

AN OUTLINED COMMENTARY ON

**2 CORINTHIANS
& GALATIANS**

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**GOSPEL
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Preface and Acknowledgment

These various commentaries and other Biblical studies were developed through many years of hard and close study of the Bible. I have had an insatiable appetite to learn all of God's Word possible. I grew up in the Beans Creek Community of Coffee County Tennessee. My family started attending the Lord's church at Beans Creek in 1949, where I was privileged to have sister Ethel Croft as an outstanding Bible class teacher. All seven member of my father's family were baptized into Christ, plus my wife, Marie. Each of our five children also obeyed the gospel.

Sister Croft greatly encouraged me to study the Bible and to become a good worker for the Lord. I tried not to cause her any disappointment. In 1978, after preaching for many years, the brethren at Beans Creek invited me to conduct a gospel meeting. Sister Croft, though she was in advanced years and had to drive a good distance, did not miss any of the services.

Since first becoming acquainted with the gospel more than seventy years ago, I have had the honor to hear some of the greatest gospel preachers of the time. Some of these well-known to most members of the Lord's church, but some of them labored in the shadows, learning and dispensing the truth of God quietly and effectively. Not so many people in the brotherhood today knew such preachers as Luke Gibbs. I have learned much and have been profited greatly from many gospel preachers and teachers through these many years. I am fully appreciative also to those many sound brethren who have published books which I have had the privilege to study. I began preaching in July of 1961 in Italy.

A debt of gratitude is owed by many to the instructors of Memphis School of Preaching for the tremendous work they did through the years, patiently teaching their students the wonderful word of life. I am especially grateful to these great men who were serving in this capacity during 1970-72, when I attended the school: Roy Hearn Frank Young, Richard Curry, Charles Pledge, and E.L. Whitaker.

I claim no originality for all of the material presented in the material included in my books. There is no way to give proper credit to all who have contributed to the information I have learned, but in every case possible, acknowledgment is cited. I have attempted to be as accurate, clear and concise as my finite knowledge allows, but, as with all human productions, there will doubtless be imperfections. Our grasp of the infinite will of God is not absolute in every detail, despite the diligence of our efforts; there is always more to learn.

Some have incorrectly thought that my books are merely expansions of the notes I took while studying at MSOP. But those notes were skimpy at best, and were not in my possession when I wrote my material. The notes were put together in connection with Bible classes I have taught over much time. For several years, a hundred or more hours weekly were required as I prepared to teach two different Bible books each week, Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, while at the same time, during full-time work as a gospel preacher. These notes became the "Outlined Bible Commentaries" that have been made available to countless people.

It has not been my aim to make money through these efforts—indeed, we barely cover our expenses. Many of my books have been given away without charge to the recipients. An uncounted numbers of books and compact discs were ordered and shipped out, for which no payment was ever received. A good many of these non-paying costumers were gospel preachers. I have learned from brethren who operated Bible Bookstores that they have had the same problem. One of these brethren reported that he had to secure his supply of Bibles, in locked cases, to prevent their being stolen by preachers. How sad! "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28). *Don't steal but give!*

The Bible quotations in my books are from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise. These books were intentionally put on 8.5 by 11 inch pages, to make the outline format easier to view. A normal hardback book contains about 800 words per page; my pages contain twice that number of words. The spiral-bound or wire-bound books are much less expensive to produce. My wife and I have done all the manual labor required to produce the books. The supplies, software and equipment are very costly. Marie still helps as much as she can despite the dementia she has had for several years— and her many surgeries and broken bones and heartaches. *I thank God whenever I think of her.*"

Bob Winton, September 23, 2021

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Introduction to 2 Corinthians

A. The City of Corinth.

1. Corinth's history goes back to ancient times when it was called Ephyra.
 - a. It is situated on an isthmus which joins Greece with the Peloponnesus (which was once called *Morea*). The isthmus is a narrow band of land which separates the Ionian and Aegean Seas. This *isthmus* gave the name for all other similar strips of land. Corinth is also known for another geographic feature, a citadel of rock which rises almost 2,000 feet above the sea, called *Acro-Corinthus*. At the top of this mountain was a flat area large enough for a town. A temple dedicated to Aphrodite (the goddess the Romans called *Venus*) was built atop this citadel, in which a thousand religious prostitutes served. The city proper was a little ways inland from this citadel. The Acropolis in Athens, about fifty miles away, was visible from the Acro-Corinthus.
 - b. Corinth acquired vast riches on account of its good location for trade by land over the isthmus and by sea from many quarters. Corinth was known for many centuries for its shipbuilding and for its famous Isthmusian Games. Its importance was also attributable to its military significance. The citadel could be guarded by a few soldiers since the ascent to it was made difficult by the steep slope of the mountain. "It had good harbors at Cenchreae and Lechaem, on either side of the isthmus. By 750 B.C., Corinth had become the wealthiest city of ancient Greece. Except for two periods (454-404 B.C. and 146-144 B.C.) it maintained economic supremacy for about 1,300 years" (*World Book Encyclopedia*, Vol. 4, p.832). But with the increase of wealth, great corruption of morality came.
 - c. The city was destroyed by the Romans in 146 B.C. when some of their ambassadors were mistreated. A hundred years later, it was rebuilt by the Romans, under Julius Caesar. It regained its former glory and wealth, along with its moral corruption.
2. So corrupt did Corinth become that the Greek language used the word "Corinthianize" to describe moral degradation. "Even as late as the seventeenth century, the 'Corinthian' in Shakespearean dramas was always a debauchee, making his entry on stage in a state of drunkenness" (Coffman, p.350). So base had Corinthian society become that Paul was virtually overawed when he arrived there.
 - a. Acts 18:9-10: "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 2:3: "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."
3. Since those ancient days, the city has decreased in size to about twenty-seven thousand. The modern city is near the site of the ancient city of Corinth. "The town is a minor commercial center linked by rail and road with Návplion, Pátrai, and Athens. Corinth has a small harbor, active since completion of the ship canal across the Isthmus of Corinth in 1893. Among the chief products of trade are currants, corn, honey, silk, and olive oil. The modern town, founded in 1858 after the destruction of the old city by an earthquake, was itself severely damaged by an earthquake in 1928. Population (1991) 27,412" [Microsoft ® Encarta ® Reference Library 2004. © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved].
4. While Nero was emperor in Rome, an unsuccessful attempt was made to dig a canal across the isthmus in order to aid the flow of shipping. Sailing around the Peloponnesus was time-consuming and dangerous. The idea had been pursued by an ancient king of Macedonia and by Julius Caesar. A French company began cutting the canal in 1882, and Greece completed it in 1893. It is 4 miles long, 70 feet in width, and 26 feet deep.

B. The Background of the Corinthian church of Christ: Acts 18:1-11.

1. Acts 18:1: "After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth."
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- a. We are not told why the apostle remained only for a short time in Athens. In terms of importance, and perhaps also population, Corinth outstripped its neighbor. The gospel would have a better chance of being spread if it could be firmly planted in Corinth. With ships and merchants coming from many parts of the Empire, the gospel would be given a very wide influence. Athens and Corinth were separated by only about 50 miles.
 - b. Some think that Paul made another visit to Corinth not reported in the Bible:
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 1:15: "And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 2:1: "But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 12:14: "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 12:21: "*And* lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and *that* I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed."
 - 5) 2 Corinthians 13:1-2: "This *is* the third *time* I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare."
2. Acts 18:2: "And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them."
 - a. Paul met Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth. They had been among the Jews who had been expelled from Rome at the decree of Claudius Caesar. The Jews were unpopular in Rome, and were thought to be the source of tumult in the imperial city. Claudius issued an edict about 49 A.D. which forced the Jews to leave Rome. This husband-wife team had only lately come from Italy, apparently on account of the emperor's decree.
 - b. Aquila was a Jew by birth, thus had to leave. He had been born in the province of Pontus, located in the northeastern part of Asia Minor, on the southern shore of the Black Sea. The Bible does not indicate whether Aquila and Priscilla were Christians when they left Rome or whether they were converted by Paul in Corinth. Jews from Rome and Pontus were among the great crowds in Jerusalem on Pentecost Day (Acts 2:9-10). It is certainly possible that they could have been in the audience to hear the first gospel sermon almost 20 years earlier. Paul's current visit to Corinth began about 51 A.D.
 3. Acts 18:3-4: "And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers. And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks."
 - a. Aquila and Priscilla and the apostle Paul were tent-makers by trade, thus the apostle abode with them and plied his trade. The Jews had a proverb that a father who failed to teach his son a trade, had by default taught him to steal. There was much in common between the three partners: they were Jews, tentmakers, and Christians.
 - b. Paul praised these two devout saints in Romans 16:3-4: "Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles."
 - 1) By the time Paul penned the Roman Epistle (56-58 A.D.), Aquila and Priscilla had returned to
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Rome.

- 2) This godly couple had been instrumental in setting Apollos aright in scriptural matters: "And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:24-26).
 - c. When Paul came to Corinth, he was likely short of funds. The apostle made several allusions to his working with his hands for his own support.
 - 1) Acts 20:34: "Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 4:12: "And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it."
 - 3) 1 Thessalonians 2:9: "For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God."
 - 4) 2 Thessalonians 3:8: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you."
 - d. Paul again resorted to his long-established practice of entering Jewish synagogues to reason with those gathered there. This he did in Corinth for a number of sabbath days, reasoning with them to persuade them that Jesus is the Christ. Compare: "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God; and I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences" (2 Cor. 5:10-11, ASV).
4. Acts 18:5: "And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus was Christ*." "But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ" (ASV).
- a. Silas and Timothy finally caught up with Paul in Corinth. They had remained in Berea following his sudden departure, being given instruction to follow him on to Athens with all speed (17:14-15). It appears that Paul left Athens before they arrived, (if so, he left word in Athens which would guide them to him in Corinth), but from a statement in 1 Thessalonians 3, another possibility is indicated, which is discussed below.
 - b. Their arrival greatly encouraged the apostle on account of the good report they brought him about the brethren in Macedonia and the financial support sent to him by the saints there (2 Cor. 11:8-9; Ph. 4:15; 2 Cor. 8:1-5). The good news they brought gave Paul fresh motivation to press the great work of preaching the gospel in Corinth. His heart would have been relieved of any doubts or anxieties about the welfare of his co-laborers and the new saints in Macedonia.
 - c. 1 Thessalonians 3:1-8 speaks of Timothy coming from Thessalonica to Paul at Corinth. The first verse says that Paul had sent Timothy to Thessalonica and that he had abode alone in Athens. It seems that Timothy had actually rejoined Paul at Athens, and had been sent back to Thessalonica. "His present arrival in Corinth [Acts 18:5], therefore, was not from his original stay in Berea; but from a recent visit to Thessalonica. Probably Silas had remained till now in Berea" (McGarvey, p.225).
 - d. The arrival of Silas and Timothy in Corinth was the occasion of the writing of the book of 1 Thessalonians, which appears to be the first of his many epistles. He was re-invigorated at the news
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they brought.

- 1) 1 Thessalonians 3:6-8: "But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you: Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord."
 - 2) Acts 18:28: "For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ."
- e. He pressed forward with the work, testifying that Jesus is the Christ. Compare:
- 1) John 15:26-27: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."
 - 2) Acts 10:39: "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree."
 - 3) Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - 4) Acts 4:33: "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all."
5. Acts 18:6-7: "And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Justus, *one* that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue."
- a. As was the usual result of gospel preaching then, some of the Jews rejected the truth. Luke reports that they "opposed themselves" by so doing. The Jews in Antioch of Pisidia had "judged" themselves "unworthy of everlasting life" (Acts 13:44-46) by their rejection of the gospel; these Jews had done the same thing. In both cases, they became guilty of blasphemy (cf. Matt. 12:32; Rom. 1:16; John 12:48). One would be wasting his time to continue to try to teach people who have rejected the gospel. Compare: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matt. 7:6).
- 1) Matthew 12:32: "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."
 - 2) Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
 - 3) John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
- b. When the Jews in a local situation rejected the gospel, Paul turned to the Gentiles, but when he went to another location, he first sought out the Jews there to begin his ministry in that new place. Paul shook his raiment, symbolizing his freedom from their lost condition. "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean..." (Cf. Ezek. 3:17-19; 33:4,7-9; Acts 20:26). Paul had done all that anyone could do to bring them to salvation. We should not be discouraged when we face similar cases today.
- 1) Ezekiel 3:17-19: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at

- thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.”
- 2) Ezekiel 33:4: “Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.”
 - 3) Ezekiel 33:7-9: “So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.”
 - 4) Acts 20:26: “Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.”
- c. Seeing that the majority of the Jews were unwilling to receive the gospel, Paul moved his base of operation to the house of Justus. He would no longer be given opportunity of speaking openly and freely in the synagogue; to have persisted would have been to bring premature, unnecessary difficulties upon the cause. Gracefully, he took up his work elsewhere. He probably continued to stay with Aquila.
 - d. We know very little about this Justus, identified in the ASV as Titus Justus. He was a worshipper of God; his name indicates he was a Gentile; thus, he obviously was a proselyte to the Jewish religion. But now he was favorably inclined toward Paul, although the text does not state that he was a Christian at this point. He readily opened his home as a meeting place where Paul could continue his preaching, and as a place of worship.
 - e. His house was next door to the synagogue. When Satan closes one door, God is able to open another. How easily we become despondent when little problems develop! How little trust we often have! If we are faithful in the basic tenets of Christianity and sincerely practice them regularly (prayer, Bible study, mutual encouragement, worship, etc.), these discouraging difficulties would not appear nearly as serious.
 - f. Titus Justus was not the Titus who was a fellow-traveler with Paul; that Titus was already active in Antioch and Jerusalem
 - 1) Galatians 2:1: “Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.”
 - 2) Acts 15:2: “When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.”
6. Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."
- a. Paul's work was bearing good fruit. Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, obeyed the gospel, along with the other members of his family. Luke reports further that many of the Corinthians heard, believed, and were baptized. Paul mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:14 that he had personally baptized Crispus and Gaius.
 - b. "It was very seldom that men of high position in the Jewish synagogues were induced to obey the gospel. It is greatly to the credit of Crispus, therefore, that he was among the first in Corinth to take this position, and this, too, at the moment when the opposition and blasphemy of the other Jews were most intense. He must have been a man of great independence of spirit and goodness of heart—the right kind of a man to form the nucleus for a congregation of disciples" (McGarvey, p.226).
 - c. The details of the conversion of these Corinthians are summed up in three actions: they heard, believed, and were baptized. This is a beautiful, concise and accurate rendering of the plan of
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salvation. Repentance and confession are not specifically named, but obviously they are implied since they are elsewhere required.

- 1) Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
 - 2) Romans 10:10: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
- d. Crispus would give up his position as chief ruler in the synagogue; he could not continue in that work now that he had become a Christian, and indeed the Jews would not permit it. Verse 17 speaks of Sosthenes as the chief ruler; but in 1 Corinthians 1:1, a Sosthenes is included with Paul in the greetings sent to the church at Corinth. It is possible that different synagogues are meant, but not likely; it is possible that different men are indicated by the name Sosthenes, but it is also possible that the replacement to Crispus (Sosthenes) was also converted to Christ.
7. Acts 18: 9-10: "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city."
- a. The Lord saw the need to speak to Paul in a vision to give encouragement to him. Even the apostles were not immune to discouragement. Christ told Paul to cease being fearful, but speak the gospel plainly. He assured his beloved apostle that he would see to it that no one would hurt him. How would you like to have such a direct promise from Christ? He does not address us orally or directly today, but his written word is just as reliable!
 - 1) Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
 - 2) Hebrews 13:5-6: "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*"
 - b. Paul was facing a large pagan population which had little regard for human life, no regard for God's word, no respect for Christ and his followers, and a people who were given over to licentiousness. These people did not fear God, and would have no concern over a lowly Jew who presented a message about another Jew who claimed to be the Son of God!
 - c. How would you have approached the work in Corinth? Would there have been any fear in your heart? We would have done just as Paul did: go to the Jews first, and then work with those Jews and proselytes who showed interest; and we would have had a measure of fear just as he did!
 - d. Given the assurance of heavenly protection, Paul was urged to speak forth the word of salvation. The Lord stated that there were many in the city who were teachable. Things are not always as bleak and dangerous as they appear! Who would think that there would be many in this wicked city who would obey? Look at our own country. Although there seems to be little hope of finding people who will obey the gospel, yet from experience we know there are many who are teachable.
 - e. Some have perverted the Lord's statement to agree with Calvinistic doctrine that God has already picked out individuals who are to be saved. This would violate Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Knowing the hearts of men, Christ could also know that there were some who would hear, believe and obey. He spoke by anticipation.
8. Acts 18:11: "And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them."
- a. Being encouraged by the Lord's promise to protect him and by the assurance that there were many in the city who would be receptive to the gospel, Paul vigorously pursued the great work of preaching
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the word of the Lord.

- b. He continued there for eighteen months, teaching the word of God among the Corinthians. Christ fulfilled his pledge to safeguard the apostle; the chief ruler of the synagogue was beaten instead of Paul, when the Jews raised a tumult against Paul (18:12-17).

C. The Author of the Epistle.

1. The text identifies Paul as the inspired author.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 1:1: "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 16:21: "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand."
 - c. 1 Corinthians 1:12-17: "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."
 - d. 1 Corinthians 3:4: "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"
 - e. 1 Corinthians 3:6: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."
 - f. 1 Corinthians 3:22: "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours."
2. External evidence attesting Paul's authorship of 1 Corinthians is abundant from the first century onward, including Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, the Didache, and Justin Martyr. Although these references are not inspired, their testimony is reliable.
3. As an apostle, Paul was:
 - a. An eyewitness of the resurrected Christ:
 - 1) Acts 1:21-22: "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 9:1: "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?"
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:8: "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."
 - b. Called by the Lord:
 - 1) Acts 26:16-18: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
 - 2) Galatians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)."
 - c. Inspired:
 - 1) John 14:26: "But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

- 2) John 16:13: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."
 - 3) Galatians 1:11-12: "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."
- d. Able to confirm the messages he presented:
- 1) Mark 16:17-20: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
 - 2) Hebrews 2:3-4: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
- e. Given a universal commission:
- 1) Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."
 - 2) Mark 16:15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
 - 3) Luke 24:47: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 11:28: "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

D. The Epistle is Addressed to "the church of God which is at Corinth."

1. The denominations which call themselves "Church of God" did not come into existence until the late 19th century in America. It is one thing for a group to call themselves the *Church of God*, but it is an entirely different proposition to prove they constitute God's church!
 - a. The New Testament church was not a denomination; it was not a confederation of many denominations. The fact is, no denomination existed in New Testament times! It has often been observed, that a denomination is too big to be a local congregation, and too small to be the church universal.
 - b. Men founded and developed each of the denominations extant today. If the New Testament is followed, all denominations would fade away into nothingness. There is no Bible authority for the existence of any of them; they reject parts of the Bible; they are uniformly wrong in their plan of salvation, worship, the organization, work, name, and authority by which they operate. This strong statement is not intended to offend anyone unnecessarily, but to pointedly call attention to New Testament truth.
 - c. Paul addresses this congregation of God's people as "church of God" because it was God who planned it and brought it into existence.
 - d. It is the church of Christ because Christ died for it.
 - 1) Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy
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Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

- 2) Ephesians 5:25: “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.”
- e. It is Christ’ body.
- 1) Ephesians 1:20-23: “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”
 - 2) Ephesians 5:23: “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.”
 - 3) Colossians 1:18: “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”
 - 4) Colossians 1:24: “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church.”
- f. Christ serves as its founder and head.
- 1) Matthew 16:18: “And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (ASV).
 - 2) Ephesians 1:20-23: “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (ASV).
- g. There are several designations by which the Lord's church is known in the Bible. Scripturally, we could refer to ourselves as the church of God, the Lord's church, the church of Christ, the body of Christ, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of Christ, the church of the first born; but it would not be wise to use these designations arbitrarily on the signs, due to the confusion this would foster.
2. The apostle describes the recipients as "sanctified in Christ Jesus," who call upon the name of Christ. They began to call on the name of the Lord when they obeyed the gospel; they were sanctified [set apart for God’s holy purposes] when they became Christians by obeying the gospel.
- a. Acts 2:36-47: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles....And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
 - b. Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into
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the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."

E. Paul the Apostle.

1. Paul was arrested in Jerusalem (Acts 21) and was imprisoned at Caesarea for two years (Acts 24:27) before being sent to Rome (Acts 27). The Book of Acts closes with the apostle having been in prison at Rome for two more years (Acts 28:30-31). What happened at the end of these two years?
 2. The following quotation from Thiessen, pp.260-262, gives one view:
 - a. "Paul was tried and acquitted. The flimsy charges against him (Acts 25:14-27; 26:30-32) did not convince even a Nero of the Apostle's guilt. Certain expressed purposes of Paul in the Prison Epistles (Phil. 23,24; Philemon 22) and certain references to men and places in the *Pastorals* [?—bw] (to be noted) enable us to determine his movements and activities after his release with some feeling of certainty.
 - b. "From Rome he probably went to Brundisium, crossed the Adriatic, either to Apollonia or to Dyrrachium, and then took the Egnatian Road to Macedonia and Philippi. He probably did not stay long at Philippi at this time, but hastened on to Ephesus and from this as a center he visited Laodicea, Colossae, and other cities in this neighborhood. After spending the biggest part of a year in the East, he probably set out for Spain. There was constant intercourse between the East and Massilia (the modern Marseilles), and so he would have no difficulty in reaching the 'limit of the west.' It is thought that he remained about two years in Spain. During this time, probably, Timothy took up the work at Ephesus [*preached in and around Ephesus*—bw]. It appears, however, as if somewhere on Paul's way back from Spain to Macedonia Timothy asked Paul to allow him to leave Ephesus and to travel with him once more. But this Paul did not allow (1 Tim. 1:3). Some time after this the Apostle wrote 1 Timothy to his faithful co-worker.
 - c. "Timothy, converted under Paul's ministry (1 Tim. 1:2,18) on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:6-23), became the Apostle's assistant on the second journey (Acts 16:1-3) after his ordination [the sectarian "ordination" is not authorized by the Scriptures—bw] to the ministry (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). He was with Paul at Troas, Philippi, Berea, and Athens. From the last place he made a trip to Thessalonica and returned to Paul at Corinth (Acts 18:5). Then we lose sight of him for about five years (Plummer). He reappears at Ephesus, on Paul's third journey, and is sent by the Apostle with Erastus to Macedonia (Acts 19:22). Paul hoped he would get to Corinth also, but it is not certain whether Timothy ever reached that city (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10). He is with Paul again in Macedonia when Paul writes 2 Corinthians (2 Cor. 1:1,19), and must have accompanied him to Corinth, for he sends greetings when Paul writes Romans (Rom. 16:21). He returned with Paul to Macedonia and to Asia, at least as far as Troas (Acts 20:3-6). Then we again lose sight of him for the two years of Paul's Caesarean imprisonment. We next find him at Rome, joining Paul in sending greetings to Colossae, Philemon, and Philippi. From Rome he, undoubtedly, made the trip to Philippi of which Paul speaks (Phil. 2:19-23), after which he again disappears from the record. We may, however, assume that he was with Paul in some of his further ministries in various eastern cities; but it is not likely that he accompanied the Apostle to Spain. Some time during Paul's visit to Spain he probably took up the work at Ephesus. While still at this place he received what we call The First Epistle to Timothy."
 3. Quotation from Rex Turner, Sr., MSOP, pp.14-18:
 - a. "Luke closed his Acts of the Apostle in the following words: 'And he (Paul) abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, and none forbidding him' (Acts 28:30,31). In this conclusion to his Acts of the Apostles, Luke did not say that at the end of the two year imprisonment Paul was put to death, nor did he imply it. In fact the necessary implication is that
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Paul had been set free....

- b. "Someone is bound to ask: 'Is there external evidence that bears on the question of Paul's release, or non-release from prison, and if so, what does the evidence show, and how relevant is it?' There is external evidence!
 - c. "To illustrate, one source of external evidence is from the writing of Clement of Rome. Clement (A.D. 30-100) wrote the Corinthians, and the salutation reads as follows: 'The Church of God which sojourns at Rome to the Church of God sojourning at Corinth, to them that are called and sanctified by the will of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, from Almighty God through Jesus Christ, be multiplied.' In this epistle, written about A.D. 97, Clement admonished: 'Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours; and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience.' Stress should be placed upon the fact that Clement said that Paul came unto 'the extreme limit of the west,' and after his having done so, he suffered martyrdom. Under no circumstances could Rome be counted the extreme west. The clear and unmistakable implication is that Paul was released from his Roman imprisonment, and in turn, that he completed his long avowed purpose to preach the gospel in Spain.
 - d. "A second source of external evidence is the Muratorian Fragment. This fragment or canon was discovered by L.A. Muratori (A.D. 1672-1750) in the Ambrosian Library and published by him in A.D. 1740. It was written in Latin and consists of eighty-five lines. Scholars agree that the original form, of which the Muratorian fragment is a copy, was written about A.D. 180-190. That fragment reads: 'Luke compiled for most excellent Theophilus' what things were done in detail in his presence, as he plainly shows by omitting both the death of Peter and also the departure of Paul from the city, when he departed [for] Spain.' Note should be taken of the fact that his Muratorian fragment explicitly states that Paul left for Spain.
 - e. "A third source of external evidence is from the historian Eusebius. His life dates about A.D. 260-340. He wrote as follows: 'Festus was sent by Nero to be Felix's successor. Under him, Paul, having made his defense, was sent bound to Rome. Aristarchus was with him, whom he also somewhere in his epistles quite naturally calls his fellow prisoner. And Luke, who wrote the Acts of the Apostles, brought his history to a close at this point, after stating that Paul spent two years at Rome as a prisoner at large, and preached the word of God without restraint. Then after he made his defense it is said that the apostle was sent again upon the ministry of preaching, and that upon coming to the same city a second time he suffered martyrdom. In this imprisonment he wrote his second epistle to Timothy, in which he mentions his first defense and his impending death.' As should be observed, this external evidence is independent. There is no attempt by the author to have it agree with another external evidence, but on the other hand it is in complete agreement with the prior external evidence already submitted.
 - f. "A fourth source of external evidence is from the historian Jerome. He wrote from Bethlehem in A.D. 492. In his preface he states that he had no predecessor in his work, but he very properly acknowledged his indebtedness to the church history written by Eusebius. Concerning the apostle Paul, he wrote: 'And because a full account of his (Paul's) life is given in the Acts of the Apostles, I only say this, that the twenty-fifth year after our Lord's passion, that is the second of Nero, at the time when Festus Procurator of Judea succeeded Felix, he was sent bound to Rome, and remaining for two years in free
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custody, disputed daily with the Jews concerning the advent of Christ. It ought to be said that at the first defense, the power of Nero having not been confirmed, nor his wickedness broken forth to such a degree as the historians relate concerning him, Paul was dismissed by Nero, that the gospel of Christ might be preached also in the west. As he himself writes in the second epistle to Timothy at the time he was about to be put to death dictating his epistle as he did while in chains; 'at my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account.' This external evidence is in harmony with the other three sources as quoted. The case is that Paul's writings together with external history make certain the fact that he was released from his imprisonment at Rome, and that 'he preached also in the west,' or Spain. Thus by both internal and external evidence—Paul's release, his visit to Philippi and Ephesus, his visit to the Island of Crete, and his visit to Spain—all of these are confirmed. Paul's second imprisonment and his ultimate death at the hands of Nero are also confirmed.

- g. "The external evidence as set forth, especially by Eusebius and Jerome, indicates that Paul was put to death just prior to Nero's death. Nero's death occurred on June 8, A.D. 68. Luke closed his Acts of Apostles at the end of Paul's two whole years of Roman imprisonment, or A.D. 62, and certainly not later than A.D. 63. Now, from A.D. 62 to A.D. 67 or 68 would leave a minimum of five to six years for Paul to make his promised visits and to preach the gospel in Crete and in Spain as well."
4. "It is difficult to say how long it was after his release that Paul wrote this Epistle. But since the three Pastorals have an affinity of language, similarity of thought, and likeness of error to combat they must have all been written at about the same time. If Paul was released in 61, and if we allow one year for his travels and work in the East and two years for his work in Spain, we get 64 or 65. This, then, is the date we would suggest for 1 Timothy" (Thiessen, p.263).

F. Date and Place of writing.

1. Paul had already been in Corinth when he wrote the first epistle to the church. He had established the church in the city during his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1ff; 1 Cor. 2:1-3). When he penned the first letter, he was on the verge of returning to them (4:19; 16:5). Luke reports (Acts 19:21) that Paul did pass through Macedonia enroute to Achaia (where Corinth was located). He also relates that Paul made that journey after leaving Ephesus, where he had spent about two years (Acts 19-20).
2. The date of the first epistle can be placed between 54-57 A.D. He arrived in Ephesus sometime during the year 54 A.D., and was there two years and three months. He spent three months disputing in the Jewish synagogue (Acts 19:8); afterwards, he taught in the school of Tyrannus for two years (Acts 19:9-10).
3. The date of the second epistle is placed at 57-58 A.D.
4. Internal evidence indicates that Paul was somewhere in Macedonia when he penned 2 Corinthians.
 - a. 2 Corinthians 7:5-7: "For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 8:1: "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia."
 - c. 2 Corinthians 9:2-4: "For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many. Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready: Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting."

F. Purpose of the epistle of 1 Corinthians.

1. Paul had learned of certain problems which had developed in the Corinthian church since his departure (1 Cor. 1:11); he penned the first epistle to expose and correct their errors. The problems they were having are indicated by the contents of that first epistle:
 - a. They were divided: 1:10-17.
 - b. They had a problem of *modernism*: 1:18-21.
 - c. There was a problem of immorality which they were allowing: chapter 5.
 - d. They were involved in bringing lawsuits against each other: 6:1-11.
 - e. They had some questions about marriage: chapter 7.
 - f. There were difficulties regarding the questions of meats: chapter 8; 10:1-13.
 - g. Some were abusing the Lord's Supper: chapter 11.
 - h. There were problems regarding spiritual gifts: chapters 12-14.
 - i. Some were denying the resurrection from the dead: chapter 15.
 2. Paul wrote the second letter after Titus informed him that his first letter had been well received. The apostle was filled with joy at their repentance. 2 Corinthians 2:1-17; 7:5-7.
 3. The sequence of events followed this pattern:
 - a. Paul wrote the Corinthians the first epistle from Ephesus, where he planned to remain until Pentecost (1 Cor. 16:8). Likely, he sent the letter by Titus, and expected some information from him on his return.
 - b. The riots at Ephesus forced him to leave earlier than he expected. His plans called for him to pass through Macedonia enroute to Corinth, where he planned to spend the winter; then he would proceed to Jerusalem, and eventually travel to Rome. "After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome" (Acts 19:21).
 - c. On leaving Ephesus, he traveled to Troas, intending to go from there to Macedonia. "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia" (2 Cor. 2:12-13). Finding a fertile field for the gospel at Troas, the apostle preached there while he awaited the coming of Titus. After spending an unspecified length of time at Troas, he sailed to Macedonia.
 - d. He traveled through Macedonia and entered Greece, where he spent three months. The part of Greece where he spent the three months was doubtless Corinth, where he had earlier stated his intention to winter. "And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia" (Acts 20:1-3).
 - e. After arriving in Macedonia, he finally met with Titus. "For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more" (2 Cor. 7:5-7). Titus brought word that the Corinthians had warmly received the first epistle, and that repentance was forthcoming from some of those who were involved in sin and error.
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- f. Following his three-month's stay in Greece, he planned to sail to Syria, but due to the Jews who waited in ambush, he decided to return through Macedonia, and from thence to Troas, and on to Syria (Acts 20:3ff).

G. Outline of 2 Corinthians.

1. General Information Dealing With an Assortment of Matters: 2 Corinthians 1-7.
 - a. Chapter 1: Paul declares that God is able to offer comfort in times of distress; he shows that he was in very severe difficulty in Asia (verses 8ff), from which he was delivered. He also shows the definite nature of God's word; it is not *wishy-washy*.
 - b. Chapter 2: The apostle addresses the matter of the incestuous man (see 1 Cor. 5), who had been disciplined by the church after receiving the first epistle, and who had himself repented. Paul teaches the brethren to receive him back into fellowship. He then speaks of his work at Troas, and disappointment over not having met Titus at that point. He closes the chapter by describing the awesome responsibility on him as an apostle of Christ.
 - c. Chapter 3: Paul contrasts the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ.
 - d. Chapter 4: Because he preached the gospel of Christ, there were many distresses laid upon him, yet in the final analysis, all his sufferings will have been worthwhile.
 - e. Chapter 5: Paul shows that there is more to life than this earthly phase; there is the eternity awaiting us all. He is fully committed to preaching the gospel so as to make it possible for all men to attain the reward intended for the godly, and to miss the awful consequences of living in sin.
 - f. Chapter 6: The apostle surveys his troubles, and calls on the Corinthians (and all other saints) to be separate from the evils that surround us in this wicked world.
 - g. Chapter 7: He mentions the fact that he and Titus finally met in Macedonia, where he gladly received the good news that the receipt of his first letter had produced what he had intended in the Corinthians. He discusses the process of repentance.
 2. The Collection for the Saints: 2 Corinthians 8-9.
 - a. Chapter 8: He uses the example of the churches of Macedonia to encourage the Corinthians to give to the relief of the saints in Judea.
 - b. Chapter 9: Paul discusses some of the issues that relate to giving, showing that one's gift must be motivated by gladness and purpose, not by feelings of necessity.
 3. Paul Confronts his Adversaries: 2 Corinthians 10-13.
 - a. Chapter 10: He speaks of his willingness to stand for the truth and fight the battles that came upon him; he mentions some of the complaints his enemies had raised against him.
 - b. Chapter 11: He describes the means by which false teachers operate. They use great subtilty, making themselves out to be apostles of Christ, when in fact they were disciples of the devil. Paul could prove his truthfulness by appealing to the many persecutions and dangers he had endured in order to preach the gospel. False teachers are not usually willing to endure such opposition.
 - c. Chapter 12: He defends his apostleship by appealing to their personal knowledge of his activities. In Corinth, he demonstrated the signs of a genuine apostle, something no other human could do.
 - d. Chapter 13: The apostle, speaking as Christ's agent, warns of the impending punishment the enemies of truth in Corinth would face when he returned. He calls on them all to examine themselves to verify that they truly were in the faith. He closes the epistle by offering the tender words of comfort and encouragement recorded in verses 11-14: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. Greet one another with an holy kiss. All the saints salute you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."
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2 CORINTHIANS 1

A. 2 Corinthians 2:1-2: Paul's Greetings to the Corinthians.

1. Verse 1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia."
 - a. The writer lays claim to the office of apostle of Christ. He was selected to this work by the Lord himself when he appeared to Paul on the road near Damascus (Acts 9:1ff). His apostleship existed by the authority of God and of Christ. "And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:15-19).
 - b. McGarvey: Since Paul's apostleship was in dispute, and since it seems to have been insinuated that he ought to have had a letter from the apostles or others, commending him as such (ch. -3: 1), he begins by asserting that he is such through the will of God, and hence needs no human commendation. He joins Timothy with him in the letter, since this young man had assisted in founding the church at Corinth. Anciently Achaia was the northern strip of the Peloponnese, and in this restricted sense Paul appears to have used it at 1 Cor. 16: 15, for he there calls Stephanas the "firstfruits of Achaia." But in the times in which Paul wrote, Achaia was a Roman province embracing all the countries south of Macedonia, and having Corinth as its capital. Since Paul uses the word "whole," it is likely that Paul means this larger Achaia which included Athens, and of which Dionysius the Areopagite, or some other Athenian, was the "firstfruits" (Acts 17: 34).
 - c. Although he was not one of the twelve original apostles and did not serve the Lord during his personal ministry, he was not behind the others in any significant way. "...in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches..." (2 Cor. 12:11-13).
 - d. Timothy is joined with Paul in the greeting. He served with Paul in the gospel for many years, and was highly regarded by the apostle.
 - 1) Acts 16:1-3: "Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek."
 - 2) Philippians 2:19-23: "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me."
 - 3) Paul speaks of Timothy as his own son in the gospel (1 Tim. 1:1-3; 2 Tim. 1:1-4). His mother and grandmother had taught him from his youth (2 Tim. 3:14-15; 1:5); Paul had trained him (2 Tim. 2:2); and the apostle had bestowed on him a spiritual gift (2 Tim. 1:6).
 - a) 1 Timothy 1:1-3: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour,

and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.”

- b) 2 Timothy 1:1-4: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy.”
 - c) 2 Timothy 3:14-15: “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”
 - d) 2 Timothy 1:5: “When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.”
 - e) 2 Timothy 2:2: “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”
 - f) 2 Timothy 1:6: “Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.”
- e. The epistle is addressed to the *church of God which at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia*. The church is God's since he planned it (Eph. 3:1-11), and commissioned Christ to establish it (Matt. 16:16-19; Heb. 10:7; John 9:4). The church is Christ's in that he died for it (Eph. 5:25; Acts 20:28).
- 1) Matthew 16:16-19: “And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”
 - 2) Hebrews 10:7: “Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.”
 - 3) John 9:4: “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.”
 - 4) Ephesians 5:25: “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.”
 - 5) Acts 20:28: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”
- f. The letter is addressed to the church in Corinth, and to all the saints in the province of Achaia, in which Corinth was situated. The instructions in the epistle were intended to be learned and followed by them all, and have application to all Christians of every age and place.
- g. The saints referred to were all alive. Man-made doctrines have limited the use of the term only to certain people selected by them, and all of these they call saints are dead. But every faithful Christian is a *saint*, for each has been *sanctified* by the word of God when he obeyed the gospel.
- 1) John 17:17: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”
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- 2) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
- 3) Acts 2:47: "...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
- h. Following our obedience to the gospel, we are instructed to grow in knowledge and in the other Christian traits. As we increase in spiritual strength, we become more fully sanctified to the saintly life. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:23).
2. Verse 2: "Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."
 - a. The word *grace* was a common Grecian greeting, while the word *peace* was used traditionally by the Jews in their greetings. Grace denotes unmerited favor, and peace signifies a request for reconciliation with God. In reference to the plan of salvation, grace is proffered from heaven and accepted by man, before peace (reconciliation) with God takes place. Inner peace and peace with others also result from our peace with God.
 - b. God is represented in the verse as our Father and Christ is depicted as our Lord.
 - 1) God is the Father of our spirits (Heb. 12:9), as well as the power behind our existence (Acts 14:17; 17:28; 1 Tim. 4:10).
 - a) Hebrews 12:9: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"
 - b) Acts 14:17: "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."
 - c) Acts 17:28: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."
 - d) 1 Timothy 4:10: "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."
 - 2) Christ is our Lord by virtue of his standing with God:
 - a) Acts 2:36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
 - b) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - c) 1 Timothy 2:5: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
 - d) Philippians 2:10-11: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

B. 2 Corinthians 1:3-11: God is the God of all Mercies and of all Comfort.

1. Verses 3-4: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."
 - a. God is the Father of Christ only in an accommodated sense; to think otherwise would result in Christ being understood as having a beginning. Christ is as eternal as the Father; there has never been a time when the Son did not exist. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth

have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

- 1) John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - 2) God is the Father of Christ in the sense that he possesses greater authority than the Son, as in the case of an earthly father and his son. "Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:24-28).
 - 3) God speaks of his having begotten Christ in giving him his earthly existence. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb. 1:5-6).
 - 4) God speaks of Christ as his Son in the sense that he raised Christ from the dead. "God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David" (Acts 13:33-34).
- b. The apostle quite properly, in view of the manifold blessings God extends, expresses gratitude and veneration to God. Gratitude toward God is a prerequisite to acceptable worship, for how could we happily offer sincere devotions to him if we are not properly thankful for what he has done?
- 1) God's bountiful provisions for mankind will engender profound joy, gratitude, and praise in the heart that believes in God and comprehends his blessings.
 - 2) Such a person will happily worship and serve God! He will not have to be offered worldly enticements or entertainment in order to get him to attend and worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24); nor will he have to be coerced or manipulated to be moved to serve God acceptably (Heb. 12:28-29).
 - a) John 4:24: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."
 - b) Hebrews 12:28-29: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."
 - 3) The word translated *blessed* (*eulogetos*) is only used in the New Testament in reference to God (Vine, Vol. 1, p.133). See also the following passages:
 - a) Mark 14:61: "But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"
 - b) Luke 1:68: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people."
 - c) Romans 1:25: "Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."
 - d) Romans 9:5: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."
 - e) 2 Corinthians 11:31: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not."
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- f) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."
 - g) 1 Peter 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."
- c. God is the Father of all mercies. He is the *Merciful Father*. His nature is comprised of mercy. It is his desire to show mercy, and not anger.
- 1) Psalm 86:5: "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee."
 - 2) Psalm 86:15: "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth."
 - 3) Daniel 9:9: "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him."
 - 4) Micah 7:18: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy."
 - 5) Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
- d. God is the God of all comfort. The context describes the troubles and hardships Paul (and other faithful saints) had faced. God, being the source of all mercies and comfort, is able to aid his people during trying times. Desiring to show mercy, our heavenly Father is proficient in offering the only kind of comfort that avails.
- 1) When we face cruel opposition as we do the work of the Lord, we are encouraged by God's tender promise that our reward will make even the harshest treatment on earth to be well worth faithfulness. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).
 - 2) When we labor without encouragement or with little apparent success, God's comforting word assures us that our labor will not have been done in vain.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
 - b) Revelation 14:13: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."
 - 3) When we suffer the loss of a loved one who has died in the faith, comfort is given us through God's promise that we will meet again with all the redeemed in a better world (heaven).
 - a) Matthew 8:11: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 4:14: "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you."
 - c) Revelation 21:4: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."
 - 4) When we face the end of life's way, and have only eternity before us, God's comforting word reassures us.
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- a) John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also."
 - b) Philippians 1:21: "For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain."
 - c) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - d) Revelation 14:13: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."
 - e. In times of trial, Paul affirms that God offered to them the comfort which only he could provide. However, the comfort he gave was not merely for the personal consolation of the individual receiving it. God comforted Paul so that consolation might be made available to others who were in trouble.
 - 1) Three parties were involved in the process: God, Paul, and others. Paul was not helped by the Lord solely to relieve his pain; rather, by aiding the apostle, the Almighty made it possible for Paul to continue his work and so doing, the apostle could bring consolation to many others in need.
 - 2) Paul's hardships included hunger, thirst, the persecutions of dedicated enemies, the dangers of travel, the discomforts of nature, and a host of other difficulties and pains: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (2 Cor. 11:24-28).
 - 3) McGarvey:
 - a) "Since Paul was accustomed to make light of ordinary physical danger, and since he did not go into the theater, and since they find nothing on the face of Luke's record which indicates that Paul suffered any anguish or any other discomfort at that time, some commentators have sought to find some other danger or distress assailing him, and, failing to find it, they have set about inventing it. This has led to all manner of extravagant and unseemly absurdities, and to assertions that the apostle had cancer, paralysis, epileptic fits, etc. Those learned in books are very often deficient in the knowledge of human nature; but one skilled in the latter knows that no man could pass through Paul's experience at Ephesus without undergoing immense excitement, constant anxieties and most depressing nervous reaction.
 - b) "If Luke makes no mention of such things as part of the incidents at Ephesus, neither does he mention them elsewhere. He busied himself with the external, not with the consequent distresses of the apostle But Paul himself tells of these anxieties and sufferings (Acts 20: 19, 27, 31 ; 1 Cor. 15: 32...). Had it been any sickness he would likely have mentioned it, and he would hardly in that case have used the expression 'so great a death' when referring to it.
 - c) "Death by any natural means was riot sufficiently repugnant to Paul for him to use such language (ch. 5: 2; Phil. 1: 23). That he contents himself with describing his troubles in this general way is itself significant, for ' it shows that the apostle thought it would be amply sufficient for the information of the Corinthians. The gossip of merchants and travelers would
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have acquainted Corinth with the great hubbub which had been raised about Diana and idolatry in Ephesus, and it was prudent in Paul to speak of, and commit himself as to his part in it in just such indefinite terms ; for his letter would be widely circulated.

- d) "Having spoken of his life as worth saving, he next takes up that thought, and tells why he dares to speak of himself in this apparently boastful or glorifying manner. If he had not remained faithful through it all, he would not have received God's consolation, and the Corinthians and others in need would not have obtained the help which Paul could pass on to them."
 - 4) Paul could take courage in his hardships. He knew that he stood in good stead with God (2 Cor. 12:7-10); he received God's help; and he was able to assist others himself. "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. 12:7-10).
 - 5) Tribulations produce good things. "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:3-5).
2. Verse 5: "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."
- a. The Lord suffered during his personal ministry, and cautioned his followers that the enemy would treat them with harshness, too.
 - 1) Because many will not respect his word, they stand opposed to those who do respect it; in this sense our Lord came not to bring peace, but a sword (Matt. 10:34).
 - 2) John 15:17-20: "These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."
 - b. However, because tribulations abounded on account of Paul's faithfulness to Christ, the consolations which the Lord offered also abounded.
 - 1) Matthew 20:23: "And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father."
 - 2) Philippians 3:10: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."
 - 3) 1 Peter 4:1: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."
 - 4) 2 Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
 - 5) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 - 6) Hebrews 13:5-6: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say,
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The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

- 7) John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."
 - 8) 1 Peter 5:5-7: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble your-selves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."
3. Verse 6: "And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation."
 - a. The sufferings which Paul endured worked out for the good of the saints in Corinth [and elsewhere] in that he was able and willing to withstand whatever he faced in order to continue to preach the soul-saving gospel of Christ. If he had given in to the pressures of the persecuting enemies, he would not have come to Corinth, and they would have remained in their sins. If he had not overcome the persecutions, he would not have continued to encourage and instruct the brethren in Corinth.
 - b. He was willing to endure all kinds of opposition and deprivation, for only by his maintaining his status as a faithful child of God could he help others. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:10).
 - c. 2 Corinthians 1:6: "But whether we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or whether we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which worketh in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer" (ASV). As he endured sufferings for righteousness' sake, and for their good, so they must be willing to endure patiently the sufferings which came their way, for righteousness' sake; and their steadfastness in tribulations would develop in them the spiritual strength and grace which they needed, and their example of faithfulness in these sufferings would also encourage others to obey the gospel and faithfully serve the Lord.
 4. Verse 7: "And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation."
 - a. Paul was now confident, since he had received Titus' report that the first epistle had been well-received, that these brethren he addresses were in the way of holiness. He knew that they were being opposed and afflicted, and that they remained steadfast despite these sufferings. Both they and Paul suffered for the cause of Christ. The afflictions were not identical, but were the same in kind, i.e., harsh treatment for righteousness' sake.
 - b. They also shared in Paul's sufferings in the sense that they wept "with them that weep" (Rom. 12:15). "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it" (1 Cor. 12:26).
 - c. Those who suffer for righteousness' sake will be more than adequately rewarded. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:17).
 - 1) Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 2:12: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us."

- 3) In Paul's inspired description of the reward, those who endure faithfully will partake "also of the consolation." The eternal reward of faithfulness will far surpass the greatest degree of suffering (Rom. 8:18), but there is a more immediate benefit. Those who suffer will be comforted with the knowledge of their eventual exaltation and through the satisfaction that comes from encouraging and helping others who suffer.
- 4) When a faithful Christian suffers for the cause of Christ, he knows that his standing with God is proper (Heb. 12:1-11). His steadfastness will enable him to instruct those who are lost and to hearten those saints who are weak. "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" (1 Thess. 5:14).
5. Verses 8-10: "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."
 - a. Paul had experienced extreme danger and trouble in Asia. He did not identify the specific case, however it must be that distress in connection with the riot in Ephesus (Acts 19:23ff; 20:1). Aquila and Priscilla had saved Paul's life by laying "down their own necks" (Rom. 16:3-4); possibly this was connected with the terrible trouble Paul describes in the text. Compare: "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die" (1 Cor. 15:32).
 - b. The apostle was not boasting about his troubles by referring to those dreadful experiences; his purpose was to report the facts of the case. He did not want them to be ignorant, lest they unexpectedly find themselves in similarly distressful circumstances, and give up in despair. Ignorance is not an advantage to the soul!
 - c. This is an inspired, therefore inerrant, description of the troublesome experience. It is not exaggerated. It truly was a case of real danger and suffering. While the exact events are not identified here, the reality and power of the persecution are emphasized.
 - 1) He was pressed beyond measure, above his own natural strength. The weight of the burden surpassed his ability to bear. Paul's two statements can be understood to be separate observations, or the second can be taken as an explanation of the first.
 - 2) In either case, the strength to overcome was not within his natural power; he needed outside assistance which only the Lord could provide. He despaired of life; he gave himself up for dead. He could see no way to escape the dilemma.
 - d. The Corinthians could be shown by the report that in even the most distressful and impossible situation, there is hope. It was as though he had been officially condemned to die; the word *sentence* may be used as a figure of speech or as a direct statement. Scholars think the term means *answer* or *response*.
 - e. His enemies assayed to kill him; human strength could not deliver him. God's providential work overruled the evil designs of wicked men, and spared the apostle's life. His deliverance was as though he had been raised from the dead, for in his mind, he was sure to die. Compare: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son. Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Heb. 11:17-19). God had intervened on other occasions to deliver Paul.
 - 1) Acts 14:19-20: "And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next

day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe."

- 2) 2 Corinthians 11:32-33: "In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands." Cf. Acts 23:11-21.
 - 3) Paul assured the brethren that God would continue to deliver him, as long as he placed his full trust in the Almighty. Of course, the time came when it was God's will that James and others should suffer martyrdom, as it eventually came for Paul; according to uninspired accounts, he was slain at Rome.
6. Verse 11: "Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf."
- a. There is a time for making requests from God and there is a time for expressing thanksgiving to him. The brethren in Corinth had helped the apostle escape from the evil intentions of his enemies—by their prayers in Paul's behalf. Many had prayed for him, bringing about his deliverance; so the apostle desired that they also give thanks to God for this *gift*.
 - b. Paul had learned the great lessons taught in Jeremiah 17:5-8: "Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit."
 - c. James the apostle had been slain by Herod, and Peter was destined to a similar fate (Acts 12). However, the saints met to pray for his deliverance; God responded with a momentous miracle.

C. 2 Corinthians 1:12-20: Paul States his Sincerity.

1. Verse 12: "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."
 - a. Paul possessed a clear conscience. He had served a just cause. Preaching the gospel of Christ is the greatest work in all the world! We sometimes suppose that those who suffer hardship must be paying for some crime against God.
 - 1) While evil men receive partial punishment for their sins in the here and now, it is also true that the righteous are often called on to endure persecution for the sake of truth: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12; cf. Heb. 12:1-11).
 - 2) Paul had been severely treated, but not because of any wrong-doing on his part. Evil men set their hatred against him. He had a clear conscience in this matter, for he was guilt-free.
 - b. He has reason to rejoice. Not only had he been delivered from the wicked intentions of corrupted men, but he had a pure conscience; he had lived a holy and sincere life in the world, especially before the Corinthians. He had not ordered his life by the wisdom of men, but by the grace of God.
 - c. The wisdom of men is placed in contrast with the grace of God in the verse. The grace of God *teaches* (Tit. 2:11-12). The gospel of Christ is the embodiment of God's grace; his grace is expressed by the gospel; we access his grace by our obedience to the gospel (Rom. 5:21; Acts 10:34-35; Titus 3:5). Paul had lived his life since his conversion in accordance with God's word (which expresses God's grace).
 - 1) Romans 5:21: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - 2) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no

respector of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

- 3) Titus 3:5: “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”
 - d. He had conducted himself before the world with a sincere and holy life; the Corinthians were better able to see and to appreciate the fact that his life was characterized by holiness and sincerity than could the unbelieving world. Those in the world could discern his godliness if they wished; the Corinthians could more easily do so, for they had had more opportunities to witness his true character than the pagans had.
 - e. It is apparent that the apostle discusses this subject for some good reason. That he had enemies in Corinth is clear from later chapters; that these adversaries had made charges against Paul's sincerity is obvious from this passage. Perhaps the most effective way of destroying a person's influence for good is to convince others that the individual is not sincere.
2. Verses 13-14: "For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus."
- a. Paul states that there is no hidden, deceptive meaning to the words he pens, that he does not use duplicity in writing to them. He had already stated in 1 Corinthians 14:37 that what he had written was inspired. To accuse him of such is to attack the word of God.
 - b. Coneybear and Howsom suggested that some of his foes at Corinth charged Paul with sending secret letters to certain individuals in the church, in which he modified the message contained in the open epistles (pp.441f).
 - c. What he had written was in agreement with what he had always written and which they acknowledged to be true; he did not author deceptive missives. The same sincerity with which he lived also pertained to his epistles.
 - d. He desired that they would acknowledge the truth continually, and have no doubts regarding his sincerity. Some have tried to twist Paul's statement in verse thirteen so as to make it appear he believed Christ would return during the lifetime of his generation.
 - 1) If Paul believed the second coming would be during his life on earth, he was wrong; and if he taught this in any of his letters, he was not guided by inspiration in such, for when he died, Christ had not returned! If he was wrong about this, how could we trust him in anything he wrote?
 - 2) Nothing is stated in the verse which requires us to understand that the end of the world is meant. Why not view the statement as referring to the end of their earthly sojourn?
 - 3) Some have suggested that *to the end* should be viewed as a natural antithesis with *in part* (verse 14), and carries the idea of *fully*. (See Coffman, p.312). But the most natural view is to see it as a reference to the end of life.
 - e. They had acknowledged Paul "in part." Part of the Corinthians had acknowledged Paul in the past. This probably refers to his apostleship. If they admitted his apostleship, they would receive his instructions as authoritative and inspired.
 - f. To those in Corinth who acknowledged Paul, to them he was the cause of their rejoicing. If Paul had not done the work of preaching the gospel among them, they would still be in their alien sins, standing condemned before God, and with no reason to rejoice. But since he had preached and they had believed and obeyed the gospel, they were then saved and could rejoice.
 - g. As these faithful saints rejoiced because of Paul, so the apostle rejoiced over them. In the last day, that joy would be fully realized. Christians look forward to the day when, in heaven, we shall be in each
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other's presence for eternity.

