verdict, “shall not inherit the kingdom of God!” Such conduct shows that the hearts of those who walk in these ways are ignorant of themselves, and know not God and the Saviour whom He hath sent. They are simply in their natural state; and “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.” (1 Corinthians 2:14.) Vain, indeed, is it to cultivate such a corrupt tree, which can only bring forth corrupt fruit. A new life, a new nature, is what the natural man wants, however refined he may be, in order to “bring forth fruit unto God.” “The works of the flesh” are one thing, “the fruit of the Spirit” another. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” A believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is born of the Spirit; for “except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” How true it is, then, that “that which is born of the flesh is flesh,” can be never better than flesh, and can only do “the works of the flesh;” concerning which it is written, “that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” How solemn and decisive this is! And yet how suitably it links itself with another inspired declaration, that “they which are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Romans 8:8.) It does not say that they that are in the flesh cannot be polite, virtuous, moral, or practice outward proprieties so as to gain the esteem of men; but that such, do what they will, “cannot please God.” How sweeping is this divine statement! How clearly it shows that the natural man, whether educated or uneducated, religious or irreligious, needs life, a new nature, to be born of God, in order to bring forth fruit—to do works which can please God. For this it was that God sent His Son, not to improve man’s evil nature, but to give life—eternal life. “I am come,” said He, “that they might have life.” It is life that the natural man needs; and we have life through, or in, our Lord Jesus Christ. God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. “He that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Accordingly, those who are born of God know the inward conflict of “the flesh” and “the Spirit.” Hence we are told in this same chapter, “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,” or, that ye should not do these things that ye desire. It is blessed to know the Son of God crucified, risen, and ascended, as the source of spiritual life, and, while abandoning all hope of improving man’s fallen nature, look to Him by faith, and receive the gift of eternal life, without which no one can see or enter into the kingdom of God.

A lady told us that while cultivating morality in herself, and seeking as much of the quiet, respectable pleasures of life as she wished, her conscience was arrested, and her heart bowed down before God, by the words of Scripture, “She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.” (1 Timothy 5:6.) “Is it possible,” said she within herself, “that I who am so moral, so virtuous, so careful in my ways, can be dead—dead before God?” She had no rest until she obtained life—risen life, everlasting life—through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another says, she resolved every now and then to live better, be better, be more religious; to mourn more over her sins, live more systematically religious, arrange in her purpose a course of life for almost every hour. But all constantly broke down. Every resolution failed. All her plans proved useless; until at last, burdened with sin and guilt, she was compelled to look up to the Lord Jesus Christ for peace and reconciliation to God through His death, and now she knows that she has eternal life.

Another says: “The first twenty-five years of my life I lived only for this world, joining in all the pleasures and amusements of fashionable society, and was altogether forgetful of God. To ease my conscience, however, I used to say my prayers night and morning; but I never read the Bible, and whenever a serious thought of the future flashed across my mind, I used to console myself with the idea that there was plenty of time for that yet. I was still young and strong. I entertained the hope that after having had my ‘fling,’ and become tired of this world’s pleasures, I should then commence to lead such a steady and correct life as in the end to obtain an entrance into the kingdom of God.

“Of the real simplicity and plain truths of the gospel I had no clear idea. No Christian friend had ever spoken out plainly to me upon the subject of my salvation. On one occasion, when ill, I was visited by one making a high profession of religion; but his inquiries did not go beyond the state of my bodily health. His conversation turned on the topics of the day, and the prevailing amusements of the place we were quartered in. I have often regretted that not a single one of my numerous Christian friends ever opened his lips to warn me as to the awful termination of the ungodly course which I was pursuing.

“One day, whilst in this state, a friend said to me, ‘Come with me to church this evening, and you will hear a good sermon from the rector of the adjoining parish.’ I went out of curiosity, and paid little or no attention to what was being said, until my attention was arrested by the preacher reading out from the fifth chapter of Galatians these words, Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying’s, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.’ I have no doubt I had often heard them before; but when at the conclusion of this fearful catalog of sins, many of which I knew I was indulging in, he read this awful sentence, ‘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,’ I felt I could go on no longer. I felt I must give them up, or there would be no hope for me. My mind was deeply impressed with what I heard. I came home changed in my views and feelings; for the Holy Spirit not only brought me under deep conviction of my sinfulness in God’s sight, but also showed me that the perfect righteousness which as a sinner I needed was only to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. I also felt that the Lord alone could give me strength, and sustain me in the narrow path which leads to everlasting life.

“Still, for another month or so I continued joining in balls, operas, concerts, and such like amusements; but finding I had lost all relish for them, I gave them up entirely, and sought the society of those who had renounced the deceitful vanities of the world, and who were living for those glorious realities which are the eternal portion of all who follow Christ here below.

“This change took place a short time before the extraordinary awakening which the Spirit of God has recently produced in various parts of the globe. Prior to that awakening of the Church of God, Christians, as far as I had seen, seldom, if ever, spoke out faithfully and boldly to those around them respecting their personal salvation. Plain speaking and earnest expostulation were not the fashion. Books may have been lent, and tracts given; religious conversation, if on general subjects, may have been frequent; but if Christians were assured of their own salvation,

there was a shameful and inconsistent indifference about the salvation of others. There was a strange shrinking from coming to close quarters, and from dealing faithfully and personally with others as to whether they were on the road to heaven or hell

“I have been much struck with the change which took place in many of my friends who visited the north of Ireland, where the power of the Spirit was so largely and blessedly manifested. They returned altered in there sentiments and their habits. Their faith and assurance of their own salvation were greatly strengthened. They were much bolder in speaking to all they met concerning that present peace and future happiness which are to be found only in Christ Jesus. I give an illustration.

“One Sunday I was walking with Captain—and a friend of his, shortly after the former had returned from Ireland, when we stopped and conversed with a poor old woman in the street about her soul. She said in a very dubious tone, she hoped she was in the right way. ‘Only hope!’ said my friend, to my astonishment; ‘that is scarcely enough. You ought to be sure.’ I reproved him, and called him presumptuous. He immediately opened his Bible, and showed me John 3:36— ‘He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life;’ and his friend to whom I referred took precisely the same view. This was all new to me. I knew I was a believer; but I did not feel or like to say I was saved. I went home, thinking seriously over it. I made it the subject of earnest prayer, and about a fortnight afterward, when speaking to one apparently unconverted about the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus, my own safety in Christ seemed to flash upon my mind, and I was enabled to rejoice much in the strength of my salvation.

“Still, I was ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and dared not openly to confess Him, or indeed to make any open profession even of religion. If any friend came into the room whilst I was reading my Bible, I immediately hid it under the table.

“One fine spring morning very early I was sitting in my room, with my window open, reading God’s word, when a friend of mine, who was taking a morning walk, stood up at my window, and looking in called out, ‘Halloo! what are you up to?’ I got red in the face, and said, ‘Reading my Bible.’ ‘Very good,’ he answered; ‘I don’t mind you. I like your religion. You are not one of those fellows who are always pushing it down people’s throats. You keep it to yourself. Good-bye.’ So saying, he went away.

“Thus left, I was led to ponder over this commendation of my style of religion. I thought within myself, ‘Who is that man serving? Not the Lord Jesus Christ. His life gives no evidence of it. Then that word of commendation cannot come from God. It must be of Satan.’ Reasoning in this way, I determined no longer to merit such praise; and from that time, by prayer, grace and strength have been given to me to acknowledge Christ before men. And when the devil was cast out ‘the dumb spake, and the multitudes marveled.’” (Matthew 9:33.)

How blessed it is to “have peace with God;” to be “reconciled to God by the death of His Son;” to know Him “in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace;” to be consciously united “to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God!” How easy, and how happy, then, it is to confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus; to confess Him before men, who loveth us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood!

Edification: Volume 4, "Fallen from Grace." (5:4)

(From notes of an address).

THERE is no salvation at all apart from the Grace of God. This being so, grace is a thing to which we all are indebted, and yet so few of us seem to really understand its wonderful character.

The word, grace, is used with at least two shades of meaning in Scripture. It signifies, firstly, a principle of blessing opposed to law: secondly, a position of favor before God, into which we are introduced by the Lord Jesus on the ground of His work, when we believe.

There are a number of contrasts found in Scripture, such as Christ and Satan, who are always opposed the one to the other; as also the Spirit and the flesh. Law and grace furnish us with a contrast of this sort, and it is the confounding of these two which plunges so many into distress. So let us point out some of the differences between them.

Law makes demands upon us, whereas grace gives to us.

Law aims at producing goodness from us; grace brings goodness to us.

Law says, love God: grace says, God loves us.

Law says, do and live: grace says, live and do.

Law condemns: grace justifies.

Law entails bondage: grace leads to liberty.

Law was definitely imposed upon Israel: grace address itself to all mankind.

“Fallen from grace,” is an expression which occurs in Galatians 5:4, and it is usually taken to mean that we may fall out of the grace of God altogether, that we may utterly lose His favor. Now there is a very vital question to be raised and answered. It is this, How can we be brought into God’s favor at all, and how can we be kept in it? If it can be shown how we get into His favor we may then see how we can be kept in it, and whether it is possible for us ever to fall out of it. One thing is certain, one day or another everyone will be anxious to be in the favor of God, for to die under His frown will mean banishment from His presence forever.

We are not left in any doubt as to what the answer to this important question is. God has “made us accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:6). He has taken us into His favor in that way and upon that ground alone. So it is what God sees in Christ that is the measure of our acceptance before Him.

We do not stand in the favor of God on account of our love towards Him, but on account of His love towards us. It is not because we have done something for Him, but because Christ has done something for us. In other words, God acts towards us on the ground of what He finds in Himself, and not on the ground of what He finds in us. Otherwise it would be our merits, our deserts, —could He find any merit at all in us, or were our deserts anything else than His unsparing judgment — and not grace at all. Nothing can be plainer than that merit and grace are contrary the one to the other. “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt,” and again, “If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace” (Rom. 4:4; 11:6).

It was the law that supposed there might be some merit in us to be rewarded. Grace supposes no merit in us at all. What we get we have no title to in ourselves, it is only ours as being in Christ. Alas! the idea of merit is so deeply ingrained into us that it is most difficult for us to get away from it. We may even think that our good conduct as Christians is necessary if God is to continue to smile upon us and keep us in His favor.

Now these Galatian believers had fallen from grace. This does not mean that they had turned away from Christ, or that they had fallen from salvation, but that they had descended to the lower ground of doing instead of believing. The Apostle did not charge them with committing gross sins. But he did say that if they thought to increase their place in the favor of God, or increase their own holiness by adopting the legal rite of circumcision, they put themselves under the liability to do the whole law. That meant that they would even have to be justified by law, and that meant that in their thoughts they had fallen from the high place in which grace sets the believer. Read verse 3 and 4 of Galatians 5, and you will see this.

To be, or seek to be, justified on the principle of law, or in any way to seek blessing from God on the ground of our being what we ought to be, is to drop from the lofty standard of God blessing according to what He finds in Himself, to His blessing according to what He finds in those He blesses. So it comes to this, that the moment we begin to think that God will be toward us according to what we are toward Him, we have fallen on to the ground of law. If we think we have got out of God’s favor because we have not been what we should be, we have in our minds fallen from grace. How easy for us to begin by grace and yet get before long on to the ground of law!

It is grace to start with, and grace to go on with, and God will never deal with us on any other ground; if lie did we should soon lose our blessing. The idea, that so many have, is that bad conduct upon our part will make us fall out of God’s favor, so that no longer will He smile upon us. Then of course we have to suppose that something must be done by us to re-instate ourselves in His favor. Some even go so far as to imagine that in such a case we need to be converted over again.

God however never deviates from grace in His dealings with His people. Once having taken them up in grace, He holds them fast in grace; and thoughts such as these only show that those who entertain them have in their minds dropped from grace to the far lower level of law. Many a man has fallen from grace who has not fallen into positive sin.

One thing however we must always remember. There is such a thing as the smile of complacency and approval as well as the smile of favor. It should be our ardent desire so to live to His glory that we may be always conscious of having the smile of His approval resting upon us. If our ways please Him He can give us a sense of it. Then it will be with us as with Enoch, of whom it is said that, “he had this testimony, that he pleased God” (Heb. 11:5).

Yet even so, it is of the utmost importance that we have it ingrained into us that we are not brought into God’s favor by anything that we can do, nor are we kept in it by anything that we can do. That would be to make our acceptance, or our being held in favor, depend upon ourselves and upon our works, which is the very principle of law, and a tremendous fall from grace. It would mean that our conduct determined our blessing, either getting it or keeping it, and thus we should have whereof to boast, though not before God.

Everything however reaches us through the merits of Another. Our conduct good or bad adds nothing to, and detracts nothing from, the perfections of Christ in whom we are brought into favor. We are in Him, and it is on His account that we stand in God’s favor, so when He gets out of favor, we shall get out of favor. Only then, and not before!

Someone perhaps still would like to ask — Will not security and certainty such as this have a tendency to make us careless about our life and service?

We will answer by asking another question. Here is a young woman who has just obtained a situation as a nurse. She knows very well that if she wishes to retain the favor of her mistress she must nurse the child well. Her situation depends upon her devotedness to her charge. Now who will nurse the child with greater tenderness and love — this nursemaid or the child’s own mother, who nurses it from another motive altogether and with no such fear hanging over her head?

Anyone of us can supply the answer to that question for ourselves!

Art. C.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Is Deliverance All? (5:17,25)

Question: Gal. 5:17, 25. Is “deliverance” all? Are we not after that to walk in the Spirit? W.

Answer: Assuredly: to question it would be antinomianism, or systematic unholiness. We are called to walk in the Spirit by the faith of Christ, in confidence of His care, in habitual self-judgment, and in obedience of the word.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Meaning of "Ye Are Fallen From Grace"? (5:4)

Question: What is meant by “Ye are fallen from grace” in Gal. 5:4? Does it mean gone into sin or become infidel? X.

Answer: If the context were duly read, the answer would be apparent. The apostle is proving to the Galatian confessors their exceeding danger in mixing the law with the gospel: ceremonial or moral makes no real difference. We as Christians are under grace, not law. We are saved by the faith of Christ, not by deeds of law moral or ceremonial. Indeed the moral law must condemn the sinner, more than the ceremonial. For a Gentile to be circumcised is to abandon grace, to lose Christ, and to become debtor to do the whole law. Such “are fallen from grace.” It is to give up God’s grace in Christ, now published in the gospel and for every Christian to enjoy.

Texts Misapplied or Misquoted, Fallen From Grace: Texts Misapplied or Misquotes, Part 1 (5:4)

Gal. 5:4.-Often quoted to prove that Christians may, by falling into sin, jeopard the life which they have got in Christ. But the text speaks of those who had appeared to receive the Gospel letting. slip the grand foundation of God's grace for ordinances, or, in other words, abandoning the ground of faith for religiousness.

The Epistle to the Galatians, Galatians 5:15-26; 6:1-10: The Epistle to the Galatians (5:15-26)

Chapter 5:15-26; Chapter 6:1-10

The apostle wishes that they who were troubling the Galatians would cut themselves off, but that has not happened; Christendom is today saturated with the doctrine of law-keeping as an aid to salvation. The believer has been called to liberty, but that is not to give opportunity to the old nature, the flesh; instead, we are by love to serve one another. The whole law is fulfilled in one word—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Liberty to the flesh might well take the form of attacking those who were not circumcised; so the apostle says, if ye bite and devour one another, see that ye are not consumed one of another. Religious flesh is capable of almost anything.

"But, I say, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall in no way fulfill flesh's lust. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these things are opposed one to the other, that ye should not do those things which ye desire; but if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under law (verses 16-18, JND).

How important to heed the admonition of verse 16! The old nature, the flesh, is opposed to the new, in which the Holy Spirit works, in order that the believer may not do the things which he desires, but the Spirit is always prepared to be the believer's strength, to lead him where the flesh has no power.

Next, we are provided with an index to the works of the flesh, and following that, with the characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit (verses 19 to 23).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strifes, jealousies, angers, contentions, disputes, schools of opinion, envyings, murders, drunkenness’s, revels, and things like these; as to which I tell you beforehand, even as I also have said before, that they who do such things shall not inherit God's kingdom" (verses 19-21 JnD).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (verses 22-23 JnD).

"The works of the flesh"—the things that are natural to it; what a shocking catalog! And what a contrast, the fruit of the Spirit! "Love, joy, peace"—these come from God, from His own nature. How lovely these nine specimens of the fruit of the Spirit are, as we compare them with the sixteen samples from the works of the flesh! Neither is a complete list, of course.

"But they that are of the Christ have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts" (verse 24, JND). It is by faith; the work is only really and fully done in Christ; it is in His cross that the crucifixion of the flesh with all its lusts, has taken place.

"Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin." Rom. 6:6 (JND).

"It is true of every believer, distinguishing him from the unsaved. We are to believe it, and to act accordingly.

"If we live by the Spirit, let us walk also by the Spirit." One more word of caution is needed, because pride comes out of the pretense of keeping the law:

"Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another." Verse 26 (JND).

"Brethren, if even a man be taken in some fault, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." chapter 6:1 (JND). The case supposed is of a child of God who through carelessness commits a fault, is surprised into what is evil. The spiritual ones are to restore him in a spirit of meekness, considering each of them himself, lest he also be tempted. And who is a spiritual man? Is it not plain that it is one who not only lives by the Spirit (every believer does that), but walks also by the Spirit; such a one habitually judges himself before God.

Closely related to this is what follows in verses 2 to 5: "Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of the Christ. For if any man reputes himself to be something, being nothing, he deceives himself; but let each prove his own work, and then he will have his boast in what belongs to himself alone, and not in what belongs to another. For each shall bear his own burden." (JND).

Should we not concern ourselves with the burden or burdens under which a brother may be groaning—need, distress, sorrows, trials, other difficulties? That was "the law of Christ," the rule of His life as He passed through this world. The Galatians wanted to be under law, and here was one for them, though the ten commandments included no such requirement.

Legalism, trying to keep the law for salvation, easily leads into prideful thoughts of self; he deceives himself; let him prove his own work, if there really was any Christian work of which he had been an instrument. In so far as the new teachers among the Galatians were concerned, it was not by themselves, but by Paul that the work of Christ had been wrought in that region. Verse 5 speaks of personal responsibility, as verse 2 treats of active love taking up the burdens of others. It is not a question of the judgment of God upon our sins in the fifth verse, but our responsibility now that we are Christ's to live to Him.

"Let him that is taught in the word communicate to him that teaches in all good things." Verse 6 (JND).

Here is a responsibility not shouldered by all the saints, and it is a cause of leanness in the soul. The Lord has His servants going about as they are able; their needs are known to Him, and He exercises the hearts of His saints here and there to meet these needs. If they were better provided for, would they not be able to visit saints, not now visited, and more often some who are not sufficiently visited? And those who labor in foreign lands—are they not apt to be neglected; the Bible Truth Depots, too?

There follows a solemn and an encouraging word: (verses 7 to 10):

"Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatever a man shall sow, that also shall he reap. For he that sows to his own flesh shall reap corruption from the flesh; but he that sows to the Spirit, from the Spirit shall reap eternal life; but let us not lose heart in doing good; for in due time if we do not faint we shall reap. So then, as we have occasion, let us do good towards all, and specially towards those of the household of faith." (JND).

There are consequences that follow the walk down here, that will be reflected in the position accorded each of us in glory. We have eternal life already, and it is put before us as a reward above for faithfulness down here.

The Epistle to the Galatians, Galatians 5:1-15: The Epistle to the Galatians (5:1-15)

"Christ has set us free in freedom; stand fast therefore, and be not held again in a yoke of bondage. Behold, I, Paul, say to you that if ye are circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. And I witness again to every man who is circumcised that he is debtor to do the whole law. Ye are deprived of all profit from the Christ as separated from Him, as many as are justified by law, ye have fallen from grace.

"For we, by Spirit, on the principle of faith, await the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision has any force, nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love. Ye ran well; who has stopped you, that ye should not obey the truth? The persuasibleness is not of Him that calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence as to you in the Lord that ye will have no other mind; and he that is troubling you shall bear the guilt of it, whosoever he may be" (Verses 1-10, New Translation of J. N. Darby).

Well, indeed, may the apostle say (verse 1),

"Christ has set us free in freedom; stand fast therefore, and be not held again in a yoke of bondage." By nature a Jew, Paul had been under the bondage of the law; the Christians of Galatia, born Gentiles and idolaters, had been under the bondage of their heathen religion. Thus he could say, "has set us free."

Then he refers to a thing imposed by God before the law was given, on Abraham and his descendants in Genesis 17:10, and afterward added to the requirements under the law in Leviticus 12:3. Circumcision typified having our old nature mortified; should not this rite be continued which connects us with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? No; whatever the use to which God applied circumcision before Christ, it is gone now, and the apostle emphatically declares (verse 2),

"Behold, I, Paul, say to you that if ye are circumcised," that is, if you as Christians should seek it as necessary to complete justification before God—"Christ shall profit you nothing."

Christ is a complete Saviour and an exclusive one, as another has remarked, and the addition of anything to His work is in effect to destroy salvation by Him.

Besides, as the next verse goes on to relate, every one who is circumcised in order to attain complete salvation, not being content with the work of Christ to that end, is a debtor to carry out every provision of the law. And that is hopeless; he would be back on the ground of a

sinner. Sad indeed would that be.

"Ye are deprived of all profit from the Christ as separated from Him; as many as are justified by law; ye have fallen from grace" (verse 4).

It was not that they had departed from Christ openly, but that they had joined the law, together with Christ, as a means of justification, and it was therefore no longer grace, the free grace of God, on which they stood.

Verse 5 presents in contrast the Christian's position as given him by God,

"For we, by the Spirit, on the principle of faith, await the hope of righteousness."

The Spirit of God dwells in us, and we are the righteousness of God in Christ. Faith rests in this righteousness, as God rests in it. The Holy Spirit sustains this faith, and directs the believer to the hoped for glory which is due to the righteousness. There Christ is, enjoying the glory due to righteousness—due to Him because of the work. He wrought for God's glory and our salvation; and we shall soon follow Him there; our hope then is not the hope of attaining righteousness, for we have the righteousness of God, but the hope which righteousness possesses, of glory above. And in Christ Jesus neither circumcision has any force, nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love.

We can see how the heart of the apostle was distressed over the thought of what the Galatian saints were doing in tampering with the truth of God,

"Ye ran well; who has stopped you, that ye should not obey the truth? The persuasibleness is not of Him that calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence as to you in the Lord that ye will have no other mind; and he that is troubling you shall bear the guilt of it, whosoever he may be."

Paul reproaches the Galatians for having lent an ear to the teachers of Judaism who had found their way in among them. "Leaven" it was, in God's sight, that they had absorbed,—the very term that is used in 1 Corinthians 5 in characterizing the gross moral evil that had been uncovered in that assembly. Men would consider the shocking abuse of morals at Corinth as terrible, and think the Galatian error a minor thing, but God's thoughts are not as man's. The Galatians had taken up with a doctrine which was destructive of the gospel, and robbing Christ of His glory.

"But I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why am I yet persecuted? Then the scandal of the cross has been done away. I would that they would even cut themselves off who throw you into confusion. For ye have been called to liberty, brethren, only do not turn liberty into an opportunity to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, in Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself; but if ye bite and devour one another, see that ye are not consumed one of another" (verses 11-15 JND).

The book of the Acts shows that the Jews were the usual instigators of the persecution which befell the apostle. The fact that the gospel of Christ makes no provision for what Scripture calls "the flesh"—(the natural man), accounts for the opposition it has always had from the world. Another has said,

"Only preach circumcision, accept the religion of the flesh, and all difficulty will cease; the world will accept your gospel, but it will not be the gospel of Christ."

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 5:19-26, Reflections on (5:19-26)

THE works of the flesh are solemnly and fully enumerated, and in such a manner as to mark the holy hand of the Spirit of God. “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these; adultery], fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (v. 19-21). Who but the Spirit of God would have given the unholy list thus? Who but He would have placed wrath, variance, etc. in the same category with such notoriously vile offenses as fornication, murders, and drunkenness? Man would have classified them, arranging them in the order in which they appeared heinous in his sight. Offenses that are lesser, in human judgment, would have been placed in one class, and bolder sins in another. But not so the Holy Spirit. He traces all to the one root. Whether it be murder or strife, sect-making (for such is the meaning of “heresies”), or emulations (which may even happen among brethren), all comes from the flesh, which is incurably evil, whether in the saint or the unregenerate sinner. In like manner the Lord Jesus exposed the heart of man to His disciples in Matt. 15:19. All evil flows thence. The spring being impure, all that flows from it is offensive to God.