- 1) 2 Corinthians 4:14: "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you."
 - 2) 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy."
3. Verses 15-16: "And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea."
- a. Paul's initial plans called for him to come from Asia to Corinth (evidently by ship), and then proceed into Macedonia; and after his visit with the churches of Macedonia, to return to Corinth, and then go onward to Judea.
 - b. Those plans had to be changed when the spontaneous riot exploded at Ephesus, requiring his sudden departure from Asia. After spending time at Troas, preaching the gospel there as he awaited the arrival of Titus, he proceeded to Macedonia, probably by way of ship to Philippi, and thence southward to Corinth.
 - c. He intended to give the Corinthians a "second benefit" when he visited them. This undoubtedly includes another impartation of spiritual gifts (Acts 8:14-17; 19:1-7; Rom. 1:11). The influence of his presence and the enlightenment of his preaching would certainly also furnish great benefits.
 - 1) Acts 8:14-17: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."
 - 2) Acts 19:1-7: "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve."
 - 3) Romans 1:11: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established."
4. Verse 17-18: "When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay."
- a. When he made his plans to return to Corinth, did he develop them with lightness? Running through this passage seems to be the implication that some in Corinth accused Paul of being fickle, of planning to come one day, only to change his mind the next. It also appears that his enemies had charged him with being too fearful to return. Compare: "That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters. For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible" (2 Cor. 10:9-11).
 - b. "Do I form and announce my purposes like an unprincipled worldling, who holds his yes and no subservient to his policy or his pleasure; i. e., does as he pleases, without any regard to his pledges or his promises?" (McGarvey).
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- c. Likely they misunderstood the fear and trembling he evinced on his first visit.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 2:1-3: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."
 - 2) Acts 18:9-10: "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city."
 - 3) Paul felt the heavy burden of the responsibility of preaching the gospel, realizing that the eternal destiny of countless souls was in the balance.
 - d. Finding it necessary to defend his actions before such charges, Paul denies being *wishy-washy*. He did not lay his plans without fully intending to fulfill them. Since he could fearlessly stand before the mighty pagan rulers, and even face violent mobs with calmness, it is clear that he was not afraid to stand up to the enemies in Corinth.
 - e. His enemies charged him with denying one day what he had affirmed the previous day. There was no double-talk in Paul! He did not operate on the sinful basis of duplicity which characterized many in his generation (and ours). He did not manage his work on the basis of fleshly methods.
 - f. Paul's preaching, indeed his whole life, was conducted on the solid foundation of God's word. As God's word does not both affirm and deny the same proposition, so Paul's word was not contradictory or *wishy-washy*. The information he presented to them was not inconsistent with itself. To accuse Paul of preaching such a message is to make that charge against God, for he preached only the will of heaven. Compare: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Luke 10:16).
5. Verses 19-20: "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (KJV). "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but in him is yea. For how many soever be the promises of God, in him is the yea: wherefore also through him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us" (ASV).
- a. Paul's assistants when he initially came to Corinth were Silas (Silvanus) and Timothy (Acts 18:5). Their preaching was definite and reliable. The message was presented so clearly and with such miraculous evidence (2 Cor. 12:11-12) that none but the most blinded would deny its truthfulness.
 - b. It would have been impossible for them to have preached at Corinth (or anywhere), and have God confirm the message with supernatural works, and that message be one of chicanery. God would not confirm a message of error; and he would not support the work of a sinful man who operated from an insincere motivation.
 - c. Christ does not change, but remains the same forever.
 - 1) Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." His gospel is just as immutable!
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think *of men* above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." [The ASV says we are not to "go beyond that which is written"].
 - 3) Galatians 1:6-12: "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; but there be some that trouble you, and would
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pervert the gospel of Christ. 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. 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. 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. 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."

- 4) 2 John 1:9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
- 5) Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

- d. The promises of God given in Christ are *yea*—they are true, definite, reliable and unchangeable. All these promises will be fulfilled. *Amen* ["So be it!"] speaks to the dependability of God's promises in Christ. We can put our trust in them! As Paul preached the promises of God, and as men and women obeyed the gospel and received the promises, God was glorified.

D. 2 Corinthians 1:21-24: The Reason For Changing His Plan to Visit Corinth.

1. Verse 21: "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God."
 - a. Paul attributes the power to establish both himself and the Corinthian saints in Christ to Almighty God. This is a strong argument against the false charges of his enemies. Paul was not operating on his own in coming to Corinth with the message he preached there. How could his miraculous activities be explained except to ascribe the entire operation to God? The miracles were God's doing, and the message God thus confirmed was also from him.
 - b. God stablisheth (present tense) Paul and the other saints. To stablish is to "render firm or steadfast" (Hodge, p.23). This *establishing* action is on-going. As we learn more of God's word, and live in closer harmony with it, we become stronger, and grow closer to the Christian ideal.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."
 - 2) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - 3) 1 Peter 2:1-2: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."
 - c. The rite of anointing was administered to kings and priests under the Old Testament Law (1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13; Lev. 8:30). Christians are priests.
 - 1) 1 Peter 2:5,9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
 - 2) In the process of becoming Christians, each one is *sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb*. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22). Compare:

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- a) Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
- 3) Miraculous gifts were conferred upon certain saints during the first century (Acts 8:14-17; 19:1-7; 1 Cor. 12:8-10). "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things....But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 John 2:20, 27).
- a) At least some of those John wrote to had received an anointing, obtained it from Christ, and as a result of this anointing, they knew all the things the apostle indicated [of course, this does not mean that they were omniscient].
 - b) The anointing [called *unction* in the King James] is from the Greek term *chrisma*, a word which originally described an oil or ointment applied to the skin; later it came to refer to the anointing itself.
 - c) The gift of discernment [1 Cor. 12:8-10] was a miraculous gift; it could be depended on to provide infallible guidance; as long as they followed the direction of the gift they were able to identify error and recognize false teachers; as long as they followed the inspired word, they would continue to abide in Christ. The mere possession of the gift did not automatically guarantee that the possessor would not err; he must follow the directions given by the truth. The miraculous guidance was never intended to take the place of the written word; the gifts were a temporary measure, designed to provide the early saints with the ability to discern truth and error while the full revelation was being delivered, confirmed, and recorded for all time.
2. Verse 22: "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."
- a. This *sealing* was a sign of God's approval. The *earnest* is a *pledge* or *down payment*, a promise of the full payment. The fact of this seal does not mean that the individual is forever saved, with no possibility of his ever being lost. A jar of canned fruit or vegetables is sealed, but the seal sometimes fails, and the stored food spoils. An electric meter is sealed by the power company, but the seal can be easily broken.
 - b. What is the *earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*? Some say it is the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit who dwells, it is claimed, in the heart of each Christian. This brings up an old argument. Does the Holy Spirit dwell in us in a different way from the manner in which the Father and the Son dwell in us? The Scriptures affirm the indwelling of both God and Christ (2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 3:17), but no one claims that they dwell in us personally.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 6:16: "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."
 - 2) Ephesians 3:17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love."
 - c. Christ dwells in us *by faith*; as we learn, believe, and live by the word of Christ, he lives in us (cf. Rom. 10:17). We are filled with the Holy Spirit in the same way:
 - 1) Ephesians 5:18-19: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."
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- 2) Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.
- d. What of the *gift of the Holy Spirit* (Acts 2:38)? Some say it refers to the direct indwelling of the Spirit; others say it refers to the gift of redemption which the Spirit offers through the gospel; others maintain that it denotes the miraculous gifts which certain Christians of the first century received, spiritual gifts which benefitted the entire brotherhood. [See author's work in Acts for a full discussion of this matter].
3. Verse 23: "Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth."
- a. Calling on God in a solemn statement of affirmation, Paul says that he did not return to Corinth sooner because he wanted to spare them the punishment which was apt to be dispensed. When Ananias and Sapphira committed sin, they met with swift justice (Acts 5). Elymas, who tried to interfere with the obedience of Sergius Paulus, was smitten with blindness (Acts 13).
- b. Many of the Corinthians fell into several grievous sins after Paul's departure. If the apostle had returned earlier, they would have been punished for their errors. However, the first epistle had its desired effect on them; they received the corrections and repented.
- c. It is good for man that God is longsuffering!
- 1) Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
- 2) 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
- 3) Revelation 2:21: "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not."
- d. "But I call God, who knows all things, even the searcher of hearts, to look upon the secret purposes of my soul, and to confirm the truth if I speak it, and to testify against and punish me if I lie (Mal. 3: 5), that I delayed to come to Corinth in order that you might have time to repent, and show your repentance by obedience; for had I come at the time which I first mentioned to you, I would have been compelled to discipline you, and therefore make you sorry (1 Cor. 4: 1). Not that I have lordship over your faith, for in this realm I am only a fellow-helper of your joy by confirming you in your belief (Rom. I 5: 13; Phil. 1: 25) ; for by your faith you stand as free and independent, full-aged children of God (Gal. 3: 23-26; 4:1-7, 31 ; 5:1). But when through lack of faith you fall into sinful practices I must discipline you" (McGarvey).
4. Verse 24: "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand."
- a. It was not Paul's intention to rule over them with a iron fist. The only way one is able to serve God acceptable and with profit is by faith (Heb. 11:6). God speaks; man hears, believes, and obeys. The Corinthians had heard, believed, and obeyed (Acts 18:8). They must continue to be obedient to the God-given duties as revealed in the gospel.
- b. If one does the proper things and avoids the improper ways only because someone is standing over him with some weapon poised to punish him if he falters, he has no faith and he offers no willing or sincere obedience. The only kind of service that pleases God is that which originates in the individual's heart and is willingly given.
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2 CORINTHIANS 2

A. 2 Corinthians 2:1-4: Paul's Esteem for the Corinthians.

1. Verse 1: "But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness."
 - a. The first epistle had contained some strong teaching, including firm rebukes of their grievous errors. It was not Paul's desire or intention to return to Corinth under conditions which would lead to heaviness of heart for them or for him.
 - b. If he had returned at the time he wrote the first letter, some heavy punishment would have been in the offing; this he wished to avoid if possible (cf. Acts 5:1-11). He waited until they had had time to make a change for the better, lest they receive an outpouring of God's wrath.
2. Verse 2: "For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?"
 - a. Expressing his esteem for them, Paul shows that if it became necessary for divine discipline to be brought to bear upon them, he would be filled with sorrow. If this came to pass, he could only be cheered up by those very ones he had rebuked.
 - b. "I did not correct you to cause you grief, but that you might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you, and which can not keep quiet when it sees you injuring yourself (Ps. 141: 5 ; Prov. 27: 6). By referring to 1 Cor. 4: 21 and 5: 1, it will be found that the threat of correction at his coming, and the case of the incestuous person, were twin thoughts in the apostle's mind. The punishment of this offender was one of the principal items that Paul wished them to attend to before he came; in fact, the whole subject of visits, delays, corrections, etc., centered in this offender, and very naturally, therefore, while here explaining the causes for his delay, the case of this incestuous person comes to mind, and the apostle uses him to flood the entire situation with light." (McGarvey).
 - c. In other words, he could not be happy if they were in sorrow. Compare: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12:15). But compare: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor. 7:10, ASV).
3. Verse 3: "And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all."
 - a. He wrote this very thing to them in the first epistle, that is, he rebuked them and produced sorrow. He exposed their sins because of the danger these errors produced. He reprovved them, but with a broken heart.
 - b. His purpose for the rebukes was to produce penitence in them, so that when he returned to them, they could enjoy a happy reunion. He was confident that they would receive his letter with the proper spirit, believing that they were sufficiently committed to the Lord that they would do right.
4. Verse 4: "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you."
 - a. Paul states the thought clearly, affirming that he found no joy in pointing out their errors. In fact, he wrote with many tears, his heart breaking on account of the necessity to speak those truths which they needed to learn. A loving parent disciplines his wayward child out of love, not from hatred, malice or vengeance, but because of his great concern for the child's welfare.
 - b. Such a reproof is not indicative of malice; rather, it is an expression of genuine love. "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16). Certainly, not! (Cf. Heb. 12:1-11).

B. 2 Corinthians 2:5-11: The Case of the Incestuous Man Resolved.

1. Verse 5: "But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you
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all."

- a. The next several verses indicate the man (the *he*) of this verse as the incestuous man of 1 Corinthians 5. This sinful individual's escapade brought grief to Paul, but also to many in the congregation.
 - b. The former reference shows that some at Corinth were *puffed up* regarding this man's outrageous sinful conduct. Why then does Paul say here that this sinful situation caused the brethren grief (sorrow)? Perhaps he only describes a portion of the church in each reference; or perhaps many of the congregation saw the horrible nature of the case after reading Paul's letter.
 - c. 2 Corinthians 2:5: "But if any hath caused sorrow, he hath caused sorrow, not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all" (ASV). The apostle was sorely grieved because of the incestuous man's shameful act, but he could have taken even stronger measures against the man, and the brethren for their condoning the situation; but lest he *overcharge* them (press them too heavily) to correct the error, he did not return to them quickly.
2. Verses 6-7: "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow."
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many; so that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow."
 - 2) NKJ: "This punishment which *was inflicted* by the majority *is* sufficient for such a man, so that, on the contrary, you *ought* rather to forgive and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow."
 - b. The individual indicated had received *punishment* from many. In 1 Corinthians 5, the apostle called on the brethren to withdraw from this unruly member. "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?...I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators" (1 Cor. 5:5,6,9).
 - c. Obviously, the church had withdrawn fellowship from this offender, and the penalty had been sufficient to bring about repentance on his part.
 - 1) 2 Thessalonians 2:15: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."
 - d. Paul admonishes the brethren to receive the penitent man back into fellowship, and forgive and comfort him, lest he be overwhelmed with excessive sorrow. Only Deity can remit the guilt of sin, so when the Bible calls on us to forgive, it is requiring us to treat the penitent offender as if he had never committed the offense. We are to receive him back into our full fellowship.
3. Verse 8: "Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him."
- a. Paul asks them to confirm their love toward him. By receiving him back into fellowship, they expressed their love for him. Undoubtedly, in welcoming him back, statements of their love were offered to him. This would give him added incentive to remain faithful.
 - b. Discipline worked in this instance. It will not bring back one who does not have faith in the gospel; and it cannot effect the restoration of one who will not repent. Suppose the offender stated his desire
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- to be accepted back into the fellowship of the church, but refused to quit living with his father's wife? In that case, he would not have repented, and could not be fellowshipped by those who love the truth.
4. Verse 9: "For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things."
 - a. The apostle's message to them would determine whether they were obedient in all matters. He directed them to withdraw their fellowship; now that the guilty member had repented, he directed them to forgive and comfort him, and to confirm their love toward him. They had obeyed in disciplining the man; now they were to prove their obedience by forgiving, comforting, and showing their love for him.
 - b. Religious activities which are not motivated by love will avail the soul nothing (1 Cor. 13:1-3). Love that is not expressed in action, but only in word, is meaningless (1 John 3:17-18). Part of our duty to God is summed up under the heading, "love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12:31).
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 13:1-3: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."
 - 2) 1 John 3:17-18: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."
 - 3) Mark 12:31: "And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - c. Obedience that is expressed only in those areas that are personally pleasing to us, and absent in those matters that are contrary to our thinking, is not obedience to God at all! If we chose to obey what we like, we are pleasing ourselves instead of God; we are obeying our own will.
 5. Verse 10: "To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ."
 - a. Paul assured them in 1 Corinthians 5 that he was with them in the disciplining action; he now assures them that when they forgave the man, his forgiveness was likewise present. As he had registered his condemnation of the man, so he now registers his forgiveness.
 - b. Both his condemnation and his forgiveness were done as a servant of Christ. What Paul did by the direction of the Lord, the Lord did it. Paul was an inspired apostle of Christ, and as such, he had the continuing guidance Christ provided him, which was inerrant.
 - 1) Mark 13:11: "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."
 - 2) Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."
 - c. Neither Paul nor the faithful saints in Corinth withdrew from the man out of malice; and their forgiving the offender was occasioned by his repentance. God does not forgive one who will not repent, and neither are we to do so. "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Luke 17:3-4).
 - d. There must be a continuing willingness in us to forgive an offending brother or sister:
 - 1) Mark 11:25-26: "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."
 - 2) Matthew 18:15-17: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every

word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

6. Verse 11: "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."
 - a. Satan seeks to get an advantage over the righteous. If the brethren failed or refused to forgive the penitent brother, they would provide the adversary with that advantage. An unforgiving spirit gives the devil a stick with which to afflict us. Compare: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt.6:14-15).
 - b. The statement is a warning. If there was no possibility of his gaining the upper hand, if there was no danger, the apostle's caution would be without merit. Clearly, the devil can still do harm to a child of God! But he can harm us only if we allow it.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 10:12: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
 - 2) 1 Peter 5:8-9: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
 - 4) James 4:7: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

C. 2 Corinthians 2:12-17: Disappointment Over Not Finding Titus, and Responsibility of Preaching the Gospel.

1. Verses 12-13: "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia."
 - a. Paul takes up again the brief report of his travels, from which he had digressed in 2 Corinthians 1:16. Leaving Ephesus under the heavy hand of oppression, Paul made his way to Troas, where he hoped to meet Titus. This was his third visit to this city. On the second journey, he and Silas were there (Acts 16:9-12); they spent seven days there on the return leg of that journey (Acts 20:1ff). The present occasion was when he was enroute for his return to Corinth on the third journey.
 - b. While waiting for Titus, he preached the gospel to the lost of that city. Apparently, he met with a good degree of success. This is clear from the fact that "a door was opened unto me of the Lord." Heaven's providence was with the apostle, giving him opportunities to announce the gospel. Compare: "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries" (1 Cor. 16:9).
 - c. After an unspecified amount of time at Troas, since Titus had not come yet, Paul decided to proceed on to Corinth by way of Macedonia. Most likely he followed the same route he had taken on the second missionary journey. From Troas, he had taken ship to Philippi, then on to Thessalonica and Berea, and then on to Corinth by way of Athens. The report is given in summary form here, however the trip may have taken many days.
2. Verse 14: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place."
 - a. He has already alluded to great dangers he had faced in his preaching experiences. In 2 Corinthians 11:24-27, he mentioned many other episodes in which he suffered for the cause of Christ. In this verse, he attributes his successes to the power of God. Only eternity can unveil the details of his many encounters with the enemy, and the constant efforts he put forth to teach the lost and edify the saved.
 - b. Properly, Paul gives God the glory for his success, affirming that the triumphs he has obtained, were all from God. One who serves the Lord faithfully, is always successful, even though there may not be any converts made. Noah was just as faithful to God even though he could convince only members of his own family to board the ark, as were the twelve apostles who had about three thousand people to respond to their preaching on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).
 - c. He does not mention here the coming of Titus; that encounter is reported later: "Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus" (2 Cor. 7:6). However, his

- outburst of thanksgiving at this point implies that he had received the report of Titus, with the actual account of their reunion given in chapter seven.
- d. God used Paul to broadcast the *savour of his knowledge* where ever the apostle was enabled to go. The “knowledge of God” is equivalent to the gospel. God has furnished us with all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Christ (2 Peter 1:3-4). The gospel, meaning *good news*, is here described as *savory*. The picture presented is like that of a priest, who through burning the sweet incense, spreads the pleasant smell. As Paul went through the land preaching the gospel of Christ, he spread the sweet odor of God's will to all who would receive it. To those who are willing to examine it, the gospel is pleasant and good.
3. Verses 15-16: "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?"
 - a. The apostle describes himself (and the other apostles and prophets) as manifesting the *sweet savour of Christ*. This is God's view of their work. Gospel preaching and gospel preachers are not held in high esteem by the majority in our society, but if we preach the same great message as did Paul and the Twelve, God holds our work in the highest regard! "...As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:15).
 - b. It is not the apostles as men who are so highly praised here; rather, it is the glorious message that they proclaimed. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. 4:7). This treasure is the gospel!
 - c. What was the result when they preached to sinful men the good news of God's grace, only to have those men to utterly reject the message? It was preached to men who were dead in sin, and their condition was only worsened by their repudiation of the gospel!
 - 1) 2 Timothy 3:13: “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.”
 - 2) Matthew 13:12-15: “For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”
 - 3) John 3:19-21: “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”
 - 4) John 9:39-41: “And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.”
 - 5) Acts 13:45-46: "But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."
 - 6) Matthew 12:31-32: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever

- speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."
- d. Those who obey the gospel are saved by the gospel.
- 1) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 2) Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
 - 3) Romans 10:9-10: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
 - 4) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - 5) Romans 10:16: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?"
 - 6) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 7) Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
 - 8) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
- e. These saved people, when they hear the gospel presented, will receive it with gladness! Every child of God has a deep and constant longing to learn all he can about the word of God; he desires to know so that he can have more faith, more knowledge, more love and sympathy for all others.
- 1) The gospel will enable these to proceed from one degree of sanctification to a greater level of spiritual maturity; and as they continue to feast on the spiritual meat of God's word, they grow stronger. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Pet. 2:1-2).
 - 2) Ultimately, these will receive the eternal salvation awaiting the redeemed in heaven.
 - a) Romans 5:8-9: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:3-5: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."
- f. *Who is sufficient for these things?* Christ was set for the rise and fall of many people (Luke 2:34). That is, some would be raised up to spiritual life because of their reaction to him, while others would fall into eternal ruin due to their having the opposite disposition toward him.
- 1) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
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- 2) 1 Peter 2:7: "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner."
 - 3) Those who preach the gospel share in this great burden for they teach the same great truths initiated by the Lord; and they bear a heavy obligation. This was especially true with the apostles, who were charged with the onus of receiving the revelation, and passing it on (orally and in written form) to all mankind. They continued the great work of Christ, and we carry the same gospel to those of our generation. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).
 - 4) Paul's question at this point is poignant. It expresses his recognition of the heavy responsibility of preaching. No one should take this work lightly! The eternal destiny of immortal souls hangs in the balance when we seek to teach and preach the word.
 - 5) If we do not try to teach it, we will be condemned for our disobedience and omission of duty.
 - a) James 4:17: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."
 - b) Ezekiel 3:17-19: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."
 - c) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 6) If we offer to mankind a corrupted gospel, they will be deceived into thinking they are saved, when in fact they are lost (John 8:32; 17:17; Gal. 1:6-12), and we have contributed to their ruin.
 - a) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - b) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - c) Galatians 1:6-12: "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; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 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. 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. 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. 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."
 - 7) If we teach the truth, but live ungodly lives, we may strip the message we present of its influence.
 - a) 1 Timothy 4:12: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."
 - b) Philippians 2:14-16: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
 - c) Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
4. Verse 17: "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in
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the sight of God speak we in Christ."

a. Other versions:

- 1) "For we are not as the many, corrupting the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ" (ASV).
- 2) "For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ" (NKJ).

b. Paul denies that he is like many who corrupt the word of God.

- 1) 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." There are far more false teachers in our world today!
- 2) Matthew 7:15-20: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

c. Concerning the word *corrupt*, Lipscomb says: "The term was originally applied to tavern keeping, and extended to cover all the devices by which the wine sellers in ancient times deceived their customers. Then it was used figuratively as here, and of philosophers of selling the sciences, and in most cases like tavern keepers, blending, adulterating, and giving short measure" (pp.44).

- 1) One corrupts the word of God who adds to it, subtracts from it, or makes any changes to it.
 - a) Revelation 22:18-19: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."
 - b) Galatians 1:8-9: "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. 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."
 - c) 2 John 1:9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
- 2) Such is frequently done with regards to: the plan of salvation; the identity, organization, work and worship of the church; the nature of Christ; the nature and work of the Holy Spirit; the inspiration, the integrity and authority of the Scriptures; and the Bible doctrine of final things.
- 3) One corrupts the word of God by *watering-down* its requirements.
- 4) One corrupts the word of God by failing to preach it all—the whole counsel of God.

d. Paul affirms the pureness of his motives, that they were sincere. He did not seek to make merchandise of either the Corinthians or the gospel. He preached it with sincerity; he wanted the best for the saints, and sought to serve God without hypocrisy. He recognized the awesome truth that all he did and said was in full view of Almighty God. If that knowledge did not make him sincere, nothing could. What he presented to them, therefore, was delivered by the authority and blessing of Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS 3

A. 2 Corinthians 3:1-5: Paul Did Not Need Letters of Commendation.

1. Verse 1: "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?"
 - a. What Paul had written in the preceding passage was not intended as self-glorification. His adversaries at Corinth might intentionally misconstrue his words to place him in the worst possible light before the faithful brethren, and thus interdict his good influence. In his opening statement of the verse, the apostle anticipates this perversion, and bluntly denies the obvious charge.
 - b. Next, Paul shows by his rhetorical question that they did not need letters of commendation from some respected source to authenticate his apostleship. In Romans 16:1-2, he recorded a statement in support of Pheobe, giving the saints in Rome sufficient reason to assist her. They did not know this Christian lady, and since she was on a proper mission and was a faithful disciple, Paul commended her to them. But the apostle did not need to be commended to the brethren in Corinth by letters from brethren whose word was reliable; they knew him well; it was by his work that they learned the gospel and were saved.
 - 1) Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 2:1-5: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."
 - c. In the third statement of the verse, Paul denied his need to have letters of commendation from them to pave the way into the fellowship of saints in other places. His name and work were widely known. His apostolic authority included supernatural powers which substantiated his standing with Christ. "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds" (2 Cor. 12:12).
 - d. One who commends himself does not prove his assertion by his own unsupported word. The Lord's commendations are the only ones that truly matter.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 10:18: "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."
 - 2) Some scholars think that the Judaizers brought letters of commendations with them, authenticating their authority, and that these false teachers had belittled Paul for not having similar letters. Paul's credentials were furnished by the Lord, in the form of miraculous works.
 - a) Mark 16:20: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 12:11-13: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong."
 - c) Hebrews 2:3-4: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
2. Verse 2: "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men."

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- a. The faithful brethren who comprised the church at Corinth were Paul's epistle of commendation. Their obedience to the gospel, their continued faithfulness, and the spiritual gifts in evidence among them, furnished all the necessary proof of Paul's apostolic authority. They would not have become Christians except by the work he did among them; they would not be walking in the light of the gospel if he had not furnished them the information and motivation; and none of them would have received a miraculous gift had he not conferred it. No other apostle had been to Corinth.
 - b. Paul had endured great adversities in doing his work at Corinth (Acts 18:9-11; 1 Cor. 2:3). Where much affliction, labor, and tears are endured in a work, there is great affection and concern in the heart of the worker. Paul had labored long and hard, and with tender concern, thus he had a tremendous feeling for the brethren there.
 - 1) Acts 18:9-11: "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 2:3: "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."
 - 3) 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6: "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost."
 - c. The Corinthian church formed a figurative letter which was inscribed on the tender heart of the apostle. Their faith was Paul's letter of commendation to all who knew them.
3. Verse 3: "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart."
- a. Continuing the analogy of the preceding verse, Paul points out further features of this figurative epistle. Christ was the author of it. The Lord furnished the authority and power, and used Paul in inscribing the letter.
 - b. The ink was the Holy Spirit. Christ enabled Paul to operate by the power of the Spirit, who conveyed to the mind of the apostle the inspired message, and through Paul, wrought certain miraculous works to confirm the message. The message was revealed and delivered and confirmed by the Holy Spirit; this third member of the Godhead became, in a figure, the ink by which the message was inscribed.
 - c. The tables on which the epistle was inscribed were not of stone, but are the figurative tables of Paul's heart. When men saw the result of Paul's inspired preaching at Corinth (the converts to Christ), they read Paul's letter of commendation. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). Their transformed lives verified Paul's apostleship.
 - d. The Old Testament uses similar language:
 - 1) Ezekiel 36:26: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."
 - 2) Jeremiah 31:33: "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."
 - 3) Proverbs 3:3: "Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart."
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e. Paul's Figurative Epistle of Commendation of 2 Corinthians 3:2-3:

Author	Christ
Epistle	Corinthians
Paper (Tablet)	Paul's Heart
Ink	Holy Spirit
Pen	Paul

4. Verses 4-5: "And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God."
- The apostle added this point lest any of his auditors get the idea that he was boasting of personal accomplishments. Thus he affirms that he is not sufficient to bring about these results (of the previous verse) by his power. His authority and power were from God. Paul placed his confidence in the Lord.
 - His confidence regarding the results of his preaching at Corinth was in Christ; it was not in his own intelligence, strength, or wisdom. God originated the great plan of salvation; Christ executed that plan; the Holy Spirit revealed and confirmed it; *earthen vessels* (2 Cor. 4:7) were used to bring the knowledge of the plan to fallen mankind. None of the inspired apostles and prophets (Eph. 3:5) would claim that their miraculous gifts originated within themselves: "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3:5).
 - The rejoicing Paul had in this great operation was not directed toward personal powers or prowess, but toward God through Christ. The truth that saved them, and which was confirmed by miraculous demonstrations of the Holy Spirit, was from God; Paul was merely an instrument.

B. 2 Corinthians 3:6-11: The Glorious Gospel is Contrasted With the Law of Moses.

- Verse 6: "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." "Who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (ASV).
 - Paul and the other apostles had been made able (sufficient) ministers of the New Covenant. Every power and every particle of truth needed was supplied to them by the Lord. God has never sent forth a man to do a job for him without supplying the means to accomplish the work. "And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Num. 13:30).
 - The New Testament implies the Old Testament, and sets the context for the following discussion. It is obviously of significance that Paul speaks in this chapter about information being written on the heart, as opposed to being written on tables of stone, and in the same connection discusses the New Covenant. Jeremiah predicted the time when God would make a new covenant with mankind, one which would not be inscribed on stone tablets, but on the heart:
 - 1) "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (31:31-34).

- 2) Hebrews 8:8-13: "For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."
- c. The contrast is between the covenant written on stone tablets and the covenant written on the heart. Paul's enemies in the church were the Judaizing teachers, men whose aim was to turn the Gentile Christians into keepers of the Mosaic Law (Gal. 2:4ff; 5:1ff; Acts 15). That some of these errorists were at Corinth is implied by 2 Corinthians 11:20-22: "For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. **Are they Israelites? so am I.** Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I."
- d. In order for Paul to show the Corinthian saints the truth about these false teachers, it was essential for them to see the correct relationship between the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ. Thus, he speaks of the Old and the New Covenants, which he identifies as the letter and the spirit. He is not saying that, whereas the Israelites had to keep the letter of the Mosaic Law, Christians must be concerned merely with keeping the spirit of the gospel (Heb. 2:1-4; 10:23ff).
- 1) The Pharisees were the strictest sect among the ancient Jews; they were very adept at keeping the letter of the Law, as indicated in Matthew 23:23. Yet the Lord said that his followers are required to exceed the Pharisees in righteousness (Matt. 5:20). Righteousness is obedience to God's word (Ps. 119:172; Acts 10:34-35; Matt. 3:15-17). Keeping only the spirit of the law of the gospel is therefore insufficient.
- a) Psalms 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness."
- b) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
- c) Matthew 3:15-17: "And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
- 2) James 2:10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Willful disobedience to even one part of God's word is enough to make us an offender—a sinner (cf. 1 John 3:4; Rom. 6:23).
- 3) 2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son" (ASV).
- 4) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
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- e. The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life.
- 1) How did the Old Covenant kill? It identified sin; when one of its adherents violated one of its precepts or commandments, he became guilty of sin; that ancient covenant had no inherent means to remove the guilt of sin:
 - a) Hebrews 10:1-4: “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”
 - b) Hebrews 9:8-17: “The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.”
 - c) Acts 13:38-39: “Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”
 - d) Galatians 2:21: “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”
 - 2) The New Covenant (the gospel) is able to give life. It has the inherent power to remove the guilt of sin, any sin and every sin.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”
 - b) Hebrews 8:12: “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”
 - c) 1 John 1:6-10: “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
 - d) 1 John 2:1-4: “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man

- sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”
- e) Acts 13:38-39: “Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”
- 3) The difference between the Old and New Covenants lies in the blood that pertains to each: the blood of animals in the first covenant, and the blood of Christ in the second.
 - a) Matthew 26:28: “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
 - b) 1 Peter 1:18-19: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”
 - c) Ephesians 1:7: “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”
 - d) Colossians 1:13-14: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”
 - e) Hebrews 10:1-4: “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”
2. Verses 7-8: "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?" "But if the ministration of death, written, and engraven on stones, came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look stedfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his face; which glory was passing away: how shall not rather the ministration of the spirit be with glory?" (ASV).
 - a. The Law of Moses, despite its inability to remove the guilt of sin, was a glorious system. The great truths of Psalm 119 which describe the beauties and glories of God's word are said about the Old Testament Law.
 - 1) The Mosaic Law was vastly superior to any code that humanity could ever produce. The Code of Hammurabi which was originated in ancient times, is inferior to the Old Testament. Hammurabi permitted immorality; the Mosaic Law forbade it.
 - 2) God's Testament provided the means for Israel to worship the living God; the laws of men direct man's devotion to idols, and can never bring anyone into contact with the Almighty.
 - 3) The Old Testament gave Israel access to the protection, provisions, and help of God.
 - 4) The glory that relates to the Old Covenant that Paul speaks of seems to relate especially to the brightness with which it was given; Moses' face shown with a great brightness. See the ASV rendering of verse seven (above).
 - b. The apostle illustrates the glory of the former covenant by referring to the brightness with which Moses' face shone when he descended Sinai:
 - 1) “And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them;
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- and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him” (Ex. 34:29-35).
- 2) His face shone with a glorious light that was frightening to Israel. While Moses talked with them he wore a veil over his face, hiding from their sight this brightness. But when Moses talked with God, he removed the veil. Paul refers to this situation, and illustrates an important lesson thereby. In his use of it, the veil represents the blindness of heart which characterized the unbelieving Jews of his day in not being willing to see and accept the gospel.
- c. Paul's discussion does not denigrate God's Old Testament Law. Rather, he affirms its greatness, and then declares that the New Covenant excels it in glory (verse 8). The New Covenant is called the "ministration of the spirit."
- 1) The Old Law addressed the outward man; it forbade many things, and required many outward ceremonies and works. It was God's intention that they would take his requirements into their hearts, and serve him sincerely and with love.
 - a) Deuteronomy 6:3-6: "Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart."
 - b) Deuteronomy 5:29: "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!"
 - c) Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - 2) The cleansing obtained by the law was ceremonial and outward. One who touched a dead body, for example, had a certain rite to perform in order to be made *clean*.
 - 3) The New Testament, by its very nature, pertains to the heart (the spirit) of man. It cannot bring any benefit to the individual unless the obedience proceeds from the heart, and is thus sincerely offered in faith with love.
 - a) Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
 - b) John 4:23-24: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."
 - c) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - d) 1 Corinthians 13:1-3: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that
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- I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”
- e) 1 John 5:2-3: “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”
 - f) Acts 8:36-37: “And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”
- 4) The Old Covenant placed an emphasis upon outward actions; the New Covenant emphasizes inward sincerity and dedication. Both Covenants required overt obedience to God's will.
3. Verse 9: "For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."
- a. There was a genuine glory that pertained to the Old Covenant, which is identified here as "the ministration of condemnation." Since no human was ever able to observe the Old Law perfectly, at the point when an Israelite violated one of its precepts or commands, he became guilty of sin, and because the system did not have the power to pardon the sin, the offender then stood under condemnation.
 - 1) Romans 7:24: “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”
 - 2) Acts 15:10: “Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?”
 - 3) Galatians 2:4: “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.”
 - 4) Hebrews 10:1-4: “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” [Under the Mosaic Law, at the Day of Atonement each year, the sins of the participants were “rolled forward” until the next Day of Atonement; hence, their sins were not removed, but were remembered each year. The blood of Christ cleansed those sins—see Romans 3:25-26].
 - b. However, under the gospel of Christ, full and complete pardon is its basic provision.
 - 1) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
 - 2) Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
4. Verse 10: "For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth."
- a. In comparison to the glory of the gospel system, the Mosaic System had no glory. Those who would have us go back to the Old Testament system for the method of serving God do not comprehend the vast superiority of the gospel.
 - b. Other statements:
 - 1) Acts 15:10: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"
 - 2) Galatians 5:4: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
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- 3) John 1:17: " For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."
5. Verse 11: "For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."
- a. Plainly teaching that the Old Covenant is taken away, Paul affirms the greatness of the glory of the New Covenant which remains. The emphasis is upon the wondrous glory of the gospel.
- 1) Romans 7:1-7: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."
- 2) 2 Corinthians 4:4: "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
- 3) God would not have replaced a glorious system with one that was merely equal in glory or inferior in glory, but only with one that was more glorious.
- b. The Old Testament predicted its own eventual termination as God's operative system.
- 1) Deuteronomy 18:15-18: "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."
- 2) Jeremiah 31:31-33: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."
- c. The New Testament affirms that the Old Covenant has been replaced (Heb. 8-10; Gal. 3).
- 1) Matthew 5:17: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."
- 2) Acts 3:22-23: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."
- 3) Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
- 4) Ephesians 2:14-15: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making
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peace."

- 5) Hebrews 8:13: "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

C. 2 Corinthians 3:12-18: The Veil of the Old Testament and the Clarity of the New Testament.

1. Verse 12: "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech." "Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness of speech" (ASV).
 - a. The hope given by the gospel is beyond compare. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God" (Heb. 7:19).
 - 1) The bringing in of a better hope did provide the way for bringing us to perfection (maturity, completeness). "The idea which the apostle wishes to convey to his readers is simply this: that on the one hand, there is a setting aside of the Old Economy on account of its weakness and insufficiency; and on the other hand, there is the bringing in of the New Economy, by which we may all now, as priests, draw nigh to God and worship him in spirit and in truth" (Milligan, p.209).
 - 2) We are commanded (Jas. 4:8) to draw near to God. According to our text, it is a great honor to draw near to him. When we draw near to God, he draws near to us. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double minded" (Jas. 4:8).
 - a) Ephesians 2:11-13: "Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."
 - b) Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
 - b. Since the hope of the gospel is such a wondrous benefit, Paul spoke plainly. There was no timidity about his speech; he was unashamed to give a full report of it in detail. The Jews were very dedicated to their religious views, but many of these were traditions invented by their uninspired forebears. They were very quick to take offense and more often than not, refused to examine the evidence.
 - 1) Mark 7:7-13: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."
 - 2) Acts 13:44-46: "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."
 - 3) Acts 28:23-29: "And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed

the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.”

- c. There are situations in which we need to speak with cautious wisdom, lest we unnecessarily offend or drive people away from the truth. However, the gospel is so plain and definite, and so very important to the soul, that we must use plainness of speech in presenting its great truths. Compare: “Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly” (John 10:24).
 - 1) These people demanded that Jesus directly and plainly tell them whether he is the Christ. If he had done so right then, doubtless a riotous condition could have been incited by his enemies. Notice that the occasion was on a national holiday, with countless people present, emotions were at a high level with patriotism and religious fervor. If he had openly and clearly declared that he is the Christ, the emotional excitement of the Jewish crowd could have exploded into great violence.
 - 2) Such a thing happened later when Stephen was murdered by an overwrought mob: “But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep” (Acts 7:57-60, ASV).
2. Verse 13: "And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished."
 - a. Moses put a veil over his face to shield the eyes of the people near him from the overwhelming brightness of his face. By way of contrast to this, Paul did not use veiled language in affirming the greater glory of the gospel to the Law, and the replacement of the Law by the gospel.
 - b. Jews who did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah, still clung to the Mosaic Law. Anyone who tried to show them that the Law was no longer in effect was in danger of persecution at the hand of the Jewish unbelievers.
 - c. Romans 10:4: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Christ is the object toward which the Old Covenant pointed; the old economy found its fulfillment in Christ and the gospel.
 - d. This verse also states that the Law had an end toward which it pointed. When that end [purpose] was filled, the Law itself was no longer needed, and was replaced by the gospel. The Law was abolished (replaced; abrogated; invalidated) by the New Covenant.
 - e. Romans 7:1-7 is a succinct treatise on the replacement of the Old Testament with the New. It pinpoints the Mosaic Law as the law from which we have been delivered. “Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring

forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.”

- f. Matthew 5:17: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”
- 1) The Law: specifically it is the Pentateuch given through Moses. It consisted of moral principles and commands, judicial instructions and information (legislation for the Jews as a nation), and ceremonial instructions (such as, burnt offerings, sacrifices, etc.).
 - 2) The Prophets: includes all the information in the prophetic books of the Old Testament. The prophets were "forth-tellers" (they taught, explained and propounded the Law) and "fore-tellers" (they predicted things to come).
 - 3) Fulfill: "To carry out as a promise; to do a duty; to satisfy; to bring to an end, complete" (Webster). Two men enter a contract; when each has met the terms of the contract and thus accomplished its purpose, the contract has been fulfilled. It has not been destroyed, but through being fulfilled, it is no longer an active, binding document. The man fulfilling the contract is not considered an enemy of it; he does not intend to destroy it.
 - 4) The law and the prophets embrace all of the Old Testament. Christ did not come to destroy the Old Testament but to fulfill it; destroy is used in antithesis with fulfill. There were prophecies in both the law and the prophets: Christ fulfilled them all. There were types and shadows in the Old Testament of which he became the antitype. He fulfilled the law theoretically by unfolding its deep spiritual significance. "Jesus and his kingdom, with all that pertains to them, constitute the object and fulfillment of all the prophets" (Boles, p. 131).
3. Verses 14-15: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart."
- a. As the Old Testament Jews had their eyes blinded to some degree by the brightness of Moses' face, so the minds of their descendants have been blinded to the truth that the Old Covenant has now been replaced by the gospel of Christ.
 - b. There is a figurative veil over their minds, blinding them to the clear truth that the Old Law has been superceded by the New Law. At the time Paul penned 2 Corinthians (about 57 A.D.), the majority of the Jews were still mentally blinded to the great change in Covenants.
 - c. Since the Jews of the first century had no viable excuse to justify their rejection of the gospel, those living today have even less means to rationalize their rejection of the gospel.
 - 1) They ignore the plain statements incorporated into the Old Testament, including the Pentateuch (Deut. 18:15-18), which clearly predicted the ending of the Mosaic System: “The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him” (Deut. 18:15-18).
 - 2) Compare: “For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:22-23).
 - 3) There is also the undeniable fact that their tribal identity has been forever destroyed; additionally, the priesthood is no longer possible since no one can be identified as belonging to the tribe of Levi.
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- 4) The temple, the altar, and the entire Old Testament worship arrangement has been destroyed. Since 70 A.D. when the Romans destroyed the temple and Jerusalem, the Jews have been unable to offer the kind of worship prescribed by the Mosaic Law. This in itself is a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy:
 - a) "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 9:27).
 - b) Compare: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44).
 4. Verse 16: "Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."
 - a. Although they are willfully blind to the truth, if they will open their eyes, they would be able to turn to the Lord. God will not perform a miracle to remove their blindness; that is an act which only they as individuals can do.
 - b. God does not show partiality to anyone; if he removed the blindness and stubbornness from the Jews so that they could be saved, he would be obligated by his impartial nature to do the same for all the Gentiles as well. But that would nullify the death of Christ, and make void all the predictions and preparations of the Old Testament era regarding the gospel system. It would repudiate the New Testament entirely.
 - c. Matthew 13:14-15: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
 - d. Romans 11:26: "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." This *premillennial sugar-stick* offers absolutely no comfort to the millennial theory of an earthly kingdom ruled over by Christ. It does not teach that all the Jews will be saved, for the reasons noted above. The word *so* is an adverb of manner; the verse affirms a simple truth of the gospel: every saved person who lives on this side of the cross of Christ, will all be saved by the same plan. There is not a special plan for the salvation of the Jews and another separate plan for the salvation of the Gentiles.
 - 1) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 5. Verse 17: "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."
 - a. The spirit of the New Covenant is Christ; he is its heart and soul; without him there would be no gospel. Moses was the lawgiver of the Old Testament era; Christ, the Son of God, is the Lawgiver of the gospel age. As there is a great difference between Moses and Christ, so there is a boundless difference between the Law and the Gospel (cf. Heb. 3).
 - b. Where Christ is, there is liberty. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:32-36). Christ is able to give us freedom from the guilt of sin, from the practice of sin, and from the penalty of sin.
 - c. There is liberty under the gospel system which was not possible under the Law. This liberty is not a
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license to commit sin or do as one pleases. It is freedom from the heavy yoke which the Law of Moses imposed on those who followed it. The gospel embodies freedom from fear and doubt; it rather gives confidence and hope.

- 1) Galatians 2:4-5: "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."
 - 2) Acts 15:10: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"
6. Verse 18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."
- a. Those who follow Christ are privileged to behold the face of Christ, and make whatever changes are necessary so as to become more and more like he is. However, we do not see the actual face of the Lord; not even the apostles had that benefit after the Lord's ascension.
 - b. Our Lord lived a perfect life, taught only perfect truths, and possessed motives and attitudes which are flawless. The Bible gives us a beautiful picture of our Lord's life, complete with his teachings; as we see ourselves set forth in the truths of the gospel, we behold ourselves as God sees us; as we therefore endeavor to correct the flaws we discover, in all affairs of our life, we become more and more like the image of Christ set forth in the gospel. We proceed from one level of glory to a greater degree of glory. This is done by the Lord through the Spirit-given message of the gospel. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18).
 - c. James 1:21-25: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
 - d. The people of certain cities did not discern the Lord's personal instructions and works: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (Matt. 11:21-24).
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CONTRASTS BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

OLD COVENANT	NEW COVENANT
First: Heb. 10:9	Second: Heb. 10:9
One Nation: Deut. 5:2-3	All Nations: Matt. 28:19
Dedicated by Animal Blood: Heb. 9:19	Dedicated by Christ's Blood: Heb. 9:15-16
Moses the Mediator: Ex. 20:19	Christ the Mediator: Heb. 12:24
Faulty: Heb. 8:7	Better; Perfect: Heb. 8:6; Jas. 1:25
Shadow: Heb. 9:24; 10:1	Reality: Heb. 10:1; 8:1-2
Blood of Animals: Heb. 9:19-20; 10:4	Blood of Christ: Heb. 9:12
Carnal Ordinances: Heb. 9:10	Spiritual Sacrifices: 1 Pet. 2:5
Purify Flesh: Heb. 9:13	Purify Soul: 1 Pet. 1:22; 3:21; Heb. 10:22
Natural Birth: Gen. 17:1ff	Spiritual Birth: John 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:22-23
Infants Included: Gen. 17:1ff	Responsible Persons: Mark 16:15-16
Temporal Rewards: Ps. 105:10-11	Eternal Rewards: 1 Pet. 1:4
Glorious: 2 Cor. 3:9-10	Exceeding in Glory: 2 Cor. 3:10-11
Yearly Atoning Sacrifice: Heb. 10:1ff	One Sacrifice: Heb. 9:26-28
Bondwoman: Gal. 4:30-31	Free Woman: Heb. 4:30-31
High Priests Had Sins: Heb. 7:28	High Priest Perfect: Heb. 7:27
Ministration of Death: 2 Cor. 3:9	Ministration of Righteousness: 2 Cor. 3:9
Priests Without Oath: Heb. 7:21	With Oath: Heb. 7:21
Priests by Carnal Commandment: Heb. 7:16	Priest by Endless Life: Heb. 7:16
Priests from Tribe of Levi: Heb. 7:11	High Priest from Judah: Heb. 7:14
Priests Died: Heb. 7:23	High Priest Eternal: Heb. 7:24
Sins Remembered: Heb. 10:1-4	Sins Removed: Heb. 10:1-4; 8:12
Written in Stone: 2 Cor. 3	Written in Heart: Heb. 8:10
Servitude: Rom. 8:15	Sonship: Rom. 8:15
Letter: 2 Cor. 3:6	Spirit: 2 Cor. 3:6
Not remove Sins: Heb. 10:11; Acts 13:38-39	Saved to Uttermost: Heb. 7:25; 8:12
Passed Away: 2 Cor. 3:11	Remains: 2 Cor. 3:11; Jude 3

2 CORINTHIANS 4

A. 2 Corinthians 4:1-6: The Glorious Gospel.

1. Verse 1: "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not."
 - a. The ministry Paul had was that of the New Covenant (Acts 26:16-18; 2 Cor. 3:6). It was his special duty to take the gospel to the Gentiles. The preceding passage exalted the New Testament over the Old Testament; here the apostle affirms that he has been assigned the ministry (the work) of announcing this new revelation to the world.
 - 1) Acts 26:16-18: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 3:6: "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."
 - b. He states next that he had obtained mercy. Unaware of the truth prior to the occasion of his conversion to Christ, Paul had striven mightily against the gospel. In that condition of rebellion against the will of heaven, he was chosen by the mercy and wisdom of God to be a minister of the New Covenant. He deserved divine retribution, but received mercy by being selected to be an apostle of Christ; and when he obeyed the gospel (Acts 22:16), he obtained God's merciful pardon.
 - c. In view of the fact that he had obtained mercy, he did not faint in fulfilling his God-given work. To *faint* is to become weak, to lose heart. Despite the many troubles he encountered in fulfilling his ministry, he did not lose his courage, but discharged his duties faithfully. "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (2 Cor. 11:24-28; cf. 12:1ff).
2. Verse 2: "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."
 - a. The Pharisees could not deal openly and honestly with the Scriptures; they found it necessary to assert that God gave to Moses an oral law, and in that unwritten revelation they found authority for many of their beliefs and practices. There was no such thing as an oral law; the written law forbade any addition or subtraction. Since the Mosaic Law did not authorize the peculiar doctrines of the Pharisees, they had to deal deceitfully with God's word in a vain attempt to justify their religious views.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 4:2: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."
 - 2) Proverbs 30:6: "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."
 - b. Paul, who had formerly been a Pharisee (Phil. 3:5), affirms here that he had renounced dishonest dealings, together with all crafty manipulations of the truth; he would have nothing to do with the practice of handling God's word deceitfully.
 - 1) Instead, he would openly and honestly announce the truth, holding nothing back and making no alterations to it in any way. He had no personal views to defend; he had no error to conceal in sophistry.

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- 2) His plan of action in discharging his divinely-given duties was to present the truth to mankind, appealing to the good in his auditors, and leave the response to the conscience of the individual.
 - 3) Paul had been a Pharisee before he was converted to Christ. He had been zealous of his religious beliefs, and pushed them with vigor, acting in ignorance of the truth. However, he had maintained a good conscience throughout (Acts 23:1). He was subject to being taught the truth, since he was honest with the truth, so when he learned the truth, he obeyed the same. Paul's foes, the Judaizing teachers, were guilty of the very practices which Paul condemns in the verse.
 - a) Acts 23:1: "And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."
 - b) Acts 24:14-16: "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men."
 - 4) His preaching was always open and above-board; he correctly perceived that all of his activities were done in the sight of God. The response of those who heard him was also seen by the Almighty.
 - a) Proverbs 15:3: "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
 - b) Hebrews 4:13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."
 - c. There are many in today's religious world who need to profit from Paul's statement in this verse. Instead of searching the Scriptures to learn the truth, far too many search the Bible in a futile attempt to find justification for their beliefs and practices.
 - 1) When some passage is uncovered which repudiates one of their dogmas, they twist the truth to fit their views. Grave danger is involved in such an action. "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:16).
 - 2) When someone who understands seeks to teach such a person the word of God more perfectly, stubbornness and prejudice are aroused, and the errorist turns to all kinds of quibbles and gainsaying in a pointless attempt to justify his creed.
 - 3) Such people often harden their hearts to the point that they are past help, and thus "blaspheme the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 12:31-32).
 - a) "But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:45-46).
 - b) This was an example of various people rejecting the truth of the gospel and blaspheming the Holy Spirit.
 3. Verses 3-4: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
 - a. There were many in Paul's generation who closed their eyes lest they should see the truth. Our Lord denounced all such people. "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matt. 13:15). The same severe rebuke applies to everyone, of any generation and land, who will not open their minds to learn the truth.
 - b. The gospel is intended for all, and is well within the reach of anyone who desires to learn it. Those to
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whom it was hidden were those who have closed their minds against it. In our land, the gospel is readily accessible to every sincere soul. Copies of the Bible are everywhere; faithful teachers of the Bible earnestly seek honest souls in order to instruct them more fully in the will of God. What about those in Moslem lands? Since the Bible is not easily found there, will those people who live and die in unbelief receive some special dispensation from God in the Judgment?

- 1) We must remember that no man has the slightest authority to act in God's stead; and no one has the right to make any changes to God's word. What God has stated in his word will be fully respected and applied in the Judgment; God will not set aside his word for the special benefit of any person.
 - a) Psalms 119:89: "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven."
 - b) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - c) John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
- 2) There was a time in Moslem territories when the current generation rejected and outlawed God's word. Evil men have a powerful impact on their contemporaries and their posterity. Those who initiated the rebellion against God's word, and those who perpetuated it, will face a heavier judgment (cf. Jas. 3:1). They made it more difficult for many in present times to learn the truth, but that does not excuse anyone from his obligations to God.
- 3) Moslem religion accepts Abraham as their progenitor, and Abraham's God as their God. The Pentateuch contains information regarding the Promised Seed (Christ). If Moslems believe in Abraham, they ought to perceive the truth given to that great patriarch concerning the Savior, and thus investigate until they learn the truth.
- 4) Even those who live in a totally-atheistic society are without excuse. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20).
- c. "The apostle anticipates that some Jew would challenge his statement, asserting that the gospel was as much veiled to him and his brethren, as Paul had above asserted the law to be (3:7-18)...The fault lay, not in the nature of the gospel, but in their own nature. By unbelief they had fallen into Satan's power, and he had blinded them..." (McGarvey, p.188). It is not the fault of the sun if men close their eyes to its light. It is not the fault of God's Son if men close their eyes to the light of his glorious gospel. There is none so blinded as one who *will not see*.
- d. Those who are lost are defined as those who "believe not." To believe not is to be lost; to be lost is to perish.
 - 1) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - 2) Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
- e. The gospel is hidden to those who will not believe; it is not hidden from them by God's design; it is not hidden from them because it is too difficult for them to comprehend. The god of this world has blinded them so they do not see its glory.
 - 1) The god of this world is Satan:
 - a) 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
 - c) John 12:31: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."
 - d) John 14:30: "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and

- hath nothing in me.”
- e) John 16:11: “Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”
 - 2) Satan is the god of this world because the majority of the world choose to follow his evil will rather than the benevolent will of the true God. "Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved" (Luke 8:12).
 - 3) Satan is able to accomplish this evil effort by means of false teachers, corrupt doctrine, and foolish and evil men. In bringing about the condemnation of men, the devil does not operate directly and miraculously any more than God acts directly and miraculously to effect the salvation of the lost. Both work through mediums. There is a void or empty space between two minds which requires a medium across which communication must be established. Satan is forced to use mediums through which he exerts his evil influence.
 - a) When he enticed Eve to violate the God-given edict forbidding the eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tempter did not exert direct, mind-on-mind, miraculous influence. Rather, he offered his temptations by the medium of words. And since there were no other human beings to do his evil work for him, he operated through the wily serpent.
 - b) When the devil wanted to tempt the Savior, he used the medium of words which was addressed to the natural appetites of the fleshly body and the pride of life (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13). Even though he approached Christ in person (evidently), he still had to use a medium to offer the temptations.
 - c) 1 John 2:15-17: "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and 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 abideth for ever." When he tempts us today, he does so indirectly through the same three avenues: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. For agents, he uses false teachers, sinners, situations that develop, and the natural weaknesses of the flesh.
 - d) In the case of Ananias and Sapphira, the devil was the source of their temptation: "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and keep back part of the price of the land?" (Acts 5:3). But in the next verse Peter asked, "Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart?" The passage does not teach that Satan miraculously placed the temptation into their minds; rather he used the medium of their own greed and pride to entrap them!
 - f. The word of the gospel gives illumination; it shows us the way to Christ, the way to serve God acceptably, the way to worship God properly, the way to live, and the way to heaven.
 - 1) Psalms 119:105: “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”
 - 2) 1 John 1:5-10: “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
 - g. If Satan, acting through his agents (2 Cor. 11:13-15), can convince us that the Bible is not accurate, or that it is not the final authority in religious affairs, or that it may be correctly followed by merely keeping the spirit of its teachings, he will have very effectively blinded our minds to the truth. Those teachers who affirm that there are many ways to heaven, or who maintain that absolute truth is unattainable, or that sincerity alone is sufficient, blind the minds of the multitudes.
 - h. The desire of the god of this world is to keep as many men as possible from seeing the truth of the gospel. The design of Satan is to obstruct God's will at every possible place. He uses the passions and
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fleshly appetites of man to cause man to become corrupted and condemned.