Let every believer watch himself with earnest godly care. Flesh must be treated as a dead and judged thing, and then all is well; but if it be allowed to work, though but for a moment, any evil may follow. Those who persist in an evil course the apostle repudiates altogether here. He presses it in this place on the Galatians, as elsewhere on the Ephesians (Eph. 5:5), that those also who live thus shall not inherit God's kingdom. The truest believer may, through unwatchfulness, fall into the gravest sins; but such cannot be said to live in them—they do not characterize their lives. The believer, through the action of the Spirit of God on his conscience, owns and confesses his sin, and gets forgiveness and cleansing. Such statements are not intended to encourage doubts in the hearts of saints, but to test and sift profession. There is much of it in this day. On every hand there is boastful profession of Christianity; but in how many cases is the fruit lacking which God looks for I 2 Tim. 3:1-5 may well be pondered in this connection.

What a contrast is the Spirit's fruit “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (vers. 22-23). These are not called “works” implying effort; but fruit, the natural result of life. The Holy Spirit is a living power in the Christian: here we have the blessed and varied result of His operations. “Love” is God's own nature and is rightly placed first. Everything else pales before this. It is that which will abide when not only prophecies, tongues, and knowledge are no

more, but when faith and hope have given place to sight and realization (1 Cor. 13:8-13). “Joy” and “peace” follow naturally. As our souls abide in the divine nature, so we are happy and calm. Things that would otherwise disturb and ruffle our hearts pass by and leave us quite unmoved. Then long-suffering, gentleness, and goodness in all our dealings with others fall into their blessed place. Wrongs are quietly borne, vindictiveness is not allowed; but on the contrary the grace which shone out always in the Perfect One is displayed to His glory. For evil, positive goodness is shown, which is ever God's way. Turning inwards again, “faith, meekness and temperance” develop themselves, enabling us to walk trustfully with God, imparting that lowly brokenness of spirit which God values, and enabling us to keep all our members well under control. What can the law say to such? It was assuredly never made for men walking in the Spirit as thus.

The foundation principle of a holy walk is next set forth. “And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts” (ver. 24). It is not said that we should do so, as is so commonly supposed, but that we have done so. Faith judges with God; it treats flesh as dead, and gives no quarter in consequence to any of its desires. Many do not understand this. They are aware of the existence within them of the evil principle, and are earnestly endeavoring to cope with it, in order to render it nugatory. But such find they have undertaken an impossible task, and are at times disposed to sit down in despair. The truth is, God has dealt with the flesh in the cross of Christ. It is proper Christian knowledge to say “knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed [annulled] that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Rom. 6:6). Thus faith accepts in simplicity what God has done, and then victory comes.

The apostle continues, “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another” (vers. 25, 26). Every believer lives in the Spirit, He being the source of the new life that he has received; to walk in the Spirit is to accept practically His gracious leadership and control in all the details of life down here. From this the Galatians had slipped, through the pernicious teaching to which they had listened: hence the apostle's grave warning and rebuke in the words which conclude the chapter.

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 5:6-12, Reflections on (5:6-12)

VERSE 6 aptly follows the concise statement of verse 5. If the one sets forth the Christian position in contrast with the bondage and gloom of the law, the other shows the moral walk which God looks for in every Christian. “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love” (ver. 6). The apostle's language is very similar in chap. 6:15, and 1 Cor. 7:19. Considerable value attached of old to the solemn rite. It was then a great matter whether a man was circumcised or not. But, Christ having come, the reality of all has been brought in for those who believe; the shadow in this, as in everything else, fades away. True circumcision—death to flesh and separation to God—is found, for faith, in the cross of Christ, nowhere else (Col. 2:11, 12). Possession of, or submission to, ordinances renders no one acceptable to God. He looks for the practical fruit of faith in all who bear the name of His Son. Faith works by love, and leads to the fulfilling of the commandments of God. Where this is seen, all else is of small account.

This point is largely developed by the apostle James. Some have fancied contradiction to Paul in the writings of this apostle; but there could not be a greater mistake. The fact is, both take up different aspects of the truth. Paul more generally dwells upon what concerns our God, which is not of works, but altogether of grace, founded on Christ dead and risen: James presents the other side, and speaks of our profession of faith before men. James says “Show me.” Hence he lays down that to bid a needy brother or sister be warmed and filled without giving them the necessary means is profitless faith (James 2:14-17; compare 1 John 3:16-18). If there be no works, it is dead, being alone. Faith works by love. It expresses itself in love to God, and to all those who are begotten of Him. The Thessalonians are bright examples of this (1 Thess. 1:3; 4:8-10).

The Galatians were apparently lacking here, as in everything else. They were biting and devouring one another, and thus stood condemned by the very law in which they were now boasting. The law at least taught love to one’s neighbor, though it did not, as the gospel, teach love to an enemy.

The apostle yearned over these misguided souls. “Ye did run well, who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you” (vers. 7, 8). It is a serious thing to put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall, in the way of the Lord's little ones (Matt. 18:6). He is very jealous over His own that are in the world. Any service, however small, rendered to them for their furtherance and joy of faith He will abundantly reward in the approaching day; as on the other hand He will reckon assuredly with those who have checked them in their onward course. The bloom had departed from these souls in Galatia, their love had grown cold, and their faith had become enfeebled, results of the unholy efforts of the Judaizing teachers among them. The movement was not of God. The work of His Spirit never leads to such deplorable results. He had called them in the grace of Christ: this persuasion had another source altogether. Paul describes it as “leaven,” even as he speaks of the moral evil which was defiling the assembly at Corinth. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (ver. 9)

The Lord spoke of corrupt doctrine in this way. Thus He warned His disciples. “Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees” (Matt. 16:6). They foolishly thought that He referred to their lack of loaves; but “He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees” (Matt. 16:12). All leaven was to be purged out of the habitations of Israel when they kept their feasts to Jehovah, and none was permitted in any offering to Jehovah made by fire. It is a type of evil everywhere in the word of God. Neither moral nor doctrinal leaven must be sanctioned in the assembly of God; or its character is falsified, and its testimony is lost. We need to especially remind ourselves of this to-day. There is increasing corruption of doctrine in every direction; and the gravest possible teaching is often screened and palliated for party purposes. Corrupt doctrine is leaven, and does its deadly work among souls until dealt with in the fear of God.

We need not wonder at Paul's concern for the Galatians. They were his children in the faith, his work in the Lord; and he groaned to see them led astray by evil men. But his heart was with God about them; hence he had confidence. “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” (ver. 10). His language in this place may be compared with chap. 4:20. There he lets out his deep anxiety in view of their state and proclivities. Here he looks up to God, and his heart

had rest. Israel when viewed in the plains of Moab presented a sorry spectacle, sufficient to destroy the confidence of any servant of God; but, when viewed from “the tops of the rocks,” their beauty, order, and justification could be proclaimed as seen by the eye of God (Num. 22-25). This could not fail, being divinely secured through grace.

Are any surprised at the strength of the apostle's language concerning the troublers? It is not inconsistent with faith working by love. It is one of the characteristics of divine love that it rejoices not in iniquity, but with the truth (1 Cor. 13). Divine love is not always saying smooth things. It is ever righteously indignant when truth is trampled in the dust and error is exalted. This may sound strange in a latitudinarian day such as the present, when everything is accepted or tolerated. Paul did not hesitate to denounce evil workers, nor to set before them the righteous judgment of God.

How different his own path! Faithfully preaching Christ on every hand, and willingly accepting in his own person and circumstances all the consequences of what he preached. “And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offense of the cross ceased” (ver. 11). There seem to have been insinuations that the apostle was not consistent in his preaching—that he set forth in one place what he condemned in another. But this was false. He was no mere time-server or man-pleaser. He declared all the truth of God, not keeping back anything that was profitable. He never adapted himself to men's carnal tastes, though he would vary the manner of his instructions according to the condition of souls. He nowhere preached circumcision. There was nothing in his ministry that flattered the first man. If so, would he have had to suffer? Would Jews and Gentiles in every quarter, particularly the former, have heaped upon him every kind of indignity if he preached ordinances? Assuredly not; flesh loves them too well. The scandal of the cross would then be at an end, and the servant of Christ would have an easy path through this world.

This is precisely what has happened in Christendom. Ordinances have supplanted the true grace of God; a humanly appointed priesthood has taken the place of Christ and the Spirit; and the supporters and propagators of the system are in ease and honor in the world. Flesh has no quarrel with such men, but appreciates them. Persecution in such circumstances is impossible.

But the offense of the cross has not ceased. Let any set forth the full grace of God in the gospel, to the thrusting aside of ordinances and fleshly efforts in general; let any really exalt Christ and His work, in contrast with the first man; and it will soon be proved. What flesh loved in Paul's day, it loves still; and what it hated then, it hates as fiercely as ever. Flesh never changes in its antagonism to God, and in its dislike to His free grace revealed in Christ. The apostle concludes this part of his subject with the indignant exclamation. “I would they would even cut themselves off which would trouble you” (ver. 12).

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 5:1-5, Reflections on (5:1-5)

THE apostle has made it perfectly plain that the believer in Jesus is not under law. We are not children of the bondmaid, but of the freewoman, as Isaac of old. What we are, divine grace has made us; it is no question of human effort at all. This is now followed up by urgent exhortation. “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (ver. 1). The Galatian movement, instead of being an advance, was retrogression. It was letting slip the blessedness into which God introduces all who have faith in His Son. We have not to make out a place for ourselves with God. He has made one for us on the basis of Christ's work; we have simply to abide there in full enjoyment.

The matter is then put very strongly. “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing” (ver. 2). The Galatians never meant this. They thought that to engraft circumcision &c. into their Christianity was to improve it. But human works and divine grace cannot go together. We cannot be justified on two opposite principles. If we stand upon works, we are ruined men, whether Jews or Gentiles. There is no rest for the soul on such ground, and no confidence. As for Paul, he had abandoned fleshly efforts once for all as useless, and was standing before God in the righteousness which is of God by faith. Christ was all to him.

To adopt circumcision was to incur the whole responsibility of the law. “For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law” (vers. 3). This may require a little explanation. It is well known that circumcision was given long before the law. The Lord Jesus remarked to the Jews that it was not of Moses, but of the fathers (John 7:22). The institution of it is found in Gen. 17. It is a sign that flesh can have no recognition with God, and that sentence of death must be passed upon it. Faith thus confessed the utter worthlessness of flesh, and availed itself of the provisions of God's grace. This is where Abraham stood, when at ninety-nine years of age, Jehovah renewed His promise as to the Seed, and gave him the sign of circumcision. On this ground he received blessing from God. It is solemn that such an ordinance should become a mere matter for fleshly glorying; but so it was in Israel. Flesh boasted, and took pride in the distinction. Had its meaning been understood, it would have been seen that God was pouring contempt by it on flesh and all its efforts.

In Moses' day the rite became incorporated with the law, hence the apostle's word in this epistle. It became an integral part of the legal system; therefore to take it up placed the soul under responsibility to do the whole law. This is very serious for souls who profess faith in Christ. The man that binds himself to meet the obligation of the law is a lost man, whoever he be. Law makes no distinctions, and shows no mercy.

The apostle becomes more vehement. “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (ver. 4). Christ will not share His glory with another. The tendency of the Galatian movement is plainly shown—it was abandonment of grace. They sought to amalgamate principles that were mutually destructive. “If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace” (Rom. 11:6). We see in them how souls may be beguiled by Satan into consequences of which, at the beginning, they had no conception. They had no intention of giving up Christ, or of abandoning grace—but this was the tendency of what they were doing; nevertheless, thank God, all was not lost in their case. At heart they were true men, and he said, “I have confidence as to you in the Lord” (ver. 10).

All this is very serious for men in Christendom, if there were any eyes to see, and ears to hear. For what we see around us is not law pure and simple, nor grace in its abstract beauty, but a painful mixture of the two, to the marring of both. Paul trembled for souls in such a position; to him it was grave departure from the gospel of Christ.

The true Christian state, in contrast, is then briefly described. “For we, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith” (ver. 5). This is one of the few bright flashes in this epistle. Notice the words with care. We wait, not for righteousness, nor for the Spirit, but for the hope. Righteousness is ours now, we have been made the righteousness of God in Christ; and this can never be unsettled. The Spirit is God's gift to us now, for by Him we have been sealed for the day of redemption. All Christ's work being accomplished, and God having been glorified, the other Comforter has been sent from heaven, and is God's gift to every believer in the Lord Jesus. Then what wait we for? the hope. We do not get here what it is; it would not suit the character of the epistle. It is the Lord's coming to receive to Himself His own, to introduce us into the glory into which He has entered. To this, divine righteousness entitles us. Such a hope was never attached to legal righteousness. Suppose a man had kept the law in its entirety, would it have given him a claim to heavenly glory? All that God ever set before souls under law was to live long in the land which He had given them. But God is perfectly righteous in placing us in glory with His beloved Son. It is due to Him who suffered all for us and rose again.

For this we wait “by faith.” The Spirit sustains our hearts by the way, ministering Christ to us, and speaking to us constantly of the glory into which He has gone. Unbelief may mock and deride, but faith rests confidently. God will yet make good His word, and take us all out of this scene to be forever with the Lord.

Edification: Volume 5, Our Scripture Portion. (4:4-31)

({vi 29136-29163}Gal. 4:4-31).

Please have your Bible open at the passage indicated above as you read this article. The writer takes it for granted that you will do this, and consequently all his references to Scripture are in the briefest possible form.

THE coming forth of God’s Son was the event which marked the commencement of a new epoch in God’s dealings with men. The steps, by which that new epoch was inaugurated, are given to us in verse 4 to 6.

First, the Son of God was sent, “made of a woman,” or, more literally, “come of woman.” Thus His incarnation is expressed, the guarantee to us that He was a Man, in the full and proper sense of the word.

Second, it could be said of Him, “come under law.” When He came God’s attention was focused upon the Jew, as upon a people who were in outward relationship with Him and responsible as under His law. Amongst that people He came, assuming all the responsibilities, under which they had wholly failed.

Third, He wrought redemption for those under the law, thus delivering them from its claims, in order that a new position might be theirs.

Fourth, as thus delivered we receive “the adoption of sons,” or, “sonship.” This wondrous position in regard to God is ours as a free gift, according to His eternal purpose.

Fifth, being made sons, God has given to us the Spirit of His Son, in order that we may be enabled to enter into the consciousness and enjoyment of this new relationship, and respond to God as our Father. By the Spirit given we cry, “Abba, Father!”

The above is a brief summary of these remarkable verses, but now let us notice in them a few points of importance.

The redemption spoken of in verse 5 goes further than the truth which we met with in verse 13 of chapter 3 We might have been redeemed from the curse of the law and yet left under the law, and consequently left still in the place of servants. The glorious fact is that the believer is not only redeemed from the curse, but also from the law that righteously inflicted the curse; so that onw we stand in the liberty of sonship and the days of bondage under the “schoolmaster” are over.

Notice also the change from the “we” of verse 5 to the “ye” of verse 6. Only the Jew had been in the bondage of the law, hence redemption from law applied to Jewish believers of whom Paul was one. Consequently he says, “we.” But, on the other hand, the place of sonship, in which Christians are set, is the portion equally of all, whether Jew or Gentile by nature. Hence the change to “ye.” The wonder is that those, who once were degraded Gentiles far from God, should now be sons and happily responding to God the Father’s love by the Spirit given to them.

The Spirit of God’s Son does not give us the place of sons. That is ours as the fruit of God’s purpose and gift on the basis of redemption. The Spirit gives the consciousness of the relationship and the power to respond to it.

In verse 7 the Apostle brings home the fact of this wonderful relationship to us each individually. And not only is sonship an individual blessing, so that he can say, “thou art... a son,” but heirship is individual also. Each of us is, “an heir of God through Christ.” This shows us that when the Apostle used “the heir” in verse 1 as an illustration of his theme, he was using an illustration which applied in a very exact and literal way. Such, is the amazing grace of God to us as believers, whether we were Jews or Gentiles. How little we have taken it in!

We call upon our readers to pause at this point and to meditate upon this truth. It is an established fact, and so stated without any qualification. The Galatians were not in the enjoyment of the fact. They were actually behaving themselves as though they were servants and not sons, yet the Apostle does not say, “Wherefore thou oughtest to be no more a servant but a son,” but, “Thou art no more a servant but a son.” Our relationship does not flow from our understanding of, or our response to, the place we have, nor from behavior suitable to it; but

rather our behavior flows from the relationship, once it is understood and responded to. Let us each say to ourselves again and yet again, “I am a son and heir of God through Christ.” Let us take time that this wonderful truth may sink into each heart.

When once the fact has really laid hold of us we shall be able to appreciate how Paul felt as he penned verse 8 and 9. The Galatians were formerly in bondage, not to the law indeed, but to false gods; and now having been brought to know God, as the fruit of God having taken them up and brought them into this wealthy place, what possessed them to turn again to the old principle of standing before God in their own merits — or rather demerits? What indeed?

The principle of the law of Moses was that each should stand before God according to his own doings. This too is a root principle with every false religion, and thus the Galatians had proceeded in their former days of paganism. In now turning aside to Judaism they were slipping back into the old principles which are weak and beggarly. What expressive adjectives! Weak, since by them man accomplished nothing that counted for good. Beggarly, because they left him stripped of all merit and of all excuse. But if we wish to realize how weak and how beggarly we must view them in contrast with the principles of the Gospel, and its results in making us sons and heirs.

In verse 10 the Apostle gives an instance of what he alluded to, when he spoke of their turning back to legal principles. They were taking up Jewish feasts and customs. That might seem a small matter, but it was a straw which showed the way the wind was blowing, and it made him afraid lest there should be with them a lack of reality— lest their professed acceptance of the Gospel were not sincere after all; and consequently the labor he had expended upon them should be in vain.

This was a sad thought, and it leads directly to the touching appeal which follows in verse 12 to 20. He beseeches them in the first place to be as he was as to their experience and practice, inasmuch as both he and they were just on the same footing as to their place before God. Alike they had been brought into sonship, and therefore alike they should all be walking in the liberty of sons. It was not a personal matter at all. He nursed no sense of personal injury against them.

This leads him to recall the great reception that they gave him when first he came amongst them with the Gospel message. He was at that time in much infirmity of a physical sort, and it would seem that his eyesight was particularly affected. On turning to Acts 16:6 we note that his first visit to Galatia was during the early part of his second missionary journey. The stoning of Paul even to the point of death took place at nearly the end of his first journey, as recorded in Acts 14:19. It is more than likely-that there is a connection between the two events, and that this “temptation... in my flesh” resulted from the ill-treatment that he received, and is the same as the “thorn in the flesh,” of which he writes in 2 Corinthians 12:7. Be that as it may, he arrived amongst them in fullness of power and they received him with grew gladness. Now it would appear that in speaking the truth to them he had become their enemy!

The fact was of course that the Judaising teachers, who had got amongst them, were aiming at producing alienation between the Galatians and Paul, their spiritual father, in order to capture them as followers for themselves. In verse 17 the Apostle in few words unmasks this, their real objective. “They are very zealous after you” he says. “but not in the right way. They are simply anxious to shut you away from us, in order that you become zealous adherents, following them.” What Paul wanted was to see them always zealous after the things that are really good, and that as much when he was absent as when he was with them.

As things were however he could but stand in doubt of them. When first he visited them it was with great exercise and travail of soul. He did not preach himself but Christ Jesus as Lord, and their spiritual birth only came to pass when Christ was formed in them. The photographic artist takes care to have a good lens in his camera, that will throw on the screen a very accurate picture of the features of the sitter. But the photograph only comes to the birth when the sitter’s features are formed in the sensitized plate as the result of the joint action of light and certain chemicals. This may serve as an illustration of the point. Paul travailed that as the fruit of Gospel light Christ might be formed in them. Then his birth pangs on their behalf were over.

But along come these Judaizing teachers, and lo! instead of Christ these men, their sabbaths, their new moons, their circumcision, seem to be forming themselves in them. No wonder that Paul, in his ardent affection for them as his children, felt as though he must go through birth pangs again on their behalf, and was perplexed about them. Under these circumstances he wished that, instead of being at a distance and having to communicate by writing, he were in their midst, able to judge of their exact state and to change his voice, speaking to them in instruction, in rebuke, or even in severity, as the occasion demanded.

However as they seemed to be so anxious to place themselves under the law, they would at least be prepared to listen to what the law had indicated! Hence from verse 22 to the end of the chapter he refers them to the allegorical significance of an occurrence in Abraham’s life.

Abraham was the great example of faith and promise, as we saw when reading chapter 3. Yet before ever he received by faith the child of promise, there was the episode in which by works he obtained a child through Hagar. Ishmael was born after the flesh, whereas Isaac was by promise. We can now see that there was an allegory in this, and that Hagar and her son picture for us Sinai, whence was proclaimed the law system which results in bondage, and also “Jerusalem which now is,” i.e., the Jewish people, who though under law are still in virtual unbelief. The Christian, on the other hand, is in the position of the child of promise, and connected with “Jerusalem which is above,” which is free.

The proud orthodox Jew might rightly boast that according to the flesh he was a true-born son of Isaac. Yet in a spiritual sense he was only a son of Ishmael and in bondage under the schoolmaster. True the schoolmaster regime came first, and later came the promise, which materialized in the advent of the Son of God. But that only confirmed the type, for Ishmael came before Isaac. The type was further confirmed by the fact that it was the proud Jews who persecuted the humble Christians, as verse 29 points out.

Again, the truth of the allegory finds a corroboration in the words of Isaiah 54:1. That verse indicates that Israel in the time of her desolation would be more fruitful than she had ever been when she was acknowledge as in relationship with Jehovah. But then that verse is the immediate consequence of the glorious truth predicted in chapter 53. It was to be as the fruit of the advent of the suffering Messiah, and not as the result of law keeping.

When the law was imposed from Sinai no one broke forth into song. Very soon there were cries to the effect that such words should not be spoken any more into the ears of the people. Yet when Isaiah unfolds before us the marvelous story of the Christ who suffers and rises again for sins not His own, the first word that follows is, “SING.” Bondage is over, liberty is come!

Of old there was the inevitable clash between Ishmael and Isaac, just as now there is between the Judaiser and the believer who stands in the liberty of the grace of God. And yet it is not the clash that decides the question, nor even the persecution of the one “born after the Spirit” by the one “born after the flesh.” What decides the matter is the voice of God. And that voice reaches us in the Scriptures.

“What saith the Scripture?” That is the decisive question. And the answer is that, “the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” The servant is displaced in favor of the son. He, who would stand before God on the basis of the law, falls. He, who stands in the fullness of grace, stands indeed.

Happy indeed it is for us if we can truly say, “We are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.” Then indeed we stand in Christ, and Christ Himself is formed in us. We are in the liberty of sonship, and that is liberty indeed.

F. B. Hole.

The Epistle to the Galatians, Galatians 4:12-31: The Epistle to the Galatians (4:12-31)

"Be as I am, for I also am as ye, brethren, I beseech you; ye have not at all wronged me. But ye know that in weakness of the flesh I announced the glad tidings to you at the first; and my temptation which was in my flesh ye did not slight nor reject with contempt; but ye received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. What then was your blessedness? (or, what blessedness was then yours!) for I bear you witness that, if possible, plucking out your own eyes ye would have given them to me.

"So I have become your enemy in speaking the truth to you? They are not rightly zealous after you, but desire to shut you out from us, that ye may be zealous after them. But it is right to be zealous at all times in what is right, and not only when I am present with you—my children, of whom I again travail in birth until Christ shall have been formed in you; and I should wish to be present with you now, and change my voice, for I am perplexed as to you" (verses 12-31, JND).

In the twelfth verse the apostle turns to his relations with the Galatian saints and answers charges made against him by the persons referred to in verse 17 who were influencing them toward keeping the law of Moses. The law had formerly claimed obedience from Paul, but he had become free of its claim through the death of Christ; as Gentiles, the Galatians had not been under law. "Be as I am, for I also am as ye, brethren," is his answer; that is, be free from the law, as being dead to it in Christ; you are Gentiles, and have never been, and are not, under the law at all, and "I am as ye are."

Apparently the Galatians thought that in charging Paul with not living according to the law, they were hurting his feelings, and so he says in verse 12, "ye have not at all wronged me"; he fully acknowledged that whatever he was by birth, and as a man, he had given up. The cross of Christ was the end of both the law and the flesh in God's sight.

Verses 13-15. When he came into Galatia, Paul carried with him something—he does not tell what—connected with his bodily state that made him, or might make him, contemptible to his hearers. It was the thorn in the flesh of 2 Corinthians 12:7. But those to whom the apostle writes received the word which he spoke, received him as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. What had become of the blessedness they then spoke of?

Verses 16-18. The false teachers had succeeded, in measure at least, in alienating the affections of the Galatians from the apostle.

"So I have become your enemy in speaking the truth to you?" They would, if they could, shut out the apostle from any contact with the Galatian saints, in order that they might attach them to themselves. Verse 18 suggests a reference to Philippians 2:12, where the apostle writes in far happier terms of the saints at Philippi:

"Ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence."

In Galatia, on the contrary, the saints, when deprived of the apostle's presence, had soon slipped from the sense of dependence upon God, and taken up with a fleshly use of the law.