- 1) John 3:19-21: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."
 - 2) Our natural desires must be kept under control, lest Satan get an advantage over us. Compare: "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (1 Cor. 2:11).
 - a) 1 Corinthians 9:27: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."
 - c) 1 John 3:3: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."
 - 3) Knowing his own fate, Satan seeks the condemnation of all humanity; none is beyond his hatred.
- i. The gospel gives off a glorious light.
- 1) It furnishes illumination for the soul: it shows the way to salvation, how to serve and worship God acceptably, and guides us to heaven.
 - a) John 6:68: "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."
 - b) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - c) 2 Timothy 1:9-10: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."
 - 2) It offers great blessings for the soul:

Blessings of the Gospel

BLESSING	REFERENCE
Citizenship in the Kingdom	Col. 1:13
Redemption by Blood of Christ	Col. 1:14
Forgiveness of Sin	Eph. 1:7; Acts 2:38; 22:16
Spiritual Life	Eph. 2:1-5; Rom. 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:17
Access to God	Eph. 2:13
Reconciliation with God	Eph. 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:17-21
Sanctification	1 Cor. 1:2
Become a New Person	2 Cor. 5:17
Liberty	Gal. 2:4
Hope	1 Pet. 1:3-5
Salvation	2 Tim. 2:10

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- j. Christ is the image of God.
 - 1) John 14:9: "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?"
 - 2) Hebrews 1:3: "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."
 - 3) If we want to know what God is like, we can learn by looking at Christ. When we see how Jesus reacted to sin, false doctrine, people in need, or other attitudes and actions of life, we see God's disposition in all these things.
 - k. Those who have allowed the god of this world (Satan) to blind them against believing the gospel are cut off from the glorious light of the gospel; being separated from the illumination of the gospel means that they are deprived of the many wonderful benefits and advantages which only the gospel can provide.
4. Verse 5: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."
- a. The apostle denies that he has been exalting himself, or that he preaches to advance his own selfish interests. He did not preach himself! He presented himself to his auditors as their servant: "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more" (1 Cor. 9:19). He did not present himself to them as their master. There are strong warnings in the Bible against self-exaltation.
 - 1) Luke 14:11: "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."
 - 2) Luke 18:14: "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."
 - 3) Matthew 23:8-12: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."
 - 4) 1 Peter 5:5-6: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."
 - b. If the entire arrangement had depended only on Paul, he would never have become a Christian; he would have spent the remainder of his life opposing Christianity. He thought that Jesus was an imposter and that the church was comprised of Jewish apostates. But Christ appeared to him at Damascus, and his life was forever changed.
 - c. There was nothing in Paul the man that would benefit the souls of the Corinthians. There was much in Paul the apostle that could profit them. He did not preach himself, but he did preach Christ.
 - d. To preach Christ is identical to preaching the gospel. It is impossible to preach Christ without preaching the gospel (Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-49; Rom. 10:13-18; Acts 2:1-41).
 - 1) Acts 8:5,12: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them....But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Included as an integral part of preaching Christ was the presentation of information pertaining to the kingdom (the church), the authority of Christ, and baptism.
 - 2) Acts 8:35-39: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See,
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here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." Again, preaching Christ included a presentation of baptism.

e. Preaching Christ logically and necessarily includes:

- 1) Providing information about the Lord's entrance into the world:
 - a) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
 - b) Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
 - c) Matthew 1:18-25: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
 - 2) Presenting information regarding his life, teachings, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension.
 - 3) Showing the provisions he made for taking his gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:15-16).
 - 4) Teaching the conditions of salvation:
 - a) John 8:24: "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."
 - b) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - c) Matthew 10:32: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."
 - d) Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - e) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 5) Informing the auditors of the kind of life required of a follower of Christ:
 - a) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - b) 2 Peter 1:5-11: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
 - 6) Discussing the blessings and hope given to faithful Christians.
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5. Verse 6: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."
 - a. The God who had commanded the light to shine to dispel primeval darkness (Gen. 1:3-4), had now shined his light of inspiration into the hearts of the apostles.
 - 1) Genesis 1:3-4: "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness."
 - 2) Matthew 11:27: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."
 - 3) John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."
 - 4) Matthew 13:10-17: "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 2:9-14: "But as it is written, 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, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."
 - 6) Ephesians 3:1-11: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - 7) See also John 14-16.
 - b. The light given was the light of the glorious gospel of Christ (verse 4). It provided the light of God's

knowledge. This is the same body of knowledge spoken of in 2 Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

- 1) John 3:19-21: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 3) 1 Peter 2:9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
 - 4) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - 5) 2 Timothy 1:9-10: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."
- c. There was a glorious light that illuminated the face of Moses, which represented the glorious law God gave through Moses. As shown in the previous chapter, the law of Moses was greatly inferior to the gospel of Christ. Employing the same figure here, Paul says that the light of the gospel shines from the face of Christ; the light that shines from his face transcends that light which came from the face of Moses.
- 1) Matthew 17:2: "And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."
 - 2) Mark 9:3: "And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them."
 - 3) Acts 26:13: "At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me."
- d. The light of the glorious gospel of Christ penetrates and permeates the hearts of those who believe, enabling us to bring glory to God and to live up to the glory he expects of us.
- 1) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."
 - 3) 2 Peter 1:2-4: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

B. 2 Corinthians 4:7-15: Paul Faced Troubles and Hardship.

1. Verse 7: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."
 - a. The gospel is illustrated in the preceding verse as a glorious light; in this verse it is likened to a treasure. The apostles of Christ first received the gospel as a direct revelation from heaven.
 - 1) Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all

the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

- 2) Galatians 1:6-12: “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; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 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. 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. 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. 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.”
 - 3) Ephesians 3:1-11: “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- b. At the first, therefore, the gospel was in earthen vessels—inspired apostles and prophets. The gospel was later committed to written form. Before the apostles died, the gospel had been recorded by inspiration, by some of the apostles [Matthew, John, Paul, Peter] and others who were inspired prophets [Mark; Luke; James; Jude]. In this form, it was fitted to be preserved and to last throughout the ages. The apostles and prophets lived only for a temporary time on earth, but the gospel survives the ages.
- 1) Jude 3: “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”
 - 2) Matthew 24:35: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”
- c. The treasure of the gospel was put into inspired men by revelation; these men did not design or invent that gospel. Consequently, the exceeding greatness of its power was from God, not from mere men [Rom. 1:16-17; Heb. 4:12; Jas. 1:21-25; 1 Pet. 1:22-25]. The apostles and prophets of the first century were agents or instruments for the revelation of the gospel, and not its source. Those who preach and teach the gospel today are but instruments by which God's word is disseminated.
- 1) 1 Corinthians 2:9-12: “But as it is written, Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, And which entered not into the heart of man, Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him. But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words. Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them,

- because they are spiritually judged. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ” (ASV).
- 2) 1 Corinthians 3:5-9: “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.”
 - 3) Romans 1:16-17: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
 - 4) Hebrews 4:12: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
 - 5) James 1:21-25: “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”
 - 6) 1 Peter 1:22-25: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”
- d. The information included in this discussion serves to buttress the general argument Paul presents in defense of his apostleship.
2. Verses 8-10: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."
 - a. Knowing the awesome greatness of the work, even the most trying of outward circumstances could not keep the apostles from doing their God-given duty of preaching the gospel.
 - b. The hardships and persecutions were severe. Paul in particular was opposed by troubles from every quarter, yet he was not distressed; he was perplexed, but not to despair; he was persecuted by men, but was not forsaken by the Lord (2 Cor. 2:14); he was cast down, but not destroyed. He enumerates in broad statements the kinds of hardships he had to face, but quickly shows that these did not defeat his work.
 - c. As he circulated among the Jews and Gentiles, preaching the gospel to all, he was met with similar treatment to that which the Lord Jesus received at the hands of those who rejected him during his public ministry.
 - 1) John 15:18-23: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they

- had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also.”
- 2) Romans 8:36: "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:31: "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily."
 - 4) Galatians 6:17: "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."
 - 5) Philippians 3:10: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."
 - 6) Colossians 1:24: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church."
- d. Paul bore in his body the kind of treatment Christ had received, and the life that Jesus lived was likewise manifested in his body (by the way he lived and by the truth he taught).
3. Verses 11-12: "For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you."
 - a. Those who sought to live and teach the truths of Christ were always exposed to harsh opposition from unbelievers, including imprisonment and death. The apostles followed Christ, and were ready to go with him where ever he might lead them.
 - 1) Luke 22:33: "And he [Peter] said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death." Compare: "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me" (2 Pet. 1:13-14).
 - 2) John 21:18-19: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me."
 - 3) Galatians 2:20: "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."
 - b. Although Paul was continually exposed to persecution and death, the Lord kept on delivering him.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 2:14: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place."
 - 2) Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."
 - c. His continuing to live despite the earnest efforts of his enemies to kill him, was a figure of the resurrected Christ. The Lord's enemies brought about his death on the cross, but he was raised to life again; the enemies of Paul tried to kill him, but God kept on defeating their evil plans, and Paul kept on living and serving Christ. The latter part of verse ten corresponds to the latter part of verse eleven.
 - d. Verse twelve gives the significance to the Corinthians of the foregoing. Paul faced persecution and death as he discharged his duties to Christ; his willingness to endure these and to continue to preach the gospel made it possible for the Corinthians to be saved. If Paul had allowed persecutions and threats to keep him from preaching the gospel, both he and those who could have been taught would have been lost. "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void. For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me" (1 Cor. 9:14-17).
 4. Verse 13: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak."
 - a. Psalm 116:10,15: "I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted....Precious in the sight

- of the LORD is the death of his saints." The psalmist affirms his willingness to speak even though affliction resulted; he spoke because he believed. In verse fifteen, he gives an added reason for speaking: even if he must forfeit his life for speaking, he rests in the knowledge that there is a preciousness that pertains to the death of God's saints, so even in death, he would be triumphant.
- b. Citing this statement (116:10) from the Psalms, Paul connects his willingness to speak because he believes God with that same willingness that the psalmist showed. The apostle's faith in the message he preached, knowing it was the revealed word of God, caused him to endure afflictions for the gospel's sake; such was necessary for the salvation of multitudes—then and now.
 - c. We often get disheartened in preaching and teaching the gospel when we see so few who show an interest in the truth, and when so many are strongly opposed to it. However, if we believe the gospel is the inspired word of God, we will believe that countless souls are in peril; since the only remedy for their sin-sick souls is in our hands, we must continue to preach and teach the gospel, for the good of the lost, despite the discouragements and hardships we face. If we believe we will speak.
5. Verse 14: "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you."
- a. Here is one of the truths that encouraged the apostle to continue his great work: he knew that the God who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also raise Paul from the dead, and would bring him and the saints at Corinth together again in eternity.
 - b. This is one of the Bible passages which speaks of a reunion of the saints in the next world. With the knowledge that he would be able to be with his beloved brethren again in a better world, Paul was spurred on to fulfill his great work.
 - c. We are separated from our beloved brethren when death tears them from our presence, but in heaven there will be a grand reunion! "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11). This knowledge spurs us on to continual faithfulness, in living the Christian life and in serving Christ.
 - 1) This statement suggests that many such Gentiles would be converted and enjoy the eternal blessings of heaven with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Plainly indicated is the fact that these three Old Testament Patriarchs will be in heaven.
 - 2) "In view of the sins and shortcomings of those particular men, it seems that none in our own day should despair of winning the crown" (Coffman, Commentary on Matthew, p.107).
 - 3) Some think that the kingdom of heaven (the church on earth) is what is being described. However, none of the three Old Testament men named were ever members of the church. Also, the blessed condition described as sitting down with these three is put in contrast with the wicked Jews who would be cast into outer darkness, a description of the torments of hell.
6. Verse 15: "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."
- a. The things that Paul did, together with the deprivations and persecutions and heartaches he experienced, were for the good of those who believed the gospel. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:10). The phrase all things is limited to the things of the context.
 - b. The apostle's work and the obedience of every believer are for the purpose of bringing forth expressions of gratitude from many unto the glory of God. God is the source of the blessings of the gospel. He devised the plan and brought it to fruition; he deserves the profoundest of thanks. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas. 1:17).
 - c. *Redound* is from a Greek word meaning "to turn out abundantly for something," in this case, to the glory of God. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31).
 - d. "That God may have augmented praise; that his glory in the salvation of people may abound. The
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sentiment of the passage is, that it would be for the glory of God that as many as possible should be brought to give praise and thanksgivings to him; and that, therefore, Paul endeavored to make as many converts as possible. He denied himself; he welcomed toil; he encountered enemies; he subjected himself to dangers; and he sought by all means possible to bring as many as could be brought to praise God. The word 'redound' *perisseuee* here means abound, or be abundant; and the sense is, that the overflowing grace thus evinced in the salvation of many would so abound as to promote the glory of God" (Barnes).

- e. "The whole gospel ministry is for the sake of the believer, for the believer is the recipient of the grace of God, and the returner of thanks to God. God is glorified in him both by the grace which he bestows upon him and the thanksgiving which he receives from him. It therefore follows that the more believers there are, the more grace there is bestowed and the more thanksgiving there is received, and hence the more God is glorified" (McGarvey).

C. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18: The Seen Versus the Unseen.

1. Verse 16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."
 - a. Because his hardships brought glory to God, Paul did not faint. Even though his mortal body suffered many privations and afflictions, and was gradually being worn down, yet he did not allow his service to God to diminish.
 - b. The apostle had an accurate understanding of what is truly important in this life. The physical body is a temporary abode of the eternal part of man—the spirit, the inner man. The outward man is designed to exist in this world only a short period of time; it will naturally grow old and weak, and eventually die and return to the elements of the earth. But the inner man (the soul, spirit) is eternal. Materialistic religions deny the existence of the "inner man"—to their own hurt.
 - c. In the case of a faithful Christian, his body grows old, weakens, suffers from the ravages of age, of disease, and injuries, and eventually dies. But the spirit of a Christian grows stronger through it all. The last day on earth will likely be the weakest day for the body, but the strongest for the spirit. As we daily pray, study and meditate on God's word, commune with God and other Christians, and discharge our duties, our spirits are strengthened. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2).
2. Verse 17: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory" (ASV).
 - a. When we visualize the tremendous amount of sufferings Paul encountered and endured as he preached, lived, and defended the truth of the gospel, we would not choose to describe his hardships as *light*. They were light only in a comparable sense: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11:24-27).
 - b. When we view life's problems in comparison to the rich blessings of heaven, those earthly stresses are light; the pains they cause fade into relative insignificance when compared to the glories of eternal life! "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).
 - c. The hardships we endure for righteousness' sake are light in the sense that they are temporary. They might last for many years, but even an earthly lifetime is virtually no time at all in comparison to eternity.

- d. Faithfulness in tribulation results in an eternal reward.
 - 1) Romans 2:7: "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."
 - 2) Romans 8:17: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."
 - 3) 2 Timothy 2:12: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us."
 - 4) 1 Peter 4:13: "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."
 - e. The glory of heaven is described by Paul as surpassing the superlative: "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "The glory is so great, so past comprehension, he calls it an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, oppressive in its grandeur" (Lipscomb, p.67).
3. Verse 18: "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."
- a. We are not to look at the things which are seen (material possessions, earthly advantages). Material objects and benefits are only temporary: we die and lose them; we lose our interest in them; they are destroyed, lost, or stolen. To *look at* these things, as Paul uses the expression here, is to strongly desire them, to spend our time obtaining and retaining them, to exalt these things above spiritual values.
 - 1) Matthew 6:24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
 - 2) Matthew 12:30: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."
 - 3) Luke 12:15: "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."
 - 4) Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 - a) The Lord's prohibition was not against the accumulation of wealth in one or more of its various forms. Abraham was an extremely rich man; so was Job. Philemon was a very respected Christian while he had wealth; Cornelius was a man of wealth and position and became a fine Christian. In order for one to fulfill his obligations to his family it is necessary for the father to work, obtain money, and take care of his own (1 Tim. 5:8). Obviously the obtaining, using, and retaining wealth is not wrong. The manner of getting it, how it is used, and our attitude toward it—these are important issues.
 - b) The rich, young ruler erred to the point of rejecting Christ when he placed his trust in riches rather than in the Lord. What he loved the most he ultimately lost, as did the foolish farmer in Luke 12: "But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (12:20). The Lord then added: "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (12:21). He also is a fool, by the Lord's definition. We must control the acquisitive and hoarding inclinations characteristic of most of us. "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).
 - b. We are to look at those things which are not seen with the human eye. There are some earthly things which the human eye cannot see: electricity, air, gravity. But this is not the kind of objects the apostle means. Paul is indicating spiritual entities, places, and rewards which are not observed by human sight.
 - 1) Neither God, Christ, nor the Holy Spirit can be seen by the human eye.
 - a) 1 Timothy 6:16: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."
 - b) Hebrews 11:27: "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured,

- as seeing him who is invisible."
- c) Although we cannot literally see God, yet there are undeniable and unmistakable evidences of God: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20; cf. Ps. 19:1).
- 2) We cannot see heaven with our naked eye, but it is a real place.
 - a) Hebrews 11:10: "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."
 - b) Hebrews 13:14: "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."
 - c) Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" (ASV).
- c. We are instructed to set our hearts on spiritual concerns.
 - 1) Philippians 3:20-21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."
 - 2) Colossians 3:1-3: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:1-2: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."
 - d. All earthly pursuits will vanish suddenly in the fire of God's retribution at the second coming of Christ. The earth, the universe, and all material elements and items will be consumed.
 - 1) 2 Peter 3:10-14: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
 - 2) God's word will abide forever, and we must face it in the Judgment.
 - a) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - b) John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
 - c) 1 Peter 1:24-25: "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 - d) 1 John 2:15-17: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and 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 abideth for ever."
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2 CORINTHIANS 5

A. 2 Corinthians 5:1-10: Our Eternal House Which is Not Made by Human Hands.

1. Verse 1: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."
 - a. Paul affirms that the truth expressed here is one of absolute knowledge. It was so because God had revealed it to him (Eph. 3:1-11). The Bible speaks in absolutes.
 - 1) Job 19:25: "For **I know** that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."
 - 2) Galatians 1:11-12: "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."
 - 3) John 17:3: "And this is life eternal, that they might **know** thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."
 - 4) John 6:69: "And we **believe and are sure that thou art that Christ**, the Son of the living God."
 - 5) Acts 2:36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
 - 6) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And *to you who are troubled rest with us*, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
 - 7) Luke 1:1-4: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That **thou mightest know the certainty** of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."
 - b. Our *earthly house of this tabernacle* is a reference to the mortal body. Paul, speaking to Christians about the hope each faithful Christian has, states that if the physical body is dissolved, we have another house in which to dwell.
 - 1) A *tabernacle* is a moveable tent, a place of temporary abode. "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance" (2 Pet. 1:12-13).
 - 2) Paul's statement about the tabernacle being dissolved is a reference to the death of the body. It is said to dissolve because it is mortal; at death it ceases to live, and begins to disintegrate and return to the elements of the earth from which it was originally constructed.
 - a) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - b) James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
 - c. The two items contrasted in the verse are the physical body that perishes and the spiritual body that is eternal.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 15:50-53: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."
 - 2) Philippians 3:20-21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his

glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

- 3) 1 John 3:2: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."
- d. Human instrumentality was involved in the formation of our physical body, by means of the natural laws of procreation; but no human activity will be involved in the creation of the new spiritual body in which our spirits shall reside at the end of time.

PHYSICAL BODY	SPIRITUAL BODY
Mortal	Immortal
Dissolves	Eternal
On Earth	In Heaven
Human Instrumentality	Without Human Instrumentality

2. Verses 2-3: "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked."
- a. There are many ailments, injuries, and natural weaknesses that attend the human body. For any of several reasons, we may be in pain, and long for relief; this is the common lot of all humanity.
- b. Faithful children of God, especially during the first century, were subjected to all manner of difficulties and pains. Not only did they suffer the pains associated with being human, but they encountered the anguish and hardships thrust upon them because they were Christians.
- c. With this latter point especially in mind, Paul speaks of his inner desire, longing for the time when he would be free from his mortal body, with its weaknesses and discomforts, and delivered from the anguish of persecution; but this state of comfort and bliss could only be had if he left this world behind, and entered into eternity.
- d. In that eternal state, Paul would be a prepared recipient of the new, spiritual body of which he is speaking. He would not be found unclothed in heaven.
- 1) The caterpillar partakes of the fruit of his environment until the time when he spins a cocoon around himself; after the prescribed time, during which his body undergoes a marvelous change, he emerges as a beautiful butterfly.
- 2) In the resurrection, we shall all be raised up to inhabit new bodies; these bodies will be spiritual in nature, designed and fitted to eternal life in heaven. A caterpillar is changed into a butterfly by the natural laws of God, but we shall be changed into the immortal body by the miraculous power of God.
- a) 1 Corinthians 15:50-53: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."
- b) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
- e. In the Judgment, some will be found unprepared for heaven. They are described in the parable of the wedding feast (Matt. 22:1-14).
- 1) One man is depicted as having entered the place of the wedding feast without being properly dressed. "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a

- wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:11-14).
- 2) Paul's desire was to be prepared for heaven, so as to avoid the embarrassment and the punishment that will come to those who are unprepared. Christ said, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear..." (Rev. 3:18).
 - f. Gary Workman suggested that Paul's statement in verse three indicates his desire to avoid the disembodied state of hades altogether, and enter directly into the new body (ADL, p.133). [Brother Workman may very well be true about this statement.]
3. Verse 4: "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."
 - a. Those who are in "this tabernacle" (are alive on earth) have occasion to groan. Sooner or later, bodily ailments or injuries afflict us all—if we live long enough. Those who serve Christ faithfully in an unbelieving world are certain to face persecution: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12).
 - b. Therefore, as Paul says, we groan. As Christians grow older, and endure the various pains and discomforts that are the common lot of all humanity, or when they are persecuted for righteousness' sake, they long for deliverance from those pains and torments.
 - c. They do not want to be disembodied (be "unclothed"); they do desire to receive the spiritual body the Lord has promised.
 - 1) Philippians 3:21: "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."
 - 2) Philippians 3:21: "Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself" (ASV).
 - d. The mortal body must be changed into an immortal body in order to enter heaven (1 Cor. 15:50). This thought is also expressed in 1 Corinthians 15:52-54: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."
 - e. Knowing that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth (Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 2:11), we properly long for the time when we will have put off this mortal body with all its earthly connections, and have donned that immortal body that is fashioned to endure and enjoy eternity. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4).
 - f. The phraseology of the verse shows that the real person is not the physical body, but the inner man (the soul or spirit) that indwells this mortal machine.
 4. Verse 5: "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."
 - a. God is the one who has made it possible for us to obtain that immortal, incorruptible body that we will have in heaven. The verse offers assurance to the faithful that we may certainly expect to receive this promised body. We have God's word on it!
 - b. The assurance of the verse is not based only on the promise of God, although this is more than sufficient to give us full confidence. The apostle adds that God has provided "the earnest of the Spirit" to verify the reliability of the promise. *Earnest* is a pledge or assurance that a commitment will be paid. If we sell a piece of property, the buyer might make a payment on account; this partial payment
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- furnishes the seller with an assurance (or pledge) that the rest of the payment will be paid as it comes due. We describe this initial payment as "earnest money."
- c. Some assert that the earnest of the Spirit is the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit which each person receives when he is baptized into Christ. We are told that proof of the Spirit's personal presence within us is demonstrated by the presence of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Gal. 5:22-23)—the fruit of the Spirit. This direct indwelling is equated with the "gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). There are some difficulties with this view.
- 1) It is based on the assumption that the Holy Spirit produces the fruits named above (Gal. 5:22-23) in some direct manner, separate and independent of the inspired word of God. If this is so, the individual has no responsibility in developing these spiritual attributes. If we do not have love, joy, etc., it is not our fault; the Spirit failed to do his job!
 - 2) If the Holy Spirit provides us these fruits independent of God's word, then 2 Timothy 3:16-17 does not mean what it says: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, **thoroughly furnished unto all good works.**"
 - 3) God has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness; these benefits are provided for us in that body of knowledge known as the gospel of Christ: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:3-4).
- d. That the Holy Spirit produces the fruits attributed to him is beyond question to those who believe the Bible. We need to determine how he develops these qualities within us. The parallel passages of Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:18-19 show that the Holy Spirit dwells in us as the word of Christ dwells in our hearts and lives.
- 1) Ephesians 5:18-19: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."
 - 2) Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."
 - 3) If the gospel (the word of Christ) can develop these attributes, and the Holy Spirit is also said to produce these same attributes, then it is true that either of these two can produce these traits independent of each other, or the Holy Spirit produces them by means of the word [the New Testament] which he revealed to the apostles and prophets (Eph. 3:1-11; 1 Cor. 2:9-14; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Acts 2:1-4). The Holy Spirit operates through the Word of God to produce these effects.
- e. Foy Wallace offers these insightful comments on the *earnest of the Spirit*:
- 1) "In 2 Cor. 1:21-22 it is stated that God had also sealed the apostles, and had given them the guarantee of the Spirit on their teaching: 'Now he which establisheth us (apostles) with you (Corinthians) in Christ, and hath anointed us (apostles), is God; who hath also sealed us (apostles), and given us (apostles) the earnest of the Spirit in our (apostles) hearts.' The same Spirit which Jesus said in Jno. 3:33 had 'set to his seal' that his spoken words were of God, had also sealed the teaching of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians and the Ephesians with the guarantee of inspiration.
 - 2) "It was therefore in this same use of the word seal, in Eph. 1:13, [*In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise: Ephesians 1:13—Verse inserted by Bob Winton*], that Paul assured the Ephesian Gentiles that the seal of that Holy Spirit of promise was to them the guarantee of their equal heritage with the Jews in the blessings of the gospel. There is
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- no logical deduction from these passages in favor of the indwelling of the personal Holy Spirit in ordinary persons then or now. The consequential end of this theory of direct personal Holy Spirit possession would necessarily be inspiration and infallibility in the one who possessed the personal Holy Spirit. It is a theoretically also doctrine worthy only of rejection.
- 3) "So how does the Holy Spirit seal us? By functioning through the apostles in the Word of Truth. The We and the Ye of this passage meant the Apostles and the Ephesians. In the miraculous period of the church it proceeded from the apostles to the church through inspiration; that period having been closed, the avenue through which it flows now is the Word of Truth, making no distinctions. The failure to make dispensational application of these Holy Spirit passages results in utter confusion and error.
 - 4) "The next question in the order is: What is the earnest of the Spirit? It has been repeatedly said that the earnest of this passage means the down payment of the direct indwelling of the personal Holy Spirit. In the first place, who said that the word in this text means a down payment—Paul did not say so nor teach so. Such an application is an example of stretching a figure of speech too far. Those who are making the word earnest mean a down payment are the users of the new translations—but the new versions take out the word earnest and put in such words as assurance and pledge and guarantee so to hold on to their down payment, they will fall back on the old version which they have all relegated.
 - 5) "But the word earnest in the old text is all right—it means assurance, and the assurance to the Gentiles of the same heritage of salvation with the Jews was the guarantee that had been stamped on the Word of Truth through the inspiration of the apostles. The new covenant was of God and had upon it the seal of the Holy Spirit. In this new covenant the Jews and the Gentiles together had the earnest of the Spirit—the assurance, pledge and guarantee of their salvation.
 - 6) "This seal and earnest of the Spirit is called that Holy Spirit of promise, and simply reverts to Pentecost: 'For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' The Ephesian Gentiles were among them that were afar off in the heathen world and that Holy Spirit of promise was to them the seal and the assurance of their inheritance in the gospel of their salvation revealed to them through the Word of Truth.
 - 7) "To call this assurance a down payment would place the Holy Spirit under debt; it beggars that Holy Spirit of promise, as though we cannot take his word for it; and it reveals how little regard these men have for the Word of Truth who are teaching this direct possession of the Holy Spirit doctrine. The facts of this passage do not sustain the doctrine of the direct personal Holy Spirit indwelling. [*The Gospel for Today*, pp,678ff].
- f. The earnest of the Spirit, in the view of this writer, as brother Wallace has written, is a reference to the supernatural activities of the Holy Spirit in the inspired men of the first century.
- 1) The most certain proof during that time of miracles, that one was speaking for God, was a supernatural demonstration—a sign or wonder [Mark 2; Acts 3; Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:1-4].
 - 2) The apostles and certain others were empowered to perform miracles; those miracles proved that the message they spoke was from God; when the message (as this passage does) spoke of the resurrection and the replacement of the mortal body with the immortal body, the promise was clearly demonstrated as completely reliable.
 - 3) A reasonable view of the earnest of the Spirit is to see it as the miraculous gifts which the Holy Spirit bestowed on the inspired saints of the first century.
5. Verse 6: "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."
- a. In view of the foregoing truths, Paul could properly conclude that he and his fellow saints could always be confident. He continues his statement about this confidence in verse 8: "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."
 - b. This confidence grows out of the statement of verse five, concerning God's promise and the earnest
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- of the Spirit. The miraculous demonstrations accompanying the revelation of the gospel verified the message as inerrant truth, providing the most reliable of proof, and thus establishing our confidence.
- c. In the process of discussing this confidence, Paul states the fact that while we abide in this mortal body, we are absent from the Lord. The implication of the statement is, if we are absent from this body, we are with the Lord. This verse gives us courage to face death; in death, we are separated from this physical body and all the pains and persecutions that attend it, and being separated from it, our souls enter the spirit world.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - 2) James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
 - 3) Philippians 1:21, 23: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain....For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."
 - 4) Also see Luke 16:19-21; 1 Corinthians 15.
6. Verse 7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."
- a. This verse is a parenthetical statement, inserted by the inspired apostle to clarify what he has just stated. We are not able to see with our physical eyes the glory that awaits us in eternity. We rely on God's word for this information. Faith is produced by God's inspired testimony.
 - 1) Romans 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
 - 2) Acts 15:7: "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe."
 - b. Our only way of knowing about heavenly verities is the testimony of God's revelation. Our confidence in eventually receiving the immortal body and the blessings of heaven is based on faith; it is not based on what we can see and know by human senses.
 - c. To walk by faith is to live in obedience to what God has said in his word. His word is our only source of information on what lies beyond this life. The Holy Spirit obtained this information from the Father, and communicated it unerringly to the inspired apostles and prophets; these men were guided in presenting these truths orally to their generation at the first, and later in recording that same message in the form of the New Testament. As we learn and believe the facts, and obey the requirements, and heed the warnings, we receive the promises in their proper time. This is the way we walk by faith.
7. Verses 8-9: "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."
- a. Paul states his willingness to be absent from his mortal body (that is, he had rather be dead), since he would then be with Christ. Philippians 1:21,23: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain....For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."
 - 1) It would be much better for him to be in eternity than to remain in this world, seeing he had so many troubles and pains to endure, while in the next world, a state of comfort and bliss was in store for him.
 - 2) 2 Timothy 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - 3) However, it was to the advantage of his brethren here for him to remain alive and active in this world. "Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you" (Ph. 1:24).
 - b. Knowing that a new world of happiness and blessing awaited him in eternity only if he remained faithful to Christ, he continued to labor for the Lord so that he would be acceptable, both here and in the next world. "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27).
 - c. As he neared the end of this life's way, he could accurately say: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept

the faith."

8. Verse 10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."
 - a. The Bible does not teach that there will be multiple Judgments before Heaven's Bar of Justice. There will be only one general resurrection of all the dead (Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29), which will be followed by the one final judgment (Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 17:30-31). All will be raised and all will be judged. Paul's statement here is not to be limited to Christians for Christ said that all nations will stand before him (Matt. 25:31-32). The Judgment will include everyone who dies (Heb. 9:27); since everyone will die, then everyone will face the Judgment.
 - 1) Acts 24:15: "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."
 - 2) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 3) Matthew 25:31-32, 46: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats....And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - 4) Acts 17:30-31: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."
 - 5) Hebrews 9:27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
 - b. The purpose of our standing before Christ's judgment seat is that we might be judged. The standard of judgment will be the word of God.
 - 1) John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
 - 2) Revelation 20:12: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."
 - c. The things done while we lived in the human body will be examined. This is taught elsewhere in the Scriptures, even in the Old Testament (cf. Matt. 25:31-46; 12:36; 5:22; Luke 10:14; Matt. 10:15).
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."
 - 2) Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
 - 3) Romans 2:8-10: "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."
 - 4) Matthew 12:41-42: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here."
 - d. Since each person, at death, will enter Hades, either in *Paradise* or *Tartarus*, each will already know

what his eternal destiny will be. It follows, therefore, that the Judgment will not be for the purpose of determining guilt or innocence, but to provide everyone the opportunity of giving answer for himself, and for the formal verdict to be announced. The faithful will be fully vindicated before this vast assemblage of all humanity.

B. 2 Corinthians 5:11-21: Paul's Motives and Mission.

1. Verse 11: "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."
 - a. With the statement regarding the Judgment Day as the basis, Paul says that he and his brethren "persuaded men." In the Judgment, great terror will result for the wicked. Knowing what awaits the lost on that day, faithful Christians will do all within their power to persuade men to turn from unrighteousness, and obey the gospel.
 - b. Our Great Commission is to preach the gospel to every accountable person (Mark 16:15-16). The blessing of salvation is offered to those who believe and obey it, but condemnation awaits those who reject it. To be condemned is to be cast into Gehenna, the hell prepared for the devil and his followers. If we believe God's word, we will put forth the sincerest efforts to persuade the lost to obey Christ.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 4:13: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak."
 - 2) Psalms 116:10: "I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted."
 - c. The word translated *terror* in this verse, is used in reference to reverent fear of God in other places (Eph. 5:21). It also is translated *terror* elsewhere.
 - 1) Romans 13:3: "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same."
 - 2) 1 Peter 3:14: "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled."
 - d. We are to live in reverential awe of God, maintaining a wholesome dread of doing anything that is displeasing to him. Because of our deep respect for God, we love him and seek to obey him completely. We know that God will bring full and proper punishment on those who disobey his will.
 - 1) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
 - 2) In view of our knowledge of what God will do to the disobedient at the Judgment, we must seek to persuade as many as we can to the way of righteousness. There is a definite sense of urgency about our God-given work! We are to be urgent in making our appeals to the lost, but we must remain under control.
 - e. In trying to persuade men to obey the gospel, Paul made himself manifest unto God as a faithful servant; he was doing the work Christ had assigned him.
 - f. Acts 26:16-18: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
 - 1) Paul succeeded many times in getting the lost to believe, but there were a great many cases in which his appeal was rejected.
 - a) Acts 26:26-29: "For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God,

- that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.”
- b) Acts 13:44-46: “And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.”
 - 2) In every case, Paul was faithful to his noble calling. His work, and ours, is to make the information available to the lost; the choice to believe and obey it belongs to them.
 - 3) The apostle hoped that he was made manifest in their consciences in the same light in which he was seen by the Lord. His desire, therefore, was that they might accept him as God had accepted him. God had selected Paul to be an apostle of Christ; he was well-pleased with the work Paul did. The Corinthians ought to recognize Paul's apostleship, and admit that he was doing what was right.
2. Verses 12-13: "For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause."
- a. Paul did not intend to commend himself to the Corinthians by the statements he has just made. Rather, he showed them his real status in God's sight; this would give them cause to rejoice on Paul's behalf. The apostle's work had brought great blessings to the Corinthians; they ought to be happy for what Paul was and did, for they benefitted directly. The word is found in Romans 5:8 (*commendeth*), where it carries the meaning of "declares."
 - b. McGarvey:
 - 1) “In thus speaking of his manifest righteousness in the sight of God and the church, the language of Paul might be construed as boastful and self-commendatory. To prevent such a misconception he tells them plainly that his purpose is to draw a contrast between himself and his opponents, a contrast which Paul's friends in Corinth might use with telling effect when contending for the superiority of the apostle. Paul's opponents gloried in those things which were outward, or which made an external show, taking pride in their letters of recommendation, their personal knowledge of Christ in the flesh, their learning and eloquence, their intercourse with the original apostles, their Hebrew descent, circumcision, etc. Paul, on the contrary, gloried in the vital religion of the heart, in that moral and spiritual imitation of Christ which is well pleasing to God, and which delights in the thought that it is constantly manifest to God.
 - 2) “For whether we are beside ourselves, it is unto God; or whether we are of sober mind, it is unto you. [Paul could not appeal to the approval of his character in the sight of God without bringing to his own mind and the mind of his readers the striking difference between the manifestations of divine communion, inspiration, etc., which characterized his own life, and the dry, barren formalism He had certain enemies at Corinth, principally the Judaizing teachers who sought to disrupt his influence. These men placed much emphasis on outward appearances, and were little concerned with inner purity. With the information about himself which the apostle provided the Corinthians, they could put these enemies of truth to silence. His foes showed interest in eloquence (10:10), Jewish birth (11:22), letters of commendation (3:1), and claims of visions (12:1).”
 - c. In verse thirteen, Paul seems to be replying to a charge leveled against him by false teachers. Evidently, they asserted that Paul must be mad. Festus made such a charge against him: "And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness" (Acts 26:24-25).
 - d. Paul states that if he is beside himself (i.e., out of his mind), it is to God's glory; it is not for his own profit. He uses the expression in contrast to being soberminded. If he is beside himself, it is to God;

if he is sober-minded, it is for the good of the Corinthians. But it was only in the minds of his enemies that he was "beside himself."

3. Verses 14-15: "For 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."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again."
 - 2) NKJ: "For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."
 - b. "As Christ's servant he partook of the love which Christ has for men. It constrained him to give up all, that he might persuade some to believe and obey Christ" (Lipscomb, p.76). The word *constrain* means to propel, require, or urge.
 - 1) When Paul perceived the greatness of the love Christ manifested in dying for lost humanity, a kindred love was kindled in his own heart for Christ and for all men. "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:12-14).
 - 2) It impelled Paul to labor zealously, even to the exhaustion of his physical strengths, to suffering many privations, and to the enduring of manifold persecutions.
 - a) "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).
 - b) Paul considered himself a debtor to all men: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:14-17).
 - 3) The *love of Christ* could refer to either the love which Christ had for lost humanity or to the love that Paul and other saints have for Christ. The two, however, are intertwined in the passage. The love that Christ demonstrated in going to the cross impels believers to obey the Lord and manifest love for the Redeemer and all of humankind.
 - c. McGarvey:
 - 1) Paul's life was devoted to Christ, and to man for Christ's sake. When tempted to swerve from either of these services, Christ's love for him confined him within the limits of the life of sacrifice which he has described, and which he regarded as prescribed for him by the Lord. His reasons for regarding this life as prescribed for him grew out of his view of the death of Christ. He regarded the death of Christ as representative.
 - 2) As Christ had died as the head of the race, therefore all men had died with him to their sins [those who chose to follow the Savior—Bob Winton], and so were obligated to lead self-sacrificing, unselfish, sinless lives for the sake of him who, on their behalf, had died and risen again. Compare Rom. 6:1-11 ; Gal. 5: 4; 2:19, 20 ; Col. 3:3.
 - d. Paul *judged* that since one died for all, then all for whom Christ died were dead. Two kinds of death are meant. Christ suffered physical death in behalf of all those who were spiritually dead.
 - 1) In God's wisdom, the only means by which he can forgive sin is on the basis of a sinless sacrifice. Only Christ, who was equal with God in eternity, and utterly free from sin in time, was qualified

- to serve as the propitiation for sin. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:21-26).
- 2) Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."
 - 3) 1 Peter 3:18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."
- e. Making the application of verse fourteen, Paul states in verse fifteen that since Christ died for all, each accountable person is obligated to live for Christ, and not for himself. Unfortunately, only a relative handful of people live for the Redeemer. Many never learn the truth, and of those who have opportunity to learn it, only a few choose to obey him.
- 1) Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
 - 2) Matthew 22:14: "For many are called, but few are chosen."
 - 3) Matthew 10:37: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."
 - 4) Luke 14:26: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."
 - 5) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."
 - 6) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
- f. Christ died and rose again—for us. A dead Savior is no Savior at all. If his spirit had remained in the hadean realm and his body in the tomb, we would still be lost, without any hope! But he was raised from the dead.
- 1) 1 Corinthians 15:19-20: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."
 - 2) Romans 4:24-25: "But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."
 - 3) Matthew 16:14-16: "And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."
4. Verse 16: "Wherefore 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."
- a. To *know* someone is to have a special relationship with that person.
 - 1) A husband *knows* his wife, and his wife *knows* him.
 - a) Genesis 4:1: "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have

- gotten a man from the LORD."
- b) Matthew 1:24-25: "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
- 2) A Christian *knows* his God and Christ.
- a) Titus 1:16: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."
 - b) 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9: "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
 - c) John 17:3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."
- 3) We *know* God and Christ in the sense that we believe in them, love them, and follow them.
- b. Therefore, we *know* no man after the flesh; we do not follow any fleshly being or obey any fleshly source of authority. We follow the will of God and Christ. These are the ones we *know*. This is a blow against the Judaizers who sought to convince the Gentile saints to follow the Law of Moses.
- 1) These Jewish teachers claimed that the Law was still in effect and that the Gentile Christians must be circumcised and keep the Law in order to be saved (see Acts 15). The books of Galatians and Hebrews repudiated this doctrine. Keeping the carnal commandments of the Old Law was no longer required.
- a) Ephesians 2:14-15: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace."
 - b) Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
- 2) The Jewish people believed that there were certain blessings which undeniably belonged to them because of their fleshly kinship to Abraham.
- a) Matthew 3:8-10: "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."
 - b) Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."
- c. For about thirty-three years, Christ abode on earth in a fleshly body. He no longer is on earth and does not now live in a fleshly body. We will never see him in a fleshly body. Premillennialism claims that Christ must return to earth, live again on earth, and set up an earthly kingdom over which he will reign for a thousand years. For this to take place, it appears that he would have to have a fleshly body again. But Paul says that "henceforth know we him no more" (that is, he will not inhabit a mortal body any more). There is no passage of Scripture which says that Christ will ever so much as set foot upon the earth again!
5. Verse 17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."
- a. Here is a beautiful statement enunciating the wonderful blessing of being in Christ. While it is true that Christ died for all mankind, it is also true that only a certain few will ever enter into spiritual union with him (cf. Matt. 7:13-14; 22:14).
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Those in Christ Have These Blessings

BLESSING	REFERENCE
In the Kingdom	Col. 1:13
Redeemed by Blood of Christ	Col. 1:14
Forgiven for Offenses	Eph. 1:7; Acts 2:38; 22:16
Spiritually Alive	Eph. 2:1-5; Rom. 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:17
Near to God	Eph. 2:13
Reconciled to God	Eph. 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:17-21
Sanctified	1 Cor. 1:2
New Creature (Creation)	2 Cor. 5:17
Liberty	Gal. 2:4
Have Hope	1 Pet. 1:3-5
Saved	2 Tim. 2:10

The Condition of Those Who Are out of Christ

CONDITION	REFERENCE
Spiritually Dead	Eph. 2:1-5
Children of Disobedience	Eph. 2:2
Children of Wrath	Eph. 2:3
Aliens & Strangers	Eph. 2:12; Matt. 7:23
Have No Hope	Eph. 2:12
Without God	Eph. 2:12
In the World	Eph. 2:12
Far Off From God	Eph. 2:13,17
In Spiritual Darkness	Eph. 4:18

- b. One is *in Christ* because he has obeyed the gospel, not because he is a fleshly descendant of Abraham.

- 1) Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."
- 2) Galatians 3:26-27: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
- c. When one enters into Christ, he becomes a new creation; old things are done away. It is like beginning life all over again, with a clean record and a fresh start.
- d. Our guilt of sin is removed.
 - 1) Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
 - 2) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
 - 3) Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."
 - 4) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
- e. We now live a life that is separated from the practice of sin.
 - 1) Galatians 2:20: "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."
 - 2) Romans 12:1-2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."
 - 4) James 1:27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."
 - 5) 1 John 3:3: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."
6. Verse 18: "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."
 - a. All things that pertain to this new relationship with Christ originated with God; he is its ultimate source; it was because of his grace that Christ came. God's grace is God's love in action.
 - 1) James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
 - 2) Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."
 - 3) Titus 3:4-7: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."
 - b. Taking the initiative, God established the gospel system, making it possible for God and man to be reconciled. It can be said that God reconciles man to himself in the sense that he formulated and executed the plan by which reconciliation occurs.
 - 1) Sectarian creeds affirm that God reconciles himself to mankind. This is folly. God did not move away from the original union he had with his offspring. It was man that moved—by rebelling

- against God's will. "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:1-2).
- 2) Paul will show in verse twenty that each individual must decide whether reconciliation with God will take place.
- c. *Reconciliation* is from two words: *re* and *conciliate*. *Re* means "again." *Conciliate* means "make friends." Hence, the meaning of the term is: *to make friends again*. The "ministry of reconciliation" is that plan by which we may be reconciled to God. The term implies that the two parties were once united, but are now estranged.
 - d. God uses Christ to effect reconciliation with man. It is by the gospel of Christ that the operation is accomplished. All accountable individuals commit sin and are separated from God:
 - 1) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - 2) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - e. The gospel is to be proclaimed throughout all the nations of men. The individuals who hear, believe, and obey the gospel are reconciled to God.
 - 1) Matthew 28:18-20: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 3) Luke 24:47: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."
 - 4) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
7. Verse 19: "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."
- a. *To wit* is translated from the Greek adverb *hos* (ὡς). It is used here as an equivalent of *namely* (Gary Colley, ADL 1989, p.148). The word connects the thought of this verse with the statement of verse eighteen. God reconciled us to himself by Christ, in that he wrought out his plan through Christ.
 - b. The *world* is the lost race of mankind. The term refers to the same people as John 3:16 ("For God so loved the world..."). Christ was sent to die in behalf of the sins of every person, but that does not mean that every individual is automatically saved thereby. They only are saved who obey the will of God.
 - 1) Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - 2) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - 3) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
 - c. Salvation means that God does not hold the redeemed accountable for the guilt of their past sins. All responsible persons are guilty of sin, if they are out of Christ.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 7:29: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have
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- sought out many inventions.”
- 3) Romans 3:23: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”
 - 4) 1 John 1:8: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”
 - 5) 1 John 1:10: “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
- d. When we obey the gospel (Acts 18:8; Rom. 10:16), our guilt is removed:
- 1) Acts 18:8: “And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.”
 - 2) Romans 10:16: “But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?”
 - 3) Hebrews 8:12: “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”
 - 4) Acts 2:38: “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
 - 5) Acts 22:16: “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
 - 6) Acts 13:38-39: “Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”
- e. When Christians commit sin, they are to repent, and confessing their wrongdoing, they are to ask God for forgiveness:
- 1) 1 John 1:9: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
 - 2) James 5:16: “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
 - 3) Acts 8:22: “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.”
- f. Faithful Christians walk in the light of the gospel, sincerely doing the best they can; God does not impute (charge) them with the guilt of their shortcomings of which they were unaware.
- 1) 1 John 1:7: “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
 - 2) Revelation 2:10: “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer....be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”
- g. Alien sins are remitted when we obey the gospel; sins done afterward are forgiven as we repent, confess, and pray for pardon:
- 1) Acts 8:22: “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.”
 - 2) 1 John 1:8-10: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
 - 3) James 5:16: “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
- h. A Christian who walks in the light of the gospel will avoid the commission of many potential sins. God does not hold us accountable for our sins only if we obey the gospel and remain faithful to Christ: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. 4:6-8).
- i. God had committed to the apostles the great work of proclaiming the word of reconciliation. This *word* is the gospel of Christ. The Lord had selected these men for this great work; he trained them for about three years, giving them the instruction and experience during the training period to do the job.
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- 1) He promised them that the Holy Spirit would bring back to their memory all of the instructions he had given them. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).
 - 2) The Holy Spirit also would reveal all the other information (the complete revelation) to them which the Lord had not taught them during his personal ministry. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come" (John 16:12-13).
 - 3) Acts 1:4-8: "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence....And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria...."
8. Verse 20: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."
- a. The apostles were Christ's representatives on earth. Their power was given to them, miraculously and directly, from heaven. They did not develop the message they preached, but received it entirely by inspiration. "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost" (Mark 13:11).
 - 1) These apostles had no replacements. Despite the empty claims made by the popes and others, Christ has no living apostles on earth today. The original apostles are still *reigning* through the word which was delivered to humanity by them. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28).
 - 2) Only the apostles were given the promise of Holy Spirit baptism, which would fully empower them to discharge the great obligations for which they were prepared. Such promises as those found in Luke 24:49, John 14:26, John 15:26, John 16:12-13, and Acts 1:5, 8 were intended only for the apostles of Christ.
 - a) Luke 24:49: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
 - b) John 14:26: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."
 - c) John 15:26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."
 - d) John 16:12-13: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."
 - e) Acts 1:5, 8: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence....But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - 3) Only the apostles were empowered to bear witness of the Lord's resurrection.
 - a) Acts 10:39-42: "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and

shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.”

- b) Acts 4:33: “And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.”
- 4) The apostles received the revelation of the gospel, and preached it by the inerrant inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In reality, they were given God's word, and delivered it to mankind. Those other Christians who were given certain miraculous gifts (1 Cor. 12:8-10), received those powers only through the laying-on of an apostle's hands (Rom. 1:11; Acts 8:14-19).
 - a) 1 Corinthians 12:8-10: “For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.”
 - b) Romans 1:11: “For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established.”
 - c) Acts 8:14-19: “Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.”
- 5) In view of these basic truths, only the apostles were *ambassadors for Christ*. An ambassador is one who is specifically selected, authorized, and empowered to make commitments for a country. The only ambassadors Christ ever had were the apostles; only they were specifically selected, appointed, authorized, and empowered to operate in the Lord's behalf. And even then, their message was not of their own invention; the very words they spoke and wrote were given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit! To assert today that we are ambassadors for Christ, is to be gravely in error!
 - b. The work done by the apostles was one of service; it was one of pleading. The office they occupied placed them in the awesome position of speaking in behalf of Christ, pleading with lost mankind to be reconciled to God. It was not an office which carried with it great earthly rewards or social position. Instead, it usually led them into all manner of hardship and opposition. But the result was worthwhile if men heeded their word.
 - c. The ultimate responsibility of reconciliation rests with the individual. Sin separated the sinner from God. Our loving Father took the initiative to establish a program by which sinful man could be reconciled with God.
 - 1) God designed the plan, Christ executed the plan, the Holy Spirit revealed and confirmed the plan, and the apostles preached the plan. The message they preached has now been preserved in the inspired written record of the New Testament.
 - 2) The apostles presented the truth, and sought to persuade the audience to obey the gospel, and thus to be reconciled to God. Using the same message (the gospel), we present the truth and seek to persuade our audience (publicly and privately) to obey the gospel and thus be reconciled to God (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-41).
 - 3) The final choice is up to the individual. If one does not obey the gospel, he in reality makes the choice to continue the estrangement from God which his own sins created. It is not God who must be reconciled to man; it is man who must be reconciled to God. God does not have to be persuaded

- to save man; it is man who must be persuaded to obey God and be saved.
- 4) Acts 13:44-46: "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."
 - 5) Acts 17:32-34: "And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them."
9. Verse 21: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."
- a. Christ committed no sin; there was no guile (deceit) found in his mouth. "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Per. 2:22-25). He was sinless in life and his teachings were without any error. False doctrine is guile (deceit).
 - b. Our Lord bore the sins of humanity on the cross; he did not bear any of the guilt, but he suffered as though he were guilty of that whole ugly mass of sin committed by the human family from the beginning to the end of time.
 - c. God allowed the sufferings of his Son on the cross to be the acceptable sacrifice for man's sins. His sacrificial death is the propitiation for our wickedness. To propitiate is "to make favorable or acceptable." His death made it possible for God to look with favor upon fallen man, and be willing to receive him back into his fellowship.
 - 1) 1 John 2:2: "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."
 - 2) 1 John 4:10: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."
 - d. His death enables us to be made righteous. The gospel is God's plan by which men may become righteous:
 - 1) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 2) Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
 - 3) Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
 - 4) That state of righteousness is obtained *in him* (in Christ), where all of the spiritual blessings are located.
 - a) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."
 - b) Galatians 3:26: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

2 CORINTHIANS 6

A. 2 Corinthians 6:1-10: Paul and His Ambassadorial Ministry.

1. Verse 1: "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."
 - a. This verse is tied directly to the preceding chapter. Having stated that he was an ambassador for Christ, and as such, pleaded with lost humanity to be reconciled to God, he now states that he (and the other apostles) were co-workers with the Lord. Paul's work could not be separated from God's work; God was working through Paul. Although there is a sense in which every Christian is a co-worker with God, Paul's point here applies directly to his work as an ambassador for Christ. Notice how he uses pronouns which distinguish between himself and the Corinthians (*we, ye*).
 - b. This point has a special significance to the primary point of the verse. The verse is an appeal to the Corinthians that they are not to receive the grace of God in vain.
 - 1) They had already received the grace of God; this was done when they heard, believed, and obeyed the gospel (Acts 18:8). If they turned from following the instruction Paul gave them, they would be turning away from the grace of God.
 - 2) If they turned away from those inspired teachings he gave them, they would have received the grace of God in vain. *Vain* means *empty, that which results in nothing*. They had been saved by the grace of God, but if they accepted the teachings of those false prophets who had come to Corinth, they would forfeit their salvation, and would have obtained the benefits of God's grace in vain.
 - 3) Paul affirmed that one can receive the benefits [become a saved person], but can lost these many spiritual blessings [Eph. 1:3; cf. Gal. 5:4]. False teachers deny what the apostle as just affirmed. See also from the American Standard Version:
 - a) Hebrews 12:14-15: "Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord: looking carefully lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby the many be defiled."
 - b) James 5:19-20: "My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins." [The sinner of this passage is a fallen Christian].
 - c. Paul shows that one can receive the grace of God (i.e., obtain the benefits which grace provides), and then lose the blessings God's grace bestowed on him. These brethren were doing what some in the Galatian churches were doing: accepting a perverted gospel taught by false teachers who sought to bring Gentile Christians under the yoke of the Law of Moses.
 - 1) Galatians 5:3-4: "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
 - 2) Galatians 2:4-5: "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."
 - 3) Galatians 1:6-12: "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; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 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. 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. 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. 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.”