Verses 19-20 bring out touchingly the apostle's affection for the saints, a love not weakened by their ingratitude, because that love was, in its source, divine. Perplexed as to them, he wanted to be present with them so as to deal with these believers as their condition of soul might be found to be.

"Tell me, ye who are desirous of being under law, do ye not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one of the maidservant (or bondmaid) and one of the freewoman. But he that was of the maidservant was born according to flesh, and he that was of the free woman through the promise. Which things have an allegorical sense, for these are two covenants, one from Mount Sinai, gendering to bondage, which is Hagar. For Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which is now, for she is in bondage with her children, but the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother.

"For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break out and cry, thou that travailest not; because the children of the desolate, are more numerous than those of her that has a husband.

"But ye, brethren, after the pattern of Isaac, are children of promise. But as then he that was born according to flesh persecuted him that was born according to Spirit, so also it is now. But what says the Scripture? Cast out the maidservant (or bond-maid) and her son, for the son of the maidservant shall not inherit with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not maidservant's children, but children of the free woman" (verses 21-31, JND).

In these verses the Galatian saints are first referred to Genesis 21, verses 9-12, and what light is thrown upon that passage here! A striking contrast is seen between the child "according to flesh" and the child of the free-woman; the one connected with the principle of law embodied in the covenant of Sinai (Ex. 19, 20, etc.), and the other, the child of promise, of the Spirit, connected with the unconditional promise to Abraham in Genesis 22, verses 16-18.

"Jerusalem which is now," full of religion, but in bondage to sin as well as to the Romans, is no longer the mother of the Jew who has believed; he belongs to Jerusalem which is above; he belongs to Christ and thus to the heavenly Jerusalem. In support of this the apostle next quotes Isaiah 54:1, wherein Jerusalem is looked at as restored to God's favor, as it will be in the Millennium. Therein the statement is made that the children of the desolate are more numerous than those of her that has a husband, referring to the period of Israel's being set aside as the people of God, and viewing all that have received the offer of salvation since the day of Pentecost as children of desolate Jerusalem. At the time of which Isaiah 54 speaks, the Christians will be in their promised heavenly place, and the Jews, or the believing remnant of them, will have experienced their great spiritual awakening.

Verses 28 to 31 seem to call for no comment. The law, it is plain, was designed for man in the flesh, but we, believers, are called of God to another condition; we are children of the free woman.

The Epistle to the Galatians, Galatians 4:1-11: The Epistle to the Galatians (4:1-11)

In the last section of the third chapter it was pointed out that the law was not against the promises of God. If a law had been given that was to impart life, then indeed righteousness would have been on the principle of law, but the Scripture has shut up all under sin in order that the promise, by faith in Jesus Christ, should be accomplished in favor of those who believe. But before faith in Christ came, the Jews were kept under the law, shut up to the faith which was about to be revealed.

The law was then the tutor or teacher of the Jews until Christ came, that they might be justified on the principle of faith. Faith having come, says the apostle, we are no longer under a tutor, for ye are all God's sons by faith in Christ Jesus. Believers are no longer viewed as Jews or Gentiles; all natural and man-made distinctions are gone, and "ye are all one in Christ Jesus." But, it is added, if ye are of Christ, then ye are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

"Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he differs nothing from a bondman, though he be lord of all; but he is under guardians and stewards until the period fixed by the father. So we, also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the principles of the world; but when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, come of woman, come under law, that He might redeem those under law, that we might receive sonship. But because ye are sons, God has sent out the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father. So thou art no longer bondman, but son; but if son, heir also through God" (verses 1-7 JND).

All this is surely plain, and as we read it over, we see that all is of God; His eternal purposes are revealed. And in marvelous grace He has acted, after waiting until the "fullness of the time" had been reached, when man's history had shown him not only without strength to act toward God, but also a sinner. God's Son came into the world, taking a relationship with men in lowly grace. Sin and death came in by the woman, and Christ came into the world by woman, though Himself without sin and not subject to death. Through law, man is under condemnation, and Christ in grace put Himself under law also, and thus He came to redeem, that believers might receive sonship, and because they are sons, God has sent the Spirit, whereby they cry Abba, Father. Precious, indeed, this working of divine grace in our souls! What an exchange from the bondage of the Gentiles in nature's darkness, and the bondage of the Jews under law, for the place of God's sons and heirs!

"But then indeed, not knowing God, ye were in bondage to those who by nature are not gods; but now, knowing God, but rather being known by God, how do ye turn again to the weak and beggarly principles to which ye desire to be again anew in bondage? Ye observe days and months and times and years. I am afraid of you, lest indeed I have labored in vain as to you" (verses 8-11, JND).

It is those who had been Gentiles to whom the apostle addresses himself as not knowing God in their former state, because the Jews had a certain knowledge of God under the law. How they must have been shocked at the words, "How do ye turn again to the weak and beggarly principles to which ye desire to be again anew in bondage?" What they had turned to, was the observance of days and seasons, which was a practice of their former human religion, and had a considerable part in it. The Jew, too, had his days and months, etc., of religious observance, originally provided by God as part of a religious system whose purpose was done away at the cross of Christ.

The Galatians, as another has said, "desired to be again in bondage to these wretched elements, worldly and carnal, to which they had formerly been in subjection; these things of which the carnal man could form his religion, without one moral or spiritual thought, and which placed the glory due to God in outward observances which an unbeliever and a heathen ignorant of God could call his religion, and glory in it." (J. N. Darby, Synopsis, Galatians, Chapter 4).

The same writer continues, "Judaism was a human religion ordained of God, but by going back to it, when the ordinance of God was no longer in force, they did but go back to the paganism out of which they had been called to have part with Christ in heavenly things.

"Nothing can be more striking than this statement of what ritualism is after the cross. It is simply heathenism, going back to man's religion when God is fully revealed."

Another writer's remarks in the same connection must find a place here: "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Weigh that expression well. There can not be a more solemn statement as regards the present state of Christendom. What does he mean by saying that these Galatian saints were returning again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which they desired again to be in bondage? They must have been perfectly shocked. Turning again to idolatry! How could this be? They might say, we are only taking up the principle of the law: do you call this the weak and beggarly elements? Why, says the apostle, when you were unconverted you worshipped false gods—idols; but if you, Christians, go and take up Jewish principles, even these feast-days or other principles of the law, you are in principle idolaters, turning back again to that idolatry out of which God delivered you. How is this? The reason is plain. It was not that the law in itself could be idolatrous, or that God did not forbear toward the prejudice of those that were Jews. But here were the Gentile believers resorting to these legal elements. Who told them? These things had lost all their meaning, and a Gentile had nothing to do with them; they had their value as a shadow of Christ, before Christ came; but to turn back from Christ risen from the dead to these mere shadows was in God's sight going back to idolatry. Whenever professing Christendom takes up the law, with its external ceremonials and shadows (quite right as all this was under the law) and adopts them as Christian worship, it has unconsciously, but really, fallen into idolatry.

"...The Holy Ghost presses this upon these Galatian believers, for the evil was only in the germ. If this be true, what a sin to take part in, to countenance or sanction in any way that which is idolatry in God's judgment! The evil is increasing most rapidly. It is not confined now to popery... The essence of our blessing lies in the soul's enjoying Christ by the Word of God—the Holy Ghost giving this enjoyment of Christ apart from everything that acts upon the natural eye or mind. (Wm. Kelly, Lectures on Galatians, published in 1864).

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 4:19-31, Reflections on (4:19-31)

How tender and touching the apostle's language now becomes! "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you. I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you" (vers. 19, 20). He had the feelings both of mother and father towards the saints, as he lets the Thessalonians know (1 Thess. 2:7-12).

He goes beyond Moses here. The lawgiver, when smarting under the perverseness of his charge, was ready to repudiate them. He asked Jehovah why He had afflicted His servant, in laying the burden of the people upon him. "Have I conceived all this people? Have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?" (Num. 11:12). But Paul was willing to travail with the Galatians a second time. He longed to be personally with them that he might see for himself their actual state, and the extent of the damage that had been done. Perhaps then he could change his voice, but at the moment of writing he had the gravest doubts of them.

The apostle now adopts another line. "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" (ver. 21). It is evident that the word "law" has two senses here slightly different from each other. The second use of the word refers to the Old Testament scriptures in general. The quotation that follows is from Genesis. He now illustrates the opposite principles of law and grace by the things that occurred in Abraham's household. "For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bondwoman, was born after the flesh; and he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Hagar," &c. (vers. 22-24). The principle of grace shines brightly in Sarah. When nature was proved impotent, God came in with His promise. It was received in faith, though there was long to wait ere the word was fulfilled. Her son, therefore, sets forth the seed of faith; those who inherit blessing. Hagar, on the other hand, speaks to us of the energy of the flesh, of bondage too. The apostle shows that this is where Jerusalem now is, whatever the boast of the Judaisers who had troubled the Galatians. "For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children" (ver. 25). Yet the Jews boasted to the Lord that they were never in bondage to any (John 8:33)! To submit to Jerusalem now was to place themselves under servitude and to rob their souls of blessing.

What remarkable instruction the Spirit draws forth from so simple a matter as Abraham's two wives! Who would have seen in Sarah and Hagar the principles of law and grace, had not the Spirit of God drawn our attention thus? There is a mine of wealth in the pictures and types of the Old Testament to reward the patient and diligent soul.

To continue, Christians have nothing to do with Jerusalem, or the system of law and bondage connected with her. Christianity knows no center on earth. Our metropolis is in heaven. "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (more correctly "our mother") (ver. 26).

We now get a remarkable quotation from Isaiah. "For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath a husband" (ver. 27). Observe the place in which this is found in the writings of the prophet. In chapter 53. we have Israel bowing to the truth of the atonement, owning the once smitten One as having died for them. Then we hear the remarkable call quoted by the apostle in this epistle. The truth is, that Israel in the coming day will be astonished to learn what God has been doing during their long term of widowhood. They will find that countless children have been born to Abraham-true children of promise. These are reckoned, in a spiritual way, as Jerusalem's progeny. We do well to remember that the gospel started from Jerusalem and all its first preachers were of the Jewish stock. While Israel is estranged God is busy, and many are being brought in to taste the sweetness of His grace.

"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now" (vers. 28, 29). Here another incident is dwelt upon. The Spirit of God saw in the mocking of Ishmael, an expression of the inveterate hatred of flesh to Spirit. Paul knew much of this. Had he been a preacher of circumcision, he would have been spared much. That would have put honor on the first man, and no persecution would have ensued for him. But he was a faithful minister of heavenly things, and had to endure the consequences in his person and circumstances. Others know this in measure.

Those who contend for law and ordinances have ever been bitter persecutors of the true seed of God. The Inquisition and many a burning pile, to say nothing of minor things, furnish painful proofs of it.

“Nevertheless, what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman” (ver. 30). This is Ishmael's lot, as we know. The Galatians must learn that this must be their portion also if they persisted on the ground of flesh and law. There can be no blessing for such, for God will not share His glory with another. Jerusalem was about to be made a solemn example. The Lord had warned His blinded people, but to no purpose. The heavenly light was resisted, flesh and ordinances were clung to; not submitting to God's righteousness, they were still going about to establish their own. The stroke was soon to fall; and Jerusalem was to be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Solemn warning for Christendom, if men had eyes to see, and ears to hear! Soon will God's hand fall there also, let men boast never so loudly.

But Paul hoped better things of his beloved Galatians. “So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” (ver. 31). Believers in Jesus are Sarah's children, heirs according to promise. Such will not be cast out, when the Ishmaels are rejected, but be preserved and blessed by God to the glory of His grace.

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 4:8-18, Reflections on (4:8-18)

BUT what were the Galatians before the gospel of Christ was brought to them by Paul? Simply idolaters, as all the heathen around them. “Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods” (ver. 8). How contemptuously the apostle describes their old heathen deities! And how strongly he speaks of their votaries! Philosophers though many of them were, they knew not God. They might be well stored with the wisdom of this world, and be able to moralize, etc.; but Godward their hearts were hardened and their understandings darkened. They were totally ignorant of Him.

Here we see the importance of noticing Paul's use of the pronouns “we” and “ye,” as already pointed out. All this could not be said of Paul and his fellow-Jews. They did not follow after heathen idolatry. They abhorred it and had the utmost contempt for it and its victims. Whatever the disgraceful proneness of the Jews before the Babylonish captivity, they kept clear of idolatry afterward. True, the house was only empty, but neither occupied nor cleansed, though swept and garnished. Still they were not idolaters; the Gentiles around them were.

And what were the Galatians doing now? “But now, after 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? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain” (vers. 9-11). This may sound strong language to some, but it is the faithful language of the Holy Spirit. They were not returning to their old gods, but were going after Judaism, with its legal requirements and ritual observances. And this is called a return to idolatry! Judaism was a system set up and once owned of God, being expressive of Christ in all its parts. Indeed, souls established in grace can turn back at all times to the books of Exodus, Leviticus, etc. and find real delight in all the Spirit's unfoldings of Christ that are found there in a typical way. Viewed from such a standpoint the old order was very far removed from idolatry. But Christ having come, the substance of all is here; heavenly realities have been brought in. Consequently a Judaism perpetuated by willful and blinded men is now idolatry. It is sensuous religion, in which flesh can engage and delight itself. Things that spoke once of Christ are now weak and beggarly elements, and the whole atmosphere is one of bondage.

Solemn words for thousands in this day! Christendom has always been more or less infatuated with its law-keeping, feast-days, and ritual in general. But now the enemy of souls seems determined to darken in this way all the light which God of late years has shed through His word, to say nothing of the partial, help graciously granted at the Reformation. Men are mad after weak and beggarly elements in every direction. Such things are placed between the soul and Christ, involving darkness and ruin. So gravely did the apostle regard this movement among the Galatians that he feared lest he had bestowed labor upon them in vain. What would he say of Christendom now?

It is well to compare this with his very different tone in Rom. 14. There he insists on toleration and contends that he that regards one day above another, regards it to the Lord. Here we may see, not contradiction, but the exceeding grace of the Holy Spirit. The Romans were evidently a mixed company. Some had been Jews, others had been Gentiles. He would not have the latter impatient and ungracious as to the prejudices of their brethren, but would have the weak dealt with considerately by those who judged themselves strong in the faith. Here in Galatians, it was no question of dealing patiently with souls who had been formerly under legal bondage and were slow to unlearn; but of recalling men who never had been in that position, and who were now hankering after it. The apostle does not deal with all alike; let us learn in the school of God to do the same.

Paul appeals now to his erring children by his own former relations with them. “Brethren, I beseech you, be as I [am], for I [am] as ye: ye have not injured me at all” (ver. 12). He was free from the law, and was thus where believing Gentiles properly were. They had done him no wrong in insinuating that he was no longer under law. He had learned deliverance through the death and resurrection of Christ and gloried in it. These Galatians owed everything to him. “Ye know how through (in) 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” (vers. 13, 14). His thorn in the flesh was a real trouble to the devoted apostle, and rendered him very despicable as a speaker in the eyes of some. But when the Spirit is at work, souls are occupied with the message, not with the messenger. Thus it had been in Galatia. Had he been an angel come straight from heaven, yea, had he been Christ Himself, they could not have received him more warmly and gratefully. His speech distilled as the dew, and those who had been poor blinded idolaters found peace and rest in Jesus through his instrumentality. Was it all a dream? “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 eyes, and have given them to me. Am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” (vers. 15, 16). Alas how fickle is man! The same thing may be observed in the Corinthians. Paul had brought them abundance of blessing, but it took very little to alienate them seriously from him. He loved them greatly, but he was little loved in return.

As in Corinth, so in Galatia, there were those who sought deliberately to alienate the saints. Paul had his detractors in many directions. “They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them” (ver. 17). Such men sought influence among them that they might draw them after themselves away from him who had served them so well. Wretched party work! Alas! the spirit of it is not dead yet. They cared little that this would result in the Galatians losing the valuable ministry of the apostle. Self was their object, everything else was secondary.

Paul is cutting, yet the wounds of a friend are kind. “But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you” (ver. 18). How differently he could write to the Philippians! They were not only steadfast when he was among them, but much more in his absence (Phil. 2:12). They confided in the Lord, and were thus sustained; the Galatians lent an ear to the seducer and were turning aside.

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 4:1-7, Reflections on (4:1-7)

THE apostle has said that we are all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus. He now proceeds to open this out more fully and shows the glory of this wonderful relationship and position, with its results in the coming day, when Christ takes up His universal inheritance. In doing so, he puts in strong contrast the position of believers under law before Christ. They were heirs, undoubtedly, but their state was that of infancy.

“Now I say that the heir, so long as he is a child (infant), differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children (infants) were in bondage under the elements of the world” (ver. 1-3). This is a principle of great importance, and helps us to understand much that would otherwise be very difficult with regard to the saints of the Old Testament times.

An infant may be heir to vast possessions, but know little or nothing of it. Until the suited age is reached, he is under restriction and therefore little better than a servant. When the moment comes, he is put in possession of everything, and can enjoy to the full all the advantages of his position.

The Old Testament saints were in this condition of nonage. There was, of course, a positive link of relationship between their souls and God, but there was but little knowledge, or enjoyment of what was involved in it. They looked up confidingly to God and counted on Him in His own time to make good all His word. He promised salvation—they waited for it; He said that He would bring near His righteousness—they looked for it. But these things and many other blessings came not until Christ came and meanwhile believers were kept under the law and its ordinances as under a tutor.

Even those who followed the Lord in the days of His flesh were in this state also. In many respects they were very privileged men. Their eyes saw, and their ears heard things which many prophets and righteous men before them had greatly desired to see and hear (Matt. 13:16-17). Their position being in advance of those who had preceded them, the Lord (as we know) gave them a prayer suited to their then state (Matt. 6:9); a prayer decidedly in advance of the utterances of Old Testament saints, though as yet short of Christianity. Still they were under law, Redemption must be accomplished and Christ must take His place before God as risen ere the new place for man in Him could be unfolded.

We must be careful to keep before us that the apostle is describing the former condition of himself and his fellow-Jewish brethren. Gentiles were not thus under the law, their state was wholly different as we shall presently see. “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (vers. 4, 5). “The fullness of time” is an important expression here. The Seed was spoken of in Eden, but God suffered some 4,000 years to run their course ere He sent Him forth. Herein we may see the perfect wisdom of His ways. He would allow man to fully demonstrate his condition. He tried the creature in a variety of ways, under conscience and under law, sending prophets, &c. But what was the result? Man proved himself in every way an incurable creature—sin, transgression and enmity abounded. “In due time Christ died for the ungodly.” “Once in the consummation of the ages hath he appeared.”

When thus sent forth, the Lord Jesus came of a woman, and came under the law. He took upon Him true humanity, real tangible flesh and blood, yet not sinful flesh, though in the likeness of it; in Him humanity was seen holy. Adam was formed innocent. Innocence is simplicity as regards good and evil; holiness implies a knowledge of both, but abhorrence of the one and love of the other. Such was Christ.

When we think of Him as “come” (not “made”) “of a woman,” we are not on peculiarly Jewish ground. Having linked Himself thus with man in grace, all may appropriate Him in faith, Gentile as well as Jew, for the need of their souls. But as “come under the law,” Jewish believers are particularly before us. He came where they were, bowed beneath the curse of a broken law, that He might buy them out once for all from such a condition. What a contrast between the bondage of the law and the liberty of sonship! Yet how slow souls are to grasp it! One has only to read the Acts of the Apostles to see how very slow the Jerusalem brethren were to grasp their full deliverance and their new place in Christ risen. God bore with a mixed state of things till Jerusalem was destroyed.

It is to be remarked that Paul alone uses the word “son.” In John's Gospel and Epistles the term uniformly is “children,” and it is not a distinction without a difference. The latter expresses the tie of life and falls quite within John's line of things; “son” implies rather position. Thus believers now are placed in full possession of all the title-deeds of their heavenly position, and are admitted also into the Father's confidence, and know His mind and counsel through the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. If Rom. 8 be consulted, the two terms will be found alternating; we are both “children” and “sons.”

Being sons, the Spirit is given, a privilege unknown until Christ was glorified. “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (vers. 6). Mark the change from “we” to “ye.” When it was a question of former bondage to law, the apostle did not include the Galatians; now when he speaks of present blessing and relationship, he says “ye,” for it was as true of them as

of himself and all the brethren with him. Thus all believers have received from God His great gift. The Spirit is here to instruct us as to our place and portion and to lead our souls into enjoyment of it all. He directs our thoughts and hearts to heaven, to the glory into which the Son has gone. Through His gracious ministry we know ourselves to be in Him there, blessed with all His blessings, in the enjoyment of His relationship to the Father.

Our proper cry now is “Abba, Father.” This is very different from the cries of believers of previous dispensations. If the Psalms be examined, Jehovah will be found appealed to, to burn up their enemies, to drive them away like stubble; and the man is praised who would dash their little ones against the wall. Are these Christian sentiments? Assuredly not. Yet they are all inspired of God and proper in their place. The speakers were saints of God but under law; Christians are under grace, free from law, and know God as fully revealed in Christ.

Let us rightly divide the word of truth. To go back to the book of Psalms for proper Christian experience is to lose the savor of grace and to breathe legalism; it is to climb down from heaven to earth. If the Psalms are really understood, they yield a harvest of blessing to the soul; but if misunderstood and misapplied, as alas! is too often done, only loss can result.

Being sons and having the Spirit, we are no longer servants. “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (ver. 7). This is incomparably higher than angels will ever know. They are servants, His ministers who do His pleasure, but they cannot say “Father,” nor join in redemption's song. This was reserved for sinners, picked up by the. sovereign grace of God. Men sometimes have sons who are not heirs, because they do not choose to give them a portion. But there are none such in the family of God. All will share with the Only-begotten; when He takes up His rights and administers all things, we shall be with Him as sharers through grace.

The Unpopular Truth as to Christmas and Easter, Truth As to Christmas and Easter, The (4:10-11)

John Wesley

Nearly everyone in Christendom celebrates Christmas, sends gifts and wishes the usual “Merry Christmas,” gladly taking it for granted that it must be right. In fact, it has become such a favorite tradition that inquiry as to its origin, which may be found in encyclopedias and unbiased church histories, is shunned. The Word of God does not justify its annual celebration either, but sternly condemns it in Galatians 4:1011: “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.” Thus the observance itself, whether pious or riotous, is condemned.

The blessed Saviour did not come to make His birthday and His name to be popularized by the world. “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15). “Christ died for the ungodly” (Rom. 5:6).

Christian Treasury: Volume 10, Genesis and the Father (4:4-5,19)

Galatians 4 and the Father

In Genesis we have the Father. It is the book of the Patriarchs, and the affections of the Father are displayed and exercised there very beautifully.

Abraham, as well as others in this book, desires a child, and though his house might have been established in a servant, a loved and trusted servant too, Eliezer of Damascus, this will not do for him, As long as he went childless, his heart was not satisfied.

He makes a feast when his son Isaac is weaned, for this was his joy, to hear himself addressed as a father. Sarah will then also have the house cleared of the bondwoman and her child.

Jacob adopts the sons of Joseph, giving them the place and inheritance of the firstborn, and welcoming them with full affection.

These are among the instances, which we find in these early patriarchal days, of the counsel and affections of our heavenly Father, shadowed or expressed in these, His representatives, in the book of Genesis. And I may add, there is no law, no Moses, no schoolmaster in this book. God has the elect immediately under His own hand and eye, dealing with them by home method, so to speak, and not as by the intervention of "tutors and governors.”

The law came afterward, and then the elect were carried to school, and put under rules and ordinances foreign to the home of the family, treated rather as servants than as children. The head of a school is a schoolmaster.

The dispensation of the Spirit has now come. The Son Himself has been manifested. He was made of a woman, made under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. The elect are now put on the ground of His accomplished redemption and in the acceptableness of His loved Person.

Now this condition of things is the Father's delight. There was a need of the schoolmaster for a season, but that need has been answered and the Father has His child home again. This is not the age of the infant, the child that cannot speak, but the age or dispensation of the son, the elect who have the Spirit. The Spirit of adoption cries, "Abba, Father," filling the house with that music. It is the time of the weaned Isaac, and all that appertains to the bondwoman must leave the house.

This, again I say, is the Father's delight. The affection of the Father finds occasion to indulge itself to the full.

The Galatians, however, were disappointing His affection. They were returning to ordinances. This is contrary to the spirit of adoption, taking the elect from the Father's house again to put them under tutors and governors as before, destroying the free, gracious, confiding communion of children with their Father. They were bringing back Hagar to the house. And it is this which the Spirit so earnestly resents in this part of the Epistle to the Galatians (see chapter 4). It is the grieved and wounded bosom of the Father that speaks in this fervent epistle. Sarah had expressed this resentment in the book of Genesis when she said, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son." That word is quoted in Galatians, for here, in like manner, the Spirit, in the behalf, so to speak, of the Father, expresses the like resentment. Paul would act the part of a parent in this epistle (Gal. 4:19).