- d. Paul teaches in the passage that the grace of God is dispensed through the word of God. It was God's word that he delivered to the Corinthians (cf. 1 Cor. 2:1-5; Acts 18).
- 1) The grace of God reigns through righteousness. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:21). Righteousness is doing of God's word (Ps. 119:172; Acts 10:34-35; Matt. 3:15-17; Rom. 10:1-3).
 - 2) The blessings of God's grace are obtained when we obey God's word. If a man turns from that grace-supplying word of God, and accepts a man-made religious doctrine or system, he forfeits the benefits of God's amazing grace.
 - a) Psalms 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.
 - b) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - c) Matthew 3:15-17: "And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
 - d) Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
 - e) Galatians 1:8-9: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema" (ASV).
 - f) 2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (ASV).
 - g) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - 3) **The grace of God forbids and requires.** "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit. 2:11-12). If one who has received God's grace ceases to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, or will not live soberly, righteously, and godly, he forfeits the benefits of God's grace. A Christian can indeed fall from grace!
 - a) Hebrews 2:1-4: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
 - b) Hebrews 6:4-6: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

- c) Hebrews 10:23-31: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
- d) Hebrews 12:28-29: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."
- 4) "Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord: looking carefully lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby the many be defiled" (Heb. 12:15).
- a) The Bible is not like the little boy who called "wolf!" It offers no empty warnings. When it warns against something, the danger is real. The warning against falling from the grace of God is issued in this verse. "To fail of the grace of God" is "to fall back from" God's grace (Vincent, pp.1168f).
- b) We are to look diligently (carefully) lest we fall. The grace of God is offered to all people (Tit. 2:11-12), but only a relative few will accept it; and not everyone who accepts it will cling to it. Therefore, the warning is given.
- 5) Those who go back to a life of sin fall from the grace of God. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pet. 2:20-22).
2. Verse 2: "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."
- a. This parenthetical statement is a quotation from Isaiah 49:8: "Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages." The use of the verse is not for the intent of showing that the prophet's words were now being fulfilled. Paul uses the statement to show that God is ever ready and willing to receive the penitent back into his fellowship. It was true in the case of ancient Israel; it was true in Paul's time; it is true today.
- b. To that quotation Paul adds his inspired appeal: "Behold now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." In view of Isaiah's statement, the apostle calls on his brethren to return to the fold if they had departed; or if they were leaning in the wrong direction, his appeal is for them to straighten up. The plea is a fitting one for anyone who is away from God.
- c. The apostle's appeal emphasizes the present moment. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." We must be time-conscious.
- 1) Our time on earth, in the best of cases, is only a short few scores of years.
- a) Psalm 90:10: "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength

- they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."
- b) James 4:13-14: "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."
 - c) The years of our life slip away quickly and often unnoticed. We must be aware of the shortness of human life on earth, so that we do not waste our precious time with unimportant affairs.
- 2) We must be conscious of our precious opportunities. We are never promised more time than the present moment; and only the present opportunity may come our way—there is no guarantee of another opportunity. When an alien sinner has the opportunity to obey the gospel, he ought to seize it, for this might be his last chance. The same is true with an erring saint. Christians are tested. This writer has known many Christians who were hardly more than hangers-on in their home congregation. Moving to a new state, and meeting with a small congregation engaged in a struggling work, these immature Christians have a wonderful opportunity to learn to serve God and increase their worth in his sight. Some of these will apply themselves, and serve faithfully and grow. Many others will shun the opportunity to serve, and continue to demand that they be served.
- d. A life spent in worthless pursuits is wasted; and opportunities unused are likewise wasted. Our loving God counsels us to be alert to this truth.
- 1) Psalm 90:12: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:16: "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."
 - 3) Ecclesiastes 9:10: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."
 - 4) John 9:4: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."
3. Verse 3: "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed."
- a. The main thought of the passage flows from verse one to verse three; verse two is a parenthetical thought inserted by the inspired apostle to bring to light the importance of taking care of spiritual obligations early and quickly. Paul and the other apostles were co-workers with God; neither he nor they gave offense in any thing, lest the gospel be blamed for their digression from its high moral standard.
 - b. The Corinthians are warned against forfeiting the blessings of God's grace; to that Paul now adds the counsel that they give no offense in any matter. Giving this offense is something that is to be avoided, hence they could either give offense or refrain from giving offense; it was something that was within their power.
 - c. Paul did not give offense lest some blame be attached thereby to the ministry. The *ministry* is the work of the gospel. To bring shame upon the gospel or the work of those who proclaim the gospel is serious. To interfere with the gospel is to oppose the will of God; it is to disrupt the salvation of souls; it is to encourage the eternal condemnation of souls.
 - d. A Christian, through ignorance or weakness, can bring reproach upon the gospel.
 - 1) Philippians 2:15: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."
 - 2) Philippians 1:27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."
 - 3) Titus 2:10: "Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."
 - e. We must not blame the gospel for the weaknesses of its adherents. Judas was a corrupt individual, but

- that did not mean that all the apostles were corrupt, or that Christ was corrupt, or that the gospel of Christ is defective. The Lord's church often has members who bring shame to it and its head, but their sinful conduct does not disprove the truth; however, it does impede the spread of the truth.
4. Verses 4-5: "But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings."
 - a. In these two verses, Paul affirms that he endeavors to so-live as to bring no blame upon the gospel (the ministry of reconciliation).
 - 1) "In all his activities and travels, he commends himself as the minister of God. To give force and effect to his entreaty, Paul conducted himself in the manner described in this and the following verses. It is a well-recognized fact that whenever blame attaches to a minister, his ministry will be weakened, if not neutralized. Without the confidence of the people the minister possesses little power, no matter how extraordinary his talent. Therefore, before proceeding to fully express the matter of his beseeching, the apostle pauses to fully set forth all the pains, cares, suffering, etc., which he had habitually undergone in order to make his beseeching effective" (McGarvey).
 - 2) The apostles all understood the need to watch their lives and their words, lest they destroy the influence of the gospel. They lived such exemplary lives that they could be seen to be the ministers of God. Paul begins a list of ten examples by which to prove his contentions:
 - b. His patience in living and proclaiming the gospel proved he was a genuine servant of God. *Patience* refers to the strength to endure, to remain steadfast. Every Christian must be steadfast.
 - 1) Hebrews 10:36: "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."
 - 2) Hebrews 12:2-3: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."
 - c. His afflictions showed his faithfulness to his calling. The word translated *afflictions* speaks of certain pressures which were brought to bear on him because of his loyalty to Christ.
 - 1) Lipscomb described it as: "Pressure from without or within, including everything that presses on the heart or tries the power of endurance or resistance" (p.86).
 - 2) Vine: To suffer affliction, to be troubled, has reference to sufferings due to the pressure of circumstances, or the antagonism of persons, 1 Thess 3:4; 2 Thess 1:6-7; "straitened," in Matt 7:14 (RV); "throng," Mark 3:9; "afflicted," 2 Cor 1:6; 7:5 (RV); 1 Tim 5:10; Heb 11:37; "pressed," 2 Cor 4:8. Both the verb and the noun (see B, No. 4), when used of the present experience of believers, refer almost invariably to that which comes upon them from without.
 - d. He was often deprived of necessities. The Greek work refers to "anguish, necessity, or calamity" (Tom Bright, ADL, p.158). These would likely include a shortage of food, clothing, and shelter. This does no damage to the Lord's promise in Matthew 6:33 that he would provide the essentials of life if we place God's kingdom and righteousness first. Paul did not starve to death, or go about naked, or die of exposure; the Lord gave him the essentials to keep body and soul together, but he had to do without the common measure of these material needs.
 - e. The distresses which he willingly faced established his claim. This term speaks of various "straits" which beset him. Old-timers used to speak of difficult circumstances as *tights*. A man could get in a *tight* financially or physically.
 - f. Paul suffered many stripes. Often, in punishment for his *crime* of preaching Christ, he would be beaten. "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods...." (2 Cor. 11:24-25). These scourgings were cruel in the extreme, leading in some cases to the death of the victim.
 - g. He was forced to endure several imprisonments. He was incarcerated in Philippi (Acts 16), in

Jerusalem (Acts 21-22), in Caesarea (Acts 23-26), and in Rome (Acts 28). In none of these cases had he done anything worthy of losing his freedom. Those imprisonments in Jerusalem, Caesarea, and Rome all occurred subsequent to the writing of this epistle.

- h. The apostle experienced several tumults. Sometimes when popular preachers of our modern era visit a city, the political leaders give them the key to the city. When the apostle came to a city preaching the gospel, he often stirred up riots by his preaching the simple truths of the gospel. Notable cases took place in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:50), Iconium (Acts 14:5), Lystra (Acts 14:19), Philippi (Acts 16:19), Thessalonica (Acts 17:5), Berea (Acts 17:13), Corinth (Acts 18:12), and Ephesus (Acts 19:29).
- 1) Acts 13:50: "But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts."
 - 2) Acts 14:5: "And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them."
 - 3) Acts 14:19: "And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead."
 - 4) Acts 16:19: "And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers."
 - 5) Acts 17:5: "But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people."
 - 6) Acts 17:13: "But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people."
 - 7) Acts 18:12: "And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat."
 - 8) Acts 19:29: "And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre."
- i. He engaged in many labors. This term refers to hard work under troublesome circumstances. Preaching and teaching the gospel, although it is an enjoyable work, is tiring and demanding. He also worked with his hands to provide for his own needs.
- 1) 2 Corinthians 11:9: "And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself."
 - 2) 1 Thessalonians 2:9: "For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 3:8: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you."
 - 4) Acts 18:2-3: "And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers."
- j. Paul's travels and work required watchings. To accomplish his work, he labored day and night many times. As he made his way from place to place, often through bandit-ridden territory, he and his company would have to be on guard against these evil men. Even in cities, he had to hide from his enemies (Acts 20:19; 2 Cor. 11:32-33). There were many sleepless nights in the apostle's experiences.
- 1) Acts 20:19: "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 11:32-33: "In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the

Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.”

- k. Finally, he mentions the fastings which he endured. Prayer and abstinence from food help a child of God to become more sincere and dedicated, and form a powerful appeal at the throne room of the Almighty.
5. Verses 6-8a: "By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned. By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report...." This passage offers a list of eleven things which are preceded by the word *by*. The purpose of this list is to show further the sincerity of Paul and establish his claim to be a genuine servant of God.
 - a. By pureness. The apostle, writing by inspiration, declares that his life has been characterized by purity and uprightness; he is free from the defilement of sin. When he obeyed the gospel (Acts 22:16), the guilt of his past sins was removed; as he lived in obedience to the will of God, he continued to receive the cleansing the blood of Christ offers the faithful (1 John 1:7-10). Being in a fleshly body, Paul doubtless committed isolated acts of sin, but as he repented and prayed, he was pardoned.
 - b. By knowledge. This knowledge probably is that body of inspired information given to him by divine revelation.
 - 1) Ephesians 3:2-6: "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:1-4: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."
 - c. By longsuffering. His claim to be a minister of God was substantiated also by the many instances in which he suffered long with others. This spiritual quality must be exercised by all gospel preachers. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2). Paul exercised this trait. There doubtless were many instances where he had to suffer long with the Jews and his own brethren, rather than taking a more direct route to solving a difficulty. Many times gospel preachers, and other saints, must endure evil treatment at the hands of unthinking, ignorant, or wicked people.
 - d. By kindness. There are times when sin and error must be assaulted in a direct and rough manner, as Jesus did in Matthew 23. There are many more times when we must exhibit gentleness (kindness) toward others, as we try to teach them out of their error and evil ways. In the usual case, a sixty-year-old person has spent his life developing the attitudes, habits, beliefs, and practices he holds; it is not likely that he will dispense with all of these that are wrong after hearing only one sermon. Patience and gentleness are essential tools to bring him to an understanding of the gospel and to see his need for it.
 - e. By the Holy Ghost. Some of the fruits of the Spirit have been named already, so it seems this reference is to another function of the Holy Spirit. That function would be the miraculous demonstrations which he enabled Paul to do. These supernatural works were positive proof that he was a minister of God! The chief purpose of miracles was to confirm the inspired message.

- 1) Mark 2:10-12: "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion." The Lord had just forgiven the palsied man of his sins, which caused consternation among the Jewish onlookers. To prove that he had power on earth to extend pardon, Christ healed his palsy.
 - 2) Mark 16:20: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
 - 3) Hebrews 2:2-3: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
 - 4) Paul was empowered to work miracles, and in each case of his exercise of this power, he was proved to be a minister (servant) of God; and his message was simultaneously established beyond any dispute.
- f. By love unfeigned. He had demonstrated genuine love on countless occasions; the presence of this love showed him to be the minister of God. Unfeigned love is unpretended love, genuine love. Love that profits the soul must of necessity be without hypocrisy. "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" (Rom. 12:9-10).
- 1) Unpretended love must be shown to God.
 - a) Mark 12:29-30: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment."
 - b) 1 John 5:2-3: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
 - c) An emotional kind of love cannot be commanded; it must develop naturally. The kind of love we show to God is commanded; therefore, it stems from the mind, not the emotions. The only way we can express this kind of love for God is by doing what he commands.
 - d) As we daily serve God, a deep love for the Almighty develops and intensifies. We have a full-fledged reverence for him, and an abiding concern lest we should offend him in any way.
 - 2) Unpretended love must be shown to our fellowman.
 - a) Mark 12:31: "And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - b) 1 John 4:20-21: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."
 - c) The love we are commanded to have for our fellowman is the willing of good toward him. Having love for him means that we will not knowingly do anything to harm him; it means we are willing to do for him whatever is within our power to do. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them..." (Matt. 7:12).
 - d) As we continue in fellowship with our brethren in Christ, we cultivate a wonderful closeness to them! There did not seem to be any close fellowship among the local churches where this writer grew to manhood. While in Italy [Pordenone] during the early part of the 1960s, my wife were greatly blessed to encounter greatness of Christian fellowship! This congregation was the most closely knit of any with which we have served.

- 3) Unpretended love must also be maintained toward God's truth.
 - a) Proverbs 23:23: "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."
 - b) 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
- g. By the word of truth. The word of truth is the gospel.
 - 1) Colossians 1:5-6: "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth."
 - 2) 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 - 3) When Paul's life and work were examined in the light of the word of God, he was seen to be a true minister of God. If we have God's word on a matter, that matter cannot be more sure!
- h. By the power of God. God's power was manifested in Paul's life.
 - 1) Most clearly, his miraculous power was plainly shown. No one with any reason about him could deny those miracles. Thousands of precious souls were convinced of the truthfulness of the gospel because of these supernatural works.
 - 2) God's providential power was evident in Paul's life. He was delivered from death by God's providence. At Jerusalem, a band of fanatical men pledged that they would not eat or drink until they had killed Paul (Acts 23:12). Paul's nephew learned of this plot, and reported it to the authorities; the apostle's life was spared. No miracle was involved; how did this young man learn of the scheme? Undoubtedly, God's providence placed him at the proper place and time to learn of it.
 - 3) God's power to change a wicked man into a holy man lies within the gospel of Christ. As the gospel saves, it effects great changes in the individual. Paul had been a devoted enemy of Christianity, even to the point of making long journeys for the purpose of finding, apprehending, and persecuting those who called on the name of Christ (Acts 26:9-12). "But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed" (Gal. 1:23). God's power was behind this change in Paul.
 - 4) Was Paul really a minister of the living God? Look at Paul's life and see these manifestations of God's power and all the proof needed will be at hand.
- i. By the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. Reference is made here to the weapons which Paul used when he engaged his enemies. These were not carnal weapons, but spiritual arms.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 10:4-5: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."
 - 2) Fighting the fight of faith involves the use of spiritual weapons against spiritual foes.
 - a) 1 Timothy 1:18: "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare."
 - b) 1 Timothy 6:12: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also

- called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."
- c) 2 Timothy 2:3-4: "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully."
- 3) These weapons are identified in Ephesians 6:10-17: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."
- 4) The Christian soldier's weapons are at both his right and left hands; he can attack in either direction and he is defended by them on both sides. He is in no real danger, even though his life might be required.
- a) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
- b) Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
- c) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
- 5) By observing these weapons of righteousness which were in Paul's arsenal, one could recognize him as a genuine minister of God.
- 6) Paul was protected by God's providence in many situations. Sometimes the deliverance was miraculous (as at Lystra when he was stoned and left for dead—Acts 14:19-20); in many cases, God's providence gave him safety and protection.
- 7) "When present in such cities as Philippi, Thessalonica and Corinth, etc., Paul had been held in glory and honor by the converts of his ministry, but had been dishonored by heathens, Jews and Judaizing Christians" (McGarvey).
- j. By honor and dishonor. Every faithful child of God has some who recognize his worth, and others who shower him with scorn and persecution.
- 1) Sometimes, there are those who will honor the saint at one point, and become his enemies at the next. Paul was thought of *as a god* at Lystra (Acts 14:8-18), but later these same people tried to kill him: "And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe" (Acts 14:19-20). Popularity is truly short-lived!
- 2) 2 Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
- 3) Luke 6:26: "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets."
- 4) Christ was hated by many and loved by a few; Paul and the other apostles faced the same reaction on the part of their contemporaries; every faithful Christian today faces the same. Having enemies and suffering persecution does not of itself prove the rightness of the suffering party, but coupled with other evidence, his standing with God can be learned.
- k. By evil report and good report. Having benefactors and detractors, one can expect to have both good and evil reports to be circulated about him. Just because a good report is given of a man does not

- make that man a saint; having an evil report to be given against a man does not make him a demon.
- 1) There were those who saw Christ as a devil, and there were others who saw him in his true light. The same was true with Paul and the other apostles; the same is true with every faithful Christian today.
 - 2) When the various reports about Paul were carefully examined, in the light of truth, his standing with God was beyond doubt.
6. Verses 8b-10: "...As deceivers, and yet true. As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed. As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." Seven things are listed next, with each being introduced by the word *as*.
- a. As deceivers, and yet true. Paul was considered to be a deceiver by many, but their conception did not alter the truth: he was not a deceiver; he spoke the truth; he was a genuine servant of the living God. He knew his own heart, and always tried to live in perfect agreement with his conscience.
 - 1) If his detractors at Corinth would examine his life, his work, his speech, and his attitudes, they would find them as he represents them to be. They could discover his heart's condition by examining these manifestations of it.
 - a) Matthew 15:18-19: "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."
 - b) Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee."
 - c) Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"
 - 2) The apostle had nothing to fear from a careful and accurate examination of himself. What could be learned about him would verify his claim to be true.
 - b. As unknown, and yet well known. The opposition in Corinth denied Paul's apostleship. For the benefit of all those upon whom his influence was to fall (then and now), Paul defended his apostolic office. If those false teachers at Corinth were successful in convincing the brethren there that Paul was not a genuine apostle, they would lead the entire congregation into apostasy. Being successful there, they would likely undermine and destroy the work of Paul everywhere else. Without an effective defense, the apostle's influence would have been ruined for all time. In that case, where would we be?
 - 1) In this statement, Paul affirms that to some he is unknown, but to others he is well known. His opponents in Corinth did not know him in the sense that they disavowed his apostolic standing.
 - a) 2 Corinthians 3:1: "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?"
 - b) 2 Corinthians 10:7-11: "Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's. For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed: That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters. For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible. Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present."
 - c) 2 Corinthians 11:5-6: "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles. But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things."
 - d) 2 Corinthians 12:11-13: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I

- be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.”
- 2) The fact that he defended his apostleship shows that there was a need to do so, that the false teachers at Corinth were denying his apostolic authority. That they knew him in the ordinary sense is seen in their evaluation of him in 2 Corinthians 10:10: "His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." Their appraisal of him was wrong.
 - 3) Paul was well known by others. The Lord knew him. "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)...But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace" (Gal. 1:1,15). God would not have empowered him to perform supernatural works if he had not selected him and approved him.
 - 4) Paul was also well known as a genuine apostle to all those who had beheld the miracles which were wrought through him. These miraculous signs proved his apostleship (2 Cor. 12:11-13).
 - 5) 2 Peter 3:15-16: “And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”
- c. As dying, and, behold, we live. At Lystra, Paul had been stoned and left for dead: "And there came thither *certain* Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead" (Acts 14:19). But they did not destroy him.
- 1) He escaped his numerous enemies on many occasions. In some cases, he was protected by Roman authorities; at other times, he was given warning in time to avoid their traps; through the use of wise strategy he was able to divide his antagonists (cf. Acts 23:6-10). There were times when he despaired of life, seeing no possible hope of avoiding death (2 Cor. 1:8). His ministry led him into many dangerous situations which caused him to face the possibility of a violent death on a daily basis:
 - a) 1 Corinthians 15:30-32: “And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.”
 - b) Acts 23:6-10: “But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God. And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.”
 - c) 2 Corinthians 1:8: “For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life.”
 - 2) Despite the dedicated efforts of many deadly foes, Paul continued to live and to serve Christ. "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that

he will yet deliver *us*" (2 Cor. 1:9-10). The very fact that Paul remained alive was strong evidence of his apostleship—he was under God's protection.

- d. As chastened, and not killed. His enemies likely charged that his many chastenings showed that he was not a true apostle; that God brought these sufferings and troubles upon Paul in punishment for his sins.
- 1) It is true that Paul was confronted with countless troubles and chastenings, but these were the product of evil men who opposed him. The existence of tribulations in an individual's life does not of itself prove one's righteousness or unrighteousness, for there have been many false teachers who have earned the severe reproof of their contemporaries, and those who live godly in Christ Jesus face persecution (2 Tim. 3:12). The final decision of the person's spiritual status may only be determined by judging his life and teachings by the infallible standard of God's word.
 - 2) Although Paul was brutally treated by his enemies, he was not slain. Why? Because God continued to deliver him from these deadly trials. Compare: "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us" (2 Cor. 1:8-10). God had a great work for Paul to accomplish before his life would be surrendered. Uninspired sources say that Paul was martyred in Rome.
 - 3) The apostle uses the word *chasten* to describe the sufferings to which he has reference. This is the word used in Hebrews 12:5-11 to depict the trials the faithful saints of the first century encountered.
 - 4) They are pictured as coming from God, who used those persecutions as a means to bring them to spiritual maturity. It was Paul's lot to endure certain vexing trials, of which he was appraised ahead of time.
 - a) Acts 9:16: "For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."
 - b) Hebrews 12:5-11: "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which reasoneth with you as with sons, My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, Nor faint when thou art reprov'd of him; For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, And scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. It is for chastening that ye endure; God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father chasteneth not? But if ye are without chastening, whereof all have been made partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed good to them; but he for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness."
 - c) Psalm 118:18: "The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death." Paul's statement closely parallels this Old Testament reference, and possibly is referred to by the apostle.
- e. As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. There were many reasons for sorrow in the apostle's great heart, but there were many causes for rejoicing. This is one of the paradoxes of Christianity.
- 1) In Paul's case, his work carried him throughout the Roman Empire, where he worked with a wide variety of people, including Jews and pagans. He was opposed by both. Their antagonism was expressed in hateful words and hurtful deeds, which led to great sorrow on Paul's part.
 - 2) However, with the blessing of salvation, the knowledge that he was doing the will of Heaven, the comfort and encouragement of God's providence, and the hope of eternal life given him, Paul had good reason to rejoice.

- a) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 - b) Philippians 1:21-23: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."
 - c) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - d) Philippians 4:4: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice."
- 3) His enemies might think they had reason to oppose the apostle because of his many sorrows, even to suggest that one with so much suffering could offer comfort to no one; however, Paul had reason to rejoice, and could offer the same cause for happiness to others. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ" (2 Cor. 1:3-5).
- f. As poor, yet making many rich. Paul had very little of this world's bounties, yet he had sufficient to survive. Despite his poverty, he was not despondent in his lack; he continued to labor with diligence for the benefit of others.
- 1) Although he had nothing material to give, he had something of far greater value to bestow upon all who desired spiritual treasures. Compare: "Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6). Peter and John were able to give the lame man the ability to walk, and to open the way of salvation to him.
 - 2) Paul likewise could, if the situation warranted it, heal the sick, raise the dead, and offer other miracles to relieve the ailments of those he met; but the paramount blessings he extended were spiritual. As precious as health is, and as necessary as the essentials of life are, those spiritual bounties the gospel offers the soul are of vastly superior importance! Health will eventually fail, earthly life will one day inevitably end, and material prosperity will be lost, but the spiritual treasures laid up in heaven will never fade.
 - a) Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:3-5: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."
 - 3) Our Lord became poor so that he could provide us with heavenly wealth.
 - a) 2 Corinthians 8:9: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 9:15: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."
 - 4) The apostle's foes doubtless denigrated his claims to apostleship on account of his material poverty, perhaps asserting that one so destitute of this world's goods could offer little to others.
- g. As having nothing, and yet possessing all things. Paul was a recipient of the very blessings he dispensed to others by the gospel. It was true that he had nothing of this world's goods, except enough

to sustain him; but his spiritual blessings far surpassed all this world could offer.

- 1) What is a man profited if he is able to obtain all the wealth of this world, but lose his soul in the process?
 - a) Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
 - b) Luke 9:25: "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"
- 2) Paul's enemies would be inclined to set him at nought because of his poverty-stricken condition. They failed to see the value of the spiritual blessings of the kingdom of Christ!

B. 2 Corinthians 6:11-18: Reconciliation Requires Separation from the Sinful World.

1. Verses 11-12: "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels." "Our mouth is open unto you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own affections" (ASV).
 - a. The sincerity of his appeal is expressed by his use of the phrase, "O ye Corinthians." He identified and addressed the Galatians and the Philippians with similar expressions.
 - 1) Galatians 3:1: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"
 - 2) Philippians 4:15: "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only."
 - b. The love Paul had for these brethren caused his tender words to pour forth from his open mouth. Everything he could say for their spiritual benefit was allowed to come forth, hence his mouth was open to them. His heart was enlarged, being swollen by the immense amount of love within it for them.
 - c. Paul's heart was not so constricted (narrow) that there was no room therein for them. Despite the erratic nature of the behavior of the Corinthians toward Paul, his love never wavered. Even if many of them had contaminated themselves with sin and had turned against Paul, he loved them. He could say: "Ye are not straitened in us."
 - d. However, their love for the apostle had narrowed; they were straitened in their own affections (cf. ASV). Despite the many struggles he had put forth for them, and the tears he had shed in their behalf, they had lost some of their original regards for Paul. The word *bowels* (KJV) is translated *affections* in the ASV.
 - e. McGarvey:
 - 1) "When Paul had written his former letter his heart had been narrowed by his suspicious as to the loyalty of the Corinthians, and he had spoken to them as with compressed and guarded lips, weighing not only his words, but mindful, as it were, of the tone in which he uttered them. But by their obedience to the instructions which he gave them his confidence in them had been restore(l, his heart had dilated to its former largeness and wealth of affection toward them, and his mouth had been set free to speak to them unreservedly and openly.
 - 2) "If any strained or straitened relations existed between them, they arose from the hearts of the Corinthians themselves. Paul therefore beseeches them to recompense his love with their love, his large-heartedness with corresponding largeness of heart on their part, and he does this in the spirit and with the expectation which a father has when talking with his children."
2. Verse 13: "Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged."
 - a. He appeals for them to reciprocate the love he has for them.
 - 1) Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
 - 2) Luke 6:31: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."

- b. Paul's concern for them was as genuine as the love of a father for his children. "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15).
 - c. It was his desire that their hearts be as enlarged with love for him, as his heart was enlarged with love for them. Paul's love was his willingness to do all he could for them, even to endure suffering. He would do nothing to hurt them.
3. Verse 14: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"
- a. In the day when oxen were yoked together to pull a plow or do some other task, it was obvious that the two animals must be compatible in size, kind, and temperament. An ox and a mule would make poor yoke-fellows; a full-grown ox and a calf likewise would be inappropriate mates in a yoke. The Mosaic Law forbade the joining of a mixed team: "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together" (Deut. 22:10).
 - b. Using this familiar and obvious truth as an illustration, Paul teaches the Corinthians of the need for their being matched up only with others of like precious faith. If a believer is bound to an unbeliever, the believer will be unduly influenced by the unbeliever. There is little the two have in common, and so both would be discontented. Each would be pressured to go against their basic desires. Driving the point home, Paul asks two rhetorical questions: What fellowship does righteousness and unrighteousness have? What communion exists between light and darkness?
 - c. Since there is no common ground between these, then there is no harmony between a believer and an unbeliever. Paul's point is to warn them against any entangling alliances with pagans.
 - 1) The subject of marriage is not being discussed in this context. Although it is not wise for a Christian to marry a non-Christian, this is not the apostle's meaning here. In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul showed that a Christian and a non-Christian can have a scriptural marriage; there are special problems which may arise in such an arrangement, but their marriage is not inherently wrong. If we apply his instructions of our text to marriage, then every Christian who is married to a non-Christian must get out of that marriage; but this would put the apostle in opposition with what he taught in 1 Corinthians seven. "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace" (1 Cor. 7:12-15).
 - 2) There are many cases in which a Christian must have daily, continuing association with unbelievers. Dealing with those who are not in Christ cannot be avoided; in most cases association is to be had, or else we would not be able to teach the lost. Business or casual contact with unbelievers is not being prohibited. Often family ties in which some are Christians and others are unbelievers or members of sectarian religions.
 - 3) The associations that are forbidden by Paul are those in which the believer places himself under the dominance of the influence of unbelievers. We are not to participate with the unbeliever in unsavory or sinful activities. Paul's instructions forbid us to commune with wicked people in those activities which make them wicked. It can be dangerous for a Christian to marry one who is a sectarian.
4. Verses 15-16: "And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

- a. Continuing to illustrate the matter, Paul shows that Christ has nothing in common with Belial, that a believer and an infidel are widely separated in sentiment, and that the temple of God and idols are poles apart. The word *Belial* means *worthless*, and describes Satan or one of his servants. There is no agreement (concord, harmony) between Christ and Belial. An infidel is an unbeliever; the same basic Greek word is found in verse fourteen that is used in verse fifteen.
 - b. The temple of God is placed in strong contrast with the temple of idols. In Corinth in particular, idols were attended by religious prostitutes. If any of the saints consorted with these religious harlots, they contaminated themselves and the congregation as a whole.
 - c. All the Christians comprise the one body of Christ; Paul calls this same entity "the temple of the living God." There is one body which is made up of many members; there is one temple which is made up of many parts. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are" (1 Cor. 3:16-17). This spiritual temple can be defiled by sin or error.
 - d. God manifested his presence in the tabernacle and later in the temple, under the Old Testament arrangement. His presence is in the church, representatively, as the individual members believe and obey his will. Both Christ and God dwell in the saints as they imbibe the Word.
 - 1) Ephesians 3:17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith...."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:18-19: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."
 - 3) Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."
 - e. The indwelling of God in his spiritual temple (the church) is depicted as his living in them, walking in them, being their God, and these obedient ones being his people. The picture is one of our special relationship with God, which is on an even higher plane than that which faithful Israel enjoyed in the Old Testament days.
5. Verses 17-18: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
- a. The command is issued for the saints to separate themselves from those entangling alliances they had formed with infidels; if they followed this injunction, and touched not the contaminating people and activities around them, then God would be pleased with them.
 - b. Meeting those conditions, with all that is implied, God would be a Father to them, and would treat them as sons and daughters. The way we live has a tremendous impact on our relationship with God. We must first become Christians, and be freed from the guilt of past sins; we must then walk in the light of the gospel (1 John 1:7-10), develop the Christian graces (2 Pet. 1:3-11), and faithfully worship God (Acts 2:42), and work in the kingdom (1 Cor. 15:58).
 - 1) 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:3-11: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge

temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

- 3) Acts 2:42: “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”
- 4) 1 Corinthians 15:58: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

2 CORINTHIANS 7

A. 2 Corinthians 7:1: Receiving These Promises Carries Obligations.

1. Verse 1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."
2. This verse belongs with the preceding passage (6:14-18), which reveals God's promise to adopt us as his children, and then to deal with us as a natural father concerns himself with his children. The quotation in verses 16-18 is from the Old Testament where God promised Israel to receive them as his children if they followed his will. Paul's use of the statements shows that the same promise is offered to us. Our spiritual blessings are far richer than those offered to ancient Israel.
3. The promises included as part of our adoption into God's spiritual family places us under the obligation to keep ourselves free from the contamination of sin.
 - a. All accountable persons stain themselves with sin (Rom. 3:23; Eccl. 7:20). Each individual who obeys the gospel receives the cleansing of Christ's blood (Rev. 1:5; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-23). This process brings him into God's spiritual family.
 - 1) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
 - 3) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."
 - 4) Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."
 - 5) 1 Peter 1:18-23: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - b. The New Testament also refers to this as:

Being Born Again	John 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:22-23
Being Added to the Church	Acts 2:36-47
Being Translated into the Kingdom	Col. 1:13-14
Being Grafted into God's True Plant	Rom. 11:17-24
Being Made Part of God's Spiritual Building	Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Pet. 2:5
Being Made Member of Lord's Spiritual Body	1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23
Being Appointed to the Priesthood	1 Pet. 2:5-9; Heb. 7

- c. As taking a bath can only remove the present grime from our bodies, so the cleansing we receive by the blood of Christ can only remove the stain of sin that is then present. A shower today cannot remove the dirt we will get on us tomorrow; being forgiven today does not pardon us for the sins we will commit next year. Paul is writing to people who have obeyed the gospel and who were cleansed from past sins at that time.
- 1) Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."
 - 3) They had been sanctified: "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (1 Cor. 1:2).
- d. Paul instructed these sanctified and cleansed children of God to cleanse themselves from "all filthiness." By including himself he shows that even he (an apostle) must do likewise. The body is the instrument used by the individual's spirit to commit sin. Acts of sin are committed by the body, but God holds the spirit (heart; soul) responsible.
- 1) Many kinds of sin have a direct impact on the physical body, including fornication, drunkenness, and reveling. Other sins have an indirect impact. One who allows himself to be filled with hatred, poisons his heart and robs the body of much of its strength and health.
 - 2) There are certain kinds of sin which are internal only, and may not be visible to the human eye. This list includes malice, envy, hatred, absence of love, failure to obey the gospel or do one's duty, violation of conscience, and lying.
 - 3) Paul's point here may be simply to refer to all kinds of sin, and to teach that we must completely forsake sin of every stripe. Every sin originates in the heart of the individual; the heart is equivalent to the spirit or soul. "And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:20-23).
- e. Since we cannot remove the guilt of a single sin (Heb. 9:22; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:18-19), Paul is not speaking of the absolution of sins.
- 1) Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
 - 2) Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
- f. He is saying that we must keep ourselves from participating in sin.
- 1) We are cleansed from the guilt of all sin when we obey the gospel.
 - a) Romans 6:17-18: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and

abideth for ever.”

- 2) We earnestly try to follow the will of God from that day forward, which keeps us from getting involved in sinful activities.
- 3) When we stumble into an act of sin, we repent of it, confess it to God in prayer, and ask his forgiveness.
 - a) Acts 8:22: “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.”
 - b) 1 John 1:8-10: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
 - c) James 5:16: “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
- 4) In this fashion, we cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.
 - a) Philippians 4:8: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”
 - b) 2 Peter 1:3-11: “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
 - c) Titus 2:11-12: “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”
 - d) 2 Peter 3:18: “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”
 - e) 2 Corinthians 3:18: “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.
 - f) 1 John 1:7: “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
 - g) Romans 12:1-2: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”
- g. *Perfecting holiness in the fear of God* is parallel to the preceding clause: *let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.*
 - 1) To perfect holiness is to make our holiness perfect. The Greek word translated *holiness* is also translated *sanctification*. This word appears ten times in the Greek New Testament, and is

translated as *holiness* five times and *sanctification* five times.

- 2) To be holy is to be sanctified. To be sanctified is to be committed to God's holy purposes and will; to live a life as free from the contaminating influences of sin as possible. We are initially sanctified when we obey the gospel; we grow in sanctification as we develop spiritual maturity.
 - a) 1 Thessalonians 5:23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - b) 1 Peter 2:1-2: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."
 - c) Romans 12:1-2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
 - d) 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."
- 3) First Thessalonians 4:1-7: "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."
- 4) It is impossible to be saved from our alien sins without reverence [godly fear] for God (Acts 10:34-35; Ps. 89:7). It is equally impossible for a Christian to perfect holiness without reverence for God. Only deep reverence for God will give us the necessary motivation to learn, believe, and obey the gospel; only deep reverence for God will cause a Christian to earnestly cultivate the spiritual attributes (2 Pet. 1:5-7), perform his God-given duties sincerely (1 Cor. 15:58), and worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).
 - a) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - b) Psalms 89:7: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him."
 - c) 1 Peter 1:5-7: "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."
 - d) 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
 - e) John 4:24: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."
- h. First John 3:1-3: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him

purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

B. 2 Corinthians 7:2-7: Paul's Reunion With Titus.

1. Verse 2: "Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man."
 - a. Paul may be responding to charges his enemies have raised against him. He pleads with the Corinthians to receive him; they had every reason to do so and no reason to refuse him. The ASV gives "open your hearts to us" in place of the KJV's "receive us."
 - b. The apostle denies that he has wronged anyone, corrupted anyone, or defrauded anyone. These were serious charges, if indeed those accusations had been made against him. In chapter 6:11-13, he stated his genuine concern for them, and lamented the fact that they had not shown the same degree of love for him.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 6:11-13: "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. Now for a recompence in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 12:14-15: "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved."
 - c. The surmised indictments grew out of Paul's rebuke of the Corinthians' allowing the adulterous man to continue his sinful conduct without remonstrance from them. This conclusion appears from the apostle's reference to him in verse twelve. See 1 Corinthians 5:1ff; 2 Corinthians 2:1-11.
 - 1) These brethren seem to have had the attitude that many of our brethren today have toward sin, rebuke, and love. It is not a mark of love to overlook sin; it is not a mark of hatred to rebuke sin in another Christian. Paul did not show a lack of love for the adulterous brother by exposing his sin, or by calling on the Corinthians to withdraw from him.
 - 2) Parents rebuke and chasten their children when they err; this treatment is a demonstration of love, not of hatred. God rebukes and chastens his children; he expresses love in so-doing: "And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.' If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Heb. 12:5-11, NKJV).
 - 3) Christians are required by the Lord to rebuke those who err—for the good of their souls.
 - a) 2 Timothy 4:1-5: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."
 - b) Titus 1:5-11: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must

- be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.”
- c) Titus 3:10-11: “A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.”
- d) Titus 1:13: “This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.”
- d. Paul also denies that he has corrupted anybody. The Greek word [*phtheiro*] "signifies to destroy by means of corrupting, and so bringing into a worse state..." (Vine, Vol.1, p.242). Vine states that the term is used in our text "of the effects of dishonourable dealing by bringing people to want" (ibid.). Paul had not taught them anything when he was with them that corrupted them in any way; and none of his teachings sent them by epistle had done so.
- e. The apostle had not defrauded anyone. The Greek word [from *pleonekteo*] is translated in the ASV as, "We took advantage of no man." He had not enriched himself by fraudulent conduct. When he made arrangements to deliver the collection to the brethren in Judea, he wanted the Gentile congregations to send men along. He wanted to make sure that there was no room for his enemies to raise a complaint against him.
- 1) 2 Corinthians 8:10-22: “And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago. Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality: As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack. But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you. And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches; And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind: Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you.”
- 2) Acts 20:1-5: “And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia. And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. These going before tarried for us at Troas.”
- 3) 2 Corinthians 12:16-17: “But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile. Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?”
2. Verse 3: "I speak not this to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you."

- a. His purpose for discussing this issue was not to condemn them; in none of his letters did he do so. He has already told them of his great love for them, a love which would lead him to lay down his life for them, if need be. He was equally well-prepared to live with them, so great was his love.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 6:11-13: "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. Now for a recompence in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 9:19-23: "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you."
 - b. He was defending himself as an apostle; he was not voicing a personal complaint against them. His willingness to travel that long distance to teach them the truth was evidence of his love for them; also, he endured much opposition and hardship when he worked among them at Corinth.
3. Verse 4: "Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation." "Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation" (NKJ).
- a. Paul had spoken to others of the Corinthians with glowing words. Despite their many weaknesses which he exposed in the first letter, he still loved them, and found many things of a complimentary nature to report about them.
 - b. Some of his words in the first epistle were strong, but not for the purpose of hurting them; rather, he sought their good. He was in anguish concerning how they would receive those rebukes; when Titus brought him the good news that they had happily received his communication, and had acted promptly in disciplining the adulterous brother, he was filled with gladness.
 - c. That news brought great comfort to the tender heart of the apostle, and even though he was suffering affliction because of the truth, he was overjoyed. Their faithfulness gave him reason to rejoice, even in the face of persecution.
 - d. "This verse tells of Paul's restored confidence in the Corinthians, and his consequent freedom of speech and joyfulness of heart. The next few verses show us that these changes were wrought in him by the report which he received from Titus concerning affairs at Corinth" (McGarvey).
4. Verse 5: "For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears."
- a. Continuing the subject of affliction introduced in verse four, Paul illustrates the grievous nature of that persecution. After leaving Asia, he proceeded into Macedonia, enroute to Achaia. In Macedonia, he could take no rest on account of the troubles which assailed him on every side.
 - b. He faced outright persecution. When he was in Philippi on the second journey, he found himself in jail. The authorities had no just cause for jailing him or evicting him from the city. His old enemies doubtless had long memories, and on his return, would continue their opposition to him. The same could be said about his enemies in the other Macedonian cities of Thessalonica and Berea. See Acts 16-17. We are not told where in Macedonia he was when Titus found him.
 - c. Under even the quietness of ordinary times, there are things about which the child of God will be concerned. It might be the spiritual or material welfare of his offspring; it might be about the future of the church; it might be about the health of his family. In times of persecution, those concerns intensify, and are accompanied by others. Paul says that there were fears within him, to go along with the fightings without.

- d. Paul returns here to the narrative he had begun in chapter 2: "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia" (2:12-13).
5. Verses 6-7: "Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more."
- a. Despite those tribulations, the great heart of the apostle found comfort. He attributes this benefit to God, whose providence had brought Titus to him with the good news from Corinth. The arrival of Titus was encouraging to Paul. God is able through various means to bring comfort and encouragement to the hearts of those who are cast down. Even the great apostle had times when he was filled with sadness, and was in need of encouragement.
- b. He was also comforted by the news that Titus brought. Titus reported that the brethren had warmly received the first epistle, and took the instructions to heart. They had withdrawn from the adulterous man, and evidently had taken steps to change those other things in which they had erred.
- c. Titus was encouraged by the changes in evidence at Corinth; this gave Paul reason to rejoice. What could give greater sorrow to a faithful Christian than the apostasy of another saint? Consequently, what could give him greater joy than the restoration of a wayward saint?
- d. Sin is extremely serious, both to the alien sinner and the erring child of God. In a sense, the erring saint is in graver circumstances than the alien. The alien may not have yet rejected the one means of salvation (the gospel, Rom. 1:16). But the wayward saint has known the way of truth and has turned away from it; unless he can come to repentance, he has no hope!
- 1) 2 Peter 2:20-22: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."
- 2) Hebrews 6:4-6: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."
- 3) 1 John 5:16: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."
- e. Titus reported to Paul that the Corinthians saw their errors and mourned over them; they wanted to do the right thing. Implied in this statement is their repentance. Christ pronounced a blessing on those who mourn: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5:4). These blessed mourners are they who repent, a painful act of obedience.
- C. 2 Corinthians 7:8-11: Godly Sorrow Produces Repentance.
1. Verse 8: "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season."
- a. Other versions:
- 1) NKJ: "For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while."
- 2) ASV: "For though I made you sorry with my epistle, I do not regret it: though I did regret it (for I see that that epistle made you sorry, though but for a season)."
- b. Paul does not regret having written them that first epistle, even though it brought them to sorrow. This

sorrow was of a godly nature, and led them to repentance. The sorrow that is generated by worldly considerations is productive of little good; in fact, that kind of sorrow caused Judas to hang himself: "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself" (Matt. 27:3-5).

- c. During the long interval between sending the letter and finally getting back a report of its effect, Paul was concerned that it might have the reverse effect of that which he intended. His humanity is demonstrated by the fact of his misgivings. We sometimes rebuke someone for some misconduct, and later feel bad about hurting him. In Paul's case, his epistle had been authored by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 14:37; 2:9-13), therefore he knew only the truth had been written; there was nothing erroneous about the message, and there was nothing wrong with the things stated. Being a tender hearted man, the apostle would naturally feel pain on having to rebuke them.
 - d. Rebuking a sinner (alien or erring saint) will not always bring about the intended change. Christ's reproving words caused many of his disciples to turn away from him (John 6:60-68). When the apostles exposed the sin of the Jewish leaders in crucifying Christ (Acts 5:29-32), they were cut to the heart and plotted to kill the apostles (Acts 5:33).
 - 1) John 6:60-68: "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."
 - 2) Acts 5:29-32: "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."
 - 3) Acts 5:33: "When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them."
2. Verse 9: "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing."
 - a. The ASV gives this rendering: "I now rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry unto repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing."
 - b. The NKJ: "Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing."
 - c. Paul had good cause for rejoicing on learning that many of the Corinthians had repented; he did not rejoice on account of the rebuke he gave them in the first epistle. The sorrow they experienced was godly in nature, stemming from the knowledge they had sinned; this godly sorrow led them to repent. The apostle was exultant over the end result. Obviously, there are others who are sorry only because they got caught (criminals, sinful people).
 - d. Godly sorrow and the sorrow produced as a consequence of sin are not identical. There is a severe pain in both cases, but the cause of the grief is different. If a man commits a crime, is apprehended, and imprisoned, he will naturally be grieved on account of the consequences of his criminal act; this is not godly sorrow. Godly sorrow would result in his case if he was genuinely grieved over the sinful

- (criminal) act he committed.
- e. The son in the Lord's illustration of Matthew 21 rejected his father's command, but later regretted that refusal. "But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went" (Matt. 21:28-29). The word translated *repented* means *regretted*. He went to the vineyard to work because of genuine regret for his earlier disobedience.
3. Verse 10: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."
 - 2) NKJ: "For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death."
 - b. "Godly sorrow results in repentance, and repentance results in salvation, and this result is never to be regretted, either by those who attain it, or by those who have helped towards its attainment" (McGarvey, p.207).
 - c. Since it is impossible to please God without faith (Heb. 11:6), and without faith it is impossible to have godly sorrow, it is impossible to repent without faith. If a man does not believe he has done anything wrong, he will not have any sorrow; but if he genuinely believes he has done something amiss, he will have genuine sorrow, provided his conscience is still alive. *Godly sorrow produces repentance*.
 - d. The sorrow of the world produces death. This is often true in the here and now. Judas was so overwhelmed with grief over his betrayal of Christ that he hanged himself (Matt. 27:3; the word translated *repent* in this passage means *regret*).
 - 1) King Saul rebelled against God's will; he later was overcome with regret and defeat, and fell on his sword (1 Sam. 28-31).
 - 2) Ahithophel committed suicide when his counsel was unheeded: "And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father" (2 Sam. 17:23).
 - 3) In these biblical cases, and in countless other episodes outside the Bible, worldly sorrow produced physical death.
 - e. The sorrow of the world produces eternal death. This is the primary meaning of Paul's statement. *Death* is used as the antithesis of *salvation* in the verse. Eternal salvation is the ultimate consequence of true repentance; eternal death is the ultimate consequence of worldly sorrow.
 - 1) The former is true of Paul.
 - a) Acts 9:1-9: "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink."

- b) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - c) 1 Timothy 1:12-15: "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but 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. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."
 - d) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
- 2) The latter is true of Judas.
- a) Matthew 27:3-5: "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself."
 - b) Acts 1:25: "That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."
- f. Since [godly] sorrow produces repentance, then sorrow is not repentance. Since reformation of life is produced by **repentance** (Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20), then reformation of life is not repentance. Repentance is that decision (commitment) we reach to make the proper change, when we come to see that we have lived in violation of God's law. This decision is brought about by godly sorrow; it is followed by a changed life. *Repentance is a change of mind, produced by godly sorrow, and results in a reformed life.*
- 1) Matthew 3:8: "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."
 - 2) Acts 26:20: "But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."
- g. When we preach or teach a lesson which causes some lost soul to have godly sorrow and repent, they have started on the way to salvation. Although we have produced godly sorrow in their hearts by the message of truth we presented, we are not to be saddened to have caused them sorrow. No godly person will be happy to see anyone suffer needlessly, however when godly sorrow brings a sinner to repentance, we have just cause to rejoice. "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentanceLikewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:7,10).
- h. McGarvey: "Godly sorrow results in repentance, and repentance results in salvation, and this result is never to be regretted, either by those who attain it, or by those who have helped towards its attainment. While it is true that the sorrow of the world tends toward despair and suicide and so towards death, as is witnessed by the cases of Saul, Ahithophel and Judas, yet this is not the apostle's thought; he means that worldly sorrow tends toward that eternal death which is the antithesis of salvation. This becomes apparent when we consider that a worldly sorrow, arising because of and by means of the consequences of sin, tends to make the sinner worse instead of better, for it breeds in him a boldness, a malignant recklessness and a morbid despair which tend to paralyze all efforts toward reformation."
4. Verse 11: "For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire,

- yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter."
- a. NKJ: "For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter."
 - b. The ASV gives this rendering: "For behold, this selfsame thing, that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing, yea what zeal, yea what avenging! In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter."
 - c. Paul states the fact that their sorrow was of a godly nature. It was not grief over having had their sins discovered and exposed; it was the sorrow that they had been guilty of violating the will of God. They were genuinely sorry that they had transgressed God word; they sincerely wanted to do that which was right.
 - d. One of the benefits of their repentance was carefulness. They now acquired a disposition to be careful in the way they lived. Before, they had been careless about these matters. There are those today who think that as long as they believe they are doing the right thing, that is all that counts; that God has no absolute standard of truth by which we are to live and by which we will be judged. There are those today who think that because God is the God of love, that he will overlook any and all violations of his will; that his grace will cover us, therefore we do not need to be careful about our lives. The Corinthians were like that until they came to understand and believe the principles Paul wrote in the first epistle; they then repented and became careful about the way they lived.
 - e. Another benefit of their repentance was a clearing of themselves. By repenting of their sins, the Corinthians cleared themselves in the sight of God. Repentance can be done in an instant, provided there is godly sorrow to generate it. When they withdrew from the adulterous brother, they cleared themselves of any involvement in his sin. When they repented, their guilt was removed. The final clause in the verse states the point clearly. Compare:
 - 1) Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
 - 2) 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
 - 3) James 5:16: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."
 - f. Another benefit of their repentance was indignation. This indignation obviously was not toward Paul or the incestuous man, but toward themselves for having *missed the mark*—they committed sin.
 - g. Another benefit of their repentance was fear. When we have a close brush with death, as in a near-collision with another car, we will often get nervous and scared after the danger has passed. We realize how disastrous the outcome could have been! When the Corinthians saw the danger of their conduct, which Paul pointed out to them in the first epistle, they then perceived the great peril in which they had ignorantly lived! They now understood that they had not shown proper fear for God; they now shuddered to think what would have been their destiny had they not repented!
 - h. Another benefit of their repentance was a vehement desire. The brethren had greatly desired to see Paul again; following their reception of his first letter, and the repentance that epistle had stirred in their hearts, their desire to see him was intensified. They *longed* (ASV) to see him (see verse 7, where the same word is used). But perhaps the strong desire indicated in this thought indicates the abundant hunger and thirst for righteousness which they now had. "Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

- i. Another benefit of their repentance was zeal. They were now filled with zeal for the Lord's cause. When one obeys the gospel, coming out of sin or religious error, that person usually is filled with zeal for the truth. When one has obeyed, but later returns to the *weak and beggarly elements* of the world or religious error, he loses that zeal for truth, which he can regain only if he genuinely repents. The Corinthians had now regained that original zeal, and followed the apostle's admonition of 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
- j. Another benefit of their repentance was revenge. The Greek term [*ekdikasis*] has reference to the administering of justice. The word is used in Romans 13:4 to describe the authority of the civil ruler to dispense justice to lawbreakers: "For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."
 - 1) "For behold, this selfsame thing, that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing, yea what zeal, yea what avenging! In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter" (ASV).
 - 2) "For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, *what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication!* In all *things* you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter" (NKJV).
 - 3) The *revenge* noted by Paul has reference to the judicial discipline the brethren brought upon the incestuous man (of 1 Cor. 5). This wayward Christian had his sinful conduct pointed out to him, and he was called on the repent. He heeded the admonishment of his brethren, and was restored to the fold of the faithful.