By faith we are justified (Gal. 3:11); by faith we are made children (Gal. 3:26). A return to ordinances or works of law, therefore, reproaches Christ as though He had not accomplished our justification. But it also silences in our hearts the cry of adoption and thus disappoints the love of the Father. And i t is this which this chapter, with some indignation, resents.

I feel that this gives this part of the epistle a very affecting and beautiful character. It is the resentment, or uttered disappointment, of Him who as long ago as the days of Abraham and Sarah let His elect know this—that no condition of things as between Him and them would satisfy His heart, but the relationship of a father to those who not only are, but also know themselves to be, children. Those are weaned, like Isaac, from the milk of ordinances and brought home to the Father's house and to the good of the Father's table. When our relationship to God becomes the subject of our souls, how commanding it is—at least, if it be a real thing with us. We may be anxious, merely calmly inquiring, or be joyful, but however such affections may vary, they are commanding.

Look at David, happy in God when conveying the ark home—what an "object" in the thoughts of others this made him! Look at him again when under conviction in the day of Oman's threshing-floor. How full of humiliation and yet of self-sacrifice he was!

Look at the congregation of Israel when happy in God in the day of the coronation of David. How large-hearted they were. And look at the princes of Israel in the day of dedicating the house of God with David.

Look at Peter in the hour of his conviction, how careless he was whether the boat sank or swam.

And see Zaccheus, interested in inquiring after Jesus, how heedless of the crowd and of the tree in which he was. Then when happy in Jesus, how heedless of the injurious speeches of the people.

Thus the eunuch, when an inquirer, was not moved by the strange and sudden appearance of a stranger. Then when he was satisfied, he was not moved by the still more strange and sudden disappearance of his companion.

When the Galatians apprehended Jesus at the first, see what manner of "blessedness" was among them (ch. 4). When the Hebrews were illuminated, what unstinted joy, leading to self-sacrifice, was in them (Heb. 10).

All these instances illustrate what I have suggested. When the Lord really becomes the object, how commanding a relation to our hearts He fills and maintains! Others become secondary.

From Words of Truth

Bible Witness and Review: Volume 1, Faith, The (3:23)

Gal. 3:23.-" Faith" is not here put for its object, I think, but is contrasted with the law when fully declared to be the sole means of justification, as it was after the cross of Jesus, when all pretension to stand before God on the law was manifestly at an end. Faith was always that whereby saints were justified really, even while the Levitical system had its place, and, if I may so say, obscured the faith which wais within: then all that was outward fell, and the faith stood revealed.

Edification: Volume 5, Our Scripture Portion. (3:10-29)

(Gal. 3:10 — 4:4).

Please have your Bible open at the passage indicated above as you read this article. The writer takes it for granted that you will do this, and consequently all his references to Scripture are in the briefest possible form.

FROM beginning to end this third chapter is filled with contrasts. On the one side we have the law and the works that it demanded, the flesh, upon which the law’s demands were made, and the curse which fell when the law’s demands were broken. On the other side we find the faith of the Gospel, the Spirit given, and blessing bestowed. We have spoken of contrasts, but after all the contrast is really one, only worked out in a variety of different ways.

The Spirit and the flesh are brought into contrast in verse 3. Now in verse 10 we get the curse of the law in contrast with the blessing of believing Abraham. The curse was pronounced against every one that did not continue doing all things that the law demanded. No one did so continue, and hence all who were placed under the law came under the curse. It was enough to be “of the works of the law” —that is, to have to stand or fall in one’s relations Godward by the response one gave to the law’s demands — to be under the curse. Man being what he is, the moment any one has to stand before God on that ground he is lost.

The Jews, who had the law, hardly seem to have realized this. On the contrary they looked upon the law as being the means of their justification. Contented with a very superficial obedience to some of its demands, they were “going about to establish their own righteousness,” as Paul puts it in Romans 10:3. In this of course they utterly failed, for in their own Scriptures it, had been put on record that, “the just shall live by faith.” And faith is not the principle upon which the law is based, but rather that of works. The whole matter briefly summed up stands thus: — By law men come under the curse and die. By faith men are justified and live.

The curse which the law pronounced was a perfectly just sentence. The Jew having been placed under the law, its curse rested upon him, and it had to be righteously borne ere it could be lifted off him in the death of Christ the curse was borne, and hence the believing Jew is redeemed from beneath it. In the days of Moses, the curse had been specially connected with the one who died as a transgressor by hanging on a tree. Many a one in ancient days, reading Deuteronomy 21:23, may have wondered why the curse was thus linked with death on a tree, as distinguished from death by any other means, such as stoning, or the sword. Now we know. In due season the Redeemer was to bear the curse for others, thus honoring the law, by hanging on a tree. It is another case of how the Scripture foresees!

The bearing of the curse was in view of the bestowal of the blessing. Verse 14 speaks to us of this, presenting the blessing in a twofold way. First, there is “the blessing of Abraham,” which is righteousness. Second, there is the gift of the Spirit, a blessing beyond anything bestowed upon Abraham. The wonder of the work of Christ is this, that righteousness now rests upon Gentiles who believe, as well as upon believers who are Abraham’s children according to the flesh. All who believe are in a spiritual sense the children of Abraham, as verse 7 informed us.

In Old Testament days the Spirit was promised, as for instance in Joel 2:28, 29. We who believe, whether Jews or Gentiles, receive the Spirit today. Thus by faith we anticipate the blessing so fully to be enjoyed in the millennial day.

For the moment however the Apostle does not pursue the subject of the Holy Spirit. When we enter chapters 4 we learn something, as to the meaning of His indwelling, and in chapter 5, we have an unfolding of His operations. In our chapter is pursued the subject of the law, and the place it had in the ways of God, and this in order to lead up to the unfolding of the proper Christian position — as stated in the early verses of chapters 4, —which is the central theme of the epistle. And first of all certain difficulties are cleared out of the way; misconceptions and objections flawing from a false view of the functions of the law, held by the Judaizing teachers and doubtless instilled by them into the minds of the Galatians.

The first of these is taken up in verse 15 to 18. In so many minds the covenant of law had completely overshadowed the covenant of promise made with Abraham. But as we have just seen the covenant of law inevitably brings nothing but its curse. Blessing can only be reached by way of the covenant of promise which culminates in Christ. It cannot arrive partly by law and partly by promise. Verse 18 states this. The inheritance of blessing if by the law is not by promise, and this of course is true vice versa. The fact is, it is by promise. Thanks be unto God!

But was not the law intended as a kind of revision of the original testament, a kind of codicil, so to speak? Not at all, for as verse 15 says, it can be neither disannulled nor added thereto. It is an old trick of dishonest men to procure the rejection of a disliked document by foisting into it an addition so contradictory of its main provisions as to stultify the whole. This is not allowed amongst men, and we must not conceive of God’s covenant of promise as being less sacred than human documents. The law, which was not given until 430 years after, has not disannulled it. Nor has it been added to it in order to modify its blessed simplicity. It was never intended to do either of these things.

Verse 16 is worthy of special note, not only because it declares in such an unmistakable way that from the outset the covenant was in view of Christ and His redeeming work, but also because of the remarkable way in which the Apostle argues as to the Old Testament prediction. The Holy Spirit inspired him to hinge the whole point upon the word, “Seed,” being in the singular and not in the plural. Thereby He indicated how fully inspired was His earlier utterance. Not merely was the word inspired, but the exact form of the word. The inspiration was not merely verbal, i.e. hang to do with words, but even literal, i.e. having to do with letters.

Accepting Paul’s argument, stated in the verses we have just considered, a further difficulty might well present itself to any mind. If then the law, given over 400 years after Abraham, had no effect upon the earlier covenant, neither annulling it nor modifying it, does it not seem to have lacked any definite purpose? An objector might declare that such doctrine as this leaves the law shorn of all point and meaning, and feel that he was propounding a regular poser in simply asking, Why then the law?

This is exactly the question with which verse 19 opens. The answer to this is very brief, and it appears to be twofold. In the first place, it was given in order that men’s sins might become, in the breaking of it, definite transgressions. This point is more fully stated in Romans 5:13. In the second place, it served a useful purpose in connection with Israel, filling up the time until the advent of Christ, by prong their need of Him. It was ordained through angels, and through a human mediator, in the person of Moses. But then the very fact of a mediator supposes two parties. God is one; who is the other? Man is the other. And since the whole arrangement was made to hinge upon the doings of man, the other party, it promptly failed.

In definitely convicting men of transgressions the law has done a work of extreme importance. What is right, and what is wrong? What does God require of men? Before the law was given there was some knowledge, and conscience was at work, as is indicated in Romans 2:14, 15. But when the law came, all vagueness disappeared; for all, who were under it, the plea of ignorance totally disappeared and, when brought into judgment for their transgressions, not a shred of an excuse remained. We Gentiles were never formally placed under it, but as a matter of fact we know about it, and our very knowledge of it will make us amenable to the judgment of God in a way and degree unknown to the savage and unenlightened tribes of the earth. So let us take care.

In verse 21 another question is raised, which springs out of the foregoing. Some might jump to the conclusion that if, as shown, the law was not supplementary to the covenant of promise it must necessarily be in opposition to it. This is not so for one moment. Had the law been intended by God to provide righteousness for man, He would have endowed it with power to give life. The law instructed, demanded, urged, threatened and, when it had been broken, it condemned the transgressor to death. Yet none of these things availed. The one thing needful was to bestow upon man a new life, in which it would be as natural to him to fulfill the law, as now it is natural to him to break it. That the law could not do; instead it has proved us all to be under sin, thus revealing our need of that which has been introduced through Christ.

Thus the law, instead of being in any way in opposition, fits in harmoniously with all the rest of God's great scheme. Until Christ came it has played the part of "the schoolmaster," acting as our guardian and maintaining some, measure of control. In verse 24 the words, "to bring us," are in italics, there being no corresponding words in the original. They should not be there. The point is not that the law leads us to Christ, but that it exercised its control as tutor until Christ came. When Christ appeared, a new order of things was instituted, and there was justification for us on the principle of faith, and not by works.

This new order of things is spoken of in verse 23 as the coming of faith. Again in verse 25 we have the words, "after that faith is come." Faith was found of course in all the saints of Old Testament days, as is shown by Hebrews 11, and by the passage from Habakkuk, quoted in verse 11 of our chapter. When Christ came, the faith of 'Christ stood revealed, and faith was publicly acknowledged as being the way, and the only way, by which man can have to do with God in blessing. In that sense "faith came," and its coming marked the inauguration of an entirely new epoch.

By faith in Christ Jesus we have been introduced into the favored place of "sons of God." The word in verse 26 is "sons," and not "children." The saints under the law were like children in a state of infancy; under age, and hence under the schoolmaster. The believer of the present age is like a child who has reached his majority, and hence, leaving the state of tutelage behind, he takes his place as a son in his father's house. This great thought, which is the controlling thought of the epistle, is more largely developed in the early verses of chapter 4 Before reaching them however, we have three important facts stated in the three closing verses of chapter 3.

By our baptism we have, as a matter of profession, put on Christ. Had we submitted to circumcision we should have put on Judaism, and thereby committed ourselves to the fulfilling of the law for justification. Had we been baptized to John's baptism we should have put on the robe of professed repentance and committed ourselves to believe on the One that should come after him. As it is we have, if baized to Christ, put on Christ and committed ourselves to that practical expression of the life of Christ which in the next chapter is spoken of as "the fruit of the Spirit." As sons of God, having now the liberty of the house, we put on Christ as our fitness to be there.

Further, we are "in Christ Jesus," and consequently we are "all one," with all distinctions obliterated, whether national, social, or natural. When we get to the last chapter we shall find that in Christ Jesus there is new creation, which accounts for the removal of all the distinctions belonging to the old creation. This new creation work has reached us as to our souls already, though not yet as to our bodies. Hence we cannot as yet take up these things in an absolute way. For that we must wait until we are clothed upon with our bodies of glory at the coming of the Lord. Still even now we are in Christ Jesus, and hence can learn to view each other apart from and as lifted above these distinctions.

Let us take note that what is taught here is the abolition of these distinctions in Christ Jesus, and not in the assembly. We say this to safeguard the point and preserve from misconceptions. In the assembly, for instance, the distinction between male and female is very definitely maintained, as is shown in 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35.

We have already had three things which mark the believer of today in contradistinction from believers before Christ came. We are "sons of God;" we have put on Christ;" we are "in Christ Jesus." The last verse of our chapter gives us a fourth thing: we are "Christ's," and belonging to Him we are in a spiritual sense Abraham's seed, and consequently heirs, not according to law, but to promise.

The opening verses of chapters 4 gather up the thoughts that have occupied the latter part of chapters 3, and summarize them in very crisp fashion. The custom that prevailed in the houses of the nobility — and that still in measure prevail in such circles, —are used as an illustration. The heir to the estate, so long as he is in infancy, is placed under restraint, just as the servants are. Tutors and governors hold him in what appears to him to be bondage. He just has to do as he is told, and as yet he knows not the reason why. He cannot yet be given the full liberty of his father's house and estate; for his character and intelligence is not yet sufficiently formed. However his father knows when the time will arrive, and the day is fixed when he will come of age and enter into the privileges and responsibilities of life.

It was just thus with God's people in the former day under the law, which was as a schoolmaster to them. Children they might be, but they were treated as servants, and rightly so. It was no question of their individual eminence as saints of God, but simply of the dispensation in which they lived. No greater man than John the Baptist was ever born, yet as the Lord has told us, "he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11:11). In their days God had not yet been fully revealed, redemption had not been accomplished, the Spirit had, not been given. Until these three great events had come to pass, the conditions were not established which permitted the "coming of age" of the people of God. All three did come to pass when on the scenes there arrived the Son of God.

When He came God's people passed from under the schoolmaster of the law, whose control was exercised according to the "elements," or "principles," of the world, and they came under the control of the Spirit of God, exercised according to the principles of grace and of God.

The trouble today with a good many of us is that we have been brought up on loose and easy-going lines, and consequently we know very little of the stern dealings of the righteous old schoolmaster! If only our consciences had been brought more fully under the righteous admonition and condemnation of the law, we should possess a far keener sense of the mighty emancipation which has reached us through the advent of the Son of God.

May God, somehow or other, yet work this sense into all our hearts.

F. B. Hole.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Mediator Is Not of One, but God Is One?, The (3:20)

Question: Gal. 3:20: what is meant by "the mediator is not of one, but God is one"? D.

Answer: It is the principle of the law on the one hand, and of promise on the other; which the apostle contrasts, in order to deliver the Galatians or any other souls from the dangerous error of mingling them together, as unbelief is prone to do. The legal mediator is intended, Moses, not Christ; and that office implies two parties: God demanding right, and sinful man wholly unable to render it. The law therefore cannot but be for sinners a ministry of death and condemnation, as we are told in 2 Cor. 3. It is wholly different with promise; for this rests on the sole and unfailing fidelity of God Who cannot lie. As God is the only party to promise in His sovereign and unconditional grace, all He promises comes to fruition. “God is one”; whereas under law man, being under obligation to perform and failing through sin, all his hopes thus come to nothing. God on the contrary accomplishes all in and by Christ, and hence to faith. And as in Him is the Yea, so through Him also is the Amen (2 Cor. 1).

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, "To Bring Us Unto Christ" (3:24)

Question: Is the A. V. [and Revised] “to bring us unto Christ” a correct translation? or does the text mean “until” or “up to” Christ? W. D.

Answer: The Geneva V. by the English refugees (1557) seems. to have suggested first, in our tongue at least, the words printed in italics. Cranmer’s Bible in 1539 gave merely the literal “unto”; but Tyndale (1534) has “unto the tyme of,” which is in sense equivalent to “until.” So ἕως is sometimes added to lend strength or precision; sometimes is used alone, as are ἄχρι and μέχρι, as more definite, though each has its own propriety. “Unto,” “for,” or “up to” appears safest, though the temporal meaning is often legitimate, whether an epoch or point as “until” or a period as “for.” But it is even more frequently used ethically for aim, state or effect,. and, result,, as the case may require. So it means here: certainly not “in” Christ, as Wiclif and the Rhemish following the error of the Vulgate: εἰς never really has such a force. Nor is it correct to confound the “child-guide” with the “schoolmaster” or teacher. Even 1 Cor. 4:15 uses the word disparagingly, though the apostle be not contrasting the law as in Gal. 3 with the promise and the gospel. Severe dealing is implied in both, not parental love. The law shut up and kept in ward; but Christ sets free. Law may alarm and distress the soul; it cannot deliver; yet how often God has used it to drive the laboring and heavily burdened to Him Who alone gives rest! a use rather negative than positive; for indeed its ministry is of death and condemnation. But what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God has done; for He, sending His own Son in likeness of flesh of sin and [as offering] for sin, condemned [not us, but] sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us that walk not after the flesh but the Spirit. Our Savior annulled death and brought to light life and incorruption through the gospel.

It is a blessed thought that Christ will Himself introduce us into the Father’s house—into heaven. What an entrance will that be, when He leads us in, the fruit of the travail of His soul, His own, and glorified according to His worth, and all His heavenly company there! And we await that day.

“Jehovah” is in the mouth of the writer of the Book of Job, not of the personages in it: so in the first two chapters. It was important to identify Jehovah with the God of all ages and all dealings with men but the persons whose history is recounted did not so know Him, and they say “God” and “Almighty” This is all natural and true, living its true moral date to the Book.

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 3:21-29, Reflections on (3:21-29)

ANOTHER difficulty is now gone into and settled by the apostle. If law, instead of helping man to attain to righteousness, only brings out transgression, is it against the promises of God? “Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid. For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by law” (ver. 21). Life was set before those who were under the law, as ver. 12 shows; but it must be attained to by human righteousness. But the law was weak through the flesh. Flesh is so utterly antagonistic to God that it will not walk in His ways. Its whole course is marked by self-will and sin. Hence the law could not give life. It could only condemn and slay law-breakers. Therefore righteousness is not on the principle of law for any. “But the scripture hath concluded (or shut up) all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe” (ver. 22). Jew and Gentile were alike sinners before God, the one breaking the known commands of God; the other giving loose rein to his passions and lusts, All are brought in guilty, the matter being gone into fully in Rom. 1-3 But now the promise is accomplished to all who believe. The Jew has no exclusive claims certainly, being in the same prison-house as the Gentiles, as it were, through guilt. Grace makes the promise good to all believers, whoever they may be; righteousness is imputed on the principle of faith in Jesus Christ.

Now before Christ came to accomplish this great work on behalf of man that all who believe in Him risen and glorified might be justified, believers, especially among the Jews were kept shut up in the school-house of the law. “But before faith came, we were kept under law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed” (ver. 23). They were waiting really until God brought in His better thing. Meanwhile they were kept under restraint and in separation from the heathen around them by the possession of the law. “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster” (vers. 24, 25). All this should appeal powerfully to the Galatians. Those who believed before their day had been under the hand of the legal pedagogue; Christianity having come they had been set free. And were Gentiles going after that which even Jews had left as suited only to an infantine condition? What utter misunderstanding of the mind of God! What serious surrender of the surpassingly excellent place that belongs to the Christian!

“For ye are all children (sons) of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (ver. 26). What an immensely superior place and relationship to that of an infant under law! Notice again in this place, the apostle's use of the pronouns: “We were kept under the law,” “the law was our schoolmaster.” He refers to himself and to his fellow Jewish saints, and does not include the brethren of the uncircumcision to whom he was writing. But when he speaks of privilege and blessing, these are as much for the believing Greek as for the Jew, hence he says “Ye.” We are called to have part with Christ, to enter into His relationship with the Father, the power of which is made good in our souls by the Holy Ghost.

Baptism is here brought in, being a sign of our having part thus with the dead and risen Christ. “For as many of you as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ” (ver. 27). It is not implied that some had not been baptized. No such idea must be inferred from this passage. In early days, when love was fresh and warm, and the commands of the Lord were more exactly obeyed, those who were used of God in the gospel of His Son baptized forthwith those who believed, or saw to the matter, that it was done by other approved men. J. N. D.'s reading may be preferred in this place, “for ye, as many as have been baptized unto Christ, etc.” The apostle means the whole body of those to whom he was writing. He shows them by the well-known ordinance of baptism, that they had part with Christ, as a rebuke to their hankering after a bygone state of things—the bondage of law.

In Christ all fleshly distinctions disappear. “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” (ver. 28). All these differences pertain, to the old creation. All are brought into equal blessing and privilege in the risen Christ. It is a question of our place and portion in Him. Let us be careful to confine the passage thus. Ere this, it has been used to set aside or slight the relationships of life; and it has been brought forward as justifying the woman in taking the man's place in the services of God. But this is to utterly pervert the plain words of the apostle. All the relationships of life are sanctioned by God in Christianity as previously, and are all regulated in the Epistles of the New Testament. And it must not be forgotten that the woman's place was ordered and settled before the fall, and has not been touched by it, save that bitterness and sorrow have come in, as solemn results.

Here, however, we are considering, not our relative places on earth, but our position now before God in Christ. We have His place, through grace. “And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise” (ver. 29). The apostle has been reasoning earlier that Christ is the true seed of Abraham. Here He brings us into the same place. We share it. All that is true of Him, as the risen and accepted Man is true of every one that believes. He has given us His standing and portion, and we are to inherit all things with Him in the coming day. Let us not lose sight of it, nor look to the things behind, as the Galatians to their hurt and sorrow.

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 3:15-20, Reflections on (3:15-20)

Now another subject is treated—the relation of the law to the promises of God. Law having come in, is it the true ground of blessing, to the setting aside of the promises made of old to Abraham? No one could question that the Gentiles have an interest in the promises, at least in those to which the apostle here refers, “Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto” (ver. 15). Such is the apostle's simple method of dealing with the matter. Would God do less than man? Even man holds to a confirmed covenant. When once the document is signed and sealed, the matter is closed, it cannot be set aside or added to. “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God to Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect” (vers. 16-17).

It is of moment to understand the particular promises to which the apostle here alludes. It is beyond question that some of the promises refer solely to the natural seed, but these are not before us in this place. The apostle is speaking of those which involve blessing for Gentiles. In Gen. 12 God said to Abraham, “in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” None can limit such a word as this. It shows how the heart of God went out to all even in earliest times, and that blessing for Gentiles was ever before His mind. But on what ground? Certainly not that of law, to which the foolish Galatians were vainly turning; for the law had no existence when God thus expressed Himself to the father of the faithful. The promise was unconditional, and depends on God alone for fulfillment. It was not drawn forth by anything in man, nor even in Abraham individually; it flowed solely from the grace of His heart.

Moreover He confirmed the word many years after, and who can annul a confirmed covenant? Observe carefully the occasion of its confirmation. It is found in Gen. 22. There we see Abraham offering up his only begotten son, and receiving him again from the dead (in figure); expressive type of the dead and risen Christ. This being all accomplished, the angel of Jehovah called to him out of heaven and said, “By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” This must not be mixed up with the word in the previous verse. There Abraham is told that his seed should be multiplied as the stars of heaven, and as the sand upon the seashore, and that they should possess the gate of their enemies. This clearly refers to Israel and includes no blessing for the Gentiles, but rather the reverse. This will be fully realized in a day yet to come, when Israel shall be led in triumph over all their foes, and all shall be subdued under them. But this is not what the apostle is reasoning upon in Galatians. His mind is fixed upon the precious word, “In thy seen shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” The seed here, he argues, is singular, not plural—it is Christ. What minute attention we should pay to scripture, if so much depends on a single letter! “He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” The omissions of the Spirit of God are as instructive as His words, to such as have eyes to see, and ears to hear.

The substance of the argument is this; that the promise concerning Gentile blessing was altogether unconditional on God's part, and that it is settled and sure in Christ dead and risen. Consequently, the law, which was given of God at Sinai four hundred and thirty years later, cannot disannul it, “For if the inheritance be of law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise” (ver.18). The two principles are opposed in nature and character. If the inheritance is on the principle of works, it becomes a matter of debt, not of promise at all; whereas it is clear that God gave it to the patriarch by promise. If blessing really is through law then the promises of God are expunged. Man can never merit them.

Thus were the Galatians carried back to the beginning of things, that they might see the unreasonableness of the position they were taking up. Why turn to something given four centuries later than the original promise? Why rest their blessing on such precarious ground? Especially as they ought to know that law had never brought blessing to Israel: their scattered and servile condition being a standing warning to all. On the ground of law nothing is certain, such is the condition of man; but when God comes in, in the wonderful grace of His heart, the soul that rests in Him, as helpless and needy, finds everything sure and stable; the righteous ground being the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Another question arises out of this. If law cannot bring souls into blessing, if it really only ruins all who place themselves under it, why was it given? A serious question surely. “Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made: and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator” (ver. 19). The apostle always jealously vindicates the law, while contending for the liberty of the believer in Jesus. In Rom. 3:31, he is careful to show that the principle of faith does not nullify the law, but that rather it is established, all its righteous sentence having been endured by Christ for us. In Rom. 7:7, he shows that the law is not sin, that we turned away from it, but that it is holy and just and good. Here the same care may be observed. The law was God's perfect rule for man; but man is corrupt and bad, and therefore it can only condemn and curse him. It was added because, or for the sake of, transgressions. It makes manifest man's true state. Sin was in the world before the law was given, consequently none can impiously assert that law made man a sinner. It came by the way, as it were, after the promise and before the fulfillment of it, to demonstrate man's real state in the sight of God. Yet so blind are men as to their true condition, that they have taken up that which was intended to make plain their ruin, and have endeavored to attain to righteousness and life by means of it. It is long since Paul wrote his Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians, but the illusion is not dispelled to this hour.