D. 2 Corinthians 7:12-16: Paul is Comforted by Their Penitence.

1. Verse 12: "Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you." "Therefore, although I wrote to you, I did not do it for the sake of him who had done the wrong, nor for the sake of him who suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you" (NKJ).
 - a. The apostle states here his motivation for writing what he penned in the first epistle. He wrote them the letter because of his love for them. Although his letter was directed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9-14; 14:37), his love was included. The exercise of the spiritual gifts was to be accompanied by love (1 Cor. 13:1-3); every Christian activity is also to be motivated by love. Paul could write an inspired epistle and still be actuated by love.
 - b. He did not write the letter to them because of the incestuous man's shameful lifestyle; he did not write it because of him who had been wronged by the incestuous man's monstrous sin. To expose the sin was an important matter, but that was not the prime motivation for his letter. To comfort him who had been wronged (the incestuous man's father: 1 Cor. 5), was not the prime cause for the epistle.
 - c. Paul's inspired epistle was an expression of his *care* for the entire congregation, inclusive of the incestuous man, his father, those who were involved in division or other sinful conduct, and the faithful.
2. Verse 13: "Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all."
 - a. Because of his unfeigned love for them, he was greatly comforted to learn that they had been comforted by his letter. His message had exposed their many sins, and had led them to repent; in repentance they had found comfort. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5:4).
 - b. Paul found much joy in the happiness Titus experienced at Corinth. When Titus met Paul in

- Macedonia, he brought a glowing report of the spiritual condition of the Corinthian church. He was overjoyed at their good reception of Paul's letter, and the apostle rejoiced also.
3. Verse 14: "For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "For if in anything I have gloried to him on your behalf, I was not put to shame; but as we spake all things to you in truth, so our glorying also which I made before Titus was found to be truth."
 - 2) NKJ: "For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I am not ashamed. But as we spoke all things to you in truth, even so our boasting to Titus was found true."
 - b. Paul had given the Corinthians a good report of Titus, and found no shame in having done so. His confidence in that young man was not misplaced.
 - c. Everything the apostle presented to them was truth, including his high recommendation of Titus. It is impossible for one who believes in Christ to conceive of the Savior telling a lie. It is also difficult to imagine Paul stating something that was false.
 - d. Christianity and truth are inseparable. There is not even a shade of falsehood in the gospel, and one who sincerely tries to follow the gospel will always be truthful in doctrine and conversation.
 4. Verse 15: "And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him."
 - a. The affection Titus had for the Corinthians was enhanced when he beheld their obedience and saw the manner in which they received him.
 - b. They showed a disposition of "fear and trembling" toward him when he came among them. They knew that he was a representative of the beloved apostle Paul, and more significantly, they saw him as a servant of God. The fear and trembling they showed was an awe and reverence for God which was evidenced by their obedience to his will.
 - c. The passage does not offer authority for a *high and mighty* approach by preachers; it does not condone the false practice of exalting preachers to lofty positions and titles of reverence, which violates inspired precepts. This practice, however, has become commonplace today. "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren" (Matt. 23:1-8).
 5. Verse 16: "I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things."
 - a. Paul's confidence in them had been reinforced by the good report Titus brought. He earnestly desired that they should receive his first letter with gladness, and be stirred to fuller obedience by it.
 - b. When Titus reported that they had indeed so received it, and had made the changes the letter demanded, Paul rejoiced. His spiritual children were well; they were on the narrow road toward glory!
 - c. "The affections which the Corinthians had awakened in the heart of Titus, who had come among them and had been received as Paul's messenger, greatly established the confidence of the apostle in that church, as he here tells them. Having thus led up to a well-grounded expression of confidence, Paul makes it a basis on which to rest the second division of his epistle—a division in which he appeals to them to fulfill their promises with regard to the collection for the poor at Jerusalem" (McGarvey).

SANCTIFICATION

1 Thessalonians 4:1-7

INTRODUCTION:

A. Sanctification is a Bible term often obscured by the theories of men.

1. The view is held by many that sanctification comes initially by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous and mysterious conversion process; some theorists allege that later the baptism of the Holy Spirit may be obtained, which puts the recipient beyond the possibility of committing sin of any kind.
2. This is not a scriptural view.
 - a. Peter had received Holy Spirit baptism, and yet he committed sin: "But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned. For before that certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (Gal. 2:11-14, ASV).
 - b. The apostle John likewise had obtained this baptism, but wrote that he and all saints are capable of sin: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:7-10).
 - c. No one in this life stands beyond the reach of temptation and disobedience:
 - 1) "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12).
 - 2) "Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run; that ye may attain. And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air: but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.(1 Cor. 9:24-27, ASV).

B. This study will content itself with learning what the Bible teaches on this significant subject.

1. We have no pet views to preach or defend; we are willing to take whatever the Bible teaches on this or any other subject, and abide with the truth.
2. Our sincere aim is always to learn the will of God more perfectly, so that we can serve him more and better.

DISCUSSION.

A. First, we need to learn the definition of the word *sanctification*.

1. Our English word derives from two Latin words.
 - a. *Sanctus* ("holy") and *facio* ("to make"). Thus, sanctification describes the process by which one is made holy.
 - b. Webster defines it as "the act of consecrating or of setting apart for a sacred purpose; the act of making holy."
2. The Greek word is *hagiosmos* ('agiasmos').
 - a. Vine defines it as "separation to God" (Vol. 2, p.317).
 - b. The word is used ten times in the Greek New Testament, being translated *sanctification* five times and *holiness* five times.
 - c. In 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7, it is used twice, being translated as *sanctification* once (verse 3) and *holiness* once (verse 7). The two English words, used interchangeably, are identical.

3. The Bible itself gives the meaning of *sanctification*.
 - a. Exodus 13:1,1,12: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.... That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD'S."
 - b. Genesis 2:3: "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."
 - c. Exodus 13:2: "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine."
 - d. Exodus 29:37: "Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy."
 - e. Leviticus 27:16: "And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver."
 - f. These things, animals, and people were set apart (sanctified) to God's holy purposes and uses.
 4. The meaning of sanctification then is plain:
 - a. "To set apart to God to be used by him and for him."
 - b. Once the item or individual was separated, it was not to be used again for common purposes. When the pagans offered a hog on the altar at the temple, the altar was polluted.
 - c. When a person obeys the gospel and is sanctified, he is to live a holy life, a life that is consecrated and dedicated to God's service; the individual is not allowed to return to his old way of life and retain fellowship with God.
 - d. 2 Corinthians 6:14: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"
- B. There are two sides of sanctification as used in the New Testament.
1. It is used in reference to the process by which one is first set apart.
 - a. All who become Christians are set apart at the time they are saved. This sanctifying process is called being "added to the church" (Acts 2:47), "translation into the kingdom" (Col. 1:13), and "entering Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27).
 - b. The gospel of Christ (God's word) is the sanctifying power.
 - 1) Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
 - 2) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - 3) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 1:2: "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours."
 - c. First Corinthians 6:11: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." They were washed, sanctified, and justified.
 - 1) They were washed when they were baptized:
 - a) Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."
 - b) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - c) Ephesians 5:26: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."

- d) Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
 - e) Hebrews 10:22: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
 - f) John 3:5: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
- 2) In this washing, they (and we) receive the cleansing made possible by the blood of Christ.
- a) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:18-25: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 - c) Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
- 3) This same process justifies (causes us to be held as though we were never guilty of sin in God's sight) and sanctifies (sets us apart in Christ to serve and glorify God).
- d. Salvation is in Christ (2 Tim. 2:10); sanctification is in Christ (1 Cor. 1:2); baptism puts us into Christ (Gal. 3:27); thus to enter Christ results in salvation, sanctification, and justification, and baptism is the culminating act which places us into this spiritual state with all of its attendant blessings (Eph. 1:3).
2. It is used in reference to our spiritual development after we obey the gospel.
- a. First Thessalonians 5:23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." These Christians had already been sanctified, but Paul's desire for them is that they might be sanctified wholly or fully. His inspired statement spoke of their need to be made sound in every part, with every grace present.
 - 1) James 1:4: "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:5-7: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."
 - 3) 2 Peter 1:11: "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." *Perfecting holiness* is bringing our spiritual development to completion, to reach spiritual adulthood.
 - c. Romans 6:19-21: "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the

end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

- 1) They had given themselves over to be servants of sin in the past to work uncleanness; now Paul calls on them to give themselves over to serve righteous unto sanctification; that is, to go on to greater sanctification.
 - 2) The fruit of sanctification is the blessed state of being free from the practice and guilt of sin, to serve the God of heaven, and to have the hope of eternal life in heaven.
3. Sanctification (being in a state of holiness) means we are separated from sin.
- a. We are separated from the guilt of our past sins and set apart to God's holy purposes when we obey the gospel.
 - b. As we increase our store of knowledge, and live better and serve God more fully, we grow in holiness (sanctification), and draw nearer to spiritual perfection. As long as we are in this life, absolute perfection is beyond our reach (cf. Matt. 26:41); we never reach a point here when we can say that there is nothing else to learn and nothing more to do for the Lord, or that we have grown beyond the possibility of violating God's word (1 John 3:4).
 - c. Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."
 - d. 1 Corinthians 10:12: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
 - e. 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

C. There is other information given regarding the means by which we are sanctified.

1. The claim is made that sanctification is accomplished by some sudden, mysterious, supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit upon the human heart, a procedure called the *second work of grace*.
 - a. Passages which are used in support of the theory offer no support:
 - 1) Romans 15:16: "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." The verse says nothing about the means by which the Holy Spirit accomplishes the action denoted. It simply states a fact. The reference might even have reference to Paul's apostleship, and not to the sanctification of individuals.
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 2:13: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." The apostle states the fact that the Holy Spirit is the author of the sanctification that accompanies salvation, without stating the method by which the sanctification is accomplished. There is no support in the verse for the theory.
 - b. Sanctification is attributed to the word of God.
 - 1) John 17:17,19: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth....And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."
 - 2) Hebrews 10:10,29: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all....Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"
 - c. Sanctification is accomplished by the Holy Spirit; he uses the inspired word of God to bring this spiritual condition to pass. It not an action done by the Spirit in a direct, miraculous way; it is not done independent of our will.

- 1) 1 Peter 1:2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."
- 2) The Spirit's work is accomplished through the message he revealed to inspired men, and which he caused to be recorded as the New Testament (1 Cor. 2:9-14; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- 3) The part the individual plays in the great spiritual drama of sanctification is to hear, believe, and obey the Spirit-given message.
 - a) Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
- d. The Godhead is unified in the sanctification process:
 - 1) The Holy Spirit sanctifies, using the inspired message of truth.
 - 2) Christ redeems through the ransom price of his blood.
 - 3) God elects those who meet the condition to the ranks of his spiritual family.

D. Both of these aspects of sanctification are essential to our eternal salvation.

1. It is God's will. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication" (1 Thess. 4:3).
 - a. Can God's will be ignored in any matter with impunity?
 - b. We cannot shun either part of God's plan of sanctification; we must obey the gospel in order to be saved from past sins; and we must walk in the light of the gospel in order to retain salvation and develop spiritual maturity.
 - c. Romans 5:8-9: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."
2. Sanctification prepares us for useful service in Christ's kingdom. "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim. 2:21).
 - a. The one-talent man was unprofitable—Matthew 25:30.
 - b. The ancient Gentiles were not profitable: "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:12).
 - c. We are saved in order to serve, not to be served.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 5:15: "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) Galatians 2:20: "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."
 - d. We cannot be useful to the Lord unless we are separated from the sinful world, and dedicated to the Lord's business.
3. Sanctification qualifies us for fellowship with the saints, both here and in eternity.
 - a. Matthew 5:8: "Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God."
 - b. Ephesians 3:15: "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."
 - c. 1 John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

- d. 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother."
4. Sanctification permits us to enter heaven and see God in peace.
 - a. 2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."
 - b. Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
 - c. Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
 - d. 1 John 3:2-3: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."
- E. Examination of the means by which sanctification is produced.
 1. Sanctification is produced by the word of God.
 - a. John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - b. Hebrews 10:10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."
 - c. John 8:31-32: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 2. We are made free from sin (separated from its guilt and practice) by the truth when we believe and obey God's word—which is Truth.
 - a. We cannot expect to be acceptable if we reject any of the requirements of God. Compare: "But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him" (Luke 7:30).
 - b. We cannot expect to be acceptable if we do not continue to follow the truth.
 - c. We are sanctified when we obey the truth and try to live in harmony with the truth.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."
 - 2) James 1:23-25: "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
 3. Growth in sanctification is produced by worshipping in spirit and in truth: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"(John 4:24).
 - a. It is a well-established principle that we become like the object of our adoration.
 - b. God has ordained our worship to be offered through studying his word, singing praise, eating the Lord's Supper, praying, and giving.
 - c. Each component of scriptural worship is a powerful influence in developing sanctification.
 - 1) Who are the spiritually weak and poverty-stricken members? Those who do not attend and worship sincerely.
 - 2) Who are the mature, strong Christians? Those who always attend and worship devoutly.
- F. Results of sanctification.
 1. If one is sanctified, he has a deep reverence for sacred things.
 - a. He has profound respect for the Bible, for worship, for the Lord's church, and for the name of the Lord.
 - b. When he speaks of God or to God, he does so with awe and respect. "And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD" (Lev. 19:12).
 - c. If one uses the Lord's name loosely, or is critical of his church, is inattentive in worship, or treats the

- Bible lightly, we can know that he is not a sanctified person; he is either grossly ignorant or indifferent.
2. If one is sanctified, he has the earnest desire for the prosperity of the church and for the salvation of the lost world.
 - a. He is willing to sacrifice self-interest for the church's welfare.
 - b. He will go out of his way to avoid being offensive to the saints or to the lost.
 - c. He is willing to do his part to reach the lost, with his talents, his time, his energy, and his money.
 - d. Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
 3. If one is sanctified, he is longsuffering.
 - a. If impatient, peevish, harsh, critical, unfriendly, or ever complaining about others, he has an unholy disposition of mind.
 - b. The heart that is right is the heart that suffers long with others even when others are out of step with the Lord.
 - c. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."
 - d. Ephesians 4:32: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."
 - e. 2 Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."
 - f. 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."
 - g. Matthew 18:15-17: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."
 4. If one is sanctified, he hates all sin and religious error and loves the truth.
 - a. One who hates sin and error does so because God does: "Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way" (Psalm 119:128).
 - b. We hate it because it is ruinous to man.
 - c. We love the truth because it leads to everlasting life.
 - d. If a man is tolerant of sin and error, he is not on God's side.
 5. One who is sanctified delights in worshipping and obeying God.
 - a. He does not view it as a heavy burden, but a joyful privilege.
 - 1) Micah 6:8: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"
 - 2) 1 John 5:2-3: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
 - b. He counts it a happy fate to be even the lowliest servant. "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps. 84:10).
 - c. He considers it a privilege and joy to give. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

- d. It is a time of happiness for him to be able to sing praise to God, to eat the Lord's Supper, to study God's word, and to pray; and he is happy to be able to serve in any capacity.
6. One who is sanctified is a willing worker in the kingdom of Christ.
 - a. There is no need to threaten or cajole such a one.
 - b. He is willing to learn and do his duty without keeping a record of his accomplishments.
 - c. Mark 14:8: "She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying."

CONCLUSION.

A. Do you measure up to God's high standards?

1. 2 Corinthians 13:5: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"
2. Do not get discouraged if you are trying but fall short—keep trying.
3. But if you are not trying, or think little of sanctification or of other spiritual affairs, reflect on these statements of truth:
 - a. Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
 - b. Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
 - c. Revelation 22:14: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

B. What we have presented in this study is what the inspired apostles wrote in these passages:

1. Philippians 2:12: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."
2. 1 Peter 1:13-16: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

2 CORINTHIANS 8

A. 2 Corinthians 8:1-5: The Generosity of the Macedonians.

1. Verses 1-2: "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."
 - 2) NKJ: "Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."
 - b. We do you to wit is an archaic expression meaning "we make known to you." Paul wants them to know what the saints of Macedonia had been able to do by the grace of God. There were congregations in the Macedonian cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. See Acts 16-18; 20:1-6. Since our blessings, our talents, our lives, our strength, and our opportunities all come from God, those things which we are able to do in the kingdom of Christ are accomplished by the grace of God.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 5:18: "And all things *are* of God...."
 - 2) James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
 - c. The saints in Judea were having a difficult time and there was the possibility of strained relations between the Jewish and Gentile Christians. To help the needy brethren in Judea and to weld the Jewish and Gentile saints together in an unbreakable bond, a plan had been developed for the Christians in Gentile lands to collect a contribution to be sent to Judea.
 - d. The Macedonians had risen to the occasion with a contribution which exceeded their means. They had an abundance of joy despite the great trial of affliction they endured and the deep poverty that would seem to exclude them from offering even a token gift.
 - 1) The great trial of affliction and poverty may have resulted from the persecutions which were raised against Paul when he first preached in their cities. His enemies hated him because they hated the truth he preached; his converts there were sure to be persecuted, and poverty would naturally follow those who are attacked by such enemies. "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure" (2 Thess. 1:4).
 - 2) "The district of Macedonia had suffered in the three civil wars, and had been reduced to such poverty that Tiberius Caesar, hearkening to their petitions, had lightened their taxes" (McGarvey, p.210). The general economic climate of Macedonia may have been harsh, which would increase the poverty and troubles of the Christians.
 - e. It is often the case that those who suffer the most, are the most generous. The Macedonians had developed unfeigned joy, plus the beautiful grace of generosity.
 - 1) A Christian who lives an easy life, and is at peace with the world, is not apt to be as generous and joyful as one whose life is troubled by persecutions and poverty. Both joy and liberality must be learned and cultivated.
 - 2) A faithful Christian who understands the blessings he has in Christ, who loves God and his fellowman, who genuinely follows the will of Christ, and who sincerely desires to enter heaven, will be full of joy and will gladly share what he has with others.
 - 3) Selfishness and Christianity are opposites. Christians are warned against stealing; every form and degree of stealing is forbidden. Instead of depriving others of their possessions, we must do what we can to provide to others those things which are essential to life, to the extent possible. "Let him

- that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28).
2. Verse 3: "For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and beyond *their* power *they were* willing of themselves."
 - a. The word *power* is used in the sense of "ability or capacity." Paul affirmed that the Macedonians gave over and above their means to give; they gave more than he expected and more than the Lord required.
 - b. They were not persuaded by Paul or anyone else to give as they did; but they gave what they gave because they wanted to give what they gave. They were willing of themselves to give; they gave of their own accord. This is where all giving is to originate if it is to do the soul any good.
 - c. What we do in service to God and our fellow man must be actuated by love (1 Cor. 13:1-3). What we give to the Lord in the Sunday contribution must be given willingly and cheerfully, not because we feel pressured by others to give. If we give only to avoid embarrassment, our gift is not profitable to our own soul. The primary benefit served by our giving is the development of a spirit of selflessness in our hearts. "I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).
 - d. Malachi 3:10: "Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and test me now in this, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."
 - 1) The Lord offers them the opportunity of putting him to the test. If they would bring all the tithes into the store-house, they would be able to see that God's ability to bless is boundless. God would open the windows of heaven so as to pour out for them a blessings that they could scarcely have place to store.
 - 2) God makes a similar requirement of us, that we give as we have been prospered. He has set no minimum amount which we are to give: that amount is determined by the degree of love, faith, and trust we have in the Lord. He promises that we will be given more and greater blessings.
 3. Verse 4: "Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints."
 - a. Coupled with the preceding verse, Paul reports here that the Macedonians wanted to give what they gave, and pleaded with the apostle to receive the gift. They did not give because someone coerced or cajoled them to give, but because it was their earnest wish to give. They besought Paul to take the gift, which evidently indicates some degree of hesitance on his part in taking a gift from them which they themselves needed.
 - b. The gift is described as "the fellowship of the ministering to the saints." The word *fellowship* is used here and in certain other places in reference to the contribution: Compare: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). The Macedonians gave to the good cause of helping the people of Judea; they participated with others in sending assistance to the needy in that Palestinian locality.
 4. Verse 5: "And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."
 - a. Stated here is the basis for their liberality. They dedicated themselves to serving the will of God entirely; they did not mark out some segment of their lives or possessions, to be used only for personal or selfish uses. They gave their entire beings to serve the will of God. They begged Paul to take their offering!
 - b. Their gift exceeded Paul's expectations. Having consecrated themselves to serve Almighty God, it was easy for them to give liberally to others, trusting God to provide for their own needs. Paul expected them to give some amount.
 - c. They gave themselves also to Paul, by the will of God. They recognized Paul as an inspired apostle of Christ; they knew that what he taught them was the will of God, and that it was the will of God that

they so-receive Paul.

- d. It is often the case that those who have the most limited means, give more in proportion than those who are rich. The poverty-stricken widow is an illustration. "And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living" (Mark 12:41-44).
- e. According to certain estimates of the giving of church members in the past, ten percent of the membership were said to give ninety percent of what is contributed. If this is so, the ninety percent may not have given themselves to the Lord!
 - 1) Far more is required in the process of becoming children of God than going through the right outward motions. The heart must be earnestly involved and the right pattern must be followed: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:16-18).
 - a) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - b) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - c) Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
 - d) Matthew 7:21-28: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine."
 - e) Luke 6:46: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"
 - f) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
 - g) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
 - 2) Our Lord showed that the narrow road to glory must be sought with a diligent search. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able"

(Luke 13:24).

- 3) "Many of us have heard of the myth concerning Achilles, the hero of Greek mythology. When immersed in the River Styx, all but his heel was submerged, resulting in his only weakness, the 'Achilles Heel.' Some have suggested that too many of our converts' baptisms have resulted in a 'dry wallet syndrome,' resulting in stinginess, selfishness and miserly giving" (Carl Garner, ADL, 1989, p.189).
- f. There is a dangerous tendency for those who obey the gospel to retain the selfish dispositions they developed while living in the world. Often, these dispositions and practices are brought into the church, with those thus disposed foolishly thinking that they belong to the Lord and have the open doors of heaven awaiting their souls in the end. However, if we are to enter Gloryland, the selfish and contaminating influences of the sinful world must be subdued.
 - 1) "Our daily newspapers inform us that, as a nation, we spend over twice as much on dog food as is given in all the churches, and waste 19 times as much as we donate to religion in general. Evidently, such attitudes and dispositions have been a part of man's problem throughout the ages, for Moses, Solomon, Malachi, and now Paul were inspired to deal with it (Deu. 15:12-14; Ecc. 11:1; Mal. 3:10)" (Garner, *ibid.*, pp.184f).
 - a) Deuteronomy 15:12-14: "And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him."
 - b) Ecclesiastes 11:1: "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."
 - c) Malachi 3:10: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."
 - 2) We must undergo a willful, personal transformation from the inside if we are to be prepared for heaven. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2).
- g. Although the way to heaven is not impossible (2 Pet. 1:1-11), it is a demanding journey, requiring the full commitment of our lives, energies, time, talents, and emotions to the cause of Christ.
 - 1) Luke 9:23: "And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
 - 2) Luke 14:33: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "What? 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? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
 - 4) 1 John 5:2-3: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

B. 2 Corinthians 8:6-11: The Corinthians are to Abound in the Grace of Giving.

1. Verse 6: "Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also."
 - a. Titus, who had been sent to Corinth, had been instructed by Paul to instill in the Corinthian saints the same grace which had been so eminently displayed by the Macedonians.
 - b. The liberal giving evidenced by the saints of Macedonia is described as a *grace*. The Greek word

[*charin*] denotes a favorable condition or characteristic. It refers to the kind of practice or attribute which pleases God.

- c. This verse may indicate that the first epistle had been carried to Corinth by Titus, who had been instructed to fulfill the requirement stated here.
2. Verse 7: "Therefore, as ye abound in every *thing*, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also."
 - a. Paul lists several items of Christian character and conduct in which the Corinthians excelled, and calls on them to excel also in the grace of giving. The apostle is not suggesting that their only deficiency was giving; he is not saying there was no room for improvement in anything except giving. The commendations concerning the four items indicate that they were progressing satisfactorily in those items; he says they need to improve in the area of giving.
 - b. They had demonstrated *faith* when they obeyed the gospel (Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized") and they corrected the sins Paul exposed in 1 Corinthians. They had increased in their *knowledge* of God's will; this was accomplished by the oral and written instructions Paul gave them (cf. 2 Thess. 2:15). They gave *utterance* to the gospel message when they taught it to the lost and to the church. They were *diligent* (earnest) in discharging their Christian obligations. Paul commends them for the *love* they maintained and expressed toward him.
 - c. The commendations were intended to encourage them to continued faithfulness and to the perfecting of the grace of giving. A *grace* is a spiritual quality that exalts one's approval before God. Liberality is a grace that is obtained only by sincere effort. Sinful living leads us to be selfish. This disposition must be reversed so that we put God and others ahead of ourselves. When we obey the gospel in becoming Christians, the process is commenced; as we grow in knowledge and the other graces, we become more and more unselfish in attitude and with our time and possessions. Developing a willingness to give both encourages and expresses unselfishness.
 - d. Our giving is a grace only if it meets the scriptural qualifications.
 - 1) Scriptural giving is done by faith.
 - a) Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."
 - b) Romans 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
 - c) 1 Corinthians 16:1-2: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."
 - d) 2 Corinthians 9:6: "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."
 - 2) Scriptural giving requires us to give according to what God has given us.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 16:1-2: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 8:6: "Inasmuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also."
 - c) 2 Corinthians 8:12: "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."
 - 3) Scriptural giving is done cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7), with a willing mind (2 Cor. 8:12).
 - a) 2 Corinthians 9:7: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 8:12: "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

- 4) Scriptural giving comes from a loving heart: “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing” (1 Cor. 13:1-3).
- 5) Scriptural giving is done on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2). The original Greek text says “every” first day of the week. The church assembles on the first day of the week to eat the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7), to have fellowship (Acts 2:42), to sing (Col. 3:16), to pray, and to give to the Lord’s cause as he has prospered us (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Through the week, we may also have an opportunity to aid some neighbor, relative or saint in some material way—individually.
- e. “We would not tolerate the introduction of something unauthorized into the worship. The Bible has more to say about wrong attitudes toward money than it does vain worship. Will we attempt to worship God this morning with wrong attitudes toward material things without any consideration that our worship will not be acceptable to him? Suppose that we had bowed down before an idol each day of the past week, would we expect God to accept our worship this morning? The Bible teaches that a wrong attitude toward material things is idolatry (Col. 3:5). Sixteen of the parables deal with wrong attitudes toward money. Someone has said that one of every eight verses in the Gospel deals with the subject of money or one’s attitude toward material things. This is not by accident, it is because of the danger and the deception of the sin of covetousness. Compare this with what’s said about baptism or the Lord’s supper. We emphasize the importance of both of these and it is right that we should, but consider the little thought that we give [in accordance to] our attitude toward material things” (Franklin Camp, *Old Truths In New Robes*, Vol. 1, pp. 187f).
3. Verse 8: “I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.”
 - a. Our giving is to be done cheerfully and willingly; we are commanded to give. However, Paul uses another motive by which to get the Corinthians to give willingly and cheerfully. He could have given a direct command since he was an inspired apostle, but he did not do so. The Holy Spirit gave him the words to write, and those words provided a different incentive.
 - b. Paul urged the Corinthians to give by telling of the liberality of other saints. The Macedonian had shown earnestness in making their offering. They had stepped forward to meet the challenge of giving, and gave more than they were able to give. A good example is a powerful motivation. If the poor Macedonians could give cheerfully to help their fellowsaints in Judea, the rich Corinthians could imitate their good example.
 - c. The apostle also called on them to prove the genuineness of their love. This they could do by giving as they ought. We exhibit love for God by doing what he wills (1 John 5:2-3; John 14:15). Our love for others is demonstrated, not merely by words, but by actions. “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:18).
 - 1) 1 John 5:2-3: “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”
 - 2) John 14:15: “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”
4. Verse 9: “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”
 - a. Here is the most powerful of motives for liberal, cheerful giving—the gift of Christ. The Lord had a choice in forfeiting his status in heaven, taking up an earthly existence, and suffering and dying for the good of mankind. He made an informed choice, knowing the consequences of his option. His willingness to do this is described as *grace*.

- b. The obvious point of the statement is to furnish a strong incentive for the Corinthians to give liberally and cheerfully to the relief of the needy ones of Judea. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb. 12:1-2).
 - c. Christ's station in heaven from eternity is characterized as *rich*; his condition on earth during his earthly mission is styled *poor*. The purpose of this sacrifice is stated plainly to have been for the enrichment of his followers. Since it is true that in becoming Christians, we may lose our material wealth, Paul is pointing to spiritual prosperity. Each one who obeys the gospel is given all the spiritual blessings of God, and in eternity, the vast riches of heaven are his to enjoy! Truly, we have wealth beyond compare with anything material, and beyond our current comprehension!
 - d. 2 Corinthians 9:15: "Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift."
 - e. Philippians 2:5-11: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
5. Verse 10: "And herein I give *my* advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago."
- a. Paul often employs tact in expressing our obligations to God. He uses it here in stating, "I give my advice." Being an inspired apostle of Christ, he had the authority to issue a divine directive to require their adherence to the injunction. But that would have nullified the willing and cheerful spirit with which Christians are to give.
 - b. It was to their advantage to be instructed to fulfill the plan to which they had committed themselves a year earlier. Clearly, the plan to gather a collection for the relief of the poor in Judea had been announced the preceding year. A year earlier, the Corinthian saints had been willing to give to this good cause, so the apostle is not suddenly springing a new program on them.
 - c. That Paul is not indicating a lack of authority by the tender appeal is seen by other strong declarations of apostleship:
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 14:37: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 12:11-12: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."
6. Verse 11: "Now therefore perform the doing *of it*; that as *there was* a readiness to will, so *there may be* a performance also out of that which ye have."
- a. Paul here calls on the Corinthians to fulfill the commitment they had made the preceding year. The plan had been introduced to them then, and they had agreed to participate.
 - b. Planning for the future is proper; making commitments concerning future operations is proper. The fulfillment of these commitments is important. They were ready to vow their participation in the plan; they must also have a readiness of mind to carry out the stated intention.
 - c. Numbers 30:2: "If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth."
 - d. Deuteronomy 23:21: "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee."

- e. Ecclesiastes 5:4-5: "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for *he hath* no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better *is it* that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."

C. 2 Corinthians 8:12-15: That There May Be Equality.

1. Verse 12: "For if there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not." "But now complete the doing also; that as there was the readiness to will, so there may be the completion also out of your ability." (ASV).
 - a. God does not expect the impossible. If we are *flat broke*, we have no money to give and none is expected.
 - 1) The widow who had only two mites could not be required to give five mites: "And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Mark 12:41-44).
 - 2) We cannot sing if we have no tongue. The Greek term ["he hath not"] is translated in the positive ["may be able"] in 2 Peter 1:15: "Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."
 - b. Having a willing mind is the first priority in giving; the amount we are able to give is incidental. A ready mind is an eager mind. The Macedonians were eager for Paul to take their collection, even though it was a great sacrifice on their part. There is a danger that we may underestimate our ability to give; we will not be excused if our estimate is wrong anymore than the one-talent man was excused for his slackness (Camp, *ibid.*, p.189).
 - c. Garner (*ibid.*, p.194) cites a little poem learned in childhood that expresses an excellent point:

*"It's not what you'd do with a million, If riches should e'er be your lot,
But what you're doing at present, With the dollar and quarter you've got."*

2. Verses 13-14: "For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: But by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be *a supply* for your want: that there may be equality."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "For I say not this that others may be eased and ye distressed; but by equality: your abundance being a supply at this present time for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want; that there may be equality."
 - 2) NKJ: "For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack — that there may be equality."
 - b. The church at Corinth had both an abundance in one area and a lack in another area. Those being contrasted with Corinth are said to have an abundance in one area and a lack in another area. The churches of Macedonia have been discussed in the context; the church at Corinth is being addressed directly.
 - c. The church at Jerusalem is implicated in the passage only in a general way. The purpose of the collection being discussed was for the assistance of the needy ones in Judea. These Macedonia brethren had a definite lack in the essentials of life. But what is their abundance? "It will not do to say that later they would have an abundance in Jerusalem and Corinth a want and then Jerusalem could help Corinth. The Bible never holds up such a motive for giving. The Bible teaches that we are to

give without any thought of receiving in return" (Camp, p.190).

- d. Corinth had an abundance of material wealth; the Macedonians abounded in the grace of giving; the Corinthians were lacking in liberality; the Macedonians were lacking in material wealth.

CORINTH	MACEDONIA
Material Wealth	Material Want
Lacking in Liberality	Abounded in Liberality

- e. "Paul used the Macedonians to supply the liberality which the Corinthians lacked. If not, why did he use the Macedonians as an example for Corinth and call attention to the Corinthians' lack of the grace of giving (II Cor. 8:1,5 and 7)? Paul wanted Corinth to supply the possessions that Macedonia did not have. The Macedonians were living in poverty and the Corinthians were not" (Camp, p.190).
- f. The apostle does not seek to give the Macedonians ease while placing a burden on the Corinthians. It is his desire that there be an equality. In a democracy, all men have the same rights before the law, but not all men have the same wealth, talents, or social standing.
- 1) In the realm of nature, an individual accumulates possessions in keeping with his abilities, opportunities, physical strength, good fortune, wisdom, and location; he manages his affairs in accordance with his wisdom, thrift, generosity, and desires. Consequently, there is little equality in nature. Everyone does not have the same talent or opportunity.
 - 2) The Lord never expected or intended that every Christian be equal in talent, wisdom, or wealth. This is shown by the Bible's teachings on ability (Matt. 25:14-30), giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2), and station in life (1 Cor. 7:20-24). Philemon was a wealthy man and Onesimus was his slave, but they were not required to be on the same economic or social standing; only in Christ were they equals [Phile.15,16].
 - 3) Galatians 3:28: "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."
- g. "Thus, when the Corinthians gave according to their ability, as the Macedonians had, there would be equality between the Corinthians and the Macedonians" (Camp, p.191).
- 1) Our work for the Lord and the amount we give to the Cause are determined by our talents and possessions; as each person has different talents, so each has different degrees of wealth. However, each member of a local congregation is duty-bound to support the work of the congregation; the kind and degree of work and the amount of money contributed by each, are determined by the individual's own situation.
 - 2) The Macedonians gave only a small amount owing to their poverty, but they gave with willing liberality; the Corinthians could give a much larger amount owing to their wealth, and they were to give with the same kind of willing liberality which characterized the Macedonians. With these congregations giving liberally according to their ability, there would be equality between them.
 - 3) Paul did not intend to impoverish one group so that another group might be enriched; instead, he sought to obtain help from those who were able to give so that the ones in genuine need might be fed and clothed.
3. Verse 15: "As it is written, He that *had gathered* much had nothing over; and he that *had gathered* little had no lack."
- a. One of the distinctive features of Christianity is the liberality with which its adherents come to the aid of those who are in need, especially of their own number. "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" (Gal. 6:9-10).

- b. The quotation in this verse is from Exodus 16:18: "And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating." The reference is to Israel gathering the manna God sent. There was enough for everyone; those who had small need, gathered only as much as they needed; those with larger needs had plenty to satisfy that need. There was neither a super-abundance nor a shortage.
- c. If Christians and congregations will give liberally as we all are taught, none of us will need to go hungry, or naked, or without shelter. One Christian or one congregation might be in desperate need, but others will have enough to share with the needy ones. God's providence can effect great things, but he expects and requires his people to do all they can do to help each other. Following God's will in this matter, we will come to the aid of our brethren whenever possible, and fulfill the law of Christ.
- d. The gospel does not teach communism. It does not teach that those who are willfully idle should be maintained by those whose industry has provided them with plenty. "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread" (2 Thess. 3:10-12).

D. 2 Corinthians 8:16-24: Arrangements for Handling the Contribution to the Judeans.

- 1. Verses 16-17: "But thanks *be* to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you."
 - a. Titus had been in Corinth. One of the things he tried to accomplish was to build within the Corinthian saints the benevolent spirit which the Macedonians had developed: "Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also" (8:7).
 - b. The apostle expressed gratitude unto God for having given Titus the same sincere concern for the saints at Corinth which Paul had for them. He does not state how God had given that young man this disposition, but it was not by some direct supernatural operation. If so, then God is obligated by his impartiality to do the same for every other Christian. The means by which God created this concern in Titus' heart was through the gospel principles which Titus had imbibed.
 - c. Because a Christian earnestly follows the will of Christ, he will love his fellow saints. Love is the willing of good toward others; it will be expressed in practical ways. Since Titus loved those brethren, he readily accepted the instructions to go to Corinth, and do the work that needed to be done there. This verse may indicate that Titus delivered the first letter.
- 2. Verse 18: "And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise *is* in the gospel throughout all the churches."
 - a. The apostle makes references later to this same brother, but in neither case does he identify him by name. "I desired Titus, and with *him* I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? *walked we* not in the same steps?" (2 Cor. 12:18).
 - b. The brother indicated was well known by many congregations across the brotherhood. Many scholars through the years have maintained that this unnamed brother was Luke, the author of the gospel bearing his name and Acts.
 - 1) On the second missionary tour of Paul, Luke had accompanied Paul from Troas to Philippi (Acts 16:8-12). He remained in Philippi when Paul went on from there through Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and finally on to Corinth (Acts 17:1-34; 18:1). Notice the pronouns Luke uses in the narrative [*they*]. "And **they** passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately **we** endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to

- Neapolis; And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days” (Acts 16:8-12).
- 2) When Paul was returning to Jerusalem from Corinth on his third missionary tour, Luke rejoined his company as they came northward through Macedonia (Acts 20:1-6). Notice again the pronouns used by Luke. Paul and his company brought with them the collection.
 - 3) Romans 15:31: "That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which *I have* for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints."
 - 4) Acts 21:17 shows that Paul and his company were warmly received by the brethren, which implies that they happily accepted the needed funds.
- c. The brother was known by a great many Christians. The gospel of Luke, from internal evidence, was written with the Gentiles primarily in mind. Many scholars think that Luke wrote his account of the gospel during his long stay in Macedonia (about six years), and that all the congregations in that general area were very familiar with him through his inspired record of the gospel.
 - d. However, if it were important that we know with certainty the identity of this brother, his name would have been made known in the text.
3. Verse 19: "And not *that* only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and *declaration of your ready mind.*"
 - a. The churches involved in the great contribution for Judea had chosen this brother to accompany Paul to Jerusalem when he delivered it to the church there. The company was made up of Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus (Acts 20:2-5). Luke includes himself in the party in Acts 20:5-6 by using the pronouns *us* and *we*. This adds additional weight to the belief that the brother of the previous verse was Luke. If he is not Luke, certainly he is one of the other seven men named in Acts 20:4.
 - b. Notice that this brother was selected by two or more congregations in one area to come to the assistance of another congregation. The churches of Macedonia selected Luke to go with Paul; these congregations acted in conjunction with the church at Corinth to bring aid to the church at Jerusalem. This is an example of church cooperation in the realm of benevolence; since it is right for churches to cooperate in this activity, it is likewise right for them to cooperate in the realm of evangelism.
 - c. Paul and his company carried *this grace* with them as they went to Jerusalem. This is a reference to the gift, the funds which had been collected by the churches. This company was charged with the responsibility of getting the money to Jerusalem and into the hand of the elders of that congregation.
 - 1) Acts 11:30: "Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." [This was an earlier gift sent by the saints in Antioch to the elders at Jerusalem for the benefit of the needy brethren in Judea].
 - 2) Acts 21:17-18: "And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present."
 - d. This operation brought glory to the Lord. When these benevolent saints collected the funds and sent them to the church at Jerusalem to assist the needy of that locality, they brought glory to Christ. These brethren demonstrated their faith in Christ, and their love both for Christ and the needy, in making this contribution. When some sincere soul follows the will of the Lord, he brings glory to Christ by his obedience. We walk by faith.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."
 - 2) Romans 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
 - 3) Acts 15:7: "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe."
 - e. When the contribution was made and delivered, the heart of the contributors was revealed for all to see. They were ready to give; they cheerfully contributed; and their offering was duly appreciated by

- those who knew it.
4. Verses 20-21: "Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men."
 - a. The apostle took precautions lest anyone find fault with any of his dealings. He sought to avoid any possibility that he or his co-workers should be blamed in administering the abundant gift they handled.
 - b. Paul had many enemies who would use any pretext to level a charge against him. The apostle knew it, and made sure that there was no cause for anyone to doubt his honesty. The cause of Christ was far too great to permit the enemy an opportunity to assault it.
 - c. He was careful to be certain that he did nothing amiss either in the sight of the Lord or before men. If he was true to the Lord, men could make no proper charge against him.
 - 1) Romans 12:17: "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men."
 - 2) 1 Peter 2:12: "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."
 5. Verse 22: "And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which *I have* in you."
 - a. Having selected Titus and the unnamed brother of verses 16-19 to go to Corinth, the apostle refers to yet another brother of high moral character whom he sent with them. This brother's identity is unknown.
 - b. This brother had proved himself to Paul to have been diligent in many things. This brother's confidence in the Corinthians had deepened his diligence toward those brethren. Paul had every reason to believe this brother would be a faithful man to work with the Corinthian saints.
 - c. 2 Corinthians 8:22: "And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have many times proved earnest in many things, but now much more earnest, by reason of the great confidence which he hath in you" (ASV). The marginal reading in the KJV agrees with the ASV rendering in relating the great confidence of the verse to the brother, instead of to Paul.
 6. Verse 23: "Whether *any do inquire* of Titus, *he is* my partner and fellowhelper concerning you: or our brethren *be inquired of*, *they are* the messengers of the churches, *and* the glory of Christ."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "Whether any inquire about Titus, he is my partner and my fellow-worker to you-ward, or our brethren, they are the messengers of the churches, they are the glory of Christ."
 - 2) NKJ: "If anyone inquires about Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren are inquired about, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ."
 - b. If anyone should question the credentials of Titus, they were to be told that he was Paul's partner and co-laborer. This would satisfy those who acknowledged Paul to be an apostle of Christ.
 - c. If anyone should inquire regarding these other two brethren, they were to be told that the churches they came from had selected them to represent their home congregations.
 - 1) The word translated *messengers* is from the Greek word translated *apostles* in other passages. The word *apostle* means *one sent on a mission*, and could properly be used of men chosen by a church to do a certain job. These two men were not apostles of Christ, but apostles of the churches. They had absolutely no authority to make decisions, or in any other way, to legislate for the Lord. Modern denominations send messengers to their conventions in which they assert the authority to change, legislate, and annul in matters over which no man has any authority. Man-made organizations may do as they please—God is not involved in their dealings. But in God's affairs, only he as the right to direct matters.
 - 2) Christ's apostles were hand-picked representatives of the Lord, and specially empowered to act in his behalf. But even the Lord's apostles were not permitted to originate any doctrine or practice

- on their own; what they were inspired to reveal was the Lord's will.
- a) Matthew 19:28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 2:9-14: "But as it is written, 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, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."
 - c) 1 Corinthians 14:37: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."
 - d) Hebrews 2:1-4: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
 - e) Matthew 16:16-19: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - f) Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
- d. The work of these messengers had to do with the great contribution being collected; they served the local congregations they represented, and brought glory to Christ in doing this good work.
7. Verse 24: "Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf."
- a. The apostle calls on the Corinthians to demonstrate proof of their love to these three men, and to the other local churches. They could do this by fulfilling their vow to give a substantial amount to the collection for the saints.
 - b. Paul had spoken highly of these Corinthians; he called on them here to show that his commendations were not empty words. During the warmth of a comfortable moment, it is easy to make vows that seem easy, but in the full light of cold reality, second thoughts may be forthcoming.
 - c. Paul admonishes them to fulfill their vow: "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only

to do, but also to be forward a year ago. Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have" (2 Cor. 8:8-11).

2 CORINTHIANS 9

A. 2 Corinthians 9:1-5: Preparations for Collecting Corinth's Gift.

1. Verses 1-2: "For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: for I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Macedonia, that Achaia hath been prepared for a year past; and your zeal hath stirred up very many of them."
 - 2) NKJ: "Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; 2 for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority."
 - b. It was unnecessary for Paul to write a detailed discussion of the plan for the collection for the saints; the details for this operation had been clearly presented to them a year earlier (cf. 8:10). It is not necessary that future generations should be given all the minute details of the arrangement; if it were important that we know them, they would have been given.
 - 1) It is sufficient for us to know that the plan involved a collection taken by each congregation; the congregations selected certain men to take charge of the money and deliver it to Jerusalem. This was a one-time operation.
 - 2) It was a voluntary program, in which each congregation decided to participate. Paul did not *command* them to participate (8:8-12). Ananias and Sapphira had the right to keep or sell their property (Acts 5:1ff). After selling it, how they used the proceeds was entirely their right to decide. However, they and every other Christian is under the God-given directive to give in accordance with their prosperity (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:12). Each congregation is obligated to do what it can to publish the gospel, help the needy, and edify its members (Eph. 4:12), to the extent of its ability, in keeping with the Scriptures, and in accordance with its best wisdom. The cheerful, abundant giving of the saints enables these good works to be done.
 - c. It was superfluous [an unnecessary inclusion of additional information] for the apostle to discuss the details of the plan; it was necessary to encourage their willing participation in the plan.
 - 1) A year earlier they had shown their willingness and intention to participate; Paul had used their example to motivate the Macedonians to take part in the plan. The zeal with which the Corinthians had initially committed themselves to the good work was a strong incentive to the brethren in Macedonia.
 - 2) Apparently, the early enthusiasm of the Corinthians for the plan had waned, or else Paul would not have needed to write so much to them about the need to fulfill the resolution they had made the preceding year.
 - d. The power of influence is great. The good example of an individual Christian or a congregation of Christians is a powerful stimulus for others. Corinth's initial declaration of support to help the needy in Judea had a strong impact on the Macedonians to give with liberality (8:1-5).
2. Verses 3-4: "Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready: Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting."
 - a. Other versions:

- 1) ASV: "But I have sent the brethren, that our glorying on your behalf may not be made void in this respect; that, even as I said, ye may be prepared: lest by any means, if there come with me any of Macedonia and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be put to shame in this confidence."
- 2) NKJ: "Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; lest if some Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this confident boasting."
- b. Paul had sent Titus and two other brethren who are unidentified by name (8:18, 22-23) to Corinth; they were sent to offer encouragement to the Corinthians to fulfill their original vow to send a collection to Judea.
- c. The apostle did not want the Corinthian saints to fall under an evil light, of failing to fulfill their announced promise. He did not want them to be found unprepared when the brethren from Macedonia arrived. Paul used the pronoun *we*, instead of *ye*, including himself as having part with the Corinthians. Since he had used their example as a means of urging others to participate in the gift, they and he would have been shamed if they of Corinth were not ready to consummate their pledge.
3. Verse 5: "Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up before hand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as *a matter of bounty*, and not as *of covetousness*."
 - a. Titus and his two co-laborers were dispatched to Corinth to make sure the collection was made ready when Paul came to take it to Jerusalem. Acts 20:1-6 identifies those who were in Paul's company, and thus were to accompany him when the money was delivered in Judea: "And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia. And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. These going before tarried for us at Troas. And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days."
 - b. The *bounty* is the gift of money being sent. He uses the words *bounty* and *covetousness* as opposites. The amount they gave was to be donated freely and gladly; covetousness was to have no part in their giving.
 - 1) If the collection had not been made, it would have to be taken up under rushed circumstances when Paul arrived. His plan at the time was to sail to Palestine directly from Corinth's eastern port; because of enemies, the company traveled by land back through Macedonia (Acts 20:3).
 - 2) The time he could spend at Corinth might be cut short, and his departure might be sudden. If the contribution was collected at the last minute, covetousness might have been more of a factor. If they had time to consider the gift to be offered, they would be able to make it with resolve of heart; they could be taught more fully the proper motives for giving, and could give with sincerity, and avoid covetousness.
 - 3) The ASV uses the word *extortion* instead of *covetousness*. If the contribution was made only after Paul's arrival, the brethren might make their gift *under pressure*, thinking that they had to give; their motive for giving would be impure.

B. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7: Conditions of Acceptable Giving.

1. Verse 6: "But this *I say*, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth

bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

- a. Urging them to give generously, Paul affirms that we are blessed in accordance to what we give. The money each saint gives is essential to the cause of Christ; without the contributions, very little could be accomplished, by the church. However, the greater benefit is done to the individual giver. "Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account" (Phil. 4:17).
 - b. Therefore, to give sparingly is to reap sparingly; to give bountifully is to reap bountifully. Our Lord taught that there is a greater blessing in giving than in receiving (Acts 20:35). When we receive some material gift from another, it is soon used, and before long we forget we ever had it. Can you remember what you received as a Christmas gift in 1979? What gift did your spouse give you for your birthday in 1965?
 - c. When we give generously each first day of the week, we develop and cultivate a willingness to give that can be obtained in no other way. Without this spiritual trait, we cannot give bountifully or cheerfully. Without this disposition, we will remain immature babes in Christ (at best). If we do not develop this spiritual quality, we may deprive ourselves of our heavenly reward.
 - d. This principle appears many times in the Lord's teachings.
 - 1) Matthew 16:24-25: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."
 - 2) Matthew 19:29-30: "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many *that re* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first."
 - 3) Matthew 20:26-27: "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:"
 - 4) Luke 6:38: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."
 - 5) Luke 14:13-14 "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."
 - e. Bountiful giving has more to do with the sacrifice with which the gift is made, than the amount that is given; it has more to do with the spirit with which it is offered, than the size of the check. The amount of our contribution and the attitude with which we give it are determined by the strength of our faith and the fervency of our love.
2. Verse 7: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."
- a. The inspired apostle did not want the Corinthians to give with a grudging heart. A heart that begrudges the amount it gives is a covetous, reluctant heart. Such a heart cannot give cheerfully; it cannot give with any profit to itself.
 - b. Our contribution is not to be made from an attitude of necessity. A robber could get us to part with our hard-earned money by threatening us with a weapon. He might ask us to give him our money, and we might quickly hand it over to him. But we gave it to him only under duress; we would not have given it to him without the coercion of his gun.
 - 1) "When the contribution basket passes in front of me, do I give or do I feel that I am being robbed?" (Camp., p.193). Do I resent giving to the church? Do I try to excuse my miserly giving by

charging the church with improperly or unwisely using the money? Any gift offered from this kind of heart would be giving by necessity.

- 2) Would I be willing for everyone to know what I give? Would I be embarrassed to be the first to put money in the basket? If so, why do I give? What motivates me to give anything?
- c. Our contribution is not tithing. Tithing belonged to the Old Testament; it was never made a part of the New Testament order. If tithing had been in effect, the principles of Second Corinthians eight and nine would not have been given. We would be required to give a flat ten-percent of our income; giving would not be based on "as God hath prospered us."
- d. Contributions are to be given in faith (Heb. 11:6). To give sparingly is to give without faith. Absence or weakness of faith will keep us from giving "as God hath prospered us." Cheerful giving is done by faith.
- e. Our contribution is to be done with purpose of heart. We are to give as we purpose in our hearts, not as we "find in our pocket." The ability to purpose in our hearts derives from the will-power feature of our heart. We decide on the amount we are able to give by logical reasoning. If we base our gift only on emotion, we might give too much, and cause our family to suffer unnecessary want, or we might be filled with anger or malice, and give too little.
- f. Our contribution is to be given with cheerfulness. Since God loves a cheerful giver, we are all to be cheerful givers, for we want to please God in all things. Since he loves cheerful giving, he hates uncheerful giving.

C. 2 Corinthians 9:8-15: Benefits of Acceptable Giving.

1. Verse 8: "And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work."
 - a. "This was a promise to them if they would faithfully do as God directed in relieving the poor and carrying forward his work, he would make all favors and blessings abound unto them" (Lipscomb, p.123).
 - b. McGarvey:
 - 1) "God is able to bestow every blessing, both temporal and spiritual, and so he can give blessings to those who dispense them, and thus enable them to abound in good works which they are performing. That this is true is shown by the Psalmist's description of the man who fears the Lord. Such a man is profuse in his liberality and his remembrance of the poor, and he is able to keep up his right-doing in giving, for the lord continually supplies him with means to that end.
 - 2) "We should, however, note that Paul's words here, like those at Ps. 91: 11, 12, which Satan quoted to the Lord in his temptation (Matt. 4: 6), are not to be so interpreted and applied as to tempt the Lord."
 - c. God makes all grace abound toward those who give as they are taught. That we gain by giving is an established principle of both farming and business.
 - 1) Farmers invest time, thought, money, and labor in planting their crops. They have good reason to expect a return on their expenses and efforts. Businessmen invest their time, labor, and money with the expectation of obtaining a reasonable profit.
 - 2) God offered his blessings to Old Testament people when they followed his will.
 - a) Proverbs 11:24-25: "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and *there is* that withholdeth more than is meet, but *it tendeth* to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."

- b) Malachi 3:10: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*"
 - 3) When we invest our hearts, time, and strength in putting God's kingdom and righteousness first, we rightfully expect to be provided the necessities of life as we live here (Matt. 6:33).
 - 4) When we invest our all in serving the cause of Christ, we have good reason to expect God's spiritual and eternal blessings. This does not mean that we have earned anything.
 - a) 1 Peter 1:3-5: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."
 - b) Matthew 6:19-20: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."
 - d. Giving develops in us the spirit of sacrifice which we must have in order to please God.
 - 1) Luke 9:23: "And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
 - 2) Luke 14:33: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."
 - 3) Philippians 4:15-17: "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account."
 - e. If the Corinthians gave as they were taught, Paul said that God would cause them to have everything they needed in order to do every good work. Giving with liberality would not diminish their ability to do; the more they gave, the more they were given.
2. Verses 9-10: "(As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for *your* food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness)."
- a. These two parenthetical verses illustrate and apply the principle of verse eight. Paul quotes from Psalm 112:9: "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour." The Lord blesses the righteous man who helps the needy.
 - b. Proverbs 19:17 "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." God notes those who aid the poor. It is as if the gift to the poor man is a debt which the Lord takes upon himself to repay.
 - c. The farmer puts his seed into the ground; God gives it back to him many times over, in the harvest. "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Eccl. 11:1). The God who returns the farmer's investment is able to return the Christian's investment. God is able to multiply our gifts even as he is able to multiply the farmer's seed, and thus give us a greater means to do more good.
 - d. "And he that, in the economy of nature, makes returns to the sower, so that he not only has his seed again, but bread for food, shall in like manner in the domain of grace, supply and multiply the seeds of charity which you sow, so that you will not only be able to do again the deed of charity which you

- have done, but he will also bless all your other acts of righteousness by making them fruitful" (McGarvey, pp.217f).
- e. Psalm 37:25: "I have been young, and *now* am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."
3. Verses 11-12: "Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God." "While you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God" (NKJ).
- a. The ASV gives this rendering of the verses: "Ye being enriched in everything unto all liberality, which worketh through us thanksgiving to God. For the ministration of this service not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanksgivings unto God."
- b. Because the Corinthians had been blessed by the Lord to be able to give bountifully to the good work of aiding the needy ones in Judea, Paul and the Jewish Christians were filled with gratitude for the Corinthians. Their gift engendered this sincere gratitude, and led to God being praised more abundantly.
- c. The collection for the saints not only supplied the needs of those saints, but it was the cause of many expressions of thanks being directed unto God.
- d. On the first day of the week, in the Lord's day assembly, those saints gave liberally to the good work at hand; the very act of giving of their means tendered worship unto God. On the Lord's day, as we give to God as we have been prospered, we do so from the right motives and with the right disposition of heart, and in the process, we glorify God.
4. Verses 13-14: "Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal distribution unto them, and unto all *men*; And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you."
- a. The ASV gives this reading of this passage: "Seeing that through the proving of you by this ministration they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all. While they themselves also, with supplication on your behalf, long after you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you."
- b. Paul tells the Corinthians that their liberal gift proves their Christian character, which causes the Jewish Christians to glorify God for the manifestation of their obedience to the gospel. Those Jewish saints likewise glorified God on account of the liberal contribution they raised in behalf of the poor in Judea.
- c. Notice that the contribution was intended for "them" (the Jewish Christians in Judea) and "unto all" (others who were not Christians in that impoverished province). It is Scriptural for congregations to assist the needy who are not Christians.
- 1) Galatians 6:9-10: "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."
- 2) 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15: "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*. See that none render evil for evil unto any *man*; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all *men*." The underlined phrase includes both believer and unbeliever; the similar phrase in the text does also.
- d. The Jewish saints prayed in behalf of their Gentile brethren. That they longed for them indicates the

sincere affection those believing Jews had for the Gentile believers.