Law cannot justify, nor can it sanctify. It is God's plumb-line making manifest man's crookedness: His mirror showing up his vileness.

The promised Seed has come, Christ has died and is risen; why turn back to law? Why abandon a sure ground for one so unsafe and uncertain?

The apostle adds some interesting remarks here, as to the giving of the law. “It was ordained through angels.” Stephen says, “who have received the law by the disposition of angels” (Acts 7:53). God did not act immediately on the solemn day of Sinai. There were angels, and there was a mediator—Moses. What a contrast to Christianity!

Through Christ's work, believers are brought to God, cleansed from all their sins, set down in His blessed presence in cloudless favor. We are loved by the Father with the same love wherewith He loves His Son, and are pronounced clean every whit, meet for the inheritance of the saints in the light. Nothing of this could be known and enjoyed under law. God spoke out of the thick darkness, His people quaked and trembled at the foot of the fiery mount; and angels and a mediator were between them and Himself.

The principle of promise does not need a mediator in this sense, there being but one party engaged; hence we read, “Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one” (ver. 20). The unity of God was the great fundamental truth that Israel was responsible to confess before the nations around, who had all departed into idolatry (Deut. 6:4). Thus God will make good His unconditional promises. Man may fail, but He never. We do not need a Moses and a host of angels between our souls and such a God.

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 3:10-14, Reflections on (3:10-14)

THE apostle continues his contrast of the two principles—law and faith. Faith brings into blessing, the father of circumcision being witness; law only curses and condemns all who have to do with it. This is at this point very solemnly shown. “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” (chap. 3:10). None can escape the keen edge of this—all who are under the law are under a curse. Notice that the apostle does not say, “as many as break the law,” but “as many as are of the works of the law.” It is taken for granted that those who undertake to fulfill its obligations utterly fail: consequently as many as go on that principle are in this solemn state before God. The quotation here is from Deut. 27 and is very striking. There Moses instructs the people that they were to set up and plaster great stones when they had gone over Jordan, and write upon them all the words of the law, setting them up in mount Ebal. There we get that six tribes, Simeon, etc., were to stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, and six tribes upon mount Ebal to curse. The Levites were then to say with a loud voice unto all the men of Israel, “Cursed,” etc. But where are the blessings? Not to be found in the chapter at all. Many have sought to get over the difficulty by blending chapter 28. with 27.; but this is confusion. The following chapter proceeds on a different ground altogether, and speaks merely of governmental blessings and curses of a temporal character. The two portions are entirely distinct. Why then are the blessings from mount Gerizim not named? Because God well knew they would never be wanted. Persons under the law are necessarily under the curse, so complete is the ruin and depravity of flesh.

What a solemn position for the Galatians to place themselves in, after having believed in Christ Some may say, Yes, but they were believers and therefore could take up the law and yet be exempt from the curse. But this is false reasoning. The law cannot be taken as men think proper. The law takes us, if we have aught to say to it at all. It does not ask a man whether he is converted or not, it is not in its nature so to do; it takes the man as it finds him, and says, ‘Do this and live,' with the solemn alternative of death and condemnation if there be failure. Therefore how serious for believers to place themselves in such a position! It is neither our means of justification before God, nor any means of sanctification. We were made dead to it by the body of Christ, and have therefore passed out of the sphere where it applies.

Moreover, law and faith cannot be blended, being entirely different principles. “But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but the man that doeth them shall live in them” (vers. 11, 12). Here we are carried back to Habakkuk (chap. ii. 4). The prophet in his sorrow over the ruin of His people, and the (to him) mysterious dealings of Jehovah in not hastening deliverance, was told that “the just shall live by his faith.” The word is used three times in the New Testament, and each, time for a different purpose. If Rom. 1. be consulted, it will be seen that the emphasis is on “just “; in Heb. 10 on the word “live “; in Gal. 3 on “faith.” The law does not speak thus, but in a precisely opposite way—the man that doeth shall live. How vain then to try and mix the two principles! and yet this is done from one end of Christendom to the other. It is the exception to find souls that are not under law in one way or another. So little has the Epistle to the Galatians been heeded!

But the apostle could write with a grateful heart, “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (ver. 13).

Notice carefully the “us.” This is important in many of his Epistles. He and his Jewish fellow-believers had been under law, but had been brought out from hence by the Lord Jesus. The Galatians had never had to do with it, being Gentiles. Consequently they were not included in the “us.” The same thing may be observed in chap. 4. “Even as we, when we were children, were in bondage.” This means Jewish believers. As to Gentiles, “when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.”

This would not be true of Jews. Thus are both distinguished as to their former state. Look also at Col. 2:9, “blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.” He does not include the Colossians in this statement, but shows the former condition of Jewish saints, and the deliverance through the work of Christ.

What inexpressible grace that Christ should take upon Him the curse of a broken law! Himself the beloved One of the Father, holy and without blemish in all His ways, yet going to such unutterable depths that souls might be delivered and blessed! The marvelous result is that the blessing of Abraham comes upon all who believe, whether Gentile or Jew. All were similarly needy and afar from God; the work of Christ is the foundation of blessing for all. “That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (ver. 14). Thus, as faith alone was the principle of blessing for Abraham, nothing else brings blessing to any. But the highest favors are bestowed where faith is, not the least being the gift of the Holy Ghost.

In the first fourteen verses of this chapter, the apostle has established very plainly two things: (1) that law never yet brought into blessing any who have been under it; (2) that the Holy Spirit was never given in connection with it.

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 3:1-9, Reflections on (3:1-9)

THE apostle enters now upon a different mode of dealing with the erring Galatians. In chapters i. he has been mainly occupied with the divine source and character of his ministry, these having been called in question because not received from the twelve. In the various incidents brought forward, we have seen that he was in no way appointed by the Jewish apostles, and that he had not been instructed by them. But we also see that there was no disagreement. They had given him the right hand of fellowship, that he and Barnabas should evangelize the heathen, while they pursued their work among the circumcision. Instead of being opposed and corrected by them, Paul shows that on one occasion he had to be the objector, and this in connection with no less a person than Peter. The twelve and himself were agreed that justification is by faith alone, not by works of law, and that the Gentiles were entirely free from law's obligations, however slow Jewish brethren might be to learn the lesson as regards themselves.

The apostle breaks out, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you1, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you” (ver. 1)? We learn here the particular form the apostle's ministry had taken in those parts. Considerable variety in style is to be remarked in Paul's labors. Among the Thessalonians the Lord's coming was a very prominent theme; among the Athenians, stress was laid upon man's original relation to God as His creature; in Galatia and in Corinth the cross was to the front. It will be noticed that sometimes we read in the New Testament of the blood of Christ, sometimes of the death, and in other places of the cross. This is not in vain. The Spirit has a different line of truth for our souls in each of these varied expressions. The blood is particularly found (though not exclusively) in Hebrews, where the main theme is the atonement and its mighty results; the death of Christ is dwelt upon in Romans as the end of His life below, in which faith finds the end of the old man and all that pertains to him; the cross is before us in Galatians as an emblem of shame. The cross pours contempt on man and all his efforts, and is thus to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness (1 Cor. 1:23).

The apostle wished to press this upon the Galatians, as upon the Corinthians at another time for a different reason. He then puts in contrast the two principles of law and faith—this down to verse 14; and appeals to them as to the ground upon which they had received all their blessings from God. “This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” (ver. 2). Failing people though they were, they had received the gift of the Spirit. It is important to distinguish between “the hearing of faith,” and the reception of the Holy Ghost. A soul hears the gospel of salvation, and believes it; and thus is cleansed, and receives the remission of sins. This precedes the Spirit's seal. It is not denied that all that precedes is His work. This is unquestionable. A man never sorrows for sin, nor bends his ear to the gospel, and certainly never confides in the Lord Jesus for salvation, apart from the gracious work of the Holy Ghost. Such fruit has never been borne by the old man since the world began. The old man is corrupt according to the lusts of deceit, and never produces anything but what is hateful to God. His Spirit must work in conscience and heart, ere there can be aught that is well-pleasing in His sight. But while all this is true, the gift of the Spirit to dwell in the vessel is a totally distinct thing. It is as if a man first built a house, and then took up his abode in it. The Spirit is God's great gift to every Christian, and in this important respect those who believe during this present period of time are signally favored of God. It is because of His infinite delight in the person and work of His beloved Son. When He took His seat on high, the Spirit descended, according to His word to His own ere He suffered.

Some in this day seem to regard the indwelling of the Spirit as a kind of attainment, and speak of it as though only the advanced and spiritual were thus favored. But this is to ignore scripture. What was the practical state of the Corinthians when Paul wrote, “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” (1 Cor. 6:19). Let the whole epistle answer. And where were the Galatians when Paul wrote as in chapter 3.? In every way both the Corinthians and Galatians were going on unsatisfactorily, yet they had received the Spirit. Every saint should earnestly heed the injunction, “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God “; but let none suppose that He is ever withdrawn; for in the very verse last quoted the apostle proceeds to say, “whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30).

The apostle then challenges the Galatians; on what principle had the Spirit been given? There could be but one answer. The sacred oil could not be poured on flesh (Ex. 30:32). Never since time began was such a gift conferred as the reward of human works, though often and regularly as the crown of God's grace under the gospel.

“Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain, if it be yet in vain?” (vers. 3, 4). If the works of the flesh never yet brought blessing to any, why should the Galatians turn to them? Were they really prepared to surrender all they had suffered for? Ordinances and legalism do not entail persecution and suffering. The natural man can enter into and appreciate them, and when those who bear the Lord's Name sink to this level, the world and themselves are agreed, and can walk together. How sorrowfully and long has this been true in Christendom! Had the apostle preached circumcision, and blended Judaism generally with the Christianity he taught, he would have been spared much, as he himself says, “then is the offense of the cross ceased.” But against all this he ever resolutely set his face, at all cost to himself, and other faithful men who stood with him.

Another question is now put. “He therefore 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?” (ver. 5). He it was who had labored among them, and wrought works of power to confirm the word. The gospel is “the ministration of the Spirit,” as also of righteousness; not the law, which on the contrary is a ministration of death and condemnation (2 Cor. 3). Paul preached the gospel to them, not the law; as a result of “the hearing of faith,” they had received the Spirit.

It is well to observe that the apostle distinguishes between the gift of the Spirit, and the working of miracles. They are often spoken of as though they were substantially the same thing. But they are distinct. The Holy Ghost is God's seal upon every believer, quite apart from mighty works, and abides to-day, spite of the church's declension and ruin. Miracles were but accompaniments of His presence, and were vouchsafed in early days in confirmation of the word preached (Heb. 2:4). These have ceased, the necessity for them having passed away—and perhaps one may add the fallen condition of the church not justifying their continuance or revival. But the Spirit remains with the church until the end.

The great point is that all had been wrought on the principle of faith, not works. The apostle now enforces the truth in another way. He brings forward Abraham, the root of circumcision, as also in Rom. 4. On what principle did God account him righteous before Him? “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness” (ver. 6). Even Abraham then, of whom all legalists boasted, knew nothing of works as a ground of blessing! God pronounced him righteous, not only before the law was given, but before circumcision was instituted. This was brought in later as “a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised” (Rom. 4:11). Consequently, if they felt it an honor to range themselves under him, works must be abandoned, and faith take their place. “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham” (ver. 7). Not “they which are circumcised,” as they seemed to suppose, “but they which are of faith.” Mere fleshly claims God entirely rejects; faith is looked for in all who would stand before Him. This is no new thing with God. He always had purposes of blessing for Gentiles apart from works and ordinances; indeed, He spoke of it to Abraham himself. “And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham” (vers. 8, 9).

Thus early did God let out what was in His heart, however humbling to the seed of Abraham according to the flesh. They would have liked to confine blessing within their own circle, doling out to others as they thought well, and in entire subordination to themselves; but God had larger thoughts. Blessing is for all alike, the Gentile may be saved and justified without becoming a Jew, or submitting to ordinances; while those who contend for merely natural descent find themselves excluded altogether, and disowned of God, as we read, “He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly” (Rom. 2:28). The apostle merely speaks here of the ground of blessing, and does not state to the full what present blessing is. Our union with Christ as members of one body must be sought elsewhere; and in this the patriarch has no place; nevertheless he and we are blessed in one common ground before God. This is the point in Galatians: the apostle scarcely goes beyond it in this Epistle.

Christian Treasury: Volume 1, The Law Was Our Schoolmaster to Bring Us Unto Christ: Galatians 3:24 (3:24)

This is a greatly misunderstood verse. Now what "was" the law? It "was" a schoolmaster unto minor children. The word here translated "schoolmaster" in the Greek original indicates a slave who acted as a tutor to children.

Next, who are meant by the minors who were under its exacting demands? Simply, and only, the Jewish people. They were under the law, but the Gentiles were not. Here Paul is writing to Gentile believers and declaring what the law applied to those who were under it. He is always very careful in his use of "us" or "our," in contrast to "you" or "your"; sometimes he carefully distinguishes between "we" (the Jews) and "ye" (the Gentiles), and at times his "we" embraces believers of both Jews and Gentiles. If there is any doubt about the meaning, the context should settle it.

Notice that the words "to bring us" arc in italics in most Bibles, thus indicating that the words were not in the original Greek, but are supplied by the translators according to their judgment, which in this case was faulty. Read without the italicized words, it is simply, "the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ," or "until Christ came." The Apostle did not say that this "slave-tutor" was intended for the purpose of bringing us (or anyone) to Christ, but rather that it acted with due severity to those under it until Christ came.

The next verse (Gal. 3:25) says, "But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." He does not say, "after Christ is come," but after "faith" came. True, it is after Christ came, but the point is that it is after faith in the Lord Jesus came. The Jews who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ after He came, died, and rose again, were no longer under the old schoolmaster, the law. They had been delivered from it by the death of Christ.

Then the Apostle goes on to say, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.... There is neither Jew nor Greek... for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:26, 28. When it becomes a matter of faith in Christ Jesus, the Jews and Gentiles shared alike in the blessings of faith-they are one in Christ. And so the Apostle drops the "us" and "we" when he speaks of faith and the blessings of it. The believing Jews are no longer under the law for any purpose whatsoever; they, with the believing Gentiles, belong to Christ and are duly subject to Him.

Therefore, we affirm that the law did not bring anyone to Christ; that was not its purpose. It was added because of sin, that "sin might become exceedingly sinful." Before the law was given, man was lawless, pleasing himself with no thought of living for his Creator, but when

the law was given to a favored class-the Jew-it proved that the man was not only lawless without the law, but a law-breaker when it was given. It became a ministry of death and condemnation (2 Cor. 3), and Paul says that it deceived him and slew him; he found that that which was holy, just, and good proved to be unto death (Rom. 7:7-12).

The law cannot give life, but it has power to condemn all who are under it, for all have sinned. It cannot bring anyone to Christ, nor is it a rule of life for the believer. P. Wilson

The Remembrancer: 1906, "Not I, but Christ" (2:20)

"Not I, hut Christ," be honored, loved, exalted,

"Not I, but Christ," he seen, be known, be heard,

" Not I, but Christ," in every look and action;

"Not I, but Christ," in every thought and word,

“Not I, hut Christ," my yearning supplication;

"Not I, but Christ," my longed-for, wished-for goal.

Christ, only Christ, my fondest meditation;

Christ, only Christ, theme sweetest to my soul.

"Not I, but Christ," to gently soothe in sorrow,

"Not I, but Christ," to wipe the falling tear,

"Not I, but Christ," to lift the weary burden;

"Not I, but Christ," to hush away all fear.

" Not I, hut Christ," in lowly, silent labor;

"Not I, but Christ," in humble, earnest toil;

Christ, only Christ no show, no ostentation,

Christ, none but Christ, the gatherer of the spoil.

Christ, only Christ, no idle word e'er falling:

Christ, only Christ! no endless, bustling sound;

Christ, only Christ! no self-important hearing;

Christ, only Christ! no trace of "I" be found,

Christ, only Christ, e'er long will fill my vision,

Glory excelling, soon, full soon I'll see— Christ, only

Christ, my every wish fulfilling,

Christ, only Christ, my "All-in-All" to be!

The Remembrancer: 1902, "Who Loved Me" (2:20)

AL 2:20{

Three little chords, each full of melody;

Three little leaves, balm for my agony.

"WHO"

He loved me, the Father's only Son;

He gave Himself, the precious, spotless One;

He shed His blood, and thus the work was done.

"LOVED"

He loved-not merely pitied. Here I rest.

Sorrow may come-I to His heart am pressed.

What should I fear while sheltered in His breast?

" ME."

Wonder of wonders, Jesus loved me;

A wretch—lost—ruined—sunk in misery.

He sought me, found me, raised me, set me free.

My soul, the order of the words approve:

Christ first, me last, nothing between but

LOVE. Lord, keep me always down, Thyself above.

Trusting to Thee, not struggling restlessly,

So shall I gain the victory—

" I—yet not I"—but Christ—" Who loved me."

Food for the Flock: Volume 3, Galatians 2:19-21, A Reading on (2:19-21)

AL 2:19-21{You get four things brought out in this passage: the law, the cross, Christ the life, and Christ the object.

First. It is the righteousness of the law; the rule and measure of what man as a child of Adam ought to be loving God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself, and doing nothing forbidden in the Ten commandments.

People forget the character of the law; it comes and requires obedience, and pronounces a curse if you do not keep it. It is very different to come and exact a debt, and to come and pay it. The law only exacts; and the moment we have got a sense, not merely of being outward sinners, which a man may escape, but of the law reaching the inner man, it is all up with us: " sin revived and I died; " " I through the law am dead to the law." Just because the law is perfect, it says you must not have lusts; but I have when under it, and I like to gratify them too; and, if not, cannot get rid of them. Then it kills. And that is just what we want as to the old man.

But then there is another thing. If it kills, it condemn too; and that is why it is said to be a ministration of death and a ministration of condemnation. But the way God has set about it is this: " I through the law am dead to the law, that might live to God'; " and the way to that is, He did it through Christ; He took the condemnation, and I have got the death, and lost the condemnation.

He takes the law in its nature' first, and -through it I am dead: But being by Christ, and -the crucifixion of Christ, I get the death, but not the condemnation; that Christ took; and then I am to reckon myself dead. Not merely Christ crucified for my sins, but I with Christ-the way of getting rid of the old man and the condemnation together. The old man condemned in Christ, and I dead: "What 'the law could not do in that it 'was weak through the flesh."

Very well then I say, I am dead.-Then there's an end of you!—No, say I;" nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ." It 'is death for the old man, and I have got another life: " not but Christ liveth in me."

We have got thus three things spoken of: the law, the cross, and the life. Now there is the fourth, the object., "'The life I now 'live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." As it is said in Colossians: He is '" all " as the object of life, and "in all" as the power of life.

It is the same thing here in other words. His only object in living was Christ.

What is " the faith of the Son of God"? The faith which has Him for its object. Is " the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ " (James 2.) the same thing?

Yes. Some take it as if it were the faith Christ had; quite true,. He did live by faith in perfect dependence; but when you say, " the faith of God"-which it is, where translated, " have faith in God "-you cannot take it as God's faith.

It is sweet to see how Paul's heart turns to what the Christ is whom he knows: " Who loved me, and gave himself for me." God speaks of my loving Him, but I must know first that He loved me: " Not that we loved God, but that he loved us."

It is a distinct thing to hold ourselves dead, knowing that we died with Christ, and to say he died for our sins. The Red Sea and the Jordan give us His death for us, and ours with Him At Jordan the ark went down, and stayed there-till all Israel had passed over, and then they were circumcised; the reproach of Egypt was never rolled away in the wilderness, it was at Gilgal.

What is "the reproach of Egypt "?:

They were not dead-had not put off the body of, the flesh., Worldliness, is the reproach of Egypt; we are " dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world." If the world sticks to a Christian; he is going on as one who is not dead.— It was a reproach for Israel to be in Egypt; he ought to be in Canaan. Till a person is dead and risen lie does not get out of Egypt. If I see dress, money loving, etc., I see Egypt in people. There are plenty of other things, of course. I cannot bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus; unless I reckon myself dead. Through. Jesus, I- have died with Him and am in Canaan; and then comes the practice. They went and won victories, and came back to Gilgal. So you will find with us; if one has been blessed in ministry, and does not come back there, he goes back in his soul.

Does the Red Sea go beyond forgiveness?

Yes; it is redemption: " stand still and see the deliverance of Jehovah." He is a Savior, and He takes them out.

As to doctrine; will it go as far as Colossians? Not quite. As far as Romans? Yes. But you do not get the full result in Romans. Is the Red Sea being risen with Christ? Yes. The Red Sea and Jordan coalesce. The wilderness is no part of the purpose of God. It is of His, ways. The wilderness is 'not spoken of in Ex. 3 and 6., nor in 15. The Red Sea is Christ's death and resurrection, which deliver us; Jordan our death and resurrection with Him, which brings us into a new position-into Canaan. All is complete, in a certain sense, at the Red Sea—they are brought to God.; but there is a new position in heavenly places not revealed there.

Where would Colossians come in?

Colossians takes a man as risen with Christ, but does not take him into heaven. In Ephesians he is in heavenly places, just where you want the armor. People do not understand what that means. The moment the Israelites cross Jordan, the man with the drawn sword meets them. Satan says: I will not have that.-But I am the Lord's host. It is no question now of saving me, but I have to act for the Lord in spiritual service.

There are two distinct things in which the Ephesians' starting-point is completely different from Romans. The starting-point in Romans is man's responsibility: he is guilty, all the world is guilty. There are proofs of sin both in Jew and Gentile; man is looked at as alive in sins. In Ephesians he is dead in them; a different thought altogether. Alive in sin in Romans, but, for that very reason, dead towards God-not a movement in his heart towards God. After a man is dead he neither speaks, nor moves, nor feels. I want to be dead 'to sin, and alive to God; and then everything changes. The point is to get 'sins and' sin dealt with; the fruit cleared away, and the tree dead; and this is fully- brought' out in Romans: '" Propitiation through faith in his blood;" and then, "Reckon ye yourselves -dead' to sin."

In Eph. 1 get nothing of 'the responsibility at all, not a man being justified, but the counsels of God- according to the good pleasure of His will.' Dead in sins, quickened together with Christ, and so you can get all the fullness of blessing in Ephesians. Christ comes into that place for us, and 'having put away our sins, in coming down "to death, God raises us all up together. In Ephesians you do not see Christ till He is dead: " Which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him t his own right hand in the heavenlies." It is a 'new creation; there is nothing about being justified, for I am a new creation.

In Colossians 'you get both (Col. 2); only he does not pursue- it on to put us into heavenly places. " The hope laid up for you in heaven " (Col. 1:5)—not yet in heaven " Seek those things which are -above " (3:1)-seek them.

In chapter 2. You get both things: " In him dwelleth all the completeness (I put it so to connect the "two words) of the Godhead." He, all the completeness of God, and r complete in Him. " In whom also ye are-circumcised'.... in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." True Christian circumcision is practically realizing that I have died. "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." Here I get Romans and something more. Then in verse 13 I get Ephesian doctrine as to our natural stale: " You, being dead in sins, 'hath he quickened together with him." But it is not carried on to sitting in heavenly places. In Romans he speaks of being dead with Christ, but does not go on to show us risen with Him. The moment I am risen with Christ, I am getting into the same place as Christ:; not merely justified as an individual before God, but on -the way into the new place of being united to Christ in heaven.

" You being dead in your sins... hath he quickened together with Christ, having forgiven you all trespasses." I was dead in my sins, and Christ dies and puts them all away, and the sins I was guilty of are all gone. He has forgiven us all trespasses-because He put them away; and then God comes and takes Christ, and takes me, and raises me up from the dead; And He goes further and says: " Your life is hid with Christ in God." Now you are to have your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. Ephesians takes us on from having our affections in heaven, to being ourselves in heavenly places.

(J. N. D.)

Christian Truth: Volume 30, Galatians 2:20 (2:20)

What life are you living? You say you are not living a disgraceful life of sin and shame, but are you living to please yourself, to surround yourself with the comforts of this life, or is it Christ that lives in you? Then there is pleasure and fruit for God; there is devotedness to do the will of God, dependence and obedience (Psalm 16). If you have passed from death unto life (John 5:24), what do you know of that life? Can you say, "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.

Things New and Old: Volume 21, He Loved Me, and Gave Himself for Me (2:20)

Thy love, Lord Jesus, ever be

The link between Thyself and me;

Thy truth, the staff on which I lean,

Thyself, the power from earth to wean;

Thy strength in weakness perfect made,

On Thee, the Mighty, help is laid;

Oh! let me never from Thee stray,

But keep me in the narrow way;

Clothe me in Thine armor bright,

Keep me walking in the light;

Ever looking off to Thee,

Nothing in myself to see.

Edification: Volume 1, Answers to Correspondents. (2:20)

LINCOLNSBIKERE. — Would you kindly explain Galatians 2:20?

“I am crucified with Christ”: what “I” is that?

“Nevertheless I live” what “I” is that?

“Yet not I”: what “I” is that?

“But Christ liveth in me”: who is the “me”

“And the life which I now live in the flesh”: what “I” is that?

“I live by the faith of the Sea of God”: what “I” is that?

“Who loved me, and gave Himself for me”: who is the “me”?

THE difficulty of this verse is occasioned by the fact that we believers are at present in a mixed condition. We are born of God and therefore possess a new nature, but we have not yet had the old Adamic nature eradicated. It is still in us and will be for so long as we are in our present mortal bodies. We therefore possess, an old nature and a new; and further we each of us know well that conversion has not changed our personality, our individuality. After all, you are the same “you” and I am the same “I” as before, though now, thank God, we have each the new nature with its new instincts and desires, which are altogether of God and sinless, as 1 John 3:9 so forcefully puts it. God identifies us now with the new nature and we should learn to think likewise though we know that the old nature is there.

Now to your seven subsidiary questions—we take them in order: —

1. “I”— the individual as identified with the old nature I, as a fallen child of Adam.

2. “I”— the person, the individual. I personally live, though if I consider myself as identified with my old nature I recognize myself as crucified with Christ.

3. “I”— again as identified with the old nature. I live, but not to express and display myself according to the character of my old nature, but

4. Christ is to be livingly manifested in His gracious character. But He is to live in “me” —myself, as identified with my new nature.

5. and 6. “I”— the individual, but as still identified with the new nature.

7 “Me”— Just the individual myself. It was not that Christ loved and gave Himself for the new nature, much less for the old. He loved and gave Himself for me—the personal individual me. Wonderful fact!

INSEIN BURMA. Please explain the following: —

(1) John 1:17. “For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

Was there grace and truth before Jesus Christ came? Does the Old Testament contain God’s grace and truth?

(2) Luke 16:16. “The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached.”

What is meant by me law and the prophets were until John?

(3) If the Holy Ghost is the third person of the Godhead what is meant by “full of the Holy Ghost” in Luke 4:1? Also what is meant by “giveth not the Spirit by measure” in John 3:34?

Your first and second questions both hinge on the change of dispensation brought about by the coming of the Lord Jesus. The law was given by Moses and it demanded works. “Grace” is not of works. If it were it would not be grace as Romans 11:6 tells us. Hence law and grace are in direct contrast. “Truth” is connected with the revelation of God. When the knowledge of God was lost through the fall, truth was lost; and truth only came again into furl evidence when God was perfectly revealed in Christ.

We see traces of grace in the Old Testament as for instance, Exodus 33:17; and certain parts of the truth were plainly seen, but neither grace nor truth came fully and perfectly into view until Christ appeared.

John the Baptist was the herald and forerunner of Christ. With his ministry the new dispensation dawned, and until then the law and prophets provided such light and knowledge of God as was available, and the law was the measure of man’s responsibility towards God. From that point onwards the kingdom was preached and a new order of things began to come into view.

As to your third question: — The Holy Ghost is indeed the third Person of the Godhead. He is a Person and, as such He fills with His presence and influence. Luke’s gospel is the one that specially presents, the Lord Jesus to us as the perfect Man. Having become a Man, He fulfilled man’s proper place in all perfection. If He acted in ministry it was as led by and filled with the Holy Spirit, and in all this He is the pattern for us, though we do receive the Holy Spirit by measure, that is, we share in His presence, and He indwells us in common with others. He has given to us “of His Spirit” (1 John 4:13). But God did not thus give the Spirit to the One whom He sent to speak His words. The whole fullness of the Spirit was present there in Christ, as the fullness of the Father also (See, Col. 1:19).

The Evangelist: Volume 6 (1872), "Who Loved Me, and Gave Himself for Me." (2:19-20)

How wonderful, and yet how blessedly true, that the holy Son of God should love me! Yes, me, who was so unclean, so far from God, so self-willed, so proud, so sinful, as to present nothing to His eye but evil, and that continually! How strange! and yet it is a most precious fact that, notwithstanding all, He loved me. Oh, yes! His pitying eye beheld me when madly posting on the broad road which leads to everlasting destruction, and His compassionate heart moved tenderly toward me. Yes, He loved me then, and in richest grace drew near and spoke to me. Yes, He spoke to me. His still small voice my inmost conscience reached, saying “Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die?” What, said my wounded heart, am I so bad, so unclean, so undone, that death, the second death, is but just before me? Where am I going? Whither are my steps inclining? Is it possible that all along my quiet, amiable life, every movement has only hurried me along the broad and downward road? Is this a fact? Can it be that until now my sinful feet have only walked in paths where He is not? Is it true that all my best enjoyments, thus far, have been with my back quite turned to Him, ears deaf to His loving words, and heart unmoved by all the groans, and sufferings, and death, of the loving Son of God upon the tree? And yet when thus so loathsome, so unclean, in purpose and in not, that He should then love me! Oh, yes! It was for “sinners,” “enemies,” “ungodly,” that Jesus died; and this He plainly tells me. Such is His love; ‘tis love divine, and such His love to me. “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

When in my sins, my folly, and my pride, it was that Jesus loved me. He looked upon me, felt deepest feelings of affection for me, and when nothing less than His own death, and that too “even the death of the cross,” could meet my case—nothing but His own life’s blood poured out could cleanse me from my sins: “He loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Yes, He gave Himself; he willingly died in my stead. He lovingly poured out His soul unto death. He offered Himself without spot to God. He bare our sins in His own body on the tree. He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. He did by Himself purge our sins. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. What perfect love! What abounding grace! What rich mercy! Many a man has given large sums of money to benefit others, but that is not himself Some, too, have even sacrificed their lives for others, because they were good and worthy, as Scripture says, “For a good man some would even dare to die.” But “Christ died,” not for good people, but “for the ungodly.” He came into the world to save sinners. When Saul of Tarsus was madly persecuting and hating Christ’s members “members of His body”— and thus showing himself to be the chief of sinners, then it was that Jesus met him, and arrested him with His loving, tender voice, saying— “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.” The Acts of the Apostles teaches us what mercy followed. Well then might the apostle in a later day exclaim— “He loved me, and gave Himself for me.” And consider what a stupendous work He must have accomplished when He gave Himself! What an everlastingness of value must it have had by reason of the infinite glory of His person! What eternal efficacy there must have been in the sacrifice of the Son of God, that one offering which He once offered! No wonder that it tells us of remission of sins, of the “old man” crucified with Him, of redemption accomplished, of peace made, and of reconciliation to God! No marvel that when He bowed His head in death upon the tree, saying, “It is finished!” that God was fully vindicated, the infinite claims of His righteousness and holiness fully met, a just atonement made for all our sins, God just, and yet the justifier of every one that believeth in Jesus. Well, indeed, might the apostle, when contemplating the death of Christ, say, “I am dead to the law;” “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless (in Him risen and ascended) I live; yet not I (not the old man, but a new life now in Christ risen, a new nature), Christ liveth in me.” Henceforth, therefore, all his resources were in Christ; his joy and hope, his spring of life and strength, were all in Him; so that he added, “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.” (Galatians 2:19,20.)

That He, the Lord of glory, Lamb of God, the Christ, should be

And all for me.

Edification: Volume 5, Our Scripture Portion (2:19)

(Gal. 2:19 — 3:9).

Please have your Bible open at the passage indicated above as you read this article. The writer takes it for granted that you will do this, and consequently all his references to Scripture are in the briefest possible form.

IN the closing verses of this second chapter, Paul speaks for himself alone. Previously (verse 15 to 17) he had said, “we,” since he spoke of truth generally acknowledged by Christians, Peter included. But now he comes to truth which Peter’s action had challenged, and so he could not assume that Peter acknowledged it. However truth it was, and Paul standing in the enjoyment and power of it could set it forth in this personal and experimental way.

At that moment Peter had the law before his soul: he was living to the law. “For myself,” says Paul, in effect, “I have God, and not law before my soul, and am living to Him.” How much greater is God, who gave the law — God, now revealed in Christ — than the law He gave. But what set Paul free from the law, under which once he had been, as well as Peter? Death had set him free. He had died to the law, and that by the law’s own act! This is stated in verse 19.

Nevertheless, here he was very much alive, and boldly confronting Peter! How then had he died to the law? And in what sense was it true that he had died through the law? Both these questions are answered in that great statement, “I am crucified with Christ.”

In those words we have Paul seizing upon the truth of the Gospel, and giving it an intensely personal application to himself. The Lord Jesus, in His death, not only was the believer’s Substitute, bearing his sins, but also thoroughly identified Himself with us in our sinful state, being made sin for us, though knowing no sin Himself. So really and truly did this take place that one of the things we are to know, as a matter of Christian doctrine, is that “our old man is crucified with Him” (Rom. 6:6). The crucifixion of Christ is therefore the crucifixion of all that we were as fallen children of Adam. But here we have Paul’s personal appropriation of this. As crucified with Christ he had died to the law.

Then again the crucifixion of Christ was not merely the act of evil men. Viewed from the divine standpoint, the very essence of it is seen to be that act of God whereby He was made sin for us, and wherein was borne for us the curse of the law (see, 3:13). As dying under the curse of the law, Christ died through the law, and as crucified with Christ Paul was able to say that he had died to the law through the law, in order that he might live unto God.

The force of this great passage may perhaps become clearer to us if we consider the five prepositions used.

1. Unto, which indicates the end in view. To live unto God is to live with God as the End of one’s existence.

2. With, indicates identification, or association. We are crucified with Christ by reason of that complete identification which He effected in His death for us. Consequently His death was our death. We died with Him.

3. In, which here signifies character. Though crucified we live. We are still living people on earth, yet we no longer live the old character of life. We live a life of a new order, a life, the character of which, summed up in one word, is CHRIST. Saul of Tarsus had been crucified with Christ. Yet the individual known as Saul of Tarsus was still living. Still living, yet in another character entirely as you observed him you saw not the Saul-of-Tarsus character coming into expression, but Christ. In keeping with this he did not retain his old name, but soon after his conversion he became known as Paul, which means, “Little one.” He must be little if Christ is to live in him.

4. By, which introduces us to the Object that controlled Paul’s soul, and made this new character of life possible. Presently, when the life we now live in the flesh — that is, in our present mortal bodies — is over, we shall live by the sight of the Son of God. Meanwhile we live by the faith of Him. If faith is in activity with us He is made a living bright reality before our souls. The more He is thus before us objectively, that is, as

the more will He be seen in us subjectively.

The Lord Chancellor’s “Great seal” is a remarkable object.. If you wished to see it however, you would probably find it impossible to get access to it. Possibly they would say, “No, we cannot let you see the seal itself, but look at this large spot of wax affixed to this state document. Here you virtually see the seal, for it has been impressed into it.” The wax has been subject to the pressure of the seal. You see the seal subjectively expressed, though you could not see it objectively. This may illustrate our point, and show how others may see Christ living in us, if as Object He is before our souls.

5. For, which here is the preposition of substitution. It introduces us to that which was the constraining power and motive of Paul’s wonderful life. The love of the Son of God constrained him, and that love had expressed itself in His sacrificial and substitutionary death.

We may sum up the matter thus: — Paul’s heart was filled with the love of the Son of God who had died for him. He not only understood his identification with Christ in His death, but he heartily accepted it, in all that it implied, and he found his satisfying Object in the Son of God in glory. Consequently the sentence of death lay upon all that he was by nature, and Christ lived in him and characterized his life, and thus God Himself, as revealed in Christ, had become the full End of his existence.

Thus it was with Paul, but is it thus with us? That our old man has been crucified is as true for us as for Paul. We have died with Christ even as he had, if indeed we are really and truly believers. But have we taken it up in our experience as Paul did, so that it is to us not only a matter

of Christian doctrine (highly important as that is in its place) but also a matter of rich spiritual experience, which transforms and ennobles our lives? The plain truth is that most of us have only done so in a measure which is pitifully small. And the secret of this? The secret clearly is that we have been so little captivated by the sense of His great love. Our realization of the wonder of His sacrifice for us is so feeble. Our convictions as to the horror of our sinfulness were not very deep, and hence our conversions were comparatively of a shallow nature. If we track things back to their source, the explanation lies just here, we believe. Let us all sing with far more earnestness,

If in each of our hearts love is kindled to a flame, we shall make progress in the right direction.

The Apostle's closing words, in the last verse of our chapter, plainly implied that the position Peter had taken was of such a nature as to lead to the "frustration" or "setting aside" of the grace of God. It would imply that after all righteousness could come by the law, and lead to the supposition that Christ had died "in vain," or, "for nothing." What a calamitous conclusion!

Yet it was the logical conclusion. And, having reached it, the moment had arrived for a very pointed appeal to the Galatians, This appeal we have in the opening verses of chapter 3. The Apostle calls them "foolish" or "senseless," for they had not themselves had the spiritual sense to see whither these false teachers had been leading them. They had been like men bitched, and under a spell of evil, and they had been led to the brink of the awful conclusion that Christ had died for nothing — that His death had been in fact a huge mistake! On the edge of this precipice they were standing, and the Apostle's pungent reasoning had come as a flash of light amidst their darkness, revealing their danger!

What made their folly so pronounced was the fact that formerly there had been such a faithful preaching among them of Christ Crucified. Paul himself had evangelized them, and as with the Corinthians so with the Galatians, the cross had been his great theme. It was as though Christ had been crucified before their very eyes.

Moreover, as a result of receiving the word of the cross, which Paul brought, they had received the Holy Spirit, as verse 2 implies. Well, in what way and on what principle had they received the Spirit? By the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? There was but one answer to this question. For the Galatians to reply, "We received the Spirit by the works of the law," was an absolute impossibility, as Paul knew right well.

Hence he does not pause to answer his own question, but at once passes, in verse 3, to further questions based upon it. Having received the Spirit by the hearing of faith were they going to be made perfect by the flesh? Does God begin with us on one principle and then carry things to completion on another and opposing principle? Men are erratic enough. They change about in this fashion when their earlier plans miscarry. But is God erratic? Do His plans ever miscarry so that He needs to change? The Galatians were senseless, but were they SO senseless as to imagine that? And were they themselves prepared to change, and to throw away as worthless all they had previously held and done; so that their earlier sufferings for Christ had all to be treated as in vain, as null and void? What questions these were! As we read them? are we not conscious of their crushing force?

But why did the Apostle speak of our being made perfect by the flesh? Firstly, because it is that which is particularly opposed to the Spirit; and secondly, because it is closely related to the law. It completes the quartette contained in verse 3 and 4. Faith and the Spirit are linked together. The Spirit is received as the result of the hearing of faith, and He is the power of that new life which we have in Christ. The law and the flesh are linked together. The law was given that the flesh might fulfill it, if it could do so. In result it could not. Nor could the law put an effectual curb on the propensities of the flesh; for the flesh "is not suspect to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). Yet here were the Galatians inclined to turn from the all-powerful Spirit to the flesh, which though powerful for evil was wholly impotent for good. It was folly indeed!

In verse 5 the Apostle repeats his question of verse 2, only in another form. In verse 2 it concerned the Galatians. How did they receive the Spirit? Here it concerns himself. In what way and on what principle did he labor when he came amongst them with the Gospel message? Miracles were wrought amongst them and when the Gospel was believed the Spirit of. God was received. Was it all on the ground of works, or of faith. Once more he does not pause for a reply, knowing right well that only one answer, could be given by the Galatians. Instead he at once appeals to the case of Abraham, that they might realize that before ever the law was instituted God had established faith as the way of blessing for man.

From the very outset faith was the way of man's blessing, as Hebrews 11 reveals so clearly. With Abraham, however, the fact came clearly to light even in Old Testament times. Genesis 15:6 plainly declared it, and that verse is quoted here, as also in Romans 4:3 and James 2:23. Abraham was the father of the Jewish race, who had circumcision as their outward sign, but he was also, in a deeper and spiritual sense, "the father of all them that believe" (Rom. 4:11).

The Judaizing teachers had been trying to persuade the Galatians to adopt circumcision, that thereby they might put themselves into a kind of Jewish position, becoming children of Abraham in an outward way. It would have been a poor imitation thing, if compared only with the true-born Israelite. And all the while, if they were "of faith," that is, believers, they were children of Abraham, and that in the deepest possible sense, as verse 7 makes manifest.

Every believer is a child of Abraham in a spiritual sense; and not only so, but as verse 9 shows us, every believer enters into the blessing of Abraham. verse 8 indicates what it is that is referred to as the blessing of Abraham. It was not merely his own personal blessing, but that in him all nations should be blessed. Not only was he to be accounted righteous before God and to stand in the blessings connected with righteousness, but myriads from all nations were to enjoy similar favor, which was to reach them in him.

But why in Abraham? How could this be? It will be worth while reading the passages in Genesis which refer to this matter. The promise of the blessing was first given when God's call first reached him. This is in chapter 12:3. Then in 18:18 it is confirmed to him. Again, in 22:16-18 the promise is amplified, and we discover that the accomplishment is to be through "the Seed" who is Christ, as verse 16 of our chapter in Galatians tells us. Then further, the promise is confirmed to Isaac and Jacob respectively, in 26:4, and 28:14; and in both these cases "the Seed" is mentioned. Once introduced, the Seed is never omitted, for in truth everything in the way of fulfillment is dependent upon Him.

The blessing then was only in Abraham inasmuch as, according to the flesh, Christ sprang out of Abraham. The Jews boasted themselves in Abraham as though he were of all-importance in himself. The Galatians had been tempted to ally themselves with Abraham by adopting his covenant of circumcision. But the real virtue lay not in Abraham, but in Christ. And the very circumcision which would outwardly ally them with Abraham, would virtually cut them off from Christ (see, verse 2) in whom everything was found, not outwardly, but inwardly and vitally.

From the outset God intended to bless the heathen (or, the nations) through faith. It was no after-thought with Him. How gracious was His design! And how comforting it is to us to know it! He called Abraham out from the nations that had fallen into corruption, that He might, in spite of all the defection that marked His people, preserve a godly seed out of whom might spring in due season, the Seed, in whom all the nations should be blessed, and Abraham as well. Hence the nations are to be blessed by faith, as Abraham was, and not by the works of the law.

God is omniscient. He can foresee what He will do, in spite of all eventualities. But here this omniscience is attributed to the Scripture! A remarkable fact surely! God's Word is of Himself, and from Himself, and is therefore to be very closely identified with Him. Let men beware how they handle it: There are those who utterly deny and deride the Scripture; and there are those who Honor it in theory, and yet corrupt it. Both will ultimately have to reckon in judgment with the God whose Word it is. And, woe betide them!

The Scripture itself foresees, and it foresees their doom!

F. B. Hole.

Edification: Volume 5, Our Scripture Portion (2:1-18)

(Gal. 2:1-18).

Please have your Bible open at the passage indicated above as you read this article. The writer takes it for granted that you will do this, and consequently all his references to Scripture are in the briefest possible form.

OUR chapter falls quite simply into two parts. First, verse 1 to 10, in which the Apostle recounts what happened on the occasion of his second visit to Jerusalem after his conversion. Second, verse 11 to 21, in which he tells of an incident that happened at Antioch not long after his second visit to Jerusalem, and which had a very definite bearing upon the point at issue with the Galatians.

The first visit was about three years after his conversion (1:18), so the second, being fourteen years later, was about seventeen years after that time, and is evidently the occasion as to which we have much information in Acts 15. That passage therefore, may profitably be read before proceeding further. From a careful reading several interesting details appear.

Acts 15 begins with mentioning "certain men who came down from Judaea," who taught circumcision as essential to salvation. They are not termed "brethren," we notice. In our chapter Paul unhesitatingly labels them "false brethren unawares brought in." Thus early do we find unconverted men getting amongst the saints of God, in spite of apostolic vigilance and care! It is sad when they are brought in unawares in spite of care. Sadder still when such principles are professed and practiced as leave the door open for them to enter.

In Acts we read that "they determined" that a visit to Jerusalem was needful. But here Paul gives us a view behind the scenes of activity and travel, and shows us that it was "by revelation" that he went up. The temptation might have been strong upon him to meet these false brethren and vanquish them at Antioch, but it was revealed to him by the Lord that he should stop disputation and carry the discussion up to Jerusalem, where the views his opponents pressed were most strongly held. It was a bold move; but it was one which in the wisdom of God preserved unity in the church. As a result of his obedience to the revelation the question was settled against the contentions of these false brethren in the very place where most of their sympathizers were. To have so settled it amongst the Gentiles at Antioch might easily have provoked a rupture.

Further, in Acts 15 it is just stated that "certain other of them" went up with Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem. Our chapter reveals that amongst these "certain other" was Titus, a Greek. This of course raised the point at issue in its acutest form. The apostle gave no quarter to his opponents. He did not submit to them for an hour, and in result Titus was not compelled to be circumcised.

This being so, Paul's action in regard to Timothy, related in Acts 16:1-3, is the more remarkable. It is an illustration of how that which has to be strenuously resisted under certain circumstances may be, conceded under other circumstances. In the case of Titus circumcision was demanded in order to establish a principle which cut at the very root of the Gospel. In the case of Timothy no such principle was at stake, the whole question having been authoritatively settled, and Paul did it that Timothy might have liberty of service amongst Jews as well as Gentiles. By birth Timothy was half a Jew and the Apostle made him completely a Jew, as it were, that he might "gain the Jews" (1 Cor. 9:20). To Paul himself and to the Corinthians, and so to us, both circumcision and uncircumcision are "nothing" (1 Cor. 7:19).

It is possible that you might observe some servant of Christ acting after this fashion today. Pause a moment before you roundly accuse him of gross inconsistency. It may after all be that he is acting with divinely-given discernment in cases where you have as yet perceived no difference. The apostle speaks of "Our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus." It was liberty to refuse circumcision where legal bondage was involved, and yet a year or so later to practice it when nothing of principle was involved.

Then again during this visit to Jerusalem Paul took opportunity to convey formally to the other apostles the Gospel which he had preached among the Gentiles. Though he had received it directly from the Lord he was not above conceiving that possibly error might have crept into his understanding of the revelation. This is indicated in the latter part of verse 2. In effect hover it was far otherwise. The most instructed amongst the apostles and elders at Jerusalem had nothing to add to Paul's gospel when they conferred upon the point. The rather they recognized that Paul was clearly called of God to carry the Gospel into the Gentile world, while Peter had a similar commission in regard to

the Jew. Hence the three apostolic leaders, perceiving the grace given to Paul, expressed the fullest fellowship and sympathy with him in his work.

This fact had a very definite bearing on the point at issue with the Galatians. If the men who had been at work in Galatians attacked Paul as being an unauthorized upstart, he was able to counter this by showing that he had received his message from the Lord by first-hand revelation. This established his authority. If on the other hand they attacked him as a man proceeding thus on his own authority and so being in opposition to those who were apostles before him, he countered this lie by the fact that James, Peter and John had shown fullest confidence in him and fellowship with him after thorough conference had taken place.

It remained for him to show that there had been a time when even Peter had yielded somewhat to the influence of men similar to those now opposing Paul, and to relate how he had opposed him then, and the grounds on which he had done so.

There is no mention in the Acts of this visit of Peter to Antioch, but it evidently happened after the decision of the council in Jerusalem as narrated in Acts 15. In that council Peter had argued in favor of the acceptance of Gentile converts without the law of Moses being imposed upon them. He had then spoken of the law as “a yoke... which neither our fathers no we were able to bear.” At Antioch however when certain came down from James holding strict views as to the value of circumcision he no longer would eat with the Gentile believers but withdrew himself. His example had great weight and others followed it — even Barnabas who had formerly stood with Paul, as recorded in Acts 15:2, and 12.

To many doubtless such action would have seemed a very small matter — just a little prejudice to be condoned, a fad to be smiled at. To Paul it was far otherwise. He perceived that under this apparently small question of how Peter took his food, grave principles were at stake, and that Peter’s action was not upright “according to the truth of the Gospel.”

Oh, that we may all seize the point so strongly enforced here! Departure from the truth, even of the gravest kind, is generally presented to us under cover of seemingly trifling and innocent circumstances. Most of us would have been tempted to exclaim, “Oh, Paul, what an exacting man you are! How difficult to please! Why make such a fuss over a small detail? If Peter wants now to eat only with Jews, why not let him? Why disturb our peace at Antioch and make things unhappy?” We are so often ignorant of Satan’s devices. He sees to it that we shall be diverted from truth over something of an apparently harmless nature. The railway engine runs from the main line into a siding over very fine points.