5. Verse 15: "Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift."
 - a. What is this unspeakable gift? Something that is unspeakable is something that is inexpressible; it is something that cannot be expressed fully in human language; it is something beyond our ability to verbally describe. A different Greek word is used in 2 Corinthians 12:4: "How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."
 - b. "Of course, the Christ himself is God's great gift to man, but the personality of Christ is not in the trend of Paul's argument. The thought that fills his mind is that the Corinthians, by their liberality, are showing themselves truly changed and converted by the gospel of Christ, and that this gospel, modifying and softening the Jewish mind, is preparing it to step over the middle wall of partition, and receive the Gentiles as part of the family of God. For the unspeakable gift, therefore, of a gospel which works such blessed changes in the bigoted, stubborn and selfish hearts of men, Paul gives thanks. The thanksgiving, therefore, is proximately for the gospel and ultimately for Christ, the author of the gospel" (McGarvey, p.219).

2 CORINTHIANS 10

A. 2 Corinthians 10:1-6: The Weapons of Christian Warfare.

1. Verse 1: "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence *am* base among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you." "Now I Paul myself entreat you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I who in your presence *am* lowly among you, but being absent *am* of good courage toward you" (ASV).
 - a. This part of the letter is addressed to the apostle's enemies at Corinth. In the earlier parts of the epistle, he spoke primarily to those who were sound in the faith, and accepted Paul as a genuine apostle of Christ. In this chapter, he will quote and expose the false charges his opponents alleged against him.
 - b. Introducing the present subject matter, Paul specifies that it is he, an apostle of Christ, that writes the following material; neither Timothy nor any other man is connected to the things he will say. It is Paul, the inspired apostle, who writes. It was he who had been attacked, so it is from him the rebuttal comes—by inspiration.
 - c. However, instead of emphasizing his apostolic authority in dealing with the issue, he bases his instructions on the meekness and gentleness of Christ. At the first, his message is one that makes an appeal, a plea that follows the example of Christ. As Christ is meek and gentle, so Paul imitates the spirit of the Savior. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5).
 - 1) Matthew 11:28-30: "Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 11:1: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."
 - 3) Ephesians 5:1: "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children."
 - d. Some scholars think that Paul uses their view of him in making the concluding statement of the verse: when he was with them, he evinced a base (lowly) disposition, but when he was absent, he took on boldness. In verses ten and eleven, Paul plainly states this to be their estimation of him. It is very common for worldly-minded people to misinterpret gentleness and meekness as cowardice or weakness. Greatness of character is determined by such qualities as love, meekness, quietness of spirit, kindness, and willingness to serve—not by an overbearing, brash, loud demeanor.
2. Verse 2: "But I beseech *you*, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh." "But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh" (NKJ).
 - a. Having introduced the plea in verse one, he states the specific appeal here. It was up to them to decide whether he would be bold when he was present with them. His appeal is that they would so change that there would be no need for boldness. If he showed boldness to them when he came, he would fulfill the warnings indicated later in this chapter. If they repented of their rebellion, he would be able to show gentleness toward them.
 - b. McGarvey:
 - 1) "Hitherto the apostle had associated Timothy as a joint author of this letter, but as he now prepares to deal with his enemies and matters personal to himself, he disengages himself from all entangling fellowships and steps forth alone to defend his name and influence. That there may be no doubt as to his purpose in thus standing alone, and that his enemies may understand the spirit in which he presents himself before them, he quotes their own belittling description of him: for they had described him as a coward who threatened and thundered when absent, but was meek and lowly

enough when present.

- 2) "Accepting for the moment this false estimate of himself, he beseeches them by the meekness and gentleness of Christ (for Jesus ever preferred gentleness to severity) that they may so amend their conduct as to make their estimate of him true thus far; viz.: that at his coming he may indeed be permitted to show them gentleness, and may not, as he now confidently expected, be compelled to show his severity toward those who accused him of conducting himself as an unprincipled worldling."
 - c. Paul expected to be bold against some in their midst when he arrived; these ones were they who reckoned that Paul lived according to the flesh. Their view of the apostle was that he only wanted the worldly benefits which he would accrue by being accepted as an apostle. But there were no such benefits! He would have no way to obtain any personal gain from the collection being put together for the Judeans. There were many afflictions and deprivations, but no worldly rewards that came to the apostle. Furthermore, it is certain that Paul did not live a sinful life.
3. Verse 3: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh."
 - a. The apostle and every other Christian lives in a fleshly body in this life, but the warfare we wage is not accomplished by worldly means or for worldly profit. Paul was a man, but his authority was not from any human source, and his aim was not to cultivate human approval.
 - b. If Paul showed boldness toward his enemies in Corinth, it would not be done with literal weapons of war. Peter was commanded to put up his sword when the mob came to arrest Christ (Matt. 26:50-52). A Christian's weapons are entirely spiritual, and his warfare pertains to the spiritual realm of the soul.
 4. Verse 4: "(For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds)."
 - a. This is a parenthetical statement intended to expand the thought with which the previous verse ended. The weapons which Paul would bring to bear when he returned to Corinth were not literal weapons designed for earthly battles.
 - 1) When Ananias and his wife were executed for sinful conduct, no carnal weapon was employed (Acts 5:1-11). It was not Peter who slew them. God exercised his miraculous power in punishing these wicked people.
 - 2) It was God who smote Elymas with blindness: "Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand" (Acts 13:9-11).
 - 3) It was God's power that blinded the men of Sodom and brought about the utter destruction of the city (Gen. 19).
 - 4) It will be God's power that will destroy the wicked in the last day:
 - a) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - b) Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
 - c) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that

- know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”
- 5) It was God's power that raised Christ from the dead, and dealt the mortal blow to Satan.
 - a) Hebrews 2:14: “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”
 - b) Genesis 3:15: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”
 - 6) It is God's power in the gospel which brings about the salvation of souls.
 - a) Romans 1:16-17: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
 - b) James 1:18: “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”
 - c) James 1:21: “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”
 - d) Hebrews 4:12: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
 - b. When Paul, or some other saint who possessed spiritual gifts, cast out demons, God's power was being exercised; no mere man can have such a capability.
 - c. When Paul, or some inspired person of the first century, or some uninspired person of our time, uses the gospel to bring sinners to obey Christ, the power being exercised is God's; it is not by some worldly means. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:16-17).
 - d. It is only the word of God that can bring Christians to spiritual maturity (Heb. 4:12; Jas. 1:18,21; 2 Pet. 1:5-11.)
 - 1) Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - 3) 2 Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."
 - 4) Ephesians 4:12: “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”
 - 5) Hebrews 5:12-14: “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (NKJ).

- e. Since it is the word of God which brings us to salvation and spiritual maturity, notice some other things which are often used (in vain) to try to accomplish these noble ends.
 - 1) When a society rejects the gospel plan of salvation, foolish and untaught men turn to gimmicks, entertainment, emotional trickery, preacher *dynamics*, or other false doctrines to convince people they have been saved.
 - 2) When the world offers so much entertainment to the people that they are blinded to true, acceptable worship (John 4:24), worldly-minded preachers resort to entertainment, gimmicks, and trickery in order to retain their audiences.
 - f. The weapons by which we win spiritual victories are themselves spiritual in nature. These weapons are the various features of the gospel of Christ. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. 6:10-18).
 - g. The strongholds which Christians are equipped to overthrow are spiritual bastions of evil. In the first century, demons were cast out of those who were possessed by them. Then and now, when the gospel is preached, believed, and obeyed, the guilt, practice, and penalty of sin are removed from those who submit to the gospel. When Christians grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, the wicked designs of Satan are uprooted. When the truth of the gospel is preached, the errors of corrupt men are exposed and nullified. Only the complete and unpolluted gospel of Christ is able to accomplish these tremendous results. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."
 - h. McGarvey:
 - 1) "With this power, therefore, I am ready to come to punish all the disobedient; but I pause that all who desire to repent may do so, and after the number of the obedient is made full I will punish the rebellious remnant that remain.
 - 2) "In verse 4 Paul evidently alludes to the crow, a large military engine with a great claw to it, which was used to pull down the walls of castles, forts and other strongholds. Stanley thinks that Paul has in mind in this passage certain military operations which occurred in Cilicia, the province in which he was born. In the hills and mountains of that locality, certain bands of pirates and robbers entrenched themselves, and for awhile withstood the Roman arms.
 - 3) "Cicero made some headway in suppressing them, and on his return was honored with a Roman triumph, but the final victory was achieved by Pompey the generation before Paul was born. Pompey made great use of the crow, for he pulled down one hundred and twenty fortresses. But the crow was then in as general use as the cannon is now, and a writer would hardly be thought to refer to Gettysburg if lie happened to use cannonading as a figure of speech. However, Pompey's campaign is a useful bit of history, for it shows us how forceful the figure was which Paul employed."
5. Verse 5: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

- a. This statement connects with verse three, where Paul affirmed that he did not conduct a fleshly warfare. The aim of the conflicts he entered was the destruction of the bulwarks of spiritual wickedness. These included every kind of sin and religious error. If Paul's teachings in this passage have any merit, there must be an unchanging standard of right and wrong, truth and error. The advocates of the *new hermeneutics* meet with an insurmountable obstacle at every turn, and must eventually give up their theory [that the Bible is not an absolute standard] or deny the Scriptures!
- b. Paul sought to cast down everything that exalted itself against God's knowledge. *The knowledge of God* is that body of truth which sets forth the information which God has revealed to mankind. This is the word of God.
 - 1) Proverbs 2:5: "Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God."
 - 2) Hosea 4:1: "Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because *there is* no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land."
 - 3) Hosea 6:6: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."
 - 4) Romans 11:33: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 15:34: "Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak *this* to your shame."
 - 6) Colossians 1:10: "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."
 - 7) 2 Peter 1:2-3: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."
- c. Paul fought against every imagination that exalted itself against God's revealed knowledge. The imaginations of mankind cannot replace the unchangeable counsel of the Almighty.
 - 1) Genesis 6:5: "And God saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually."
 - 2) Genesis 8:21: "And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done."
 - 3) Jeremiah 11:8: "Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do; but they did *them* not."
 - 4) Jeremiah 13:10: "This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing."
 - 5) Jeremiah 18:12: "And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart."
 - 6) Luke 1:51: "He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts."
- d. Paul fought against every high thing that exalted itself against God's revealed knowledge. Man's wisdom creates schemes, beliefs, and theories which contradict God's word. When someone rejects

some precept of the Bible, he will try to replace that truth with an idea of his own. He thinks that his invention is superior to what God has revealed.

- 1) When the Biblical account of creation fell into disfavor with man, he invented an hypothesis by which he could explain the existence of the universe and the earth with its teeming life.
 - 2) When man became discontented with worshipping the living God of the Bible, he invented a host of *gods* and *goddesses* that suit his every whim.
 - 3) When man saw that the rejection of the Biblical standard of morality led to decadence, crime, and rebellion which ruined society, he tried to manufacture a makeshift moral standard which would heal or stifle the corruption which surrounded him. But there can be neither ethics nor morality apart from God and his word! The only power that will dampen immorality and engender morality is a genuine belief in eternal punishment and reward (Matt. 25:19-31)—and love for God.
 - a) John 5:28-29: “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”
 - b) Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”
 - c) Romans 14:10-12: “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”
 - d) Mark 12:29-31: “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”
 - e) 1 John 5:3: “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”
 - 4) The vain reasonings of finite men cannot replace the eternal edicts of the infinite God of the Bible. "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain" (1 Cor. 3:18-20).
 - e. Paul's warfare sought to bring every thought into obedience to the will of Christ. This was for the immediate and the eternal good of each individual. Obedience to Christ works no evil to any man; it brings about the greatest possible good.
 - 1) Obedience to God eliminates all crime, hurtful actions, damaging words, and unholy thoughts from being done by the person who obeys. It protects the individual from all manner of harm that he might do to himself, and keeps him from doing those things to others.
 - 2) Obedience leads one to live a higher and more noble life; he will be a blessing to society in general, and bring no harm at all to anyone.
 - 3) Obedience eventually will sweep us through the portals of heaven, into the eternal kingdom of God! (2 Pet. 1: 5-12).
6. Verse 6: "And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled." “And

being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled” (NKJ).

- a. The warfare Paul waged placed him in readiness to bring forth God's justice upon those who are guilty. In the Judgment of the last day (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12; Rev. 20:12-15), disobedience will be punished (2 Thess. 1:7-9) and obedience will be rewarded (Heb. 6:10; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; 2 Thess. 1:5-6; Mark 10:29-30).
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 5:10: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”
 - 2) Romans 14:10-12: “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”
 - 3) Revelation 20:12-15: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”
 - 4) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”
 - 5) Hebrews 6:10: “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.”
 - 6) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17: “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”
 - 7) 2 Thessalonians 1:5-6: “Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you.”
 - 8) Mark 10:29-30: “And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.”
- b. However, the administration of divine justice in the context is to a more immediate case. When Paul returned to Corinth, those false teachers who had prated against his authority in his absence, and lodged many evil charges against his character, would have to face the truth. We have no way to know whether some direct act of divine punishment was in the offing, such as Ananias and Sapphira met, but certainly their sins would be exposed for all to see. If they did not repent, they would be

disciplined by the church, as was the adulterous man (1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:1-11).

- 1) 2 Corinthians 3:6: "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 3:14-15: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart."
- c. If the guilty members at Corinth repented, the purpose of Paul's epistles and visit would have been accomplished. This was clearly the end the apostle sought to reach.

B. 2 Corinthians 10:7-11: Paul and His Enemies.

1. Verse 7: "Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he *is* Christ's, even so *are* we Christ's."
 - a. He asks whether they passed judgment on how things appeared on the outside. Anyone with even a little experience in life should know that things are not always as they appear to be. Each observant person who has lived several years could give scores of examples. "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).
 - b. Without considering the whole story, it might have appeared to some in Corinth that Paul was weak when he was present but wrote strong letters when he was absent. He is asking them here to examine all the evidence before making a rash or shallow judgment.
 - c. When he was present with them, he exhibited the spirit of Christ; this is what the Lord requires of every follower. Paul demonstrated for his own good and for their emulation the kind of disposition that every Christian is to develop, and practice sincerely. However, when sin or error challenges the truth, God's people are to be strong and courageous in opposing it. Our Lord was not being inconsistent when he showed love and kindness to many, but was as a lion when he exposed sin and error (Matt. 23). He was (and is) the Lamb of God (Rev. 13:8) and the Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5). Both of these features are to characterize Christians.
 - d. The false teachers who opposed Paul claimed to belong to Christ; their claims rested only on their assertions. Paul could make the same assertion, and does so here. The mere outward claim to be a Christian does not prove the contention. They had not proved their own righteousness; they had not proved their charges against Paul. Compare: "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7).
 - e. Paul will show later that when he was in Corinth, he brought with him the "signs of an apostle" (2 Cor. 12:11-13). These were miraculous activities which only a genuine apostle of Christ was empowered to do. He had proved his credentials.
2. Verse 8: "For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed."
 - a. Paul's authority, including the power to perform those supernatural works, unique to an apostle, had been amply demonstrated in reality; he had proved the reality of his authority by the arguments he had set forth; the miracles he wrought proved irrefutably that he was a real apostle of Christ. But he could say much more concerning this authority.
 - b. He was given this apostolic authority and power for the edification of men, not to bring about their destruction. An apostle's authority was the greatest on earth given to men; if he were to boast to the most extreme degree, his boasting would not have surpassed the glory of his authority. Whatever

- authority the false teachers at Corinth claimed to have had, it was nothing in comparison to that employed by any of Christ's apostles!
- c. Paul is not to be understood as exalting himself by this argumentation; rather, he is showing the false teachers that their charges against him were empty. When he directly identified the awesome power he was enabled to exercise, he stated plainly that he was not behind any of the apostles in authority, and then added, "though I be nothing" (2 Cor. 12:11).
3. Verse 9: "That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters."
 - a. Paul did not write to strike terror in the hearts of his faithful readers. He had no such reservations with respect to the false apostles at Corinth: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor. 11:13-15).
 - b. In writing to them, he sought to spare them from whatever punishment God would mete out to the disobedient when he returned to Corinth. They would soon find that not only his letters were powerful, but he was capable of dispensing severe rebuke and even punishment in person (cf. Acts 13:8-12). God saw fit to blind a certain Jewish false prophet. We have no reason to believe that God intended to take direct, supernatural action against the errorists in Corinth to punish them physically, but since he had done so in other situations, he might do it again.
 - c. "There is evident allusion to the representations made by the false teachers, that Paul wrote in the authoritative tone which he assumed merely to frighten his readers, having neither the power nor the purpose to carry his threats into execution" (Lipscomb, p.132).
 4. Verse 10: "For *his* letters, say they, *are* weighty and powerful; but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "For, His letters, they say, are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account."
 - 2) NKJ: "For his letters," they say, "are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."
 - b. Vincent:
 - 1) **Weighty** [*bareiai*]. In Classical Greek, besides the physical sense of "heavy," the word very generally implies something "painful or oppressive." As applied to persons, "severe, stern." In later Greek it has sometimes the meaning of "grave or dignified," and by the later Greek rhetoricians it was applied to oratory, in the sense of "impressive," as here.
 - 2) **Weak**. "No one can even cursorily read Paul's epistles without observing that he was aware of something in his aspect or his personality which distressed him with an agony of humiliation—something which seems to force him, against every natural instinct of his disposition, into language which sounds to himself like a boastfulness which was abhorrent to him, but which he finds to be more necessary to himself than to other men. It is as though he felt that his appearance was against him.... His language leaves on us the impression of one who was acutely sensitive, and whose sensitiveness of temperament has been aggravated by a meanness of presence which is indeed forgotten by the friends who know him, but which raises in strangers a prejudice not always overcome" (Farrar). [We must remember that Paul was writing by inspiration, and did not choose the message or the words he delivered—Bob Winton].
 - 3) **Bodily presence**.

- a) All the traditions as to Paul's personal appearance are late. A bronze medal discovered in the cemetery of Domitilla at Rome, and ascribed to the first or second century, represents the apostle with a bald, round, well-developed head; rather long, curling beard; high forehead; prominent nose; and open, staring eye. The intellectual character of the face is emphasized by the contrast with the portrait of Peter, which faces Paul's.
- (1) Peter's forehead is flat, the head not so finely developed, the face commonplace, the cheek-bones high, the eye small, and the hair and beard short, thick, and curling.
 - (2) An ivory diptych of the fourth century, reproduced in Mr. Lewin's "Life of Paul," contains two portraits. In the one he is sitting in an official chair, with uplifted hand and two fingers raised, apparently in the act of ordination. The face is oval, the beard is long and pointed, the moustache is full, the forehead is high, the head is bald, and the eyes are small and weak. The other portrait represents him in the act of throwing off the viper.
 - (3) A forgery of the fourth century, under the name of Lucian, alludes to him as "the bald-headed, hook-nosed Galilean." In the "Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles" mention is made of one Dioscorus, the bald shipmaster, who followed Paul to Rome, and was mistaken for him and beheaded in his stead. In the "Acts of Paul and Thekla," a third-century romance, he is described as "short, bald, bow-legged, with meeting eyebrows, hook-nosed, full of grace." John of Antioch, in the sixth century, says that he was round-shouldered, with aquiline nose, greyish eyes, meeting eyebrows, and ample beard.
 - (4) [Note: *These descriptions are very likely faulty and are not to be taken as absolutes. It is not important for us to know what Biblical people looked like physically; it is more essential that we see their spiritual condition and status* —Bob Winton]
- b) **Contemptible** [*exoutheneemenos*]. Literally, "made nothing of." The English Revised Version (1885): "of no account." [Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved].
- c. "Now even if I boast most freely that my authority is greater than yours, my boasting will not bring shame upon me if you put me to the test. You will find that I am not terrible in letters alone, but also in my presence, and you will find how falsely you have spoken when you said that my letters were the only part of me calculated to cause fear. However, I shall regret to thus demonstrate my power against you, for God gave me this power to use rather in building you up than in tearing you down. The apostle thus draws a subtle contrast between himself and his adversaries, for they had delighted in destructive rather than constructive works" (McGarvey).
- d. Uninformed men usually place great emphasis on outward appearances with respect to gospel preachers. As long as the man looks and sounds good in the pulpit, he is a good preacher. This attitude was especially true with the pagan Greeks. One who was a great orator was sure to be well-received by both the Greeks and the Romans.
- e. Corinth was part of the Grecian entity. The city was a commercial crossroads of the ancient world, and was influenced by many worldly factors. Chiefly, the Corinthians were Grecian in fact and in disposition. What is in the world will eventually make its way into the church, for there are many who obey the outward forms of the gospel without being converted, and many who are converted do not grow to spiritual maturity but return to the world in life. To the extent of the influence of these weak members, the local church is contaminated.
- f. Paul's enemies, the false teachers at Corinth, asserted that his physical presence was weak; this was their view of his private and public presence. Furthermore, his speech-making was contemptible. In their perverted view of gospel preachers and preaching, they thought the point of emphasis was the

delivery and presence; the message was not the primary matter.

- g. The Great Commission, however, does not say that we are to go into all the world and deliver orations; neither does it require preachers to exude personality and presence! It is the gospel that brings salvation, not the speech-making ability of the preacher.
 - 1) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 2) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
 - 3) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - 4) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
- h. Paul was willing to admit being "rude in speech," but he was absolutely sure concerning the knowledge he possessed. "But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things" (2 Cor. 11:6).
- i. An enemy of the truth can never be made to respect and love the gospel preacher who exposes his sin and error. Preachers of the gospel must be able to recognize the difference between a false charge from an enemy of the truth and a charge of sin or error levied against us by a concerned fellowsaint.
- 5. Verse 11: "Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *will we be* also in deed when we are present."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "Let such a one reckon this, that, what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such are we also in deed when we are present."
 - 2) NKJ: "Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such we will also be in deed when we are present."
 - b. His enemies had claimed that Paul was strong and bold when he wrote letters from the safety of a distant city, but was weak in both presence and speech-making when present in body. See verse ten.
 - c. The inspired apostle cautions his auditors to take heed, for he could be as strong and bold in presence as even they admitted he was in his letters. He issues this warning for their own good; he did not engage in empty threats.
 - d. Consider John's warning to a certain corrupted member: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church" (3 John 9-10).

C. 2 Corinthians 10:12-18: The Difference Between Paul and His Enemies.

- 1. Verse 12: "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." "For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves,

are not wise” (NKJ).

a. McGarvey:

- 1) Let all who thus accuse me of cowardice know assuredly that when I come my deeds will comport with the threatenings and warnings in my letters. I have in no way exaggerated my authority or power in my writing to you, for in this art of exaggerated self-praise or self-commendation I am not the equal of the false leaders in Corinth.
 - 2) “In this art I am not so proficient that I can presume to measure myself with these Corinthian experts, for they, never looking outside their own narrow circle, but comparing themselves with each other, have swelled with an inflated sense of self-importance which would have long since been punctured so that it would have collapsed if they had brought themselves into comparison with the real apostles. Real worth can never speak so highly of itself as can conceited and unreasoning vanity.”
- b. Every faithful gospel preacher has enemies; every godly elder has enemies; everyone who sincerely teaches the gospel to the lost and erring will have enemies. Paul had strong enemies at Corinth, even among members of the church. Anyone whose life is out of harmony with the requirements of God's word will either ignore the truth, obey the truth, or hate the one who taught the truth! For a child of God to have enemies is a token of his faithfulness to God.
- 1) John 3:19-21: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."
 - 2) John 15:18-21: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin."
 - 3) Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."
 - 4) Galatians 4:16: “Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?”
 - 5) 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
- c. Paul's enemies at Corinth had exalted themselves. The standard by which they judged themselves to be great was one of their own invention. There were several of these enemies. Paul described them as *false apostles* and *ministers of Satan* (2 Cor. 11:13-15).
- 1) Paul refused to make himself part of their number by imitating their example of self-exaltation. They had determined that they were great by comparing themselves with each other; their standard was their fallible human criteria. "There is an old saying that warns one against comparing himself to another, lest the other prove more worthy, and he prove the fool!" (Forehand, ADL, p.235).
 - 2) The apostle had shown that these men were the source of their own commendation. "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?" (2 Cor. 3:1).

- 3) He had shown that these enemies were more interested in outward appearances than in the condition of the heart. "For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart" (2 Cor. 5:12).
- d. These enemies of truth measured themselves by themselves, and compared themselves with themselves. Paul affirms that they were not wise in doing this. The margin says that they "understand it not." The ASV renders the statement in this manner: "For we are not bold to number or compare ourselves with certain of them that commend themselves: but they themselves, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding." If one does not understand the standard that pertains to the soul, his soul is in eternal danger!
 - 1) Ephesians 4:18: "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."
 - 3) Matthew 7:21-27: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."
 - 4) Proverbs 24:9: "The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men."
 - 5) Psalm 5:5: "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity."
 - 6) Romans 1:21: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."
2. Verse 13: "But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you." "But we will not glory beyond our measure, but according to the measure of the province which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even unto you" (ASV).
 - a. Once again, Paul declared that he would not glory (boast) in himself as did his enemies in themselves. They placed great value on their own worth; and since the context is dealing with authority, they esteemed themselves as having greater authority than Paul.
 - b. Paul had defended his apostleship, not because of the personal worth of him who exercised it, but on account of the power possessed by him who conferred it. He exalted it only to its proper limit, and never extolled his own value. Even though he could correctly state that he was not behind the chiefest apostles, yet he was nothing (2 Cor. 12:11-13).
 - 1) "Real worth can never speak so highly of itself as can conceited and unreasoning vanity. Those who compare themselves with Christ lose that self-exaltation which belong to those who compare themselves only with men, hence they are too handicapped to enter into competition with any such in the matter of boasting" (McGarvey, p.223)
 - 2) A man might see himself as being exactly right in all spiritual matters, but his estimation of himself

is apt to be faulty unless it is accurately determined by the infallible standard, which is God's word. "The great trouble with most religious people is that they desire to honor God, but desire to do it in their own way.... We are not to be judged in the last day by our conscience, by our standards of right, by what we have been taught, nor by the agreement of public sentiment, but by the word spoken by the Lord to guide man" (Lipscomb, p.134).

- a) Matthew 4:4: "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."
 - b) John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
- c. The Lord had revealed to Paul the standard by which he was to live. He first introduced Paul to the truth that he [Jesus of Nazareth] truly is the Messiah (Acts 9:1ff). He was given the commission of carrying the gospel message especially to the Gentile nations (Acts 26:16-20).
- 1) Ananias furnished him with the necessary details regarding how to become a Christian (Acts 22:16). Christ empowered Paul to be a full-fledged apostle, and revealed to him the details of the gospel message: " But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:16-18; cf. Gal. 1:11-12; Eph. 3:1-11).
 - 2) The authority the false teachers in Corinth claimed to have was local; the sway they claimed to have was in the local church. Their claim to authority was empty.
 - 3) Paul's authority carried him to places throughout the Roman Empire, including Corinth. "Paul got no false idea of his own stature by measuring himself with other men; but as the most apt measure for the point to be determined, viz.: his stature or capacity as a minister of the gospel, he chose the province or territory which God had assigned him as his field of operation. Though the whole world was his bishopric (Gal. 2:7-9), yet he contents himself with saying it included Corinth. In the eyes of his opponents Corinth was the sum and center of all things, but in the larger life of Paul it was a mere dot in a limitless field of operations. See 11:28" (McGarvey, pp.223f).
- d. Compared to Christ, Paul was small indeed; however, the false apostles at Corinth were truly tiny when they are compared to Paul! In a small community, a man might appear to be great, but his real stature is seen when he is measured against a larger scene. A ruler of the world's greatest nation appears huge in the eyes of some from a small nation, but how small that political figure is when he is compared to the ruler of the universe!
3. Verse 14: "For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our measure*, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* the gospel of Christ." "For we stretch not ourselves overmuch, as though we reached not unto you: for we came even as far as unto you in the gospel of Christ" (ASV).
- a. It was in keeping with his mission that he bring the gospel to Corinth; he was not over-stepping the bounds of his authority when he preached the gospel there.
 - b. It was not necessary for him to use the territory or labors of others in order to fulfill his mission. He was willing to spend his time and strength to discharge his duties, but in doing so, he never exceeded his authority, and he never took credit for the work done by others.
4. Verse 15: "Not boasting of things without *our measure*, *that is*, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly." "Not glorying beyond our measure, that is, in other men's labors; but having hope that, as your faith groweth,

we shall be magnified in you according to our province unto further abundance” (ASV).

- a. The apostle stresses again that he never claimed authority beyond that which Christ gave him. He operated within the scope of that authority. The prime power that set him above all other men was the apostolic office he was given. But he was not greater in authority than any of the other apostles of Christ. He was not of greater personal worth than any other person. “For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise” (Gal. 3:26-29, ASV).
 - b. The main thrust of Paul's evangelistic efforts was directed to those areas where the gospel had not yet been taken. "Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation" (Rom. 15:20). This practice would get the gospel to those who knew it not, and at the same time would defuse the arguments made by his enemies that he enhanced his own glory by taking credit for the labors of other preachers.
 - c. He hopefully expected that the faith of the Corinthian saints would increase. This spiritual growth on their part he would consider to be reward enough for himself. In the entire operation, he would not have gone beyond his authority.
5. Verse 16: "To preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand." “To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment” (NKJ).
- a. In this verse, he states his intention of going on beyond Corinth to other fields of labor. His present plans were to spend the winter at Corinth, and proceed on with his company to Jerusalem to deliver the contribution to the church there. Then he planned to go on to Rome, and from thence to Spain.
 - 1) Romans 15:22-25: "For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you. But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company. But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 16:4-7: "And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me. Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia. And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go. For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit."
 - 3) Acts 20:1-3: "And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia."
 - b. His successes were not due to the work of others, for he went where the gospel had not gone before. Paul showed in 1 Corinthians 3:4-9 that various individuals may be involved in the conversion of lost people: “And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration

of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.”

- 1) One may plant the seed initially in the hearts of those who are taught, but someone else may be able through further teaching to bring those people to obey the gospel; the end result, however, is due to what God has furnished: the seed. It is God who gives the increase.
 - 2) What farmer would take all the credit for the harvest if he only put the seed into the ground? Did not the one who tilled the growing crop also participate? Did not the one who gathered the harvest also take part? Did not God, who provided the seed and the laws by which seed is sown and crops are grown, deserve the greatest credit?
6. Verse 17: "But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."
- a. There is no room for a man to boast of what he has accomplished in the work of God. The best worker can only say at most, *I am an unprofitable servant; I have merely done my duty; there is much that should have been done which I failed to do* (cf. Luke 17:10).
 - b. Without the great plan which God formulated in eternity, which Christ executed during his earthly ministry, which the Holy Spirit revealed to the inspired ones of the first century, which was preserved by the power and providence of God through the centuries, there would be no means of salvation, no preaching of the gospel, and there would be no salvation.
 - c. Therefore, it is God who deserves the glory. We are merely taking the seed which he provided, planting it in the hearts of men using the strength, talents, and opportunities which God gives us. How then can some mere man throw out his chest, and proclaim that it was by his power and prowess that he made so many converts!
 - d. This writer was told by a preacher, who was moving to a distant city to take up a new work, what he and the brethren had established as their goals during the first year: They would convert a specific number of alien sinners, and bring about the restoration of a specific number of erring Christians. But no man can determine how many will obey the gospel or how many of the erring will be restored. It is not up to us to set the number. Compare: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (1 Cor. 3:6).
 - e. To bring glory to God, our Creator and Sustainer, is the prime purpose of man.
 - 1) Jeremiah 9:23-24: "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 1:31: "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 10:31: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."
7. Verse 18: "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."
- a. Only God can declare that an individual is righteous. The only way we can know whether a person is righteous is by comparing the individual to what God has said in his word.
 - 1) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned."
 - 2) Acts 2:38: "And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

- 3) 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
- 4) Romans 6:14-16: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"
- b. There are many who sincerely believe they are living in precise harmony with the desires of Heaven. Many of these follow false religions (Islam, etc.). Many believe *something* about Christ and follow part of the gospel, confidently thinking that they are what God desires.
- c. We are right with God only if we conscientiously follow the will of God.
 - 1) James 2:10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."
 - 2) Matthew 4:4: "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."
- d. Partial obedience, or insincere obedience, may convince the individual that he is pleasing to God. Merely because we are satisfied that we are right, does not make us right (2 Pet. 1:1-12).
- e. The strong point the apostle makes here is that it does not matter what we may think of ourselves or what the majority of men may think of us, in the final analysis it is what God thinks of us that counts! (Matt. 25:31-46).
 - 1) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 2) Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."
 - 4) Revelation 20:12-15: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
- f. One is a Christian only if God says he is a Christian. God speaks through his written word.

2 CORINTHIANS 11

A. 2 Corinthians 11:1-5: Paul's Concern for the Spiritual Welfare of the Corinthians.

1. Verse 1: "Would to God ye could bear with me a little in *my* folly: and indeed bear with me."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "Would that ye could bear with me in a little foolishness: but indeed ye do bear with me."
 - 2) NKJ: "Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly — and indeed you do bear with me."
 - b. It was incumbent upon Paul that he defend his apostleship, or else his writings and personal influence for the kingdom of God would have been nullified.
 - c. The false teachers at Corinth had made serious charges against Paul, and had exalted themselves before the church. It was necessary for the apostle to meet these allegations on the "battlefield" determined by these evil men. He did not desire to discuss his own merits, and certainly not with a view to self-glorification. The points he makes in this chapter are given to show that the false teachers had nothing worthy of boasting about, when compared with the many ordeals and deprivations which Paul had endured for the sake of the gospel.
 - d. Therefore, Paul begged their indulgence while he responds to the attacks which the enemies had made against his person and authority. The marginal rendering shows that the faithful at Corinth did indeed bear with him. "Would that ye could bear with me in a little foolishness: but indeed ye do bear with me" (ASV).
 - e. The material given here, although written from Paul's viewpoint, was revealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:1-11).
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 2:9-14: "But as it is written, 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, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 14:37: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."
 - 3) Galatians 1:11-12: "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."
2. Verse 2: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ." "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ."
 - a. Paul has more than a little interest in them. He declares that his is a godly jealousy toward them. Godly jealousy, like godly sorrow, is a disposition which originates with God, and which is pleasing to the Almighty. God states in Exodus 20:5 that he is a jealous God, one that demands the full allegiance of his subjects, for this is in their best interest.
 - b. "The feeling which Paul had for the church was no selfish or mercenary interest, but such as arose from

his desire that the church should be faithful to Christ, and not turn aside to another" (Lipscomb, p.137). He would not improve his standing in this world if the Corinthians remained steadfast to the truth; he would be very happy by their faithfulness, but that would not put "money in his pocket." However, their faithful stance would give them spiritual riches.

- c. By preaching the gospel to the Corinthians, he had espoused them to one husband. The Christians at Corinth were part of the church for which Christ died (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25; Matt. 16:16-18). Christ is declared to be the bridegroom, and the church is the bride.
 - 1) Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:25: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."
 - 3) Matthew 16:16-18: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
 - 4) Romans 7:4: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."
- d. It was Paul's intention that the saints might be presented as a pure virgin to the Christ, the bridegroom.
 - 1) All the saints (the saved people) comprise the one church of Christ, and as such, they constitute the bride of Christ. Ephesians 5 is a lengthy discussion of the relationship between Christ and his church. Revelation 19:7-10 gives a figurative, prospective picture of the Lord's wedding feast (cf. Matt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13).
 - 2) To be espoused is to be married. The church is even now wedded to Christ, although we have not been presented to him as yet. That presentation will be at the last day, when we enter heaven. If the church is not now the bride of Christ, then he is not a bridegroom now. But Paul is right in depicting Christ as a bridegroom even now. Of course, this is a figurative depiction of the relationship between Christ and his church.
 - 3) The church is to be as pure as the most proper bride. This is possible only as each member is pure from the guilt, the love, and the practice of sin. He will not accept a besmirched bride! "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27).
 - 4) McGarvey:
 - a) "The apostle, seeing the effect which the self-glorification of these false teachers has had upon certain of the Corinthians, determines, for a time, to adopt their tactics, descend to the foolishness of boasting, and thus overcome them on their own ground. Paul, in his consecration to Christ and forgetfulness of self, could not thus descend to the level of boasting, even though he merely related facts, without a sense of shame and a petition for consideration.
 - b) "When he considers the folly of the situation, it seems to him that the Corinthians could not put up with it, but when he remembers their affection for him, he is sure they will. He tells them that nothing but the strongest motives could induce him to thus belittle himself, but he found

such a motive in his extreme jealousy for them on Christ's behalf. As the paranymph, or "bridegroom's friend" (John 3: 29), the one whose office it was to procure and arrange the marriage, he had espoused them to one husband, even Christ, and had so instructed and led them as to present them pure and spotless before the Lord at his coming."

3. Verse 3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
 - a. Showing his tender regards for them, Paul fears that they were in danger of being hoodwinked into accepting a polluted version of the gospel.
 - b. Some pointed questions are in order, with Paul's statement in mind:
 - 1) If truth is not important, why was the inspired apostle concerned?
 - 2) If truth is not attainable, why was he apprehensive about their condition?
 - 3) If there is no absolute standard by which we are to live, how could the Corinthians be beguiled?
 - 4) If it is impossible for a saved person to sin so as to be lost, why did Paul make this statement? If fact, why did he go to the trouble to write the two letters to the Corinthians if they were so certainly saved that they could not be lost?
 - c. The very statement of the verse shows that a Christian is in as much danger as Eve was when temptation came to her (Gen. 3:1-6). Paul believed in the correctness of the Genesis record concerning Adam and Eve.
 - 1) If one rejects the book of Genesis, he must also reject those references in the New Testament to that Old Testament book; but if he rejects part of the New Testament, how can he consistently accept any of it?
 - 2) To reject part is to repudiate it all! Logically, if we accept part, we must accept it all! Otherwise, how could we know that those sections we accept are true, and those sections we reject are false?
 - d. The Greek word translated *corrupt* means "to destroy by means of corrupting, and so bringing into a worse state" (Vine, Vol. 1, p.242). The field of all teaching is the mind. The information that is presented originates in a mind, and it is conveyed to other minds through the process of teaching. Minds are purified by truth (cf. 1 Pet. 1:22-23), and minds are corrupted by error (sin).
 - 1) The Corinthians had been purified when they obeyed the gospel:
 - a) "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8).
 - b) "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:9-11).
 - 2) They were now in danger of being corrupted again by the false religious message of the false teachers Paul is confuting.
 - e. Satan (described here as the serpent) accomplishes his evil work by devious means. Paul spoke of his methods as *wiles* in 2 Corinthians 2:11, and as *fiery darts* in Ephesians 6:16.
 - 1) "Satan operates through his word, institutions, and appointments to accomplish his work. Every rebel against God is a minister of Satan; every word of opprobrium, or disparagement of the church of Christ; every discouraging word spoken, or influence exerted against faithful obedience to the gospel in its spirit and precepts, is the devil working and speaking through his ministers"

(Lipscomb, p.138).

- 2) Neither God nor Satan works without means in converting men to their cause. The devil can no more take us over against our will to cause us to do evil, than God can take us over against our will to do good. In either case, the human will must be exercised.
- f. Error condemns the soul (2 Thess. 2:10-12); truth saves (John 8:32; 17:17; 1 Pet. 1:22-23). Operating through his many agents, Satan is able to mislead us by his subtle methods and devious messages. Operating through his godly agents, God is able to lead us into the way that leads to heaven by his simple message of truth.
- g. The gospel system is one of great simplicity! "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt. 11:25). Man is lost in sin; Christ died for us; the gospel tells us how to appropriate the blessings made possible through the death of the Savior; we believe and obey that message, and follow it as our rule of life. Worldly-minded men are not content to abide with the simple gospel; they want something more glamorous or more exciting. The dangers of departing from God's simple system are often stated in the Bible:
 - 1) Isaiah 35:8: "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - 3) 2 John 9: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son" (ASV).
4. Verse 4: "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*."
 - a. The apostle describes the false teachers at Corinth in this statement. It is a strong denunciation! How wicked is their work? They preach another Jesus, one who is different from the Savior.
 - 1) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - 2) John 6:66-69: "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."
 - 3) John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
 - b. The Jesus preached by the Judaizers would be another *Jesus*—not the crucified Savior! If salvation could be produced by the Mosaic Law, then our Lord died in vain: "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. 2:21). These errorists taught the Gentile converts that they must be circumcised and keep other portions of the old Law. Their view of Christ was perverted, hence their doctrine could not be accurate.
 - c. The same was true with the Gnostics who came on the scene in the church a few years later. They preached a Jesus who was unknown in the scriptures.

- 1) The Docetic Gnostics denied the actual humanity of Christ; they regarded all flesh as inherently sinful, thus decreed it would have been impossible for Christ, who was sinless, to abide in a sinful body of flesh. They argued that the body of Jesus was not real, but an illusion and that he only appeared to suffer on the cross.
- 2) The Cerinthian Gnostics attempted to distinguish between Christ and Jesus; they claimed that Jesus was the offspring of Joseph and Mary, and that Christ descended upon Jesus at his baptism and left him on the cross.
- 3) Gnosticism of either kind is evil for at least two reasons.
 - a) It denies the Incarnation of Christ, a truth that is basic to Christianity.
 - (1) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
 - (2) John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - (3) John 1:14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."
 - (4) John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."
 - (5) Luke 24:39: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."
 - (6) 1 John 1:1-3: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."
 - b) It assumes that flesh is inherently evil, which contradicts the basic Bible truth that everyone enters the world free of the guilt of sin.
 - (1) Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."
 - (2) Ezekiel 28:15: "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."
 - (3) Matthew 18:3: "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."
 - (4) Matthew 19:14: "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."
- d. False teachers today, despite their claims to the contrary, preach another Jesus. When a doctrine is preached that is different from the doctrine of Christ, the Redeemer is not being preached! We can only preach Christ if we preach his unpolluted gospel.
 - 1) Galatians 1:6-12: "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach

unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema. For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ. For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ” (ASV).

- 2) 1 Corinthians 4:6: “Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other” (ASV).
 - 3) 2 John 1:9-11: “Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works” (ASV).
 - 4) 1 Timothy 1:3: “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.”
- e. Paul accuses these false teachers of having a different spirit to offer. Is this a reference to the third person in the Godhead, or does it allude to the disposition with which we live? Since the word *spirit* was not capitalized by the translators, it is apparent that they thought the reference was not to the Holy Spirit.
- 1) If Paul was referring to the Holy Spirit, he would likely be alluding to the miraculous works which the Spirit wrought through genuine apostles and those on whom the apostles had laid hands. If this is the case, an obvious question for the false teachers would be, "Where are your supernatural signs?" Also, the message these false teachers offered was not authored by the Holy Spirit, but by some man (cf. 1 John 4:1). The next verse affirms that Paul was not behind any of the other apostles of Christ—he was endowed with equivalent supernatural powers with them. This seems to show that the *spirit* of verse four is a reference to the Holy Spirit, who was the source of all the miraculous works the apostles wrought. This view fits the immediate context better.
 - 2) If Paul is speaking of the spirit with which Christians operate, his point would call into question the disruptive, rebellious, and corrupting disposition of the false teachers. Where Paul was known for his kind, generous, humble, and loving attitude, the false teachers were known for their severe attacks on the apostle when he was absent.
- f. Paul accuses these false teachers of preaching another gospel from that which he preached. The Judaizers had operated in their usual vicious manner in Galatia, in attempting to pervert the pure gospel Paul had preached.
- 1) Galatians 1:6-9: "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; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 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. 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."
 - 2) To change the gospel is to corrupt it. To preach a changed gospel is to preach a different gospel. A changed gospel is a polluted message, and not "good news" at all!
- g. The verse ends (in both the KJV and ASV) with the italicized word *him*. The word was supplied by the translators in an attempt to complete the sentence in English. A better word, one which is in

harmony with the context, is the word *me*. See the margin. The apostle is not telling the Corinthians to bear with the false teachers; rather, he is asking them to bear with him (Paul—*me*).

5. Verse 5: "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "For I reckon that I am not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles."
 - 2) NKJ: "For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles."
 - b. Paul states here the fact that his authority was not less than those apostles who were deemed the greatest. He makes this statement with becoming humility. The Greek word translated *suppose* means "reckon" (Vine, Vol. 4, p.96).
 - c. When Jesus went about with the twelve, he gave special instructions to three (Peter, James and John). The natural talents and personality of some will cause them to come to the forefront; this is true in any group.
 - 1) While these three apostles were given special opportunities, that did not mean that they were greater in authority than the others. It was simply the case that someone must take the lead, for if everyone is in charge, no one is in charge.
 - 2) In an eldership comprised of seven good men, there will be a varying degree of talents. Some will be better able to fill public roles than others; some will be more patient than others; some will be able to handle complex doctrinal problems better than others; and some are better equipped to defuse volatile situations better. However, having these abilities does not give the individuals greater authority than another elder.
 - 3) Although Paul was not privileged to walk with the Lord during his public ministry, his authority was equal to that which Peter, or James, or John, or any other of the apostles, possessed. "...For in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing" (2 Cor. 12:11).

B. 2 Corinthians 11:6-12: Paul Was Innocent of Wrong-Doing at Corinth.

1. Verse 6: "But though *I be* rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "But though I be rude in speech, yet am I not in knowledge; nay, in every way have we made this manifest unto you in all things."
 - 2) NKJ: "Even though I am untrained in speech, yet I am not in knowledge. But we have been thoroughly manifested among you in all things."
 - b. The word *rude* is translated as *unlearned* in Acts 4:13. These false teachers had belittled the apostle's speech-making: "For, His letters, they say, are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account" (2 Cor. 10:10, ASV). Adopting their language, Paul states that even though he was *rude in speech*, yet his knowledge was of the highest order—the inspired revelation of God's will.
 - 1) Galatians 1:11-12: "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."
 - 2) Ephesians 3:4-5: "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ. Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."
 - c. Clearly and abundantly, Paul had presented the knowledge which had been revealed to him. There was no reason for any one, not even his enemies, to be ignorant of the truth. They charged him with being unlearned in speech, but he was able to make himself understood.
 - d. The apostle was well-educated, but he did not depend on his human learning to furnish his message. The Holy Spirit gave him the message which Paul either spoke or wrote. The words were true and proper; his writing hand and speaking voice were those he possessed naturally. The Grecian mind,

influenced by pagan philosophy, might consider his speech-making unlearned, but he was indifferent to pleasing their worldly ears; he wanted to convert their souls, which could only be done if his message was heard, believed, and obeyed (Rom. 10:13-18; 1 Pet. 1:18-25; Acts 18:8).

- e. Romans 15:15-19: "Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ."
2. Verses 7-8: "Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages *of them*, to do you service."
 - a. A false teacher has a false heart; he is not interested in truth or godliness. He will twist any verse and pervert any word or action of a faithful saint to his own evil ends.
 - 1) A sound argument or a verified truth is wasted on such a person. Paul's enemies used every conceivable means to undermine his influence and uphold their own false way.
 - 2) When Paul declined to accept financial support from the Corinthian congregation, the errorists made that to indicate that even Paul did not think he was worthy of being supported by the church, therefore by his own admission (their argument claimed) he is not a genuine apostle. But if he had accepted wages from the congregation, they would have accused him of preaching for money.
 - b. Titus 1:9-11: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."
 - 1) Using sound doctrine, elders are obligated to exhort and convince gainsayers. "This shows *why* an elder must be apt to teach and must possess an accurate and extensive knowledge of the holy truth revealed in the scriptures. A moment later, Paul will give further information regarding the particular gainsayers he had in view here; but, apart from that, there are evil and seductive teachers in all generations who exercise their subversive talents for private gain, doing much damage to the faith of many. Such men must be prevented from achieving their evil purpose; and an eldership not having sufficient ability in the scriptures is unequal to such a task" (Coffman, p.323).
 - 2) The mouths of these false teachers must be stopped, and elders are to have the knowledge, will, and ability to attend to this unpleasant task. The Greek term (*epistomizo*) "means, properly, to check, or curb, as with a bridle; to restrain, or bridle in; and then, to put to silence. It is, of course, implied here that this was to be done in a proper way, and in accordance with the spirit of the gospel" (Barnes, p.269).
 - 3) This passage illustrates the authority with which God empowers elders to do their work. If the elders of every congregation always did their duty, false teaching could be kept out of the body of Christ! It is obvious that few did so in the latter part of the first century and in the ensuing years, or else the great apostasy would not have been successful then.
 - 4) "Here is ample authority for the elders of the church to exercise decisive control over the teaching from their pulpits, or even privately. The widespread notion that congregations should democratically hear any kind of teaching that comes along is incorrect. Purity of a church demands that the fountain from which it drinks must be pure. Elders have both the right and the duty to silence unsound, subversive and inaccurate teaching" (Coffman, p.324). Some elders may be more concerned over someone getting paint on the carpet than in the fallen state of a wayward member

- or over some false doctrine being taught or practiced in the congregation.
- c. He asks the brethren whether he had committed an offense when he abased himself by providing for his own livelihood when he preached at Corinth. The rhetorical question is to be answered in the negative: there was no sin involved in this practice.
 - d. Other passages show that he plied his tentmaking trade to provide for his material needs.
 - 1) Acts 18:1-3: "After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers."
 - 2) Acts 20:34: "Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 4:12: "And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it."
 - 4) 1 Thessalonians 2:9: "For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God."
 - 5) 2 Thessalonians 3:8: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you."
 - e. He accepted funds from other congregations to provide some of his support.
 - 1) Philippians 4:15-17: "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account."
 - 2) Paul described this as "robbing other churches," being paid by these other congregations to serve the church at Corinth. These other churches gladly sent funds to help the apostle, so it was not against their will that he obtained these wages. But he deprived these generous brethren of needed money so that he could continue his work among the Corinthians.
 - f. Paul's statement here ought to have shamed the Corinthians, especially the false teachers who opposed him.
3. Verse 9: "And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all *things* I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and *so* will I keep *myself*."
- a. Perhaps knowing in advance what the false teachers would say against him, Paul did not take any wages from the Corinthians, even when he was in serious need. He could have known this by past dealings with these or other such men, or this information might have been revealed by the spiritual gift known as "the discerning of spirits" (1 Cor. 12:10).
 - b. Certain unnamed brethren from Macedonia came to him while he was at Corinth, bringing with them a financial gift for Paul. They had done this when he labored at Thessalonica (Phil. 4:15-16), and again at Corinth. "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity" (Phil. 4:15-16).
 - c. To this point, he had refrained from being a financial burden to them, and intended to continue this policy. Corinth was a wealthy city, and undoubtedly the church had some wealthy members. It may have been the case that he would have been criticized harshly had he taken wages from them. His enemies were deprived of this argument when Paul declined any support from the Corinthian church, even though he was perfectly entitled to it (1 Cor. 9). A gospel preacher's foes today can always try to besmirch his reputation by charging him with only "preaching for money," when that enemy can

prove nothing wrong with what the preacher presents.

4. Verses 10-11: "As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this glorying in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth."
 - 2) NKJ: "As the truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia. 11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows!"
 - b. Regardless of the assaults his enemies raised against him, he would not permit them to silence his "boasting" about having worked at Corinth without any wages from them. He had the right to be paid by them, but to accept their wages would be too costly to his influence, for his foes would use it against him.
 - c. 1 Corinthians 9:18: "What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel."
 - d. Why did Paul accept money from others but refuse wages from the Corinthians? A possible answer from his enemies might be that he loved the other congregations but did not love the church at Corinth. Paul broaches this potential charge, and answers by making an appeal to God who knew his heart. His love for the Corinthians was not less than his love for his brethren in other places. He was willing to let God decide the issue regarding his love.
 - e. The Macedonians were more liberal in heart than the Corinthians: "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God" (2 Cor. 8:1-5).
5. Verse 12: "But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we." "But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast" (NKJ).
 - a. Here is the reason for refusing their wages: He would take away from his enemies the strongest charge they could level against him if he received no money from Corinth.
 - b. He committed himself to continue this practice, thus taking this charge away from his adversaries. If they had been preaching without wages from Corinth, Paul had always followed that course there. If they had been receiving pay from Corinth, they would be forced to explain why they complained about Paul's financial practices. In either case, they would have lost any grounds for complaint.
 - c. They claimed to be equal to Paul in authority. If so, let them give up their support from Corinth, and finance their own activities as Paul did. Deprive a false teacher of monetary gain and prominence, and see how long he continues.

C. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: Paul Describes the False Teachers.

1. Verse 13: "For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."
 - a. Using extremely strong language, Paul describes the true condition of his opponents. Some false teachers are sincere men, thinking that their message is one of truth. This was not the case with these errorists, however.
 - b. They were false apostles. An apostle is one who has been sent by some authority figure to do a certain work.
 - 1) God sent Moses to be a lawgiver and deliverer; God sent Christ to be a Lawgiver, Savior, and

Master Teacher.