Incidentally let us at this point take note that the idea that church in the apostolic age was the abode of peace and free of all contention has no support from Scripture. From the outset the truth had to be won and maintained through conflict — a great deal of it internal, and not merely with the world without. We have no right to expect absence of conflict and trouble today. Occasions are sure to arise when peace can only be purchased by compromise, and he who sees most, and hence is constrained to raise his voice in protest, must be prepared to be accused of uncharitableness. Failing such protest peace is maintained, but it is the peace of stagnation and spiritual death. The quietest spot in the throbbing heart of London is the city mortuary! So beware!

If we find ourselves in a position where we feel morally bound to raise our voices, let us pray earnestly that we may be able to do it in a way similar to Paul. “When I saw... I said unto Peter...” Our tendency always is to launch our complaints into the ear of someone other than the culprit himself. Notice, for instance, in Mark 2, that when the Pharisees object to the action of Jesus they complain to His disciples (verse 16). and when to the action of His disciples, they complain to the Lord (verses 23, 24). We shall do well to make it a rule, when remonstrance is needed, to make our remonstrance directly to the peon concerned, rather than behind his back.

Paul however did this “before them all.” The reason for this is that Peter’s defection had already affected many others and so, become a public matter. It would be a mistake in a multitude of cases to make public remonstrance. Many a defection or difficulty has not become public, and if met faithfully and graciously in a private way with the person concerned it may never become public at all, and thus much trouble and possible scandal be avoided. Public defection however must be met publicly.

Paul began his protest by asking Peter a question based upon his earlier mode of life, before the sudden alteration. Peter had abandoned the strict Jewish customs in favor of the freer life of the Gentiles, as he himself had stated in Acts 10:28. How then could he now consistently retreat from this position in a way that was tantamount to saying that after all Gentiles should live after the customs of the Jews? This question we have recorded in verse 14.

In verse 15 and 16 we have the apostle’s assertion which succeeded his question. In this assertion Paul could link Peter with himself and Peter could not deny it. “WE,” he says. “We, who are Jews by nature” have recognized that justification is not reached by “the works of the law, but by, the faith of Jesus Christ,” and hence haves turned from law to Christ and been justified by Him. Thank God, that was so!

Now comes a second question. If it were true, as Peter’s action seemed to suggest, that even when standing in all the virtue of. Christ’s work we still need something, in the way of law-keeping or the observance of Jewish customs, to complete our justification, is not Christ then discredited? He puts the proposition with extreme vigor of language, —is He not even “the Minister of sin” instead of the Minister of justification? To ask such a question is to answer it. It is impossible! Hence he adds, “Away with the thought,” or “God forbid.”

This was followed by a second assertion in verse 18, a statement which must have fallen as a sledge-hammer on Peter’s conscience. Peter’s action had inferred that Christ might be the Minister of sin; but it also was without a doubt of the nature of building up again the wall of partition; between Jew and Gentile who are in Christ, that the Gospel had thrown down, and which Peter himself had destroyed by his former action in the house of Cornelius. Whichever was right, Peter was wrong somewhere. If he was right now, he was wrong formerly. If right formerly, he was wrong now. He stood convicted as a transgressor.

As a matter of fact he was wrong now. Formerly he had acted as instructed of God in a vision. Now he was acting impulsively under the influence of the fear of man.

In these few words from the lips of Paul the Spirit of God had revealed the true inwardness of Peter's action, however innocent it may have appeared to most. Only two questions and two statements, but how effective they were! They quite destroyed Peter's false position.

Not content with this however the Spirit of God led Paul to forthwith proclaim the true position. He had perceived at the outset that Peter and his followers "walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel," so now he very plainly, yet in fewest possible, words, states the truth of the Gospel. He states it moreover not as a matter of doctrine C experience — his own experience. He does not now say "we," but "I," which occurs no less than seven times in verse 19 and 20.

In the Acts we have striking examples of the preaching of the Gospel through the lips of Paul. In Romans 1-8 we have the exposition of the Gospel from his pen. In Galatians 1 we have the defense of the Gospel — by setting forth its characteristic features, which hall-mark it, as it were. Now we are to consider the truth of the Gospel.

But we must take up verse 19 to 21, on the next occasion.

F. B. Hole.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Justification (2:16)

Question: Gal. 2:16. It has been lately asserted on the strength of ἐὰν μή in this verse, that, since it is by faith of Him who is the end and fulfilling of the law that men are justified, it involves in itself the full virtue of a legal righteousness. The apostle does not say, as he often does elsewhere, that man is not justified by works but by faith simply; but that he is not justified by works of law "except through faith of Jesus Christ," that faith receiving as its portion not only a clearance from all legal blame, but by imputation the positive merit also of that righteousness of law, which, described by Moses, is found only in the man Christ Jesus and with the rest of His personal perfections carried to the account of those who have by grace their redemption and their acceptance equally in Him. It is by the obedience of One, as the same witness testifies, that the many are made righteous—language which, while harmonizing perfectly with the fundamental doctrine of sacrificial atonement, invites us to consider, not the definitive act of dying only by which the Son of God brought to its predestined close the course of His obedience here below, but the proved personal merit also of the man who gave Himself and all that He had shown Himself to be for our sins.....The tables of stone, fit emblems of its (the law's) own unrelenting character, and also of the intrinsic strength and stability of that Man who should perfectly discharge its claims, have disappeared forever.....No longer enmity, law is, in Christ, a part of that "great peace," which is the eternal portion of them that, in the spirit of a justifying faith, serve still with their minds the law of God. Such is the statement: is it just?

Is it true, in short, that this is the natural force of the words ἐὰν μὴ διὰ Ἰησοῦ as contrasted with ἐκ πίστεως, and that it would be possible to justify the authorized version only on the assumption of a large ellipsis? "Man is not justified by works of law" (and therefore not justified at all), except by faith of Jesus Christ. Does the remainder of the verse, as it stands in the original, appear to forbid this?

Answer: I do not think the smallest doubt can rest on the sense of Gal. 2:16. We have only to read the rest of the verse to make the meaning of the apostle perfectly clear, and more than clear if possible, earnestly contradicting such a sense: ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. That makes his meaning incontrovertible. But he adds, as anxious to insist on the point, διότι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σάρξ. How this can be an explanation that we shall be justified by works of law by the faith of Christ, I am at a loss to understand. But it is a mistake as to the force of εἰ μή or εἰ δὲ μή. Not that it is not used as "unless" or "except." But its connection with the main idea of the previous phrase, and opposition to the manner there stated, is common: it is really stronger than ἀλλά, having the force of only, or but only. Compare Rom. 14:14, where the δι' αὐτοῦ must be left out, and the unclean, or main idea taken by itself. Only in that case a thing is unclean, and the point is the opposition to the way or manner. It is exactly so here. There κοινός! is the common idea, justifying here, δι αὐτοῦ the special case hypothetically put and denied. Introduce δι αὐτοῦ into the second member of the sentence and you make nonsense of the whole. And so you do here if we read what follows. So Matt. 12:4. It was not lawful for him to eat nor those with him, but only for the priests. So Luke 4:26, 27, but (or but only) to Sarepta, which was not in Israel: so as to Naaman. There is always the contradiction of or opposition to something in εἰ μή. The question is to what? In the first case it is of priests to common Jews; in Luke it is to "in Israel!" in Romans "by nature" or to him who so esteems it; in Galatians law and Christ; and always a common idea too, as in Matthew, lawfulness to eat; in Luke, widows or lepers; in Romans uncleanness; in Galatians, justifying. Hence the common idea is not uncommonly left out, and only εἰ δὲ μή put in, and the contradicting matter only stated. Meyer, Ellicott, De Wette, Hammond, Fritzsche on Rom. 14:14, all take it as "but," or "but only" in Gal. 2:16. The difference of ἀλλά seems to me to be that there is not necessarily a common point or subject as well as contrast, but simply contrast (not this, but that) with εἰ μή! there is always a common point about which the contrast takes place. But it is a great mistake to think that it makes the whole antecedent clause the common point, which is what the question would do, so that the clause following it is a condition simply of the whole. You may see the grammatical statements in Klotz's Devarius, Hoogeveen or Viger, Bos' Ellipses, and Winer 654, (sec 66), the rest under ti μή, and the Commentaries in loco. In both, passages from the classics will be found. The point of the difference of ἀλλά and εἰ μή has not been noticed that I am aware of! but I think it will be found just.

There does not seem to me to be the smallest doubt as to the sense of the passage; at any rate, that it means what the question supposes by the grammatical force of the words is a mistake. Passages such as Rom. 14:14 demonstrate it, and others too, as Mark 13:32; Rev. 9:4. In 1 Cor. 7:17 it stands elliptically by itself for "only." Rom. 3:27 fully confirms what I have said of the difference of ἀλλά. When the supposed common point is set as to be, and a condition or way of it is negatived, what follows εἰ μή is exclusive and contradictory of the condition or way. Thus οὐδέ τις ἄλλος αἴτιος ἀθανάτων εἰ μὴ ωεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς. A cause is supposed, ἄλλος negatived, εἰ μὴ exclusive and contradictory of ἄλλος; when there is no negative and the case supposed, the εἰ μὴ negatives the supposition and says why. Μιλτιάδην δὲ τὸν ἐν Μαραθῶνι εἰς τὸ βάραθρον ἐμβαλεᾶ, καὶ εἰ μὴ δαὶ τὸν πρύτανιν ἐνέπεσεν ἄν. If it had not been for the Prytanis, he would have fallen into it. There are cases where μή! is left out, and εἰ δέ put with a possible substitution. It answers in the cases of exclusion to íÆôÆà in Hebrew. See Wolff's Curae in loco. When the whole sentence is negative, the εἰ μή becomes a positive affirmation of what follows, as 1 Cor. 10:13, Mark 8:14, and others. Schütz's Hoogeveen gives a pretty full explanation under the words εἰ μή In result, the negation of works, or faith in Christ to the contradiction or exclusion of works of law, is clearly the sense of the passage.

Chapter 2:10 to 21

"But when Peter came to Antioch I withstood him to the face, because he was to be condemned; for before that certain came from James, he ate with those of the nations; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing those of the circumcision; and the rest of the Jews also played the same dissembling part with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away, too, by their dissimulation.

"But when I saw that they do not walk straightforwardly, according to the truth of the glad tidings, I said to Peter before all, if thou, being a Jew, livest as the nations and not as the Jews, how dost thou compel the nations to Judaize? We, Jews by nature, and not sinners of the nations, but knowing that a man is not justified on the principle of works of law, nor but by the faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified on the principle of the faith of Christ, and not of works of law; because on the principle of works of law no flesh shall be justified.

"Now if in seeking to be justified in Christ we also have been found sinners, then is Christ minister of sin. Far be the thought. For if the things I have thrown down, these I build again, I constitute myself a transgressor. For I through law have died to law, that I may live to God. I am crucified with Christ, and no longer live, I, but Christ lives in me, but in that I now live in flesh, I live by faith, the faith of the Son of God, who has loved me and given Himself for me.

"I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness is by law, then Christ has died for nothing" (verses 11-21, JND).

Peter had done well in his testimony at the Jerusalem conference, but he failed sadly at Antioch. Before "certain came from James"—probably Jewish believers from Jerusalem where Judaism had its center—Peter ate with the Gentile believers, as of course he should; but when these others came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing the newcomers; and the other Jews followed his example, even Barnabas, Paul's companion, among them.

If Peter did not realize the gravity of what he was doing, Paul did, and he at once took Peter to task before all. The occasion was not one where the feelings of another could be considered and he be spoken to privately about his error. Nor could the fact that God had acted mightily in Peter, who was beyond question reckoned one of the chief apostles, justify silence about the offense. Finally no question of apostolic rank, as of Peter's being Paul's superior, to whom deference must be shown, could be raised, for Peter had no such appointment.

The Lord had committed the gospel to Paul's responsibility, and silence could not be permitted where that gospel was falsified. To Peter therefore he said before all:

"If thou, being a Jew, livest as the nations ... how dost thou compel the nations to Judaize? We, Jews by nature ... have believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified on the principle of the faith of Christ, and not of works of law; because on the principle of works of law no flesh shall be justified, etc."

Paul's words went right to the heart of the matter, the Holy Spirit by him showing how much was involved in Peter's act. In order for Gentile believers to enjoy full Christian communion, they must live as Jews, if Peter's example should stand; yet he had before felt free to live as the Gentiles did. But said the Lord's faithful servant in pointed words of truth:

"We, Jews by nature and not sinners of the nations, but knowing that a man is not justified on the principle of works of law; nor but by the faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified on the principle of the faith of Christ and not of works of law; because on the principle of works of law no flesh shall be justified."

In Romans 3:20, we have the conclusion stated:

"Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His (God's) sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin," and, a few verses following, there is:

"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (verse 24).

It may be well to remark that, as the careful reader may have noticed, the better translations have "works of law" or "deeds of law," not "the works (or deeds) of the law" as in the common version of our Bible. The language in the original would apply to any deeds under any laws or rules, not the ten commandments only.

Verse 17. Going back to the law after receiving Christ had this effect, that having ceased to seek righteousness by the law in order to come to Him, and now judging that they had done wrong in giving up the law, Christ was made to be a minister of sin, because He had made them transgressors under it; as another has expressed it, "If after you have got Christ you are only found through the law to be a sinner, you in effect make Christ the minister of sin." Monstrous thought!

Verse 18. In coming to Christ, I give up the law as the ground of my hope of salvation; and if I turn back to the law, I make myself a transgressor under it, for the law condemns me, cannot deliver, cannot save me.

Commenting on Peter's failure and nature's tendency to lean upon ordinances, the well-known writer frequently quoted in these pages has this to say:

"What a result from the weakness which, in order to please men, had returned to those things that were gratifying to the flesh! How little did Peter think of this! How little do many Christians suspect it! To rest upon ordinances, is to rest upon the flesh; there are none in heaven. When Christ, who is there, is everything, it cannot be done. Christ has indeed established ordinances to distinguish His people from the world, by that which signified on the one hand that they were not of it, but dead with Him to it, and on the other hand, to gather them on the ground of that which alone can unite them all—on the ground of the cross and of accomplished redemption, in the unity of His body.

"But if, instead of using them with thanksgiving according to His will, we rest upon them, we have forsaken the fullness, the sufficiency, of Christ, to build upon the flesh, which can thus occupy itself with these ordinances, and find in them its fatal sustenance, and a veil to hide the perfect Saviour of whose death, as in connection with this world, and with man living in the flesh, these ordinances so plainly speak to us. To rest upon Christian ordinances is exactly to deny the precious and solemn truth which they present to us, that there is no longer righteousness after the flesh, since Christ is dead and risen." (Synopsis: Galatians; J. N. Darby)

Verse 19: "For I through law have died to law, that I may live to God."

Once Paul had been under law; his conscience awakened, he saw what he was as a condemned sinner, deserving eternal judgment; his soul then had realized death in all its power. Through law he died to law, because law has nothing to say to a dead man; died to it, in order that he might live to God.

Verse 20: "I am crucified with Christ, and no longer live, I, but Christ lives in me."

Christ had borne sin's judgment, suffered the curse of the law of God and death, yet lives, the risen one. Paul was set free in Christ, outside of the law in grace; was crucified with Him, so that condemnation was gone for him. Nevertheless he lived, no longer Paul, but Christ living in him.

"But in that I now live in flesh, I live by faith, the faith of the Son of God, who has loved me and given Himself for me."

Happy Paul! living in flesh, as he says, he lives by faith, the faith of the Son of God; he has an all attractive object before his soul, outside of this world; and that object is the One who loved him and gave Himself for him.

Verse 21. This gives the conclusion of the whole matter. The grace of God is not frustrated, and Christ has not died in vain, thinking of the present enjoyment of Christ which the believer may have, of which he is robbed by the false teaching, much current in our day, another has said:

"What a loss, dreadful and inseparable, to lose such a Christ as we under grace have known Him; such a righteousness; such a love; the Son of God our portion, our life; the Son of God devoted for us, and to us!"

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 2:11-21, Reflections on (2:11-21)

PAUL closes the series of personal incidents in connection with the twelve, by relating Peter's sorrowful declension at Antioch. Instead of being resisted by Peter because of teaching a defective gospel (as some adversaries might have expected), Paul had to withstand him for compromising the truth of the gospel. “But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision” (vers. 11, 12). What a poor thing is man apart from sustaining grace! When Hezekiah was left to himself for a moment, he betrayed his trust, man of faith though he was ordinarily (2 Chr. 32:31). We only see perfection in One: He only has trodden the path unfalteringly and without defect. Where would the church have been if really built on Peter, as many say? At Antioch he completely broke down when the fundamental truth of the gospel was involved. During the early part of his stay there, he enjoyed the fellowship of Gentile brethren, and felt perfectly free to go in and out of their houses, and eat with them. He enjoyed the liberty of grace, and regarded no man as common or unclean. But the fear of man bringeth a snare; and we soon behold the humbling spectacle of the very chiefest of the twelve turning completely aside because of the coming of certain Jewish brethren from Jerusalem. He forgot for the moment the lesson taught him on the housetop at Joppa, and his own statements concerning the Gentiles in the council at Jerusalem (Acts 10; 15); and by withdrawing himself from his brethren of the uncircumcision, he built again the things he had destroyed, making differences where God makes none.

The infection spread. “And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him: insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation” (ver. 13). That the other Jews had eaten and drunk all things in liberty; why, should follow their leader may not be a matter of because some from James had come upon the surprise; but what can we say when we see even scene, should he make a difference, and impose Paul's own fellow-laborer led astray He who had labored with Paul in the gospel, who had joined with him in planting Gentile assemblies in all quarters, and who had labored with such acceptance and blessing in this very assembly—he of all persons should have been proof against such a thing as this. The Spirit describes him elsewhere as “a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith” (Acts 11:24). Paul found much comfort in his fellowship, and they were doubtless divinely mated. But “the son of consolation” was apt to be weak at a crisis, as we see in the matter of John Mark (Acts 15:37). It is a great test for the saints when such men go astray. Satan knows how to beguile the lovely characters, that he may the better accomplish his unworthy ends. The personal qualities of such, their past faithful services, and the place they have won in consequence in the hearts of the saints, all combine to put the unwary off their guard, and thus to ensnare their souls. It is not safe to follow even “a good man,” as many in our own days can sorrowfully testify. In such crises, the eye must be off men, and fixed upon the Lord, in order to arrive at a sound judgment.

But, thanks be to God, there was at least one faithful man at Antioch at that time. Painful as it doubtless was to the apostle, he promptly rebuked Peter publicly. The wounds of a friend are kind. “But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I

said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (vers. 14-16). In so simple a matter as refusing to eat at table with brethren of the uncircumcision, Paul saw the truth of the gospel at stake. A straw is sufficient to show the course of a stream, and so the apostle judged. Peter had been living after the manner of the Gentiles, and bondage upon the Gentiles? Paul reminded his Jewish brother of the ground on which they all stood before God. Had they ever found justification by law? Had the law ever done aught for them but condemn them? Had not both Peter and himself believed in Jesus Christ that they might be justified by faith? Had they not both learned that by works of law no flesh shall be justified? Then why deny all this, and put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples that none had yet been able to bear? The apostle then reasons with the Galatians. If they really were under law, they were sinners; for law convicts of sin all who are under it; and in linking together Christ and law, they virtually made Him responsible for such a condition. "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" (ver. 17). Probably they had not thought of this. Satan in leading souls astray generally means more than they mean. To get under his power in any way is to have one's susceptibilities blunted, and the vision dimmed.

Moreover to turn back to law, after having left it, is to constitute oneself a transgressor. "For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor" (ver. 18). Nothing can be plainer than this; and the principle is worthy of the deepest consideration in this day. If God brings souls out from under law, it is transgression to return to it in any form; while, on the other hand, if God does not thus deliver, it is transgression to leave it. Let the Galatians solve the question before God. Was He leading them there, or the enemy?

True deliverance from law is by death, as the apostle shows. "For I through the law died to the law that I might live unto God" (ver. 19). Law is a killing power, a ministration of death, and but for divine intervention in grace, it would have been the eternal ruin of all who were under it. But Christ has come, death has come in—His death is ours. The sentence has taken full effect in Him for us—we have died, and that through law. But having thus died through the law, we are necessarily dead to it—it has no further claim, as Rom. 7 fully establishes. The law has nothing to do with dead men. We live unto God, and bring forth fruit, in complete contrast to the former condition, when the motions of sins which were by the law wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. We were then in the flesh; we are now in the Spirit.

Therefore the apostle says, "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" (ver. 20). Here we get Christian life in a nutshell. Crucified with Christ, the old life closed with all its appurtenances; a new life possessed—Christ. The life is sustained by faith in its heavenly object, the Son of God. How blessed is this for the Christian! A positive new life implanted in the soul from God, indestructible, eternal, and divine; and its true object set before it. This is put too in the most touching possible way, for the apostle adds, "Who loved me, and gave himself for me." This draws out the affections, and produces heavenly fruit for God. Who would not be forever adoringly occupied with such an One? What a contrast to mere cold legalism! Yet the heart is ever ready to return there, to its own loss and the Lord's dishonor.

To speak and act thus is not to frustrate divine grace. "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ died in vain" (ver. 21). The soul must be brought to this. If flesh were at all competent to attain to righteousness by law-keeping, the death of Christ was needless; but if (as was indeed the case) we were altogether without strength, grace (and that alone) can avail before our God. The soul that has learned in any measure its ruin by nature is thankful and content to take its place as an object of abounding grace—grace founded upon the atoning death of the Lord Jesus.

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 2:1-10, Reflections on (2:1-10)

THE apostle proceeds to speak further of his connections with the twelve, and relates his second visit to Jerusalem. "Then fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also" (ver. 1). The circumstances of this visit are detailed in Acts xv. While Paul and Barnabas were laboring at Antioch, certain men from Jerusalem got in among the brethren, and taught them that, unless they were circumcised after the manner of Moses, they could not be saved. This led to much dissension and disputation, for the apostle would not quietly suffer the foundations of the faith to be thus assailed; but God so ordered it that the question was not settled on the spot. Paul and Barnabas, with other deputies, were dispatched to the Jewish metropolis to discuss the question with the apostles and elders. Thus did God preserve unity all round. He would cause the leaders of the Jewish brethren, resident in the very city from which the trouble emanated, to declare the entire freedom of Gentile believers from the law of Moses.

The discussion is given in Acts xv. where Peter describes the law as a yoke "which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear;" and concludes his speech with the memorable words, "But we believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Remark, not "they even as we," but "we [Jews] as they" (Gentiles), all fleshly distinctions being now obliterated through the cross of Christ.

But if Acts 15. gives us the human and circumstantial side of Paul's journey, our epistle shows the divine side. "I went up by revelation." It was thus not merely a matter between Paul and the troubled assembly, or between Paul and the twelve; but he was directly sent of the Lord. He now seeks conference with those whom he had rather avoided before. "I communicated to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles; but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain" (ver. 2). Here we may see the wisdom of the apostle. He spoke privately to the leaders before the public discussion came on, that it might be manifest that there was no contradiction (whatever difference there might be) in the teaching of those who labored, whether among Jews or Gentiles. He laid before the twelve the gospel which he preached among the Gentiles. Did they judge it defective, as those who had seduced the Galatians? Did they add to him anything? The context shows that they did neither; but rather that they recognized thankfully the grace of God which wrought in him, even though his line was altogether different from their own. When the Spirit is working, there is no room for human pettiness.

Verse 3 should be read as a parenthesis. “But neither Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.” In this Paul was very bold; yet it was not the boldness of defiance, but of Christian liberty. He took, in the face of all, an uncircumcised Gentile brother into the very center of Judaism; and who that was taught of God (however full of Jewish feeling) could say him nay? Yet the apostle, we know, was always very considerate of Jewish scruples, making himself all things to all men for their blessing, as may be seen in his circumcision of Timothy in Acts 16., and in his instructions in Rom. 14. But Titus, unlike Timothy, was a pure Gentile, and it would have compromised the truth of the gospel to have circumcised him to please brethren among the Jews. Titus was saved as a Gentile, apart altogether from ordinances or works of law. This is brought forward here to show that even in Jerusalem was not required what the Galatians had proved themselves so ready to submit to.

Following upon the parenthesis, the apostle explains more fully the cause of his visit to Jerusalem at that time. “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: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you” (vers. 4, 5). Thus does he speak of the proceedings at Antioch, of the efforts of the enemy, and of his own earnest resistance of them. How soon did the church fall a prey to evil men through unwatchfulness, when apostolic energy was no more!

Still, as we have seen, even the great apostle of the Gentiles, was not permitted of the Lord to settle this momentous question without reference to Jerusalem; and this for unity's sake: a precious and important principle in the sight of the Lord. But did Paul learn anything in Jerusalem? Was his knowledge of Christianity perfected there among the twelve? “But of these who seemed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person): for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me” (ver. 6). How could the Jewish leaders add anything to Paul? His gospel was beyond theirs, as is plain. He started with Christ's glory, and proclaimed its immense results to all who believe; they testified of One who walked here, who was crucified, and raised again by the power of God. The testimonies were not contradictory, but Paul's was in advance, nevertheless.

Therefore, instead of disagreeing with Paul, or seeking to alter the character of his ministry, as though it were faulty, or not of God, the twelve gave over the work among the Gentiles to Paul and Barnabas, mutually agreeing each to keep to his own line. “But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter (for he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles): and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace which was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision” (vers. 8, 9). Whether among Jews or Gentiles, it was God who wrought; and the laborers were but the vessels of His grace. It is happy to observe these brethren, equally called and commissioned of God, recognizing the grace given to each other, even though their line was essentially different, and though they had received no sort of authority from each other.

Peter's place is very clearly defined here—the apostleship of the circumcision. Strange that perverse men should have fastened upon him, of all the twelve, to be the reputed founder and head of the great Gentile assembly of the West; and strange, too, that to this day the delusion should be maintained with all its soul-destroying appurtenances. Scripture speaks of but one apostle in Rome, Paul, not Peter; and that, not to found or head a church (there being an assembly there long before, and no apostle engaged in its foundation), but to be imprisoned and to die.

In giving up the Gentile work to Paul, the twelve expressed one important wish. “Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do” (ver. 10). The loving compliance of the apostle may be seen in 2 Cor. 8, and 9. The dearth in Judea furnished an occasion for the cementing of divine bonds, Gentile brethren coming forward with affectionate hearts to supply the need of fellow-members of the same body among the circumcision.

Messenger of Peace: Volume 2 (1883), "Who Gave Himself." (1:3-4)

(Read Galatians 1:3, 4; 2:15-21; 4:4-7.)

THERE is much in the Epistle to the Galatians that reminds you of that to the Romans. In Romans you have the great foundation truths of the gospel unfolded in all their breadth and beauty, the truth of the total ruin of man, and then the truth of the redemption which Christ has accomplished, so that man is brought to God, perfectly justified, through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It answers Job’s question, “But how should man be just with God?” (9:2) by showing that the sin you had Christ has died for, and the righteousness which you had not, and never could have by any work of your own, is conferred on you by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what Romans teaches, while Galatians is a recalling of the soul to these simple truths. The Galatians had been turned aside by false teachers, who taught them that while Christ had done a great deal, yet they also had a great deal to do before they could be “just with God.” Now, though the Galatians, to whom the Epistle was written, lived in the days of the apostle Paul, yet there are many Galatians in this day, who, while they believe that Christ has done a wonderful work, yet think that they have something left to do for their salvation, and consequently they have not peace with God.

Now, what is the first thing the apostle starts with? No less than this, that our Lord Jesus Christ “gave himself for our sins.” These people had been thinking that they must do something to affect the blotting out of their sins. But Christ “gave himself for our sins.” What a wonderful thing! what marvelous tidings for sinners! that the Lord Jesus Christ “gave himself for our sins.”

But why did Christ give Himself? What was the need of this wondrous act? The reason is not far to seek. Your state and mine, dear reader, could be met in no other way. In proof of this I wish to draw your attention to two very solemn conclusions that the Holy Ghost presents in Scripture. The first is, “But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe” (Gal. 3:22). Thus, you see, you are under sin, my reader, if you have not Christ. You may say, “I do not conclude that,” but the Scripture does. You have a dominant master, sin; and if you are honest, you will own it.

“The scripture hath concluded all under sin.” Who gets out of that? The man that believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. What are the wages of sin? Death; and after death, eternal damnation. You may say, “I do not believe it.” That does not alter the fact; “the wages of sin is death,” and after death the judgment. O do not put it from you, my reader the Holy Ghost has penned this solemn statement as to your condition. You are under sin. Do you say, “I am trying to get out?” That you will never do by trying, but only go on sinning the more; for as long as you try, you do not get the right way out. While you are trying you are not believing.

The second conclusion is this, “For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all” (Rom. 11:32). Not only, then, are you a sinner, but you are an unbeliever. God concludes all in unbelief. Why? That He may judge all? Nay, but “that he might have mercy upon all.” Then, if God concludes you in sin and in unbelief, —and God knows it, and the Holy Ghost comes and testifies it to your conscience, — do not you, I beseech you, refuse to bow to what God says about you.

Do you ask, “What will bring me out of this terrible condition?” Listen to what God has to say to you, that will bring you out. Galatians 1:4 gives the answer. The Lord Jesus Christ “crave himself for our sins.” You are thoroughly under the power of sin, and, if God does not intervene, there is no help for you, and hell must be your portion forever.

You may think, “I will turn over a new leaf and amend my life.” Yes, but what about all the pages of life’s book that have already been blotted? If from this hour to the end of your history you went on without committing one sin, you would be none the better off. There are years of sin already lying at your door. How, then, are you going to escape God’s judgment? Ah, this lovely truth comes in, “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.” He “gave himself for our sins.”

Do you say, “How can I get quit of my sins?” The Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the living God, gave Himself for them. Think of the majesty of His person, think of His glory, think of who He was, and whence He came, and then think He “gave himself for our sins.”

Can I have a doubt or a misgiving? Suppose the devil comes and says, “What a sinner you are!”

Quite true, I reply, but He “gave himself for our sins.” It was not merely that Christ gave what He had, He gave Himself. Then what ought I to do? say you. Why, first of all believe it, and then give yourself to Him.

Blessed be His name, He gave Himself. Faith says, “for my sins.” Then where are my sins? Gone forever, put away by Christ. He poured out His blood upon the cross; but as that blood flowed forth, it washed every one of my sins away. On the cross He bore every one of my sins. Man had forsaken Him, He was betrayed by a false friend, and denied even by true ones; and when He was alone in His sorrow, and alone in His grief, when all had forsaken Him, and He looked for some to take pity, and there was none, and for comforters but found none, —then God forsook Him too. Then He cried, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Amazing truth! Here is a righteous man in the deepest depths of woe, and, you would think, God would stand by and comfort Him. But no, God forsakes Him. Why? Because He was bearing our sins, and God and sin never can meet except in judgment. He cannot look upon it, though it be on the person of His Son—and that sin not His own —without utterly judging it. Every saint of God had had the Lord standing by him and strengthening him, but Jesus was alone and forsaken.

On the cross He bore my sins, and put them away. When He went on to the cross, there was not a sin upon Him; and when He came down from that tree, there was not a sin upon Him. While on the cross, He bore sins, and His blood rolled them all away. If now my sins could be found anywhere, they must be found on Christ, and that, you know, is impossible. He took them, and therefore, if they are anywhere, they are on Him, not on me. We know they are not on Him, —His resurrection was the proof of that.

But not only has Christ put away my sins, does this Epistle teach me, but I am justified by faith in Him “who loved me and gave himself for me.” We read in chapter 2:16, — “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Here the contrast is between the works of the law and the hearing of faith, i.e., between what I do, and my believing on Him who has done something for me. What you and I can do can never clear us before God. How, then, can we be justified? By what Christ has done. When you justify God, —bow down to what God says about you, and believe what He says about His blessed Son, —then God justifies you. God is now looking about to see whom He can justify. He justifies everyone who condemns himself.

The value of the law is this, that it shows you that you are downright wrong, but it can never put you right. God knew that your heart and mine were deceitful to the very core, but the law exposes these hearts to our own gaze. There is not one thing in you or me that can suit God. “I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,” and the law makes this manifest. How, then, can I be justified by keeping it? Never! It can condemn, but cannot clear me.

Knowing, then, that I cannot be justified by what I can do, as Paul says, “We have believed.” There is the turning point, my reader. Now, have you believed? If so, we may go farther, as the Apostle does, saying, “The Son of God loved me and gave himself for me.” It is not only my sins that are gone, but I myself am gone, —the man that sinned. Where, then, is my life now? Blessed answer, — “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). Yes, Christ is my life, —I live in Him, and He in me. I should not be satisfied with knowing that Christ gave Himself for my sins. I want something for my heart; I want to know that He loves me. “Dost Thou love me, Lord? “I look up and say. “I loved thee, —I gave Myself for thee,” is His sweet answer. “Ah! then,” the Christian says, “my heart is His, now and forever; my sins are forgiven; God justifies me; Christ is my life; I am a child of God; and more, I possess the Holy Ghost, because I am a son and heir of God.”

These last truths we get in chapter 3:26, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus”; and in chapters 4:4-7, “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

A “child” gives the thought of intimacy, but it is the eldest son who knows that he is to get the title and property. He can enter into his father’s mind, and he says, “I must comport myself with the dignity that becomes my station.” And so, my reader, from this day, if you really believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will surely lead an entirely new life. You will not alter your ways to get life, but, because you have it, your ways will be altered to suit Him who has so richly blessed you.

W. T. P. W.

Bible Treasury: Volume N1, Reflections on Galatians 1:11-24 (1:11-24)

IT was necessary that he should speak of his relations with the twelve. Had he received his instructions from them, or any sort of appointment from them? Hearken: “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Thus does he assert the entire independence of his ministry, and its heavenly origin. His gospel could not have been derived from the Jerusalem laborers, because, while not contradicting theirs in anywise, it went far beyond them.

It will be observed by every careful reader of scripture that the gospel as preached by Peter and Paul, though in both the Spirit's testimony to Christ, had decidedly different characteristics. Peter spoke of One who had walked here well known by all the Jews, who had been crucified by wicked men, yet raised up by God and exalted to glory, in Whose name remission of sins is now preached to all. Paul, on the other hand, starts with His glory.1 His testimony was not of One who walked here (though he speaks of his wondrous pathway as a pattern for our souls, Phil. 2). On the contrary, he wrote, “Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more” (2 Cor. 5:16).

His testimony was of One, Who, having accomplished redemption, is now in glory, the Second Man, head of a new race, in Whom believers are justified and accepted, and with Whom we are one body by the Holy Ghost. All this, and more, he had by revelation, not through a human medium. Not that Paul despised the fellowship of any of his brethren—his many appeals in his Epistles for their prayers prove the contrary; nor that he undervalued the counsel of those who had been longer engaged in the service of Christ than himself; but he would preserve intact his own direct responsibility to the Lord, as having been called and commissioned from above, altogether apart from man.

His early training in Judaism was in no sense a preparation for his apostolic ministry. He had been a persecutor, and a very extreme one. “For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it: and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly jealous of the traditions of my fathers.” The divine sovereignty in the choice of the vessel is strikingly seen. Who more suitable to write the Epistle to the Galatians? Who better fitted to enforce justification by faith alone, to the exclusion of works, thus pouring contempt on the first man, and all his efforts after righteousness? Who better fitted to show the believer's entire deliverance from law? Could a converted publican do it as well? I am not overlooking the Spirit's inspiration in writing thus, but merely drawing attention to the display of divine wisdom in the use of one who profited in Judaism above his contemporaries, blameless and zealous, to unfold Christianity in its highest aspect, setting the believer entirely free from law, and all that pertains to the first man.

Accordingly, when called of God, be conferred not with flesh and blood, nor sought human credentials, but went into Arabia, &c. “But when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia and returned again unto Damascus.” Observe the peculiarity of the expression— “to reveal His Son in me.” He is the only apostle who uses the phrase, and it is characteristic. To Peter the Father revealed His Son ( Matt. 16); but Paul's word goes farther. It involves union with Christ, and of this truth Paul was the honored exponent. He learned the elements of it in his conversion. The immense fact was brought to bear upon him that in persecuting the saints he was persecuting Christ, for the saints were in Him and He in them.

Having received such a call, the apostle acted upon his direct responsibility to the Lord, without any human medium. He went into Arabia (after a brief testimony, it would seem, in the synagogues of Damascus, Acts 9), and thence returned to the scene of his conversion. What a passing by of those who were somewhat in the church! He did not go up to Jerusalem for some time, and then merely on a visit to the apostle of the circumcision; not to be instructed or appointed in any way. This he shows plainly. “Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none save James the Lord's brother. Now the things which I write unto you, behold before God I lie not.” It is clear that he was most anxious to show that there was no sort of subordination to the twelve, nor commission from them. It was so ordered that only two of the apostles were at home at the same time. It might be a reproach in the eyes of the Galatians; but Jerusalem and the twelve were certainly not the source of his ministry.

He was also, at least at first, very little known by the Jewish saints in general. Though he loved them well, and at a later date found pleasure in carrying to them Gentile offerings, his work did not lie among them, but in the regions beyond. Hence we read, “Afterward 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.” How transforming is divine grace, turning a thief into a giver (Eph. 4:28), and a persecutor into a preacher; but what a rebuke for the assemblies of Galatia! They were criticizing the devoted apostle, and slighting him because his ministry had not a Jewish source; while the assemblies of Judea (from whom he might naturally expect more or less prejudice) glorified God for His admirable work of sovereign favor. Those who had been called to the grace of Christ by his means were positively behind brethren of the circumcision in such an important respect!

The Epistle to the Galatians, Galatians 1:1-9: The Epistle to the Galatians (1:1-9)

No human mind, or minds, however many and however wise, could have planned and prepared a book such as we have in the Bible, a book of unfailing guidance exactly meeting the needs of the children of God through the centuries, and today shedding its broad beams of heavenly light over a very dark world, for all who are subject to it. This book professes to be, and it is, the Word of God; the believer finds the needs of his soul met therein; finds the path of obedience in it, and, his sorrows relieved, his errors corrected, a heavenly joy filling his heart, as Christ becomes increasingly the object before him, he pursues his course toward an assured end at his Saviour's side in glory.

The Epistle to the Romans makes plain what man is, lost and undone, and how a holy and righteous God can save lost sinners; nothing can separate the subjects of His grace from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Epistles to the Corinthians point out many of the pitfalls which the old nature within, and Satan, the enemy of our souls, would use to the believer's loss. (How thankful we should be for this, because these very evils abound around us today!) The truth of the "one body," comprising all believers, is found in the Corinthians; so is a chapter dealing with the Lord's supper, and others tell of the Holy Spirit's work in the Assembly, of the coming of the Lord, and many other subjects forming part of the instruction the believer needs.

The Epistle to the Galatians differs from Romans wherein positive truth is presented, in that the recovery of the truth formerly known is what is pressed in the Epistle now before us. Perhaps the first mention of Satan's successful scheme to corrupt the gospel is found in Acts 15:1-31. In Acts 21:20-22 we see that the Jewish believers at Jerusalem were inoculated with this evil mixture of law and grace, though they had learned that the apostle Paul taught the Jews as he did the Gentiles who believed, justification by faith without the deeds of the law (Rom. 3:28).

Portions of 2 Corinthians 11 and 12 seem to indicate that the false teachers who had found an entrance in that Assembly in the apostle's absence, were trying to get the Gentile believers converted to Satan's device of law and grace—Judaism and Christianity. Philippians 1:15 and 3:2-7, 18-19; Colossians 2:14-17 and 1 Timothy 1:3-11 among other passages show how extended were these efforts of the devil to corrupt the truth while Paul was yet alive. Today this corruption of the truth in varying degree is all but universal, notwithstanding its condemnation in the pages of Scripture.

"God, it is true, in His love has suited the gospel to the wants of man. The enemy brings down that which still bears its name to the level of the haughty will of man and the corruption of the natural heart, turning Christianity into a religion that suits that heart, in place of One that is the expression of the heart of God—an all-holy God—and the revelation of that which He has done in His love, to bring us into communion with His holiness ... "

"God allowed this invasion of His assembly in the earliest days of its existence, in order that we might have the answer of divine inspiration to these very principles, when they should be developed in an established system which would claim submission from the children of God as being the church that He had established, and the only ministry that He acknowledged." (Synopsis of the Books of the Bible: Galatians, J. N. Darby).

We turn to the text of the Epistle: "Paul, apostle, not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised Him from among the dead, and all the brethren with me, to the assemblies of Galatia. Grace to you, and peace, from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, so that He should deliver us out of the present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory to the ages of ages. Amen." (verses 1-5, JND).

Of the nine Epistles of Paul addressed to assemblies, this to the Galatians has the most singular form of address. In writing to the Corinthians he had referred to his apostleship as through, or by, the will of God; here the language is, "not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ." Halted near Damascus in his course as the chief of sinners by the Lord Himself, we see in Acts 9 to verse 30, in chapter 11:25-30, and chapter 12:25, with the beginning of chapter 13, Paul's history from that meeting on the Damascus road to the commencement of the work outside of Israel's land to which he was called by the Holy Spirit.

Knowing well what Satan would do to corrupt the gospel, the Lord chose the servant through whom He would make it fully known, chose the place and circumstances of his conversion, dealt with him, not as with the twelve on earth, but as the risen and glorified One, kept him apart from the twelve apostles at Jerusalem in Arabia, and distant Tarsus first, and afterward at Antioch (both these places far to the north of Israel's land) during years of preparation, that his apostleship might be altogether "not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised Him from among the dead."

"And all the brethren that are with me;" his brethren, then with the apostle, his companions in service, are united with him; "to the assemblies of Galatia"; setting them apart as though they had taken up with something, some bad teaching (as indeed they had), for which they must be dealt with.

The apostle wishes, as in all his letters, grace and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, but here adds, "who gave Himself for our sins, so that He should deliver us out of the present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory to the ages of ages. Amen." Since He gave Himself for our sins, our sins are gone from God's sight in that one perfect offering; and our present position, through His grace, is that He will deliver us in body, as He has already done for our souls, out of the present evil world, which has been judged. Now these things are completely at variance with Judaism, with the principles of law keeping for salvation. The law looks at a man in the world, alive in his sins, and bids him, "Do this and live," establishing, if he can, his own righteousness here in the world. And many are quite prepared to go on such a footing.

Verses 6-9: "I wonder that ye thus quickly change from him that called you in Christ's grace to a different gospel which is not another one; but there are some that trouble you, and desire to pervert the glad tidings of the Christ. But if even we or an angel out of heaven announce as glad tidings to you anything besides what we have announced as glad tidings to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, now also again I say, if any one announce to you as glad tidings anything besides what ye have received, let him be accursed" (JND).

In but a few years the believers in Galatia had turned from the apostle Paul's teaching of the whole truth of God in its purity, to an adulteration of it, an addition to it. As another has expressed it, to add anything was to deny the perfection of the entirely heavenly revelation

of God; to alter its character was to corrupt it. The apostle is not speaking of a doctrine openly opposed to it, but of that which is outside of the gospel he had preached. Thus there cannot be another gospel; it is a different gospel, but there are no glad tidings but what he had preached. Whoever turned away the saints from the perfect truth Paul had preached, let him be accursed.

Reflections on Galatians, Galatians 1:1-10, Reflections on (1:1-10)

The opening address is remarkable for its singularity. “Paul an apostle (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised him from the dead), and all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia.” He is careful to assert his apostleship and the source of it, the Judaizing teachers of his day invariably calling it in question while seeking to undermine the doctrine of free grace (2 Cor. 11-13). It was an offense to such that Paul had not received his commission from the twelve and from Jerusalem. So petty and narrow is the human mind that it is slow to enter into the breadth of God's thoughts and the divine sovereignty of His action. These men would have had Christianity revolve around Jerusalem as a center, and would have supplemented faith in Christ with circumcision and the ordinances of the law. But God's thoughts are not as men's thoughts. Christianity is no mere branch of Judaism (which had a divinely selected earthly center), but a totally new order of blessing, founded upon the work of Christ, having its seat in heaven, where Christ sits as the glorified Head at the right hand of God.

It was true that Paul had not been called from Jerusalem. He was called to both grace and apostleship near Damascus, and when sent forth to evangelize the Gentile world, it was from Antioch. Thus early did God break in upon successional order. Therefore, while asserting his apostleship, he adds, “not of men, neither by man.” He sets man aside, as either the source or the channel of ministry. The source of all ministry is the risen Christ. “When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some apostles,” &c. (Eph. 4). Here there is no room either for official men or the church. The authority of the former is in every case pretended, not real, while the latter has no place, according to scripture, save as a receiver of all the blessing. It is an infringement of the rights of Christ for either to step in between Himself and His servants. Yet how general is the departure from scripture in this very respect! In what religious body in Christendom could ministry be described as “not of men, neither by man?” Many would probably assert that man is not the source of ministry, but can anyone say that man is not the universally recognized channel? Human authority, in one form or another, is looked for on all sides, ere a man can be regarded as a “regular” minister of Christ. Scripture furnishes no warrant whatever for such a notion, though it be ancient. Laborers are responsible to the Lord alone, Who fits, calls, and gives them to the church.

But here we must distinguish between gift and office. Scripture speaks plainly of elders and deacons. Elders were chosen by the apostles, either personally or by delegate, to care for the spiritual state of the saints locally; deacons were nominated by the assembly to undertake the temporal affairs, as caring for widows, &c. Both classes were apostolically appointed. But this was not for the ministry of the word. It was not an absolute requisite for men of either class to be able to labor in word and doctrine. No doubt, where this was, the laborer was worthy of double honor (Acts 14:23; 6:3-6, 1 Tim. 5:17).

But ministry, if Scripture is to be followed, is free, those who have received gifts being responsible to the Lord Jesus to exercise them. Good doctrine, not official appointment, was to be looked for (compare 3 John). When Apollos went to Ephesus, it was not his ordination that was inquired into, but his doctrine; and having approved himself there (after godly help), being “disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote exhorting the disciples to receive him” (Acts 19). And when at a later date, Paul greatly desired him to go to Corinth, it was not at all his will to go at that time (1 Cor. 16:12). Liberty prevailed all round in apostolic days when the truth was held fast, as the apostle himself records.

Paul was not alone in his earnest protest to the Galatians, He adds, “and all the brethren which are with me.” This was to silence objectors. 2 Cor. 11; 12 shows what base insinuations his opponents could throw out. Therefore he is careful to show that what he wrote was with the fall concurrence of all who were associated with him in the work. He briefly addresses them as “the churches of Galatia.” He does not add, “beloved of God,” as to the Romans, nor “to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus,” as to the Corinthians. It is the shortest possible address, unlike the general style of the affectionate apostle. How could it be otherwise? The souls were trifling with the very foundations of Christianity; what could he say for them? “I stand in doubt of you,” he says farther on. Nothing was more serious, in his judgment, than to turn to the law after confession of faith in Christ, still his heart was towards them. If he was not so expressive as usual, he coup wish most unfeignedly “Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.” This word is specially important, if only because of its constant repetition in the New Testament. But the Galatians could not enjoy either grace or peace while they trafficked with law. These are the precious fruits of the work of Jesus, and for the enjoyment of our souls day by day.

But the apostle adds of our Lord Jesus, “who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world (age), according to the will of God and our Father: to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen.” What more could He give for our sins than Himself, and what else would have availed? He bare the sins of the many, and they are gone, cast into the depths of the sea. But was the putting away of sins the only object of His work? Nay, there is more, “That he might deliver us from this present evil world.” Is it strange that such a word should come in here? By no means. It was needed urgently in Galatia. To follow the law is an aspect of worldliness, however startling it may sound to some. Law was given to correct and restrain flesh, and to direct man viewed as living in the world. But the Christian has died and is risen; so that Paul could say, “Why as though living in the world?” &c. (Col. 2:20). Where this is understood, the heart is proof against legalism, because it enjoys a heavenly Christ as its only object. If the Galatians ever knew this, they were letting it slip.

The apostle expresses his astonishment at their early declension from the truth. “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.” Theirs was not gradual decay after long years of profession, but a very sudden turning aside. How could they be so fickle? To turn now to law was to turn from God. He had called them by Paul to grace, not law. Time was, when to follow the law was to walk with God. But faith is come, and those who were under the schoolmaster are so no longer. For Gentiles, after profession of faith in Christ, to turn to law, is to turn from God. No wonder the apostle stood in doubt of the Galatians! But he would not admit that it was another gospel. There were no glad tidings different from those preached by him with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. It was a perversion of the gospel of Christ, and the men were troublers, and should bear their judgment.

Paul felt that the foundations were at stake, which made him vehement. “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” Faith working by love can speak strongly at times, when the truth of Christ is involved. The apostle would pronounce anathema upon himself if ever he corrupted the gospel committed to his trust.

But it was possible that these Judaisers might seek to persuade the Galatians that they had not received all the gospel and that what they taught was merely supplementary, and what the apostle would have set before them had he remained long enough. This would be plausible, but it is met, “As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” Paul had taught them all, and they had received all: all pretended developments were but error. In speaking so strongly, the apostle had Christ before him, not men. “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.” Paul had not learned the unwholesome principle of our day, that for unity's sake all sorts of error should be tolerated. None could be more careful than he not to unnecessarily wound any, nor could any be more considerate to souls who were slow in their growth in the truth; but when the foundations of Christianity were undermined or attacked, the apostle forgot men, and acted for Christ. An important principle for our souls at the present crisis.

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