- 2) Christ sent the twelve and Paul to reveal, relate, record, and confirm the gospel.
- 3) Certain men were selected by congregations in the first century to perform some assigned work.
 - a) Acts 13:1-3: "Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers, Barnabas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (ASV).
 - b) Acts 14:4: "But the multitude of the city was divided; and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles" (ASV).
- 4) Who sent these men to do the work they attempted? Neither God nor Christ! They sent themselves. They were false apostles. Where were their signs of apostleship? Non-existent! An apostle of Christ could *prove* he was an apostle of Christ.
 - a) 1 Thessalonians 1:5: "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake."
 - b) Romans 15:18-19: "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ."
 - c) Acts 19:11: "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul."
 - d) 2 Corinthians 12:11-13: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong."
- c. They were deceitful workers. A false teacher can be a hard worker. But he is a deceitful worker! He pretends to teach the truth; none of them will admit that they teach error. A false teacher possessing intelligence can invent all manner of logically-sounding arguments, but in every case, there are more fatal flaws. We must be wise enough to see the flaw, and expose it.
 - 1) False teachers who reject baptism for the remission of sins used to give the following analogy of Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" is equivalent to "He that getteth on a train and is seated shall go to Chicago." The essential act is to get on the train; he will get to Chicago whether he is seated or not. The believer is saved and may be baptized if he chooses; he is saved whether or not he is baptized. Answer: On the surface, this seems to be a logical argument. The flaw is in this: If belief and boarding the train are parallel, then salvation and getting to Chicago are parallel; if one is saved at the point of faith (without baptism), then one is (without being seated) instantly in Chicago when he boards the train. The analogy breaks down.
 - 2) One is deceitful if he will present only a part of the truth, those passages which seem to lend support to his doctrine. If he ignores other verses which contradict his conclusion, he is dishonest with the truth.
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
- d. These false teachers fashioned themselves into the apostles of Christ. However, they were not interested in advancing the church of Christ, or righteousness. The Christ they preached was not the

Son of God, but a being of their own design and manufacture—"another Jesus" (verse 4).

- 1) The religious system they advocated was not Christianity, but a mongrel religion which merely availed itself of the handy features of true religion.
 - 2) What is being foisted upon the ignorant and unsuspecting today is a mongrel *christianity*, with a wide choice of selections offered: *join the church of your choice; go to heaven on a way of your choosing.*
 - 3) There are many false apostles today, deceitful workers who fashion themselves into apostles of Christ; but their authority is one of their own making, and can offer blessings only of their own power; neither these modern charlatans nor their first century counterparts are spokesmen for the Almighty; they operate without divine authority and can offer no spiritual hope.
 - a) 2 Peter 2:12-15: "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness."
 - b) Jude 1:10-13: "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."
2. Verse 14: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."
- a. There is nothing surprising about this development, says Paul, for Satan is transformed into an angel of light. If the master demon so-disguises himself as to appear to be an angel of light (truth), we should not be shocked to see his ministers assuming the role of Christ's apostles.
 - b. The great danger of false teachers is their deceit. They will never show themselves in their real character. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:15-20).
 - c. The fruit of an apple tree is the apples it produces. The fruit of a teacher is the doctrine he preaches. A true teacher can be identified if his doctrine is the truth (John 17:17; 8:32). A false teacher can be identified because his doctrine is at variance with the truth (2 Thess. 2:10-12).
 - d. Of necessity, there cannot be a false teacher unless there is an absolute standard of truth. The Bible claims to be that absolute standard, and its claims are more than justified by many internal and external proofs.
3. Verse 15: "Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
- a. This verse completes the thought of verse fourteen. Since Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, it is to be expected that his followers should pass themselves off as apostles of Christ. The closer a counterfeit \$100 bill resembles the genuine article, the greater the danger that it will be accepted as

authentic.

- 1) The closer a counterfeit church is to the Lord's church in doctrine and practice, the graver the danger that the unsuspecting will be deluded.
- 2) How much error must a religious system inculcate into its constitution before it becomes a false system? How much poison must be added to good food before that dish becomes deadly?
- b. The Bible is clear and definite in its requirements; it does not permit anyone to reject its precepts and commands with impunity. Here are a few things God has said about his word:
 - 1) Matthew 4:4: "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."
 - 2) James 2:10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."
 - 3) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
- c. The consequences of teaching or practicing that which is not authorized by the word of God are truly perilous. Such a violator will receive a just recompense. Paul merely states the fact of punishment; he does not here describe the penalty. Other passages make the meaning plain:
 - 1) Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9: "Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
 - 3) Hebrews 10:29-31: "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
 - 4) Revelation 20:12-15: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

D. 2 Corinthians 11:16-33: Paul Discusses the Suffering his Labors for Christ Entailed.

1. Verses 16-18: "I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little. That which I speak, I speak *it* not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also."
 - a. It is not in harmony with the Lord's will for any of his followers to speak boastfully of himself. Paul has embarked on an inspired effort to refute the false teachers at Corinth who sought to destroy his apostolic authority in the eyes of men. Their efforts were two-fold: they must destroy Paul's credibility and exalt their own assumed authority. To accomplish the former, they made various false charges against the apostle; to accomplish the latter, they had to declare their own power and worth.
 - b. In order to answer these enemies of truth, Paul had to meet the arguments they set forth. When they asserted their authority, Paul had to state his. In their case, they could only offer empty words to prove

- their claims; in his case, he could point to the miraculous works God did through him, to the fact that he accepted no wages from Corinth, and to the many hardships and privations he willingly endured for the cause of Christ.
- c. In ordinary situations, statements that tend to exalt the saint are out of harmony with the will of Christ. The Lord requires that we humble ourselves in his service and allow him to exalt us in due time.
 - 1) However, it was essential that Paul defend his apostleship; to do so, he must call attention to certain facts; he relates these truths, not to exalt himself, but to prove that the gospel he preached had the full authority of heaven behind it.
 - 2) There was no other apostle available to defend Paul; it was not necessary for the Lord to make a public, personal statement in Paul's behalf; the best means to defend his authority was in the way that was used. What Paul wrote here is inspired information! He is not saying that the material here is uninspired, as the RSV and other modern versions assert.
 - a) 2 Corinthians 11:16-19: "I repeat, let no one think me foolish; but even if you do, accept me as a fool, so that I too may boast a little. (What I am saying I say not with the Lord's authority but as a fool, in this boastful confidence; since many boast of worldly things, I too will boast.) 19 For you gladly bear with fools, being wise yourselves! (Revised Standard Version).
 - b) 2 Corinthians 11:16-19: "I repeat: Let no one take me for a fool. But if you do, then receive me just as you would a fool, so that I may do a little boasting. In this self-confident boasting I am not talking as the Lord would, but as a fool. Since many are boasting in the way the world does, I too will boast. You gladly put up with fools since you are so wise!" (New International Version).
 - 3) Paul did not want to take this approach, but the decision was not his to make. The Lord directed the response Paul wrote, despite the personal embarrassment the apostle might feel. Paul understood the necessity of this. He stated that if anyone wanted to think him foolish, then so be it.
 - d. Knowing the great heart of the apostle, we may be sure that he had rather be preaching the gospel to some lost soul than to engage in this *boasting*. He knew, however, that if he did not defend his apostolic authority, countless souls would be lost! In the interest of truth, for the salvation of sinners, for the welfare of the Lord's church, and in behalf of the other aspects of the cause of Christ, he answered *the fool according to his folly* (Prov. 26:5). If Paul had not answered the charges, his influence would have been weakened or destroyed—with disastrous effect on millions of people between then and the end of time!
2. Verses 19-21: "For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye *yourselves* are wise. For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour *you*, if a man take *of you*, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) "For ye bear with the foolish gladly, being wise yourselves. For ye bear with a man, if he bringeth you into bondage, if he devoureth you, if he taketh you captive, if he exalteth himself, if he smiteth you on the face. I speak by way of disparagement, as though we had been weak. Yet whereinsoever any is bold (I speak in foolishness), I am bold also" (ASV).
 - 2) "Again I say, Let no one think me foolish. If otherwise, yet receive me as foolish, so that I may also boast a little. What I speak, I do not speak according to the Lord, but as in foolishness, in this boldness of boasting. Since many glory according to the flesh, I also will boast. For you gladly bear with fools, being wise" (Modern King James).
 - 3) "I say again, let no one think me a fool. If otherwise, at least receive me as a fool, that I also may boast a little. What I speak, I speak not according to the Lord, but as it were, foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. Seeing that many boast according to the flesh, I also will boast. For you put

- up with fools gladly, since you *yourselves* are wise!" (NKJV).
- b. Employing a bit of irony, Paul speaks of them being wise and him being foolish (in their conceited estimations). He made a similar statement in 1 Corinthians 4:10: "We *are* fools for Christ's sake, but ye *are* wise in Christ; we *are* weak, but ye *are* strong; ye *are* honourable, but we *are* despised."
 - c. The Corinthians bore with foolish men gladly. The foolish men he has in mind are the false teachers in their midst. They had borne with these errorists, when they ought to have strongly reprovved them. They were willing to bear with the false apostles but had doubted the genuine apostleship of Paul.
 - d. They bore with the false apostles even when those destructive dictators brought them into bondage to their error, consumed their souls (and maybe their wealth), used them to accomplish their evil purposes, and brought the greatest dishonor to them. One of the greatest acts of contempt is a slap on the face.
 - 1) Luke 22:64: "And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?"
 - 2) Acts 23:2: "And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth."
 - e. He was speaking in such a way that it appeared he was bringing reproach upon himself, for he was never *strong* enough to do to the Corinthians what the false apostles had done. This comment takes note of the charge that he was a weak preacher because of his humility, gentleness, and willingness to endure want and persecution. However, the truth is: he was as bold as anyone! No one was more courageous than Paul.
3. Verses 22-23: "Are they Hebrews? so *am* I. Are they Israelites? so *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so *am* I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I *am* more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft."
- a. The comments of this passage (and in the following verses) constitute what the apostle calls *foolishness*. He did not like to take this approach (verse 1), but in order to repudiate the charges of the false apostles, it was necessary that he plainly state his accomplishments. Nothing but the strongest of motivations could bring him to speak of these items.
 - b. He asks whether his opponents were Hebrews. Granting that they were, he declares that he also is a Hebrew. Obviously they gloried in their nationality. He asks whether they were Israelites, and whether they were Abraham's seed. The implied answer to each of these questions is in the affirmative; and he declares in each case that he is also.
 - c. The Jews were very proud of their fleshly connection with Abraham. They were willing to rest the eternal destiny of their souls on this kinship. The hardest truth the Jews must learn related to this matter.
 - 1) Matthew 3:9-10: "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."
 - 2) John 8:39: "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham."
 - 3) Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
 - 4) Galatians 3:26-29: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 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. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - 5) Judaism was based on the physical lineage; because of this, extensive tables were kept of each family to show their ancestral lines back to Abraham. Christianity is based on the spiritual

- relationship one has with Christ; to be in Christ is to be in God's spiritual family (Eph. 3:14-21).
- d. In view of these three questions concerning their being Hebrews, Israelites, and the seed of Abraham, it is clear that these false teachers were the Judaizers who plagued the church in many places; they were especially filled with hatred against Paul (cf. Acts 15). "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. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. 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?" Gal. 2:11-14).
 - e. In verse twenty-two, a fourth question is raised: Are they ministers of Christ? They claimed to serve Christ, but they were greatly concerned with keeping the Law of Moses. In repudiating their doctrine, Paul declared in Galatians five that if one sought to find justification by the Old Testament law, he was obligated to keep it all, but if he did that, he forfeited all claims on the grace of God!
 - 1) Galatians 5:1-4: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
 - 2) Galatians 2:21: "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."
 - 3) Paul affirmed that he was more of a minister (servant) of Christ than were the false teachers! This was not intended to be a boast; it was a simple fact which is proved by the statistics which he lists in the next few verses. His labors had been more abundant than theirs; he had received more stripes for preaching Christ than they; he had been imprisoned more frequently, and had faced death on more occasions than they had. He could more than match anything they claimed for themselves! He was answering fools according to their folly: "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit" (Prov. 26:5).
 4. Verses 24-27: "Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; *In* weariness and painfulness, *in* watchings often, *in* hunger and thirst, *in* fastings often, *in* cold and nakedness."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; *in* journeyings often, *in* perils of rivers, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils from my countrymen, *in* perils from the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; *in* labor and travail, *in* watchings often, *in* hunger and thirst, *in* fastings often, *in* cold and nakedness."
 - 2) NKJ: "From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; *in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of my own countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; *in* weariness and toil, *in* sleeplessness often, *in* hunger and thirst, *in* fastings often, *in* cold and nakedness."

- b. Because he preached the gospel, the Jews despised him, and expressed their hatred in physical ways. Five times they laid on him thirty-nine stripes. The Law prescribed beating as a penalty for certain crimes, but limited the number of stripes to forty.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 25:3: "Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed: lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee." Josephus (Antiquities iv. 8, sec. 21, p.98) shows that the Jews took measures not to exceed forty stripes, thus stopped at thirty-nine.
 - 2) "The convict was stripped to the waist and tied in a bent position to a low pillar, and the stripes with a whip of three thongs were inflicted on the back between the shoulders (Acts 22:25). A single stripe in excess subjected the executioner to the punishment" (Lipscomb, p.149).
 - 3) The inspired historian of Acts does not relate the occasions when Paul received these beatings. At Philippi, he and Silas were beaten by the Roman authorities (Acts 16:19-23).
 - a) Each of these beatings was severe!
 - b) Acts 16:19-23: "And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely."
- c. He was beaten with rods three times. This is said to be a Roman method of beating, and doubtless included the scourging he received at Philippi.
- d. Paul was stoned once, an experience one was not expected to survive.
 - 1) Acts 14:19: "And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead." They were so sure he was dead that they dragged his body outside the city.
 - 2) Acts 14:20: "Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe." This experience may form the background to what he relates in 2 Corinthians 12:1-4: "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."
- e. Three times he had been shipwrecked. None of these three cases is given in the inspired record outside this brief reference. The shipwreck he suffered in Acts 27-28 occurred subsequent to this writing.
- f. He spent a night and a day in the deep. This evidently refers to his having floated on a board or some other article after one of the shipwrecks. It was a day and a night before he was rescued. This would have been an awful experience of itself.
- g. He had made many long and hazardous journeys, including three great missionary excursions lasting from many months to a few years. He was on the third of these journeys when he penned the present epistle.
- h. The hazards he faced included the dangers posed:
 - 1) By waters (in sailing on the sea or in crossing rivers).
 - 2) By robbers (vicious bandits inhabited many places where he traveled).
 - 3) By his own countrymen (the Jews hated the gospel and would have killed him gladly because he preached it).
 - 4) By the heathen (those pagans who disliked what Paul preached, because it hurt their business, or

- opposed their favorite god, often attacked him. "And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers" (Acts 16:19).
- 5) In the city (being in a civilized place did not insure his safety; he faced perils at Damascus, Jerusalem, Ephesus, and elsewhere).
 - 6) In the wilderness (being away from populated areas did not insure safety, for there were dangers attendant to isolated environs).
 - 7) In the sea (there were many potential dangers in sea travel, especially in those days of archaic navigation).
 - 8) Among false brethren (false teachers are often as vicious as the law allows).
- i. His struggles and pains included many other matters:
- 1) He endured much weariness and pain. We tend to think of great Bible characters such as Paul as supermen, people to whom great challenges meant little and even great obstacles were trifling. But Paul got tired just as we do; and pain hurt him as much as it does us. He was willing to endure these because the work he did and the reward he sought were well worth any suffering. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).
 - 2) He spent much time on watch. A guard is entrusted with watching for the enemy so that his company can be warned in time to protect themselves. As Paul journeyed from one place of labor to another, he took his turn standing watch over his comrades. Knowing the selflessness of the apostle, we may well suppose that he spent many sleepless nights so that his friends could take their rest in safety.
 - 3) He was often hungry and thirsty. Few modern Americans know the travail of going without food and water. We are never far from either of these necessities. How many would willingly subject themselves to circumstances in which food and water were scarce, for such a simple purpose as carrying the gospel to foreign lands?
 - 4) He fasted on many occasions. One of these instances took place at Antioch just prior to the first missionary effort (Acts 13:1-3). Fasting and praying went together, and were engaged in when a special job or danger was at hand. Christians and churches today are known more for their feasting than for fasting.
 - 5) The apostle endured the harshness of cold weather without proper clothing. Imprisoned at Rome, Paul asked Timothy to bring to him the cloak which he left at Troas (2 Tim. 4:13). He encouraged his son in the faith to come "before winter" (2 Tim. 4:21). The cloak would be a comfort to him in the cold of the Roman winter.
5. Verse 28: "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."
- a. These afflictions and hardships which came upon him from outside sources were great, but there was the added weight of the concern he carried for the churches of Christ. He was not so much concerned over the possibility of a congregation going out of existence due to economic problems or to some other difficulty; but he was gravely concerned over the possibility of their apostasy.
 - b. The great concern the apostle had was in regard to the spiritual welfare of the churches. He had already revealed in the second letter to the Thessalonians (chapter 2) that the seed for the great apostasy had already been planted. He stated earlier in this present chapter his fear that the brethren at Corinth might be lost due to the underhanded work of the false teachers among them (11:3, 13-15).
 - c. Paul was greatly concerned over the welfare of the precious souls of his brethren; he was gravely concerned also for his national brethren, the Jews.
 - 1) Romans 9:1-3: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that

- myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."
- 2) Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
 - d. He worked and pleaded and prayed that his brethren in Christ would remain faithful to their Lord. He knew the awful penalty of falling from grace, and tried to get them to see the great danger. He showed them the beauty and blessing of faithfulness, and pleaded with them to maintain their devotion to God.
 - e. He foretold the dangers of the future, shedding tears to encourage their loyalty. Compare: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:27-32).
 - f. Our Lord expressed his undying concern for those he came to help.
 - 1) Luke 19:41-44: "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."
 - 2) Luke 23:27-28, 34: "And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.... Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."
6. Verses 29-31: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not."
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 11:29-31: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is caused to stumble, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed for evermore knoweth that I lie not" (ASV).
 - 2) "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying" (NKJV).
 - b. Paul was not a superman. If others had weakness, so did he; he had to struggle to endure the hardships he faced just as others did; cold and hunger hurt him as much as anyone else suffered from them. Temptations were just as hard for him to resist as they are for any other sincere Christian.
 - c. If others stumbled, so did he. He never claimed to be above sin.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 9:27: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." To *offend* is to *stumble*.
 - 2) 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned,

- we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
- d. When a brother in Christ fell victim to Satan's temptations, Paul *burned* in shame and sorrow. When a brother in Christ taught false doctrine, the apostle was filled with sorrow and mortification over this departure.
 - e. The apostle would be content in glorying over his infirmities, those harsh experiences which his enemies would shun. In these Paul took comfort and hope. "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. 12:10).
 - f. Paul appealed to God, who knew that he spoke the truth about this matter: that he took pleasure in the sufferings he met on account of his loyalty to Christ.
 - 1) Heaven would be worth the trials he endured.
 - a) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 - b) Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - 2) Many expressions of Paul's reverence for God are seen throughout his inspired writings and speeches. Without this loving respect for God, no man can be acceptable to the Almighty.
 - 3) Psalm 89:7: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him."
7. Verses 32-33: "In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands."
- a. Following his conversion in Damascus, Paul quickly began preaching the gospel. His efforts were not appreciated by the closed-minded Jews, who tried to apprehend and punish him in order to silence his preaching. The truth will often drive men, even some members of the church, to take drastic, sinful action against their *tormentor*.
 - b. His escape from Damascus is reported also in Acts 9:23-25: "And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket."
 - c. Our text shows that even the civil ruler took part in the attempt to arrest Paul, but he escaped by being lowered over the city's wall in a basket.

ADAM & EVE'S FALL and OUR RESTORATION

SAVED CONDITION ☆ IN CHRIST ☆ STATE OF PURITY	
Lie Preached: Gen. 3:1-5	Truth Obeyed: Acts 2:36-47
Lie Heard: Gen. 3:6	Truth Believed: Acts 2:36-37
Lie Believed: Gen. 3:6	Truth Heard: Acts 2:36-37
Lie Obeyed: Gen. 3:6	Truth Preached: Acts 2:1-36; Mark 16:15-16
LOST ☆ SEPARATED FROM GOD ☆ TAINTED WITH SIN	

2 CORINTHIANS 12

A. 2 Corinthians 12:1-5: The Man Caught up into Paradise.

1. Verse 1: "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord."
 - a. The ASV gives this translation of the verse: "I must needs glory, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord."
 - b. Once again, the apostle declares his dislike for speaking of himself in a manner that could be seen by some as boasting. Although it was distasteful, it was necessary in order to answer his critics. It was not expedient, but it was essential. The inexpediency involved the possibility that others might misunderstand his purpose. Remember that he was writing by inspiration, so it was the Holy Spirit who decided the subject; but it was still embarrassing to Paul to have his powers and accomplishments aired publicly.
 - c. To respond to his enemies, he needed to address the subject of the visions and revelations he had received from the Lord. The false teachers claimed to offer a superior message by greater authority than that which Paul had. The visions and revelations they evidently claimed for themselves were not real; Paul's were real: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong" (cf. 12:11-13).
 - d. The only way to account for the revelations Paul reported was to admit his apostleship. Only a genuine apostle of Christ could do those miraculous works which he manifested before them (12:12). What proof could the false teachers offer? None! Since they could not confirm their doctrine by divinely-wrought miracles, and what they taught conflicted with those things which the genuine apostles had revealed, these teachers were false.
2. Verse 2: "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven." "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago — whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows — such a one was caught up to the third heaven" (NKJ).
 - a. The glorying Paul does is done by describing a personal experience in the third person. The context (general and local) shows that the apostle is speaking of himself. If he is speaking of another person, that report would have no bearing on his present purpose. In verses six and seven, he shows that it is about his own personal experience that he has spoken.
 - b. "According to the received chronology, this epistle was written near the close of the year 57, and 'fourteen years ago' would place this vision about the time he and Barnabas were sent forth from Antioch on the first tour among the Gentiles (Acts 13:1-3)" (Lipscomb, p.156).
 - c. The man was *in Christ*, a condition which is obtained by the individual believing, repenting, confessing Christ, and being baptized into Christ.
 - 1) John 8:24: "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 3) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

- 4) Matthew 10:32: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."
 - 5) Acts 8:37: "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
 - 6) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 7) Galatians 3:26-27: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
 - 8) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."
- d. Paul knew the man, knew he was in Christ, knew the details of the episode, knew the words spoken and saw the sights indicated, and knew when the event occurred. These are added reasons for believing Paul spoke of a personal experience.
- e. Paul did not know whether the man was in the body or out of the body when the event transpired. That was information which God had reserved. The statement is informative.
- 1) It shows that one can be in the body or out of the body, and retain the same identity. The spirit can exist apart from the body. James 2:26 shows that when the spirit is separated from the body, the body is dead.
 - a) Genesis 35:16-19: "And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem."
 - b) Luke 23:46: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."
 - 2) Paul's spirit was conscious (even if it was apart from his body). The doctrine that the spirit is asleep following death, being unconscious until the resurrection, is false.
 - 3) We are also shown in the report that there is more to a man than the physical body. Paul was either in or out of the body; he did not know which. Since it was possible for him to be out of the body and still retain his identity, there is more to a man than the material body.
- f. Paul was caught up to the third heaven. The Bible speaks of four *heavens*.
- 1) The atmosphere where the birds fly is called *heaven*.
 - a) Genesis 1:20: "And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven."
 - b) Matthew 6:26: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"
 - 2) Outer space where the stars, the sun, and the moon are, is called *heaven*.
 - a) Genesis 1:14: "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years."
 - b) Genesis 15:5: "And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be."

- c) Genesis 17:7: “And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.”
- 3) Paradise, where the blessed reside in the Hadean Realm, is called the third *heaven* (2 Cor. 12:2,4). Following the deaths of Jesus and the penitent thief, they were together in Paradise (Luke 23:43). However, after his resurrection, the Lord told Mary Magdalene that he had not yet ascended to his Father (John 20:17). During the time his body was in the tomb, he was in Paradise but he was not in heaven, where God dwells. This must be the place where Paul was in the scene he is depicting.
- 4) The dwelling place of the Almighty, the eternal home of the saved, is called *heaven*.
- a) Matthew 6:9: “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.”
- b) 1 Kings 8:30: “And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive.”
- c) Psalm 24:7-10: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory.”
- d) Daniel 7:13-14: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”
3. Verses 3-4: "And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth). How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."
- a. The terms *third heaven* and *paradise* evidently are used interchangeably. *Paradise* is defined by the scholars as "pleasure park," and thus the word could properly be used in reference to the place where the spirit of Jesus resided while his body was entombed (cf. Luke 16:19ff). It properly is used to designate heaven, where God is (Rev. 2:7). The word *Paradise* is like the word "city" in that it depends on the context to identify the exact location, whether heaven or Abraham's bosom is meant.
- b. In that place, Paul was privileged to hear words which were unlawful to repeat. Human language might not even be able to communicate the ideas expressed by the words he heard. Heaven, the home of the soul, is usually described in the Bible by negative ideas. Compare: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4).
- 1) It is as if the nearest the Holy Spirit could come to describing heaven to our finite minds was to say that it is not like it is here on earth, that the harsh things of earth do not spoil the glorious home of the redeemed.
- 2) Paul was not authorized to report what he had seen and heard, and may not even have had the ability to do so if such was permitted. The Greek term translated *unspeakable* is used to indicate words and ideas too sacred to be uttered by human tongue (Vine).
- c. Some have suggested the idea that the episode Paul is describing occurred when he was stoned at Lystra (Acts 14:19-20), and that he was actually dead and in the spirit world (hades). The timing was

right, for he was on that first missionary tour about fourteen years prior to the writing of this epistle. It is interesting to consider, but we must not be dogmatic about declaring this to be the case Paul had in mind. "And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe" (Acts 14:19-20).

4. Verse 5: "Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities."
 - a. Had any of the false teachers experienced such a *vision* as this? Certainly not! God would not in any way so act as to lend credence to their false doctrines.
 - b. In our time, there have been many who claim that they died while undergoing surgery, and describe certain strange sights they beheld. Some of these cases have been reasonably explained as the common effects of anesthetics; the rest are dreams, imaginations, or fabrications.
 - c. Paul found it easy to glory in the experiences of this *third party*, but he did not like to glory in himself; he was happy, however, to have suffered from certain infirmities which were incurred because of his service to Christ. These hardships were experiences which were forced upon him by enemies and circumstances; they were not deeds which he accomplished.

B. 2 Corinthians 12:6-13: Paul's Thorn in the Flesh and its Purpose.

1. Verse 6: "For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but *now* I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me *to be*, or *that* he heareth of me." "For if I should desire to glory, I shall not be foolish; for I shall speak the truth: but I forbear, lest any man should account of me above that which he seeth me to be, or heareth from me" (ASV).
 - a. "Now, if I should desire to boast, I should not need to foolishly vaunt myself as to imaginary things, but I could confine myself to truth..." (McGarvey, p.234). Paul's powers of apostleship had provided him with the ability to perform mighty miracles and to receive and report inspired truth. His accomplishments, authority, and experiences were far beyond anything his enemies could claim.
 - b. However, he would forbear any declarations of his powers and deeds, lest anyone get the wrong opinion of him. He did not want to be esteemed of greater worth than proper. It was not his desire that the brethren exalt him above what they could see him to be or had heard from him. Paul did not suffer from an inflated ego, and he did not want anyone to think too highly of him.
 - c. The contextual matter is "visions and revelations" he had received from the Lord (verse 1). These experiences set him apart from most of humanity. They were rare incidents even in that age of miracles. Certainly, the false apostles in Corinth had never met with such awesome encounters.
 - d. The apostle exercised stern self-control in this matter of boasting, as he did in all other phases of his life (1 Cor. 9:27). He did not come to Corinth with a glad hand or silver tongue, but did there what he endeavored to do wherever he went: to preach the unadulterated gospel of Christ in order to save souls.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 1:17: "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 2:1-5: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

- 3) 1 Corinthians 9:27: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
2. Verse 7: "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure."
 - a. To prevent Paul from thinking too highly of himself on account of the revelations he was given, the Lord sent him a *thorn in the flesh*; this *thorn* is further described as a *messenger of Satan*. Whatever this problem was, it was designed to promote humility in the apostle. Hardships, deprivations, persecutions, and other distresses cultivate and promote the traits of Christianity in the sufferer.
 - b. Many suggestions have been made by Bible students concerning Paul's *thorn*. Coffman listed several of these guesses (pp.484f):
 - 1) Headache.
 - 2) Epilepsy.
 - 3) Malaria.
 - 4) Temptations.
 - 5) Infirmities of the mind.
 - 6) Acute, disfiguring ophthalmia.
 - 7) Evil thoughts.
 - 8) Malta fever.
 - 9) False teachers.
 - c. The identity of "this thing" (verse 8) will go unknown until eternity, along with the words which Jesus wrote in the dust of Palestine (John 8:1-11). If either of these unrevealed matters was important to our knowledge, we would have been told. Perhaps the Lord left such things unreported for the purpose of testing our willingness to abide with that which is written, and to refrain from speculating.
 - 1) We have no reason to think Paul had headaches, epilepsy, malaria, or Malta fever. He was blinded for three days at Damascus, but the Lord restored his sight; since the Lord never worked a partly-effective miracle, we may be sure that Paul's eyesight was restored to perfection.
 - 2) The apostle was exposed to temptations just as every other Christian; he had to fight evil thoughts just as every child of God must. This *thing* was something out of the ordinary, but temptations are the common lot of us all.
 - 3) Festus, the Roman Governor, charged Paul with madness, but the apostle denied the allegation. "And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness" (Acts 26:24-25). Paul was not a madman! His mind was never infirm.
 - 4) The false teachers at Corinth, the Judaizers who seem to be especially antagonistic toward Paul, have been put forth as Paul's thorn. Of the suggestions made above, this seems to be a possibility; however, in the absence of proof, we must not assert this to be the thorn.
 - 5) Others have suggested that Paul may have been disfigured by the stoning at Lystra, or by the beatings he endured on other occasions.
 - a) This may seem to be credible, especially in view of his statement in Galatians 6:17: "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

- b) Galatians 4:13-14: "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus." These passages, however, do not prove that these marks were his thorn in the flesh.
- 6) Coffman thinks that the thorn was the Jewish people's rejection of the gospel (pp.386f). Paul desperately desired the conversion of the Jews to Christ (Rom. 9:1-3; 10:1-3), but in general they chose unbelief. However, there is no proof that this is the thorn.
- d. The thorn was a *messenger of Satan*. Whatever its identity is, it was a definite *thing* (verse 8). Satan often withstood Paul's work.
- 1) Romans 15:22: "For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you."
 - 2) 1 Thessalonians 2:18: "Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us."
 - 3) Romans 1:13: "Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles."
 - 4) 2 Timothy 4:14-17: "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."
3. Verses 8-9: "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."
- a. Three times, Paul had asked the Lord to remove *this thing* (the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan). His request was not granted. Sometimes our prayers are not answered according to our desire; sometimes something different or better is given; sometimes we must wait for the answer.
 - b. Paul's weakness (infirmity, or hardship, etc.) became his strength. This can be true with us. If we have a difficult problem, that hardship can be used to develop greater faith, determination, zeal, and devotion to the Lord. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:11).
 - c. A strength can become a weakness. If we have a very pleasing personality, that wins many friends and enables us to influence people to our way, we can pervert that ability to be the drawing power to the lost, rather than the gospel.
 - 1) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 2) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - 3) 1 Peter 1:18-25: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was

foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

- 4) Galatians 1:6-10: “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; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 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. 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. 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.”
 - 5) Romans 16:17-18: “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”
- d. The Lord told Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Heaven's grace would be more than a match for the troubles Paul encountered. He must rely on the Lord to help him. Therefore, Christ did not remove the problem; he helped the apostle to carry on despite it.
- 1) The power of the Lord is fully displayed in the weakness of man. When a child of God is at his weakest in the eyes of the world, but sees clearly that he cannot fend for himself, solve his own problems, or remove the difficulties he faces, then he evinces the greatest strength, in the eyes of the Lord.
 - 2) Paul's superb vision of spiritual realities caused him to see that when he was weak (before the world), then he was strong (before the Lord). The apostle declares that he gladly bore his infirmities. The very statement of the passage revealed the truth.
- e. The *power of Christ* is the *grace* of Christ in this situation. By enduring his infirmities, the power of Christ rested upon Paul. Only by remaining loyal and active would he retain the power of Christ. This power (or grace) included these three benefits for the apostle:
- 1) The miraculous powers given by Christ through the Holy Spirit enabled Paul to be a true apostle of Christ. This power gave him the full authority of apostleship, providing him with the inspired revelation of the gospel and supernatural works by which he confirmed that message. This power was overtly demonstrated.
 - 2) The providential guidance and assistance of heaven enabled him to continue his great work, despite the fanatical foes he encountered. When he was later arrested at Jerusalem, a group of Jews banded themselves together with an oath, declaring that they would not eat or drink until they had slain Paul (Acts 23:12-13). The context reveals that God providentially brought this scheme to light, and delivered the apostle. This power could be discerned by anyone who duly considered the life of Paul.
 - 3) The gospel of Christ provided Paul with salvation and encouragement, and the information to follow the will of the Lord. No one who comprehends the gospel will think that the gospel is a

- dead letter. It is the power God uses to save lost souls.
- a) Romans 1:15-16: "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
 - b) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - c) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - f. The power of Christ that rests upon the faithful today includes the providential assistance of God, and the guiding, edifying, encouraging, and soul-saving power of the gospel; and it guides the redeemed on to heaven (2 Pet. 1:1-11).
4. Verse 10: "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."
- a. Paul reveals in this chapter the secret to his great strength. He understood and believed the Lord's statement. He was willing to endure whatever opposition and hardship that came upon him, for he knew that ultimately his efforts would be crowned with success and glory.
 - 1) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 4:16-18: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."
 - b. Knowing that he was made strong when he placed his reliance upon Christ, and perceiving that the infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, and distresses he encountered because he served the Lord, helped him to place great trust in the Lord, and he happily accepted these hardships. He knew that he had the approval of heaven.
 - c. Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
5. Verse 11: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing."
- a. The brethren at Corinth, by not defending Paul themselves when his critics attacked him, and by entertaining doubts concerning his apostleship, had compelled the apostle to speak out in his own defense. The feature of his defense which he disliked making was the apparent boasting which was necessitated in order to prove his apostolic authority.
 - b. He declares that in view of the fact that he is not behind any of the other apostles in authority and power, the Corinthian saints should have spoken out in his defense.
 - c. The apostles share equal authority in the Lord's kingdom.
 - 1) Matthew 18:18: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - 2) Matthew 19:28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed

me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." What he said here of the twelve, is also true of Paul.

- 3) Although Peter was the chief spokesman in Acts 2, he did not have greater powers or authority than the other apostles:
 - a) Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
 - b) Acts 1:5: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."
 - c) Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - d) John 16:12-14: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."
- d. 2 Corinthians 11:5 "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles."
 - 1) ASV: "'For I reckon that I am not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles."
 - 2) NKJ: "For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles."
6. Verse 12: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."
 - a. Paul consistently performed the miraculous works of an apostle when he was in Corinth (or elsewhere). These miracles are classified into the three categories of signs, wonders, and mighty deeds.
 - b. Some miracles were called *signs*. Christ worked with the apostles following the establishment of his kingdom as they went everywhere preaching the word; he was with them "confirming the word with signs" (Mark 16:20).
 - c. As a sign, a miracle was a token of the close presence and actions of God. In this case, they validated the spoken message. Compare: "And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee. And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee. And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river

- shall become blood upon the dry land” (Ex. 4:1-9).
- d. Some miracles were called *wonders*. This term accentuates the astonishment felt by the witnesses on seeing a supernatural event. "I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion" (Mark 2:11-12).
 - 1) The purpose of a wonder was to startle men out of their apathy, and cause them to open their eyes to the spiritual appeal that was being directed to them.
 - 2) Compare: “And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters. And he drave them from the judgment seat. Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things. And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow” (Acts 18:8-18).
 - e. Some miracles were called *mighty works*, or simply *miracles* (Matt. 11:20; Acts 2:22). The same Greek word is translated as *mighty works* and *miracles* and *mighty deeds* in these passages. The emphasis of this term is on the power of him who is the source of these works. Supernatural works are such demonstrations of heaven's power that the term miracle has come to be the common term by which we describe them.
 - 1) Matthew 11:20: “Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.”
 - 2) Acts 2:22: “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.”
7. Verse 13: "For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except *it be* that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong." “For what is there wherein ye were made inferior to the rest of the churches, except it be that I myself was not a burden to you? forgive me this wrong” (ASV).
 - a. Paul's point here is that the Corinthian congregation was equal to every other congregation in the reception and exercise of spiritual gifts, therefore Paul is a genuine apostle.
 - b. The nine spiritual gifts are identified in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."
 - c. In fulfilling its mission, every congregation has the capability to discharge its responsibility. Some are larger in number and wealth, but their obligations are greater; some are greater in talent, but their duty is also heavier. A church's obligation is determined by its ability (talent, means, opportunity).

Therefore, in this sense, every congregation is equal.

- d. Returning to his policy of not asking the Corinthians for financial support, Paul observes that they were equal to all other congregations except possibly in this monetary matter. He asks for their forgiveness that he did not burden them with financing his work. Philippians 4:15-18 shows that giving is beneficial to the giver: "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God" (cf. Acts 20:35).
- e. By not giving him financial aid, they did not have a part in the success of his labors, and they did not receive the benefit that comes from giving. This *burden* was actually a *blessing*.
- f. As he has shown already, he did not request or accept financial assistance from the Corinthian church because that would have furnished his enemies at Corinth with a strong argument with which to assault Paul's apostleship. In the interest of the truth and his influence as an apostle, he did not receive funds from them.

C. 2 Corinthians 12:14-21: Paul's Plans to Return to Corinth.

1. Verse 14: "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "Behold, this is the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be a burden to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children."
 - 2) NKJ: "Behold, this is the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be a burden to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children."
 - b. Was the proposed trip to Corinth to be the third visit, or was it the third time he had *intended* to come? We have a record of the first visit, but not of a second.
 - 1) His first visit was during the second missionary tour. If he had returned for a second stay, when was it? "This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (2 Cor. 13:1). This seems to say that he had been there twice already.
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 1:15-16: "And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea." He stated his intention to come to them from Ephesus, and then after travelling to Macedonia, to return to Corinth. Two intended visits are named, with our text being the third. It seems more likely that Paul is speaking of *intended* visits.
 - c. Even on this next stay at Corinth, in which he planned to spend the winter (1 Cor. 16:6; Acts 20:2-3), he would not depend on them for financial support: "I will not be burdensome to you." He did not seek what they had; he wanted *them*. The individual is of vastly greater importance than the material possessions he owns. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26).
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 16:6: "And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring

me on my journey whithersoever I go.”

- 2) Acts 20:2-3: “And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.”
 - d. They could rest easy if they had been concerned with the prospect of having to furnish the apostle's maintenance during his three-month visit. He would provide for his own needs. "He was ready to give his very life for them, but was not willing to accept gifts from them" (Lipscomb, p.164).
 - e. A great plan had been developed for the Gentile congregations to gather a collection of funds to be delivered to the church in Jerusalem to relieve the suffering that predominated there. None of this money was for Paul's personal use. To ensure the proper disposition of the gift, certain men were selected from participating churches to deliver the money (cf. 1 Cor. 16; 2 Cor. 8-9; Acts 20-21).
 - f. The church at Corinth was called on to participate in this operation of benevolence. Those individuals who gave their money (1 Cor. 16:1-2) to fund this effort would gain greater benefits than they gave (Phil. 4:17; Acts 20:35). In promoting this good work, Paul was seeking the good of the Corinthians.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 16:1-2: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”
 - 2) Philippians 4:17: “Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.”
 - 3) Acts 20:35: “I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
 - g. It is not the obligation of the children to lay up treasure for the parents, but it is the parents who provide for the welfare of the children. In the average family with children, it is not the children who provide for the parents; the parents provide for their young offspring.
 - h. In the relationship between Paul and the Corinthian saints, he stood as the father and they as the children. “I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel” (1 Cor. 4:14-15).
 - i. As the father will not take from the children under his protection, so Paul would not deprive the Corinthians of their possessions. As the father's labors were for the children's benefit, so the apostle labored for the good of the saints.
2. Verse 15: "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." And I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved the less?" (ASV).
 - a. Paul was ready "very gladly" to spend and be spent for them. What he had done in Corinth and what he had written to them was for their good; these were expressions of his love for them. He expended much effort in their behalf in many ways; this he did gladly; he expended much time and interest in their behalf.
 - 1) As loving parents happily expend their money, time, freedom, strength, and lives in behalf of their offspring, so did the apostle for the saints at Corinth.
 - 2) John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Genuine love is willing to make even the supreme sacrifice for others.
 - 3) Conversion to Christ is evidenced by a change from selfishness to selflessness.
 - a) Luke 14:25-35: “And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

- b) 2 Corinthians 5:15: “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.”
 - c) Romans 15:1-3: “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.”
- b. Paul's love for the Corinthians centered on his concern for their souls (see ASV). The condition of the soul must be the prime concern of us all: “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. 16:26). His motive was unblemished.
 - c. However, the more abundantly he loved them, the less was he loved by them. The ASV makes this a question, but even then it is rhetorical, thus it affirms what it asks. This is a statement of common fact. Sometimes the more a man sacrifices for others, the less he is appreciated by them.
 - 1) Selfish children are not impressed by the sacrifices of their parents; the more they are given, the more they expect and demand. These self-centered offspring ignore the pain which the sacrifices cause the parents. Unwise children do not perceive the sacrifice and labor and inner pain and anxieties these children cause those who brought them into the world.
 - 2) Selfish, unthinking Christians treat godly elders and faithful preachers and teachers the same way. These self-centered members ignore the pain caused by the sacrifices; they take these sacrifices for granted, and demand more and greater service. But the faithful servant gladly endures, for he honestly desires to serve the Lord and help his brethren.
 - d. The apostle had sacrificed more than he was willing to tell; his sacrifices were intended to enrich the souls of those he taught. Instead of being grateful for his sacrifices, some of them denied his apostleship, questioned his motives, and were harshly critical of his looks and preaching.
3. Verse 16: "But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile." “But be that as it may, I did not burden you. Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you by cunning!” (NKJ).
- a. Despite their unbecoming disposition toward him and his many sacrifices for them, he was determined not to be burdensome to them. In other words, although he had sacrificed much for them and though they had been unimpressed by his service in their behalf, he did not seek any monetary support from them for his own needs.
 - 1) Why? For the reason stated earlier: he would not give his critics even a faint cause to charge him with preaching for money.

- 2) His enemies had to explain why Paul endured the many hardships to preach the gospel if he was not a true apostle. The only conceivable reason was for the money he could make. But if he received no compensation from the Corinthians for his work there, this charge was removed. The financial support that came from Macedonia was a mere pittance; together with the money he made by tentmaking, he was only able to eke out an existence.
- b. Paul's wise practice had robbed his critics of the only argument with which they could have explained his willingness to preach the gospel without regards to the hardships.
 - 1) Even his enemies could not deny that he was severely persecuted for preaching; but if they could have charged him with preaching for money, they would have explained why he was willing to suffer tribulations. His *craftiness* had taken from them this handy allegation; he had *caught them with guile*.
 - 2) The apostle is not confessing that he was deceitful; he is simply stating that he used wisdom in declining to take money from the Corinthians for his own support. He had the right to their financial assistance (1 Cor. 9). He knew, either by experience or by revelation, that the enemies would use this charge if they could, hence he skillfully denied them the possibility of making it!
4. Verses 17-18: "Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you? I desired Titus, and with *him* I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? *walked we* not in the same steps?" "Did I take advantage of you by any one of them whom I have sent unto you? I exhorted Titus, and I sent the brother with him. Did Titus take any advantage of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?" (ASV).
 - a. A devious adversary will try to turn any occasion to his advantage and to the hurt of his victim. Having disposed of a charge that he personally sought a financial reward for his preaching, Paul's critics would have to look elsewhere for a manufactured charge.
 - b. Wisely anticipating their next criticism, Paul denies that any of his helpers obtained money for him. The Corinthians could answer for themselves the questions he poses here. The apostle did not send his fellow-laborers to raise support. Let the record speak for itself.
 - c. When Titus and the other unnamed brother (8:18) were sent by Paul to Corinth, did Titus seek money from you? The answer is obviously *no*. Titus and Paul were characterized by the same spirit (disposition). They walked "in the same steps."
 - d. McGarvey:
 - 1) "My detractors admit that I myself took nothing; then I must have taken it through the agency of others. If so, by whom? Titus and the brother who accompanied him were the only agents I sent. Did Titus thus cheat you in my behalf? Did he not, on the contrary, show you the same inner spirit of self-sacrifice which I displayed? Did he not outwardly follow my plans, exhorting you not to give it to him, or send it to me, but to lay it up in your own treasury weekly as I directed? See I Cor. 16: 1, 2.
 - 2) "If Titus, as we have supposed, accompanied the messengers who bore Paul's first epistle to Corinth, he very naturally carried out the directions of that epistle. Who was then with him we do not know. Titus had not yet reached Corinth to undertake this work a second time as Paul directed (8: 6, 16, 17). Paul's actions were ever free from guile or covetousness—1 Thess. 2: 3-5."
5. Verse 19: "Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but *we do* all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying."
 - a. Anticipating another criticism, Paul denies that he was making excuses to defend himself before their judgment seat. He has one who is far more important that he seeks to please—God. What he says is spoken with the full knowledge that he is being heard by the Almighty! God knew he was speaking

the truth: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not" (2 Cor. 11:31).

- b. What he has written has been stated *in Christ*. Spiritual blessings, spiritual truth, spiritual knowledge, spiritual light, and spiritual hope are found in Christ. He spoke with the full awareness that what he said and did were entirely exposed to the eyes of God; and what he spoke and did were entirely in harmony with the sphere in which *Christ* operated.
 - c. The apostle's intent was to build them up in the faith (to edify them). It was not his purpose to deprive them of anything that was dear to them; he had demonstrated that he had taken no money from them, directly or indirectly, for his personal use.
 - 1) He had sacrificed his freedom, ease, time, and strength, and had placed his life in grave peril to the end that they might be edified.
 - 2) No one should think that Paul was offering excuses in order to gain their approval.
6. Verse 20: "For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and *that* I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest *there be* debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults."
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "For I fear, lest by any means, when I come, I should find you not such as I would, and should myself be found of you such as ye would not; lest by any means there should be strife, jealousy, wraths, factions, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults."
 - 2) NKV: "For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults."
 - b. Paul was concerned that when he came, he would find the sinful conditions earlier exposed and rebuked still being practiced.
 - 1) Debates had been present among them. The ASV has *strife* as the translated word. These debates were sinful strifes and contentions; they were not the orderly discussions in which propositions are carefully affirmed and denied. Religious discussions were conducted by Christ, Stephen, Paul, and many others (cf. Prov. 25:9; Jude 3). However, strife and contentions are strongly denounced here and elsewhere in the Scriptures.
 - 2) Envyings had been present among them. The ASV word is *jealousy*. This is the feeling of pain over the successes or possessions of others; to desire to have what someone else has obtained. Christianity requires that we rejoice with those who obtain success (Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26). Envy (jealousy) is a major cause of church problems.
 - a) Romans 12:15: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 12:26: "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."
 - 3) They had been guilty of wrath. This is anger and animosity which develops from contentions. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" (1 Pet. 2:1).
 - 4) Strifes were practiced in their midst. The ASV has *factions* for this word. The Lord's will is for Christians to be at perfect peace among themselves. It is, of course, necessary for divisions to occur so that those who are genuine saints may be identifiable. "For there must be also factions among you, that they that are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Cor. 11:19, ASV).

- 5) They had been guilty of backbiting. This sin is one of assassinating another's character openly when the victim is not present.
 - a) Proverbs 25:23: "The north wind driveth away rain: so *doth* an angry countenance a backbiting tongue."
 - b) Galatians 5:15: "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."
 - 6) Whispering was one of their sins. This sin is a secret assassination of another's character.
 - a) Ephesians 4:29: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."
 - b) Colossians 4:6: "Let your speech *be* alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."
 - c) James 4:11:12: "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?"
 - 7) Swellings were present. This sin was one of prideful exaltation of one's own worth; an inflation of one's estimation of himself, which results in others being held in contempt. Vine:
 - a) phusiosis (NT:5450) denotes "a pumng up, swelling with pride" (akin to phusioo, "to puff up"), 2 Cor 12:20, "swellings."
 - b) "huperonkos (NT:5246), an adjective denoting 'of excessive weight or size,' is used metaphorically in the sense of 'immoderate,' especially of arrogant speech, in the neuter plural, virtually as a noun, 2 Peter2:18; Jude 16, "great swelling words," doubtless with reference to gnostic phraseology." [Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright © 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers].
 - 8) There had been tumults within the church. "Disorders and confusion arising from the existence of parties" (Lipscomb, p.168).
 - c. He did not want to find them in that dreaded condition, and did not want them to find him the stern disciplinarian that he could be when necessary. He had the authority to take certain actions which would be to their hurt.
7. Verse 21: "*And* lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and *that* I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed."
- a. If Paul found them in these sins, he would be humbled; he would be disappointed, humiliated, and sorrowful. He would find it necessary to dispense God's punishment against them.
 - b. Those who had become guilty and had not repented would be noted. He specifically names the sins of uncleanness, fornication, and lasciviousness. These sins were of a particularly heinous nature, totally uncharacteristic of a follower of Christ. These are sins which were very prominent among the Gentiles, especially of those in Corinth.
 - c. Excerpt from my commentary on Galatians, under the *works of the flesh*:
 - 1) Fornication.
 - a) The gospel of Christ introduced sexual purity into a world which was steeped in all kinds of sexual misconduct. Fornication of every kind was not only condoned by the ancients, but was regarded normal and necessary in their way of life.

- b) There is no morality associated with animals; they bear no sense of guilt; this was the way God made them. But he did not make man thus; we have been given an awareness of right and wrong, and a law which prohibits some things and requires other things. That law says that we sin against our own body if we commit fornication (1 Cor. 6:18). Fornication is the only ground for divorce and remarriage (Matt. 19:9). God requires that we keep ourselves pure from this sin, and permits sexual relations only by a man and a woman who are scripturally married to each other.
- c) "Fornication" is from *porneia*, which means "illicit sexual intercourse" (Vine, Vol. 2, p.125). It is defined by Thayer as "illicit sexual intercourse in general" (p.531f). A noun form of the word is used to identify a prostitute. One is guilty of the sin of fornication for money or for lust. The Greek term is used as the name for the entire category of sexual sins: adultery, prostitution, homosexuality, bestiality, etc., are types of fornication.

2) Uncleanness.

- a) This word is used to describe the defilement of an unclean wound; its adjective form (positive) was used to describe a house that has been cleaned and left in good condition. Paul uses the negative form of the word here.
- b) The word as used in the text retains these pictures, but has application to the spiritual realm. It is the direct opposite of spiritual purity. "In a moral sense, the impurity of lustful, luxurious, profligate living: Rom. 1:24; 6:19; 2 Co. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19; 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Th. 4:7" (Thayer, p.21).
 - (1) Romans 1:24: "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves." The reference is to homosexuality and other acts of sexual misconduct.
 - (2) Romans 6:19: "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."
 - (3) Galatians 5:19: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness."
 - (4) Ephesians 4:19: "Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."
 - (5) Ephesians 5:3: "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints."
 - (6) Colossians 3:5: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."
 - (7) 1 Thessalonians 4:7: "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

d. Lasciviousness.

- 1) The Greek word (*aselgeia*) is translated "wantonness" (Rom. 13:13; 2 Pet. 2:18) and "lasciviousness" (Mark 7:22; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19).
 - a) Romans 13:13: "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying."
 - b) 2 Peter 2:18: "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error."

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- c) Mark 7:22: "Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness."
 - d) 2 Corinthians 12:21: "And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed."
 - e) Galatians 5:19: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness."
- 2) Thayer defines the word as, "Unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence....wanton (acts or) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females..." (pp.79f).

2 CORINTHIANS 13

A. 2 Corinthians 13:1-10: Paul Will Correct the Sins at Corinth When He Comes.

1. Verse 1: "This *is* the third *time* I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."
 - a. Two different views are held regarding Paul's visits to Corinth as stated here and in 12:14.
 - 1) Some think that Paul had been to their city two times already, and that he was planning a third visit. There is no Biblical record of the second visit [prior to Acts 20], but not every operation of Paul is recorded.
 - 2) Others view these two passages to speak of the apostle's *intentions* to come to Corinth. "Behold, the third time I am *ready* to come to you..." (12:14). Second 2 Corinthians 1:15-16 speaks of two intended visits, and this verse speaks of a third: "And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea."
 - b. Paul knew the seriousness of the problems at Corinth caused by the false teachers. He was earnest in his plan to return to them so that he could resolve the problems, through instructive discipline or corrective discipline. He had not stayed away from them because he was afraid of the errorists, but important pressing needs kept him at other places.
 - c. When he came, he would expose the false doctrines and sins by proper means. The Mosaic Law required the testimony of two or three witnesses before guilt was established (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15). This procedure has been made part of the New Testament system.
 - 1) Numbers 35:30: "Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 17:6: "At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death."
 - 3) Deuteronomy 19:15: "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."
 - 4) Matthew 18:15-17: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."
 - 5) 1 Timothy 5:19 states the same principle: "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."
 - d. The inspired apostle stated in the text that he intended to use this procedure to establish the facts when he returned to Corinth. "The apostle here declares that patience has reached its just limit....He will not, however, proceed rashly, nor will he decide who is guilty by direct or immediate revelation, lest he be regarded as arrogating to himself the offices of both witness and judge. He will proceed by due legal form, and call witnesses, since they are to be had, and obviate the necessity of employing miraculous knowledge" (McGarvey, p.240).
2. Verse 2: "I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare."
 - a. Paul had already given them a warning that when he comes, he will apply the proper measures to

correct the problems among them. He reinforces that warning with another. *I have warned you once, and now I warn you again.*

- b. The type of punishment he envisions is not stated, but it could be (1) the withdrawal of fellowship, as with the sinful brother of 1 Corinthians 5, or it could be (2) the application of miraculous punishment, as in the cases of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5) and Elymas (Acts 13).
 - c. Because he was a genuine apostle of Christ, he had the authority and the obligation to do what he warned them he would do. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28). [The promise here included all of the Lord's apostles, the twelve plus Paul; Paul had not been chosen at the time Christ spoke, but was later installed into the apostolic office by Christ—Acts 26:15-19].
 - d. The purpose of discipline is to deliver a precious soul from the devil's grasp.
 - 1) Matthew 18:15-17: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 5:1-5: "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."
 - e. If the guilty party will not repent, the withdrawal of fellowship will at least be a word of caution to others who might be subject to the same error. When direct discipline was sent upon Ananias and his wife, those who learned of it feared: "And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things" (Acts 5:11).
3. Verses 3-4: "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you. For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "Seeing that ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me; who to you-ward is not weak, but is powerful in you: for he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth through the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him through the power of God toward you."
 - 2) NKJ: "Since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, who is not weak toward you, but mighty in you. For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you."

- b. Some at Corinth had denied Paul's apostleship, and others had begun to doubt it. He states here that they wanted proof that Christ truly spoke through him. In the preceding chapters, he has given them abundant reason to accept his claim to apostleship.
- 1) He labored at Corinth without charge to the brethren there: "And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself. As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth" (2 Cor. 11:7-9).
 - 2) He had endured many hardships and persecutions in his efforts to discharge his apostolic office: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (2 Cor. 11:24-28).
 - 3) He had performed supernatural works before them which could only be done by a genuine apostle of Christ: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong" (2 Cor. 12:11-13).
- c. His enemies had accused Paul of being weak and fearful, but they had misjudged his humility and meekness. He had not evinced weakness in performing his apostolic duties; they had merely perceived it to be weak. The problem was in their perception. He had not been weak; he had been gentle and patient. If they reflected honestly on the miraculous works Paul did in their presence, they would admit the power he demonstrated proved his apostleship. Meekness is not usually understood correctly. It is not weakness, but describes one who is under the control of God—willingly.
- 1) Meekness is from a Greek term that is not easily expressed in English. The ancient word was used to describe a wild horse which had been tamed, but without having his spirit broken. It describes one who has been going his own way, but who has become submissive to God, and now happily goes the way God directs.
 - 2) The basic element of meekness, derived from its root meaning, is equilibrium. "Full and complete possession of all the faculties of one's being, and inner mastery." "The meaning of 'prautes' is not readily expressed in English, for the terms meekness, mildness, commonly used, suggest weakness and pusillanimity to a greater or less extent, whereas 'prautes' does nothing of the kind...It must be clearly understood, therefore, that the meekness manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer is the fruit of power. The common assumption is that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help himself; but the Lord was 'meek' because he had the infinite resources of God at His command" (Vine, Vol. 3, p.56).
 - 3) The word is associated with lowliness, having a quiet spirit, and gentleness.
 - a) Ephesians 4:2-3: "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
 - b) Titus 3:2: "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *but* gentle, showing all meekness unto all men."

- c) 1 Peter 3:4: "But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."
- 4) Christ is the perfect example of meekness.
 - a) Matthew 11:29: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."
 - b) Matthew 26:39: "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*."
- 5) Paul was meek, yet strong.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 4:21: "What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and *in* the spirit of meekness?"
 - b) 2 Corinthians 10:1: "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence *am* base among you, but being absent am bold toward you."
- 6) Meekness is required of those who would restore fallen saints. "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" (Gal. 6:1).
- 7) Christ himself, although he was *weak* in the sense that he was crucified, yet he was raised up from the dead by the power of God. Only from the world's viewpoint was Christ weak; it appeared to the Lord's enemies that he did not have sufficient power to avoid the cross, or when he was crucified, to remove himself from the cross. His crucifixion was planned by God; rather than showing weakness, it demonstrated the power of God's wisdom; and his resurrection showed God's omnipotence.
 - a) Romans 1:4: "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."
 - b) John 10:17-18: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."
- 8) Moses, who was strong enough to lead a few million people through the wilderness, is still called a meek man: "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3).
- d. That his apostolic powers had been great could be seen in them. They had been guilty of all kinds of sinful conduct, but they received cleansing through the gospel Paul preached (1 Cor. 6:9-11). They had lived lives which were corrupted by sin, but now their lives (the faithful) were pure. They had received various spiritual gifts through Paul, which only an apostle could confer.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 12:8-10: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."
 - 3) Romans 1:11: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established."

- 4) Acts 8:14-17: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."
- e. The followers of Christ are *weak* in the sense that we sometimes also fall under the heel of persecutors.
 - 1) 2 Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
 - 2) 1 Peter 4:11-19: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."
 - 3) Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - 4) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
- f. From the world's point of view, we may appear to be utterly helpless. We also, along with all humanity, face illness, experience accidents, suffer hardships, and eventually die. The greatest physical weakness we have is death, but even then, we are promised the resurrection. We share in the Lord's *weakness*, but we shall also share in his resurrection.
- g. Christ had the ability to smite his enemies with miraculous judgment; he chose not to use that power for good reason. God suffers long with man, giving him time and opportunity to come to repentance.
 - 1) Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
 - 2) 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (ASV).
 - 3) It was God's power and initiative that slew Ananias and his wife (Acts 5).
- h. He could coerce man's compliance by killing a number of sinners regularly as object lessons to the rest, but that obedience might not be sincere. The miraculous power Paul had was not to be used indiscriminately or ruthlessly. Just because he had not used supernatural power to punish sinners at Corinth did not mean he had no power to do so (of course, only by God's directions).

4. Verses 5-6: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates."
- a. This verse is directed to the saints at Corinth. It states our obligation, also. The admonition is for Christians to examine themselves to determine whether they are in the faith.
 - 1) The statement would be foolish if it were not possible for one who had become a Christian to depart from the faith. A Christian can fall away from the faith, and be separated from Christ.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 10:12: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 9:27: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
 - c) Galatians 5:1-4: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
 - d) James 5:19-20: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."
 - 2) The requirement of the verse would be impossible if there were no standard of truth by which to measure ourselves. Those who are not content to believe and obey the Bible, in a feeble attempt to justify their doctrine, assert that there is no absolute standard of truth in religion. If that is so, how could they *know that truth*? Paul's statement in verse five repudiates their assertion.
 - a) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - b) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - c) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - d) Galatians 1:6-12: "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; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 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. 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. 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. 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."
 - e) 2 John 1:9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
 - b. "They had demanded proof that Paul was an apostle. He had furnished it, and he now admonishes them to try themselves so as to make sure that they are in the faith" (Lipscomb, p.171). They questioned whether Christ was in Paul, providing the message he preached; Paul asked them whether Christ was in them, or were they reprobates?
 - c. To examine is to try (to test). The word *prove* used in the text is stronger than the word *examine*. "This

word, *prove*, refers to assaying or trying metals by the powerful action of heat; and the idea here is, that they should make the *most thorough* trial of their religion, to see whether it would stand the test" (Barnes, p.269). How could they put themselves to the test?

- 1) First, there must be an absolute standard by which to measure themselves. That standard, of course, is God's word.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - b) Isaiah 8:20: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."
 - c) 1 Thessalonians 2:13: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."
 - d) 2 Thessalonians 2:15: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."
 - e) 2 Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."
 - f) 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."
 - g) 1 Corinthians 14:37: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."
 - h) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
- 2) They were again to test their attitudes, words, thoughts, motives, and actions by the word of God. "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth [therein], he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (Jas. 1:25).
- 3) We identify true and false teachers by the fruit they produce (the doctrines they preach and practice).
 - a) Matthew 7:15-20: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
 - b) 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
 - c) 1 Peter 4:11: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."
- d. To be *in the faith* is to conduct one's self in keeping with the dictates of the faith. *The faith* is used here as a synonym of the gospel system (Christianity).

- 1) Acts 6:7: “And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”
 - 2) Ephesians 4:4-5: “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism.”
 - 3) Galatians 1:23: “But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.”
 - 4) Jude 1:3: “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”
- e. To be in the faith is to be a follower of the gospel, a Christian. One enters the faith by obeying the gospel.
- 1) Acts 6:7: “And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”
 - 2) Acts 2:36-38: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
 - 3) Acts 18:8: “And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.”
 - 4) Acts 22:16: “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
- f. One no longer is a participant in the faith if he becomes lukewarm: “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Rev. 3:15-17).
- g. One leaves the faith if he believes or practices false doctrine.
- 1) 1 Timothy 4:1-3: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”
 - 2) 1 John 2:19: “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”
- h. One can depart from the faith by practicing any kind of sin.
- 1) 2 Timothy 3:1-9: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as

Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.”

- 2) Galatians 6:1: “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.”
 - 3) James 5:19-20: “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”
- i. One can leave the faith by having the wrong attitude or motive: “And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me” (Acts 8:18-24).
 - j. One who has left the faith is a reprobate. The same Greek term is used in 1 Corinthians 9:27, where it is translated *castaway*. A reprobate is one who practices sin; he is a castaway from God. “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Cor. 9:27).
 - k. An alien sinner is a castaway, because he is not fit for God to use since he became accountable and entered into sin. An erring Christian is a castaway, because he has contaminated his soul with sin, and God cannot use him.
 - 1) A reprobate fails to meet God's criteria. ““Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them” (Jer. 6:30).
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:8: "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith."
 - 3) Titus 1:16: “They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."
 - 4) Romans 1:28: "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."
 - l. Christ dwells in his people. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love" (Eph. 3:17). When one obeys the gospel, and lives in harmony with the will of God, Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. Faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17).
 - 1) If Christ is not in a Christian, that Christian has become a reprobate. Because he is a reprobate, he is cast away from God, unfit for God's use on account of his sinful condition. No reprobate can go to heaven (Rev. 21:27; Matt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14; 2 Pet. 1:1-11; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9-11). If Christ is not in us, we are reprobates.
 - a) Revelation 21:27: “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.”
 - b) Matthew 5:8: “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”
 - c) Hebrews 12:14: “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the

Lord.”

- d) 2 Peter 1:1-11: “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
 - e) Galatians 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, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, 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.”
 - f) 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”
- 2) Another figure is also used in other passages to depict our relationship to Christ—we are in him: “For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27, ASV).
- m. Paul wanted both himself and the Corinthians to keep from becoming reprobate. Verse six states his honest belief that he was not reprobate, and that they would perceive him so to be.
5. Verses 7-8: "Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates. For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." “Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do what is honorable, though we may seem disqualified. 8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth” (NKJ).
- a. Paul's statement here shows that we become reprobate by doing evil. When we violate God's truth, we do evil (1 John 3:4; 5:17). His prayer for the Corinthians was that they would not do evil.
 - 1) 1 John 3:4: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”
 - 2) 1 John 5:17: “All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.”
 - b. However, he did not pray for their faithfulness for *his* benefit. If they remained faithful to Christ, that would give Paul great satisfaction and would be an admission on their part that Paul was a true apostle.

His primary aim for wanting them to be faithful was for the benefits that condition would bring to their souls.

- c. "We do not thus pray for the sake of approving ourselves by showing our power to restrain you from evil (and thus our approval would result from our prayer), but we thus pray because of our earnest desire for your righteousness. We would have you do that which is honorable, even though you thereby deprive us of the opportunity of vindicating ourself, so that we shall still be looked upon by you as untrustworthy, and not capable of enduring tests" (McGarvey, p.242).
 - d. The apostle continually showed his unselfish love for others, willing to be mistreated and maligned, if that would help someone else.
 - 1) Romans 9:1-3: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."
 - 2) Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
 - e. The truth is extremely important! Men often hinder the spread and influence of the truth by their unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18), but in the final investigation, the truth will win. An enemy of the truth may succeed for a while on earth, but when he passes into eternity, he will be confronted by that truth he sought to destroy; it will be intact and full of strength. All efforts against the truth eventually come to nought. The truth is important to us, and must not be ignored or rejected, but loved and obeyed.
 - 1) God's word is the truth: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).
 - 2) The truth sets us free from sin. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).
 - 3) The truth converts the soul: "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (Ps. 19:7).
 - 4) The truth purifies the soul and produces the new birth. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet. 1:22-23).
 - 5) The truth provides us with everything that we need for life and godliness. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2 Pet. 1:3).
 - 6) We must love the truth in order to be saved. "And with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2:10-12, ASV).
 - 7) We will be judged by the truth at the last day. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48).
6. Verse 9: "For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, *even* your perfection."
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "For we rejoice, when we are weak, and ye are strong: this we also pray for, even your

perfecting.”

- 2) NKJ: “For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. And this also we pray, that you may be made complete.”
 - b. Paul continues the thought that he was willing to suffer wrong or be considered deficient in some way if that meant that his brethren were strong and spiritually mature. There was no selfishness about the apostle. He was willing to be abased if he could help others.
 - c. If they wanted to think he did not employ miraculous measures to discipline the sinful at Corinth because he was weak, so be it. If he could correct their errors from afar by means of the letters he wrote, so much the better. The proper result would have been achieved.
 - d. His sincere and earnest desire was that they might go on to perfection, and he prayed to that end. The purpose of the epistles was to correct their errors and teach them the truth so that they could become strong, mature Christians.
7. Verse 10: "Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction." "For this cause I write these things while absent, that I may not when present deal sharply, according to the authority which the Lord gave me for building up, and not for casting down" (ASV).
- a. He states his aim in writing to them as endeavoring by the written missives to correct the problems at Corinth, so that when he came in person, there would be no need for him to take direct action to discipline the wayward.
 - b. The power by which Paul exerted his apostolic influence was miraculous. The message was a divinely-given revelation, which he delivered (in written or oral form) by inspiration, and which was confirmed to be from God by supernatural signs.
 - c. The primary purpose of the miraculous power was for the salvation of sinners and edification of the saints, but which included the means of inflicting punishment on evildoers. Again, Ananias and Sapphira (Christians) were slain by this power when they committed sin (Acts 5:1-11), and Elymas (an unbeliever) was punished with blindness for a season because he opposed the preaching of the gospel (Acts 13:7-12).
 - d. Paul was also empowered with leading the congregation to withdraw fellowship from unfaithful members, with the purpose being to shame them, and bring them to repentance. This discipline was effective in getting the adulterous man of 1 Corinthians 5 to repent (2 Cor. 2:4-11).

B. 2 Corinthians 13:11-14: Concluding Remarks.

1. Verse 11: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: “Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”
 - 2) NKJ: “Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.”
 - b. In concluding this letter, Paul expressed genuine concern for their welfare. Some of them had gotten involved in sin and religious error, but he still loved them and wanted to help them. His words of reproof were not indications of hatred, but of love.
 - c. He exhorts them to be perfect. His prayer that they might be perfected was important, but the prayer could not give them spiritual maturity; that is a condition which the individual must sincerely desire,

so much so that he will exert the effort and time needed to reach that worthy goal (cf. 2 Peter 1:1-12). Spiritual maturity requires the development of all the Christian traits, and the ability and willingness to do all that God requires.

- d. He exhorts them to be of good comfort. In spite of the persecution of unbelievers, the turmoil and trouble caused by the false teachers, the discouragements of trying to live a godly life in an ungodly environment, the heartaches and pains that result from the common problems of life—despite all of these and other such things, they could be of good comfort. The gospel offers so much hope and consolation that, even in the most desperate of outward circumstances, a faithful child of God can be comforted.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 1:3-5: “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.”
 - 2) Romans 8:18: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”
 - 3) 1 Peter 1:3-5: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”
- e. He exhorts them to be of one mind. That such a condition is possible is seen by the Lord's prayer for unity (John 17:20-21) and by the command to be perfectly joined together (1 Cor. 1:10).
 - 1) John 17:20-21: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 1:10: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”
 - 3) Philippians 1:27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."
 - 4) Philippians 3:16: "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."
- f. He exhorts them to live in peace. There is no reason why two faithful Christians cannot live peaceably with each other. There is no reason why two dozen, two hundred, two thousand, or two million Christians cannot live peaceably with each other.
 - 1) If each one is sincere in his profession of Christianity, and walks in the light of the gospel (1 John 1:7), each will be longsuffering with the others, will forbear one another in love, and seek the best good of all others.
 - 2) None will seek to harm another, and none will seek vengeance: “Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:17-21).

- 3) Romans 12:18: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."
- g. Paul affirms that if these conditions are met, then the God of love and peace would be with them.
- 1) God is love;
 - a) 1 John 4:8: "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."
 - b) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
 - 2) God is the God of peace. He is the giver of peace.
 - a) John 14:27: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."
 - b) Philippians 4:6-7: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."
 - c) James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
 - 3) A faithful saint has peace with God, peace within himself, peace with his brethren, and always manifests a peaceful disposition toward those in the world.
2. Verse 12: "Greet one another with an holy kiss."
- a. The common method of expressing friendliness and love in that day when meeting or parting was with a kiss. Paul's admonition here requires that the kiss be holy. We can easily see how a kiss could be lustful and therefore unholy.
 - b. The apostle did not bind the kiss as the only proper method of salutation. When the kiss is the custom, it must be a *holy* kiss. There is no record of our Lord kissing or being kissed (except by Judas). Two women are said to have kissed his feet—both special situations.
 - c. Our custom is to shake hands. A handshake can be abused by someone who wants to show off his strength, and try to shame the other party, instead of expressing friendliness and love. Our handshakes must be holy. In recent years, hugging has become popular. A warm hug can be an excellent expression of Christian love. But some hug in an unholy way—embracing only members of the opposite sex, putting hands where they do not belong. Whatever the action of greeting may be, it must be a *holy* greeting.
3. Verse 13: "All the saints salute you."
- a. Writing from somewhere in Macedonia, Paul includes the salutations of the brethren there. Congregations had been established at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. Perhaps others had been set up by now, but these three are spoken of in the inspired record.
 - b. These brethren sent their greetings to the saints at Corinth. There was a closeness between brethren in those ancient times which often seems to be missing in the church today. In times of peace and prosperity, we get the notion that we do not need each other. When we encounter persecutions or other strong opposition or troubles, we need each other, and we need the Lord. We should never lose our appreciation of Christian fellowship.
4. Verse 14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. Amen."
- a. Paul pronounces the grace of Christ upon the saints. The grace of Christ is expressed by the gospel of Christ. He came to earth, lived a perfect life, gave perfect teachings, and died a sacrificial death for all humanity; he was raised the third day, and ascended back to heaven. He gave the gospel for the

salvation of sinners, and to guide the saints through this life successfully, so that we may be with him in eternal glory.

- b. Paul pronounces the love of God upon the saints. The love of God drew salvation's plan, guided it as it was developed during the ages of the Old Testament, and sent Christ to execute the plan. His love saturates the plan. His love is still expressed by the gospel and by his providence, and will be fully shown in heaven.
- c. Paul pronounces the communion of the Holy Spirit upon the saints. The Spirit communes with our hearts by means of the Scriptures he revealed
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 2:9-14: "But as it is written, 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, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:18-19: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."
 - 3) Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."
- d. The Holy Spirit comforts the saints through the inspired scriptures. Those who have lost a loved one in Christ, are given the comfort of knowing that they will be together in heaven.
 - 1) Matthew 8:11: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."
 - 2) Revelation 14:13: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."
- e. Those who face tribulations or other earthly hardships, can know that heaven is worth any sacrifice or pain.
 - 1) Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - 2) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
- f. Those who face temptations and trials, have his providential assistance: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:12-13).
- g. As we struggle through life, the Spirit offers the comfort of communion as we study and meditate and

believe and follow the inspired counsel he revealed, recorded, confirmed, and preserved for us.

h. McGarvey:

- 1) “This is the full apostolic benediction. It contains three blessings respectively derived from the three divine sources. It occurs nowhere else in the Scripture. Coming, as it does, after this, the most severe of letters, it reminds one that the greatest showers of blessing often follow the fiercest flashes of lightning and the mightiest reverberations of thunder.
- 2) “Thus closes Paul's second epistle to the church at Corinth. It evidently furthered the good work set in motion by the first epistle and by Titus; for when Paul a little later wrote his letter to the Romans from Corinth, he was evidently in a calm and peaceful frame of mind. Also compare 10: 15, 16 and notes, with Rom. 15: 22-24. Moreover, the collection for Jerusalem was taken, and was apparently generous, for Paul accompanied them who bore it to Jerusalem.”

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Preface and Acknowledgment

These various commentaries and other Biblical studies were developed through many years of hard and close study of the Bible. I have had an insatiable appetite to learn all of God's Word possible. I grew up in the Beans Creek Community of Coffee County Tennessee. My family started attending the Lord's church at Beans Creek in 1949, where I was privileged to have sister Ethel Croft as an outstanding Bible class teacher. All seven member of my father's family were baptized into Christ, plus my wife, Marie. Each of our five children also obeyed the gospel.

Sister Croft greatly encouraged me to study the Bible and to become a good worker for the Lord. I tried not to cause her any disappointment. In 1978, after preaching for many years, the brethren at Beans Creek invited me to conduct a gospel meeting. Sister Croft, though she was in advanced years and had to drive a good distance, did not miss any of the services.

Since first becoming acquainted with the gospel more than seventy years ago, I have had the honor to hear some of the greatest gospel preachers of the time. Some of these well-known to most members of the Lord's church, but some of them labored in the shadows, learning and dispensing the truth of God quietly and effectively. Not so many people in the brotherhood today knew such preachers as Luke Gibbs. I have learned much and have been profited greatly from many gospel preachers and teachers through these many years. I am fully appreciative also to those many sound brethren who have published books which I have had the privilege to study. I began preaching in July of 1961 in Italy.

A debt of gratitude is owed by many to the instructors of Memphis School of Preaching for the tremendous work they did through the years, patiently teaching their students the wonderful word of life. I am especially grateful to these great men who were serving in this capacity during 1970-72, when I attended the school: Roy Hearn Frank Young, Richard Curry, Charles Pledge, and E.L. Whitaker.

I claim no originality for all of the material presented in the material included in my books. There is no way to give proper credit to all who have contributed to the information I have learned, but in every case possible, acknowledgment is cited. I have attempted to be as accurate, clear and concise as my finite knowledge allows, but, as with all human productions, there will doubtless be imperfections. Our grasp of the infinite will of God is not absolute in every detail, despite the diligence of our efforts; there is always more to learn.

Some have incorrectly thought that my books are merely expansions of the notes I took while studying at MSOP. But those notes were skimpy at best, and were not in my possession when I wrote my material. The notes were put together in connection with Bible classes I have taught over much time. For several years, a hundred or more hours weekly were required as I prepared to teach two different Bible books each week, Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, while at the same time, during full-time work as a gospel preacher. These notes became the "Outlined Bible Commentaries" that have been made available to countless people.

It has not been my aim to make money through these efforts—indeed, we barely cover our expenses. Many of my books have been given away without charge to the recipients. An uncounted numbers of books and compact discs were ordered and shipped out, for which no payment was ever received. A good many of these non-paying costumers were gospel preachers.

The Bible quotations in my books are from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise. These books were intentionally put on 8.5 by 11 inch pages, to make the outline format easier to view. A normal hardback book contains about 800 words per page; my pages contain twice that number of words. The spiral-bound or wire-bound books are much less expensive to produce. My wife and I have done all the manual labor required to produce the books. The supplies, software and equipment are very costly. Marie still helps as much as she can despite the dementia she has had for several years— and her many surgeries and broken bones and heartaches. *I thank God whenever I think of her.*"

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS

A. Author.

1. The epistle begins with a direct reference to the author. Paul again identifies himself by name in chapter five, verse two.
2. The external evidence that Paul wrote the letter is strong. Polycarp, Marcion, Justin Martyr, Origen, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria attest to the Pauline authorship. The Old Syriac and the Old Latin versions include it, and the Muratorian Canon places it as Paul's second epistle.
3. The Tübingen school of criticism accepted Galatians and the Corinthian epistles as genuine.

B. Paul the Apostle.

1. Paul was arrested in Jerusalem (Acts 21) and was imprisoned at Caesarea for two years (Acts 24:27) before being sent to Rome (Acts 27). The Book of Acts closes with the apostle having been in prison at Rome for two more years (Acts 28:30-31). What happened at the end of these two years?
2. The following quotation from Thiessen, pp.260-262, gives one view:
 - a. "Paul was tried and acquitted. The flimsy charges against him (Acts 25:14-27; 26:30-32) did not convince even a Nero of the Apostle's guilt. Certain expressed purposes of Paul in the Prison Epistles (Phil. 23,24; Philemon 22) and certain references to men and places in the *Pastorals* [?—bw] (to be noted) enable us to determine his movements and activities after his release with some feeling of certainty.
 - b. "From Rome he probably went to Brundisium, crossed the Adriatic, either to Apollonia or to Dyrrachium, and then took the Egnatian Road to Macedonia and Philippi. He probably did not stay long at Philippi at this time, but hastened on to Ephesus and from this as a center he visited Laodicea, Colossae, and other cities in this neighborhood. After spending the biggest part of a year in the East, he probably set out for Spain. There was constant intercourse between the East and Massilia (the modern Marseilles), and so he would have no difficulty in reaching the 'limit of the west.' It is thought that he remained about two years in Spain. During this time, probably, Timothy took up the work at Ephesus [*preached in and around Ephesus*—bw]. It appears, however, as if somewhere on Paul's way back from Spain to Macedonia Timothy asked Paul to allow him to leave Ephesus and to travel with him once more. But this Paul did not allow (1 Tim. 1:3). Some time after this the Apostle wrote 1 Timothy to his faithful co-worker.
 - c. "Timothy, converted under Paul's ministry (1 Tim. 1:2,18) on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:6-23), became the Apostle's assistant on the second journey (Acts 16:1-3) after his ordination [the sectarian "ordination" is not authorized by the Scriptures—bw] to the ministry (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). He was with Paul at Troas, Philippi, Berea, and Athens. From the last place he made a trip to Thessalonica and returned to Paul at Corinth (Acts 18:5). Then we lose sight of him for about five years (Plummer). He reappears at Ephesus, on Paul's third journey, and is sent by the Apostle with Erastus to Macedonia (Acts 19:22). Paul hoped he would get to Corinth also, but it is not certain whether Timothy ever reached that city (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10). He is with Paul again in Macedonia when Paul writes 2 Corinthians (2 Cor. 1:1,19), and must have accompanied him to Corinth, for he sends greetings when Paul writes Romans (Rom. 16:21). He returned with Paul to Macedonia and to Asia, at least as far as Troas (Acts 20:3-6). Then we again lose sight of him for the two years of Paul's Caesarean imprisonment. We next find him at Rome, joining Paul in sending greetings to Colossae, Philemon, and Philippi. From Rome he, undoubtedly, made the trip to Philippi of which Paul speaks (Phil. 2:19-23), after which he again disappears from the record. We may, however, assume that he was with Paul in some of his further ministries in various eastern cities; but it is not likely that he accompanied the Apostle to Spain. Some time during Paul's visit to Spain he probably took up the work at Ephesus. While still at this place he received what we call The First Epistle to Timothy."
3. Quotation from Rex Turner, Sr., MSOP, pp.14-18:
 - a. "Luke closed his Acts of the Apostle in the following words: 'And he (Paul) abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and

teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, and none forbidding him' (Acts 28:30,31). In this conclusion to his Acts of the Apostles, Luke did not say that at the end of the two year imprisonment Paul was put to death, nor did he imply it. In fact the necessary implication is that Paul had been set free....

- b. "Someone is bound to ask: 'Is there external evidence that bears on the question of Paul's release, or non-release from prison, and if so, what does the evidence show, and how relevant is it?' There is external evidence!
- c. "To illustrate, one source of external evidence is from the writing of Clement of Rome. Clement (A.D. 30-100) wrote the Corinthians, and the salutation reads as follows: 'The Church of God which sojourns at Rome to the Church of God sojourning at Corinth, to them that are called and sanctified by the will of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, from Almighty God through Jesus Christ, be multiplied.' In this epistle, written about A.D. 97, Clement admonished: 'Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours; and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience.' Stress should be placed upon the fact that Clement said that Paul came unto 'the extreme limit of the west,' and after his having done so, he suffered martyrdom. Under no circumstances could Rome be counted the extreme west. The clear and unmistakable implication is that Paul was released from his Roman imprisonment, and in turn, that he completed his long avowed purpose to preach the gospel in Spain.
- d. "A second source of external evidence is the Muratorian Fragment. This fragment or canon was discovered by L.A. Muratori (A.D. 1672-1750) in the Ambrosian Library and published by him in A.D. 1740. It was written in Latin and consists of eighty-five lines. Scholars agree that the original form, of which the Muratorian fragment is a copy, was written about A.D. 180-190. That fragment reads: 'Luke compiled for most excellent Theophilus' what things were done in detail in his presence, as he plainly shows by omitting both the death of Peter and also the departure of Paul from the city, when he departed [for] Spain.' Note should be taken of the fact that his Muratorian fragment explicitly states that Paul left for Spain.
- e. "A third source of external evidence is from the historian Eusebius. His life dates about A.D. 260-340. He wrote as follows: 'Festus was sent by Nero to be Felix's successor. Under him, Paul, having made his defense, was sent bound to Rome. Aristarchus was with him, whom he also somewhere in his epistles quite naturally calls his fellow prisoner. And Luke, who wrote the Acts of the Apostles, brought his history to a close at this point, after stating that Paul spent two years at Rome as a prisoner at large, and preached the word of God without restraint. Then after he made his defense it is said that the apostle was sent again upon the ministry of preaching, and that upon coming to the same city a second time he suffered martyrdom. In this imprisonment he wrote his second epistle to Timothy, in which he mentions his first defense and his impending death.' As should be observed, this external evidence is independent. There is no attempt by the author to have it agree with another external evidence, but on the other hand it is in complete agreement with the prior external evidence already submitted.
- f. "A fourth source of external evidence is from the historian Jerome. He wrote from Bethlehem in A.D. 492. In his preface he states that he had no predecessor in his work, but he very properly acknowledged his indebtedness to the church history written by Eusebius. Concerning the apostle Paul, he wrote: 'And because a full account of his (Paul's) life is given in the Acts of the Apostles, I only say this, that the twenty-fifth year after our Lord's passion, that is the second of Nero, at the time when Festus

Procurator of Judea succeeded Felix, he was sent bound to Rome, and remaining for two years in free custody, disputed daily with the Jews concerning the advent of Christ. It ought to be said that at the first defense, the power of Nero having not been confirmed, nor his wickedness broken forth to such a degree as the historians relate concerning him, Paul was dismissed by Nero, that the gospel of Christ might be preached also in the west. As he himself writes in the second epistle to Timothy at the time he was about to be put to death dictating his epistle as he did while in chains; 'at my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account.' This external evidence is in harmony with the other three sources as quoted. The case is that Paul's writings together with external history make certain the fact that he was released from his imprisonment at Rome, and that 'he preached also in the west,' or Spain. Thus by both internal and external evidence—Paul's release, his visit to Philippi and Ephesus, his visit to the Island of Crete, and his visit to Spain—all of these are confirmed. Paul's second imprisonment and his ultimate death at the hands of Nero are also confirmed.

- g. "The external evidence as set forth, especially by Eusebius and Jerome, indicates that Paul was put to death just prior to Nero's death. Nero's death occurred on June 8, A.D. 68. Luke closed his Acts of Apostles at the end of Paul's two whole years of Roman imprisonment, or A.D. 62, and certainly not later than A.D. 63. Now, from A.D. 62 to A.D. 67 or 68 would leave a minimum of five to six years for Paul to make his promised visits and to preach the gospel in Crete and in Spain as well."
4. "It is difficult to say how long it was after his release that Paul wrote this Epistle. But since the three Pastorals have an affinity of language, similarity of thought, and likeness of error to combat they must have all been written at about the same time. If Paul was released in 61, and if we allow one year for his travels and work in the East and two years for his work in Spain, we get 64 or 65. This, then, is the date we would suggest for 1 Timothy" (Thiessen, p.263).

C. Background of Galatians.

1. The name *Galatia* originated with the migration into Asia of the Gauls from Europe, which occurred about 277 B.C. The boundaries of the territory they occupied were settled about 230 B.C. Their homeland became known as Galatia. It became a Roman Province in 25 B.C., when King Amyntas turned his kingdom over to Rome. In 6 B.C., Paphlagonia was joined to Galatia, and four years later, Pontus was added. Pontus Polemoniachus was added in 64 A.D.
2. Galatia was used in different senses during the first century.
 - a. In geographic terms, the name applied to the old Galatia in the northern part of central Asia Minor. During his first missionary tour, Paul visited the cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. However, Antioch is described as being in Pisidia, and Lystra and Derbe are said to be cities of Lycaonia.
 - b. Politically, the reference was to the Roman province of Galatia, which included other provinces at different times, as noted above.
 - c. The differences between political boundaries and geographic boundaries may explain why Antioch, Lystra, and Derbe are assigned to different provinces.
 - d. "The Roman Galatia was the central region of the peninsula of Asia Minor, with the provinces of Asia on the W, Cappadocia on the E, Pamphylia and Cilicia on the S, and Bithynia and Pontus on the N (Acts 16:6; 18:23; 1 Cor 16:1; Gal 1:2; etc.). It would be difficult to define the exact limits; in fact they were frequently changing. At one time there is no doubt that this province contained Pisidia and Lycaonia, and therefore those towns of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, which are conspicuous in the narrative of Paul's travels" [The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright © 1988].
 - e. Galatia: "(land of the Galli, Gauls). The Roman province of Galatia may be roughly described as the central region of the peninsula of Asia Minor, bounded on the north by Bithynia and Paphlagonia; on the east by Pontus; on the south by Cappadocia and Lycaonia; on the west by Phrygia.—Encyc. Brit. It derived its name from the Gallic or Celtic tribes who, about 280 B.C., made an irruption into Macedonia and Thrace. It finally became a Roman province. The Galatia of the New Testament has

really the ‘Gaul’ of the East. The people have always been described as ‘susceptible of quick impressions and sudden changes, with a fickleness equal to their courage and enthusiasm, and a constant liability to that disunion which is the fruit of excessive vanity.—The Galatian churches were founded by Paul at his first visit, when he was detained among, them by sickness, Ga 4:13, during his second missionary journey, about A.D 51. He visited them again on his third missionary tour” [Smith’s Bible Dictionary, *Sword Searcher*].

3. Congregations were established in Galatia during Paul's first missionary excursion. This letter is addressed to these congregations, and references are made to them also in 1 Corinthians 16:1. Paul mentions the province again in 2 Timothy 4:10, describing it as the place Crescens had gone.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 16:1: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.”
 - b. 2 Timothy 4:10: “For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.”

D. Date of Galatians.

1. On his second missionary journey Paul, in company with Silas, visited the churches of Galatia. At Lystra, Timothy joined the company (Acts 16:1-3). This tour also took them through the northern part of Galatia, Macedonia, Greece, and Corinth, before they returned to Jerusalem.
2. On the third missionary trip, he and Silas passed through Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:23-19:1); he spent three years at Ephesus (Acts 19).
3. While Paul was away from the churches of Galatia, Jewish teachers (cf. Acts 15) began their evil work of undermining the apostle's work there. They sought to disprove Paul's apostleship, and strongly opposed the truth he had inculcated in the Galatians.
4. He was unable to return to Galatia when he learned of this development, so he wrote the epistle to correct the problem. "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. Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" (Gal. 4:19-21).
5. Earlier, between the first and second tours, Paul had been involved in the struggle with the Judaizers at Jerusalem and Antioch of Syria (Acts 15). He refers to this battle in Galatians 2:4-5: "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."
6. Sometime after Paul's second visit with the churches of Galatia, the Judaizers made their way there, and began their destructive work. At the time, according to some scholars, Paul had already made two visits to Galatia. This conclusion is based on the apostle's statement in Galatians 4:13 regarding the *first* visit, which is thought to imply a second visit. This would place the writing of Galatians about 53-57 A.D.
7. However, if the statement in Galatians 4:13 simply speaks of his initial visit, without any implication of a second visit, the time of Galatians would be between the first and second journeys (48-49 A.D.).
8. “The epistle was probably written very soon after Paul's second visit to Galatia (Ac 18:23). The references of the epistle appear to agree with this conclusion. The visit to Jerusalem, mentioned in Gal. 2:1-10, was identical with that of Ac 15:1-41, and it is spoken of as a thing of the past, and consequently the epistle was written subsequently to the council of Jerusalem. The similarity between this epistle and that to the Romans has led to the conclusion that they were both written at the same time, namely, in the winter of A.D. 57-8, during Paul's stay in Corinth (Ac 20:2-3). This to the Galatians is written on the urgency of the occasion, tidings having reached him of the state of matters; and that to the Romans in a more deliberate and systematic way, in exposition of the same great doctrines of the gospel” [Eastons Encyclopedia, *Sword Searcher*].

E. Galatians is a Defense of the Glorious Gospel of Christ and a Presentation of Christian Liberty.

1. Chapters one and two give a defense of Paul's apostleship.
 - a. If Paul cannot verify his apostleship, his gospel would be false and the Galatians are not children of

God.

- b. If he can establish his authority by undeniable proof, he will confirm the message as truth, and give them full assurance of their sonship to God.
2. Chapters three and four present the gospel as a message of liberty.
 - a. Paul draws a contrast between the gospel with its liberty and the Law of Moses with its bondage.
 - b. He shows that the gospel brings freedom.
3. Chapters five and six show that Christian liberty has limits.
 - a. Liberty is not a license to do evil. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Rom. 6:1-2).
 - b. Liberty and responsibility go together. Christian liberty does not permit us to run wild, having no restraints.

F. Outline of Galatians.

1. Chapter 1.
 - a. Verses 1-5: Salutation.
 - b. Verses 6-9: Warning against perverting the gospel.
 - c. Verses 10-12: The source of Paul's message.
 - d. Verses 13-24: Paul describes his early experiences as a Christian.
 2. Chapter 2.
 - a. Verses 1-10: Paul's contact with the other apostles.
 - b. Verses 11-15: Paul rebukes Peter at Antioch.
 - c. Verses 16-21: Judaism and Christianity are distinctive.
 3. Chapter 3.
 - a. Verses 1-6: The Galatians are rebuked for leaving the gospel for the Mosaic System.
 - b. Verses 7-14: The true heirs of Abraham are those who follow the gospel.
 - c. Verses 15-29: The promises to Abraham are fulfilled in Christ.
 4. Chapter 4.
 - a. Verses 1-11: We are delivered from the Law of Moses.
 - b. Verses 12-20: Paul makes an appeal to them based on their former love for him.
 - c. Verses 21-31: The allegory of Hagar and Sarah.
 5. Chapter 5.
 - a. Verses 1-6: To return to the Law is to forfeit salvation.
 - b. Verses 7-15: Paul rebukes the Galatians.
 - c. Verses 16-26: Contrasts drawn between the Spirit and the flesh.
 6. Chapter 6.
 - a. Verses 1-5: Restoring the erring.
 - b. Verses 6-11: They are not to be weary in well doing.
 - c. Verses 12-18: The Judaizers.
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Map of Paul's Missionary Locations



GALATIANS 1

A. Galatians 1:1-5: Salutation.

1. Verse 1: "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)."1/*7
 - a. There were certain Jews who "obeyed the gospel," but were unwilling to give up the law of Moses. They followed Paul, first to Antioch in Syria, where they disrupted the church with their errors (Acts 15).
 - 1) By the time of this epistle, they had made their way into Galatia, and were disturbing the congregations which Paul and Barnabas had established there. These false teachers denied that Paul was a genuine apostle, and had undermined the faith of the Galatian saints to such an extent that it became necessary for Paul to pen this inspired message to nullify their evil influence.
 - 2) Second Corinthians was written a few years later to the church at Corinth for the same reasons. By this time (57 A.D.), the Judaizers had made their way to Corinth.
 - 3) How did these Judaizers get their financial support? The devil's disciples always seem to be well-funded. When someone refused to obey God, the way into rebellion is often ready at hand. Jonah went to Joppa, on the coast of the Mediterranean, where he found a ship, paid his fare, and sailed toward Tarshish. It appears that Satan had provided all things for Jonah's disobedience: a ship going to the most distant destination possible, the fare, and the necessary space on board. If one seeks to disobey the Lord, the means will be readily at hand! But if we wish to obey, the means are likewise provided.
 - b. With his opening statement, Paul affirmed his apostleship, and declared that he received it from Christ and the Father, and that it did not originate with any man.
 - 1) The only way that anyone became an apostle of Christ was through a direct call to that office; it carried with it the miraculous signs that only those hand-picked few were given (cf. John 14-16):
 - a) Matthew 19:28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."
 - b) Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
 - c) Acts 2:42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."
 - d) Acts 8:14-17: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."
 - e) 2 Corinthians 12:11-13: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except *it be* that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong."
 - 2) Paul was called by Christ as he neared Damascus, where he had gone to persecute Christians. Three reports are given in Acts describing this supernatural experience (Acts 9, 22, 26).
 - 3) Information regarding his work as an apostle is given in Acts 26:16-18: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

- Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
- c. Paul's apostleship was not inferior to that of any of the other apostles.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 9:1: "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?"
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 11:5: "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 12:11-12: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."
 - d. In defending his apostleship, Paul also defended the Deity of Christ when he affirmed that Christ was raised from the dead by the Father.
 - e. When a congregation sent men on a mission in their behalf, sometimes these were called apostles, but that is a general use of the term; they were apostles of the church; these were not apostles of Christ. Paul states in this opening verse that he did not become an apostle by the authority of men; his apostleship came from Christ and God. There are many today who falsely claim that they are apostles.
 - 1) The Roman popes claim to be successors to the apostle Peter, and that they have all the authority which Peter and the others possessed. "As goes the propositions, so also the demonstration!"
 - 2) Mormons claim to have apostles, but the authority is that of their own invention; they do not speak for Christ, and they do not have the powers that pertained to a genuine apostle.
 - 3) Some Pentecostals lay claim to apostleship, but these are empty words. A genuine apostle of Christ had the power to prove it! "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake" (1 Thess. 1:5).
 - 4) The very work that the apostles of Christ were required to do precludes anyone taking their place. They were eyewitness of Christ's resurrection, and verified their testimony with miraculous power.
 - f. Only the apostles of Christ were selected and prepared to be eyewitness of the risen Savior. He went to Joppa, on the coast of the Mediterranean, where he found a ship, paid his fare, and sailed toward Tarshish. It appears that Satan had provided all things for Jonah's disobedience: a ship going to the most distant destination possible, the fare, and the necessary space on board. If one seeks to disobey the Lord, the means will be readily at hand! But if we wish to obey, the means are likewise provided" (Jonah 1:1-3).
 - g. Only the apostles of Christ were selected and empowered to be eyewitnesses to the resurrected Lord:
 - 1) "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:36-43).
 - 2) The apostles had been selected and empowered to be infallible witnesses of Christ (John 15:26-27; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:8). The apostles had been with the Lord from the beginning of his ministry, and had seen the things he did in Jerusalem and throughout the land of the Jews. But his enemies crucified him.
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What the Baptism of the Holy Spirit Did for the Apostles of Christ

POWER PROVIDED	PASSAGE
Ambassadors of Christ	2 Cor. 5:18-20; Matt. 19:28; John 20:23
Witness of Christ's Resurrection	Acts 1:8; 4:33; 10:39-42
Infallible Remembrance of His Teachings	John 14:26; 16:12-16; Cf. Acts 20:35
Reception of All Truth	John 16:12-14; Acts 2; 2 Tim. 3:16-17
Foresee Things to Come	John 16:13; 2 Th. 2:1ff; 1 Tim. 4:1-3
Miraculous Signs to Confirm Gospel	Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4; 2 Cor. 12:11-13
Confer Spiritual Gifts to Others	Acts 8:12-24; 19:6; Rom. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:6
Full Inspiration to Receive and Reveal Word	Matt. 19:28; 1 Cor. 2:9-14; Acts 2
Defend the Faith	Mark 13:11; Acts 4:13; Acts 25-26
All Included in "Comforter"	John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7

2. Verse 2: "And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia."
 - a. The salutation is from Paul (verse one), and from those brethren who were Paul's co-workers in the gospel. These unnamed men could attest to the genuineness of his apostleship.
 - b. "The address implies that there were many churches in Galatia, yet to none of them does he attach any honorable title, for none of them does he offer the usual expression of thanksgiving, and to none of them does he speak the customary words of commendation and praise. This ominous silence on the part of the apostle constitutes a most telling rebuke" (McGarvey, p.249).
3. Verse 3: "Grace *be* to you and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - a. Despite the fact that the Galatians were experiencing a weakening of their faith, Paul maintains sincere love for them. It is his desire that peace might continue with them from God and Christ. When brethren fall away, and we must rebuke them, let our correction be given tenderly, with a broken heart. This expression of greeting is commonly used in Paul's letters.
 - b. But when errorists arise and oppose the truth, and promote their false doctrine, the faithful must earnestly defend the truth and oppose error.
 - 1) 3 John 11-12: "Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God. Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true."
 - 2) Titus 1:9-11: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."
 - 3) Galatians 4:16: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"
4. Verse 4: "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father."
 - a. Christ *gave* himself for our sins. The vicarious suffering he underwent had to be done with love. He was not coerced to fill his earthly ministry. If he was forced to die for us, his sacrifice would not have benefitted our souls.

- b. Passages to consider:
- 1) Matthew 20:28: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 2:6: "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."
 - 3) Titus 2:11-14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."
 - 4) Hebrews 2:9-10: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."
- c. "The story is told of the Swiss people many years ago when they had been defeated, driven back and were very much discouraged. One Swiss man said, 'Today I will give my life for my country.' As they stood before the solid phalanx of spears held by the enemy, he charged the line, grabbed as many spears in his arms as he could and fell on them in death. Through the break he made in the enemy line the Swiss soldiers poured through and won the victory. In a similar way Christ made a way of salvation for us" (Lambert, pp.10f).
- d. John 10:17-18: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."
- 1) Our Lord gave his life in order to make salvation possible for lost sinners. He had the duty to sacrifice himself; he would die a heinous death; but he had the promise that after three days he would be raised to life again. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom *are* all things and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:9-10, NKJ).
 - 2) To an uninterested bystander, the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus might have appeared to have been far beyond his power to resist or avoid. It was obvious that he was under the overpowering might of the ruling authority, and that there was nothing he could do to free himself.
- e. Christ gave himself for *our sins*. He did not die so that we might obtain earthly wealth or political eminence; he did not die so that we might be released from disease, accident, or trouble; he did not die that we might never have to face grief or death. He died that our sins might be forgiven.
- 1) Man's greatest problem is sin. Its penalty is separation from God in eternity (Rom. 6:23; Rev. 20:12-15). Its penalty includes unending punishment in Gehenna.
 - a) Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - b) Luke 12:3-4: "Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do."
 - c) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
 - 2) Sin contaminates every accountable person.
 - a) Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."

- b) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
- c) 1 John 5:19: "*And* we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."
- 3) Sin is the violation of God's word, through commission of a transgression or omission of duty.
 - a) James 4:17: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin."
 - b) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - c) 1 John 5:17: "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."
- 4) Christ died that our sins might be pardoned.
 - a) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
 - b) 1 John 2:1-2: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world."
- f. Christ gave himself that he might deliver us from this present evil world.
 - 1) *World* is used in three different ways in the Scriptures. It refers sometimes to the earth (Ps. 90:2), to mankind in general (John 3:16), and to the evil that surrounds us in this life (1 John 2:15). It is used in the text in this last sense.
 - 2) To *deliver* is to "draw or pluck out." Lambert pointed out that the Greek word does not mean that one is forever taken out of the world, for one can return; it is used to describe Peter's departure from Herod (Acts 12:11), but he could have fallen under Herod's control again (p.11).
- g. Christ died to deliver us from this *present* evil world.
 - 1) A thousand years from now (if time continues), the world might be far worse than it is today, but we will not live in that world, hence we will not need deliverance from it. We must be delivered from **this present** evil world. We are subject to the temptations, guilt, and condemnation brought upon us in our present situation on earth. Compare: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:34).
 - 2) This deliverance does not pertain to the future worlds of eternity. If we enter heaven, we cannot lose it; if we enter Gehenna, there is no deliverance possible.
 - 3) This deliverance (salvation) is offered to us only at the present moment (2 Cor. 6:2); we may not have the time and opportunity to be saved at any subsequent moment: "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2).
- h. Christ died to deliver us from the present *evil* world. We are surrounded by evil.
 - 1) There is evil in the civil realm, including wars, rebellions, terrorism, murder, illegal drugs, and other crimes.
 - 2) There is evil in the moral realm, including greed, hatred, fornication, profanity, and vulgarity.
 - 3) There is evil in the religious realm, including false doctrine, worldliness, apathy, selfishness, and unbelief.
 - 4) We are admonished to be separated from the evils of this world so that God will find us acceptable.
 - a) John 17:15-18: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."
 - b) Romans 12:1-2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

- c) 2 Corinthians 6:14-18: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath 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 ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
 - d) James 4:4: "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."
 - e) 1 John 2:15-17: "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and 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 abideth for ever."
 - i. Christ died to deliver us from the present evil world *according to the will of God*.
 - 1) His death on the cross was in keeping with the will of God; God designed the plan of redemption which Christ fulfilled in his sacrificial death. His death was not a last-minute alteration of God's will, but was the perfect fulfillment of it. Compare: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).
 - 2) The redemption offered is obtained by meeting the conditions of God's will. We cannot be saved by our own plan; salvation is not obtained by the plans or methods of any man.
 - a) Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - b) 1 Thessalonians 2:13: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it not as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."
 - c) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."
 - d) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - e) Hebrews 10:9-10: "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*."
5. Verse 5: "To whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen."
- a. One who correctly perceives God's wonderful design to redeem fallen mankind, will experience a feeling of immense gratitude for the Father's plan.
 - b. God deserves the praise of our hearts.
 - 1) Psalm 89:7: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him."
 - 2) Ephesians 3:20: "Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."
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3) Ecclesiastes 12:13: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man."

B. Galatians 1:6-9: Warnings Against Perverting the Gospel.

1. Verse 6: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel" (ASV).
 - a. Paul here states the occasion for the letter: they had quickly begun to depart from the gospel of Christ. His inspired judgment is shocked that they could so soon be pulled away from the truth. In view of the preceding verses, their defection is hard to understand.
 - b. The occasion for their departure from the truth was provided by the Judaizing teachers. Paul accused them of preaching a different Christ (2 Cor. 11:4); here he shows that they teach a different gospel. No one can preach the Christ of the New Testament without preaching the unadulterated gospel of Christ; no one can preach the pure gospel without preaching the Christ. Christ and his gospel are inseparable.
 - c. "Their defection from the truth was not yet complete and would continue, unless they were brought to a better state of mind by this epistle. Whether or not this was the case is not known. The word *quickly* may mean either that their action had been hasty, taken without due consideration, or but little time had elapsed between the acceptance of the gospel and their defection" (Lipscomb, p.189).
 - d. They were departing from him who called you into the grace of Christ. Paul does not identify the one who did the calling. The context would permit us to understand it to be God or Paul, and some suggest that it might even be Christ. It would be awkward, however, to say that "Christ called you into the grace of Christ." Paul did the preaching by which the Galatians were drawn to Christ, but God provided the message by which the call was offered. The drawing power is the gospel.
 - 1) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."
 - 3) John 6:44-45: "No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me" (ASV).
 - e. The grace of Christ is discussed in these verses:
 - 1) Acts 15:11: "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 8:9: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 13:14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. Amen."
 - f. The grace of Christ encompasses all that he did and taught in our behalf. It includes his departure from heaven for his earthly mission, his life in poverty, his perfect obedience to God's will, his genuine concern for humanity, his teachings (done in person and through his inspired servants), his agony in Gethsemane, the pain and shame of dying on the cross, his burial, his resurrection, his ascension, and all of the written gospel.
 - g. The grace of Christ is embodied in the gospel of Christ. The Galatians had been called into the sphere where the grace of Christ is obtained; this call was issued by the message of the gospel; but they were moving away from the grace of Christ unto another gospel. To obtain the blessings issued by the grace

- of Christ, we must have the gospel of Christ. To accept a different (perverted) gospel is to lose the benefits of the grace of Christ.
2. Verse 7: "Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."
 - a. This different gospel to which the Galatians were turning was not "good news" (the gospel) at all. There is only one true gospel; any other so-called gospel is a false message espousing a worthless system. The true gospel becomes a false gospel if it is perverted. Only the pure gospel can provide genuine spiritual blessings.
 - b. The true Gospel is comprised of several parts: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1-4).
 - c. There are those who *trouble* the Galatians. They were troubled by means of the false doctrine they were being led to believe. False teachers bring great trouble to those who accept their error, although the victim may not even be aware of the spiritual disease he has contracted.
 - 1) Galatians 5:10: "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."
 - 2) Galatians 5:12: "I would they were even cut off which trouble you."
 - 3) Galatians 6:17: "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."
 - d. The Judaizers offered a perverted gospel to the gullible Galatians.
 - 1) "Paul preached salvation by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8), they preached salvation by the law through works, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses or they cannot be saved (Acts 15:1,5); the two are incompatible, and are antagonistic to that end (Rom. 11:6)" (Lipscomb, p.190).
 - 2) To pervert the gospel is to corrupt it, to deviate from that which is right and true.
 3. Verses 8-9: "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. 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."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema."
 - 2) NKJ: "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed."
 - b. Speaking plainly to the point, Paul strongly maintains that the gospel he preached to the Galatians was fully presented, that it was the final revelation from heaven, and was unchangeable by man or angel.
 - c. Paul did not have any authority to change the message he had delivered to them; no one from his company could alter it; none of the other apostles could make any changes to it; not even an angel from heaven could modify it.
 - d. "Any other gospel" is a corrupted version of the true gospel. This is strong language indeed! One who preaches a gospel which is different from the gospel which Paul preached is to be accursed. The Greek term *anathema* is stronger than the English word with which it is translated; it means to be devoted to destruction [headed for Gehenna]. To preach false doctrine is to fall under the curse of God.
 - e. Many take an indifferent view to changing the word of God. Paul was not one of them. To emphasize the serious nature of perverting the gospel, the Holy Spirit guided the apostle to repeat the same
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warning, using a slightly different wording, in verse nine.

- 1) The Galatians had already received the true gospel by the inspired preaching of Paul. If anyone else should preach any gospel different from what Paul preached, that preacher was destined for destruction. The obvious point of the statement is that he was not to be believed.
 - 2) Since it is sinful to preach a perverted gospel, it is equally sinful to accept a perverted gospel. One who teaches error is not to be encouraged in his wicked work. "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (2 John 10-11, ASV).
 - 3) To deviate from God's word deprives both the teacher and the disciple of fellowship with heaven. "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9, ASV).
- f. Other strong warnings are issued by the New Testament against perverting the gospel.
- 1) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - 2) 2 Timothy 2:2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." The *same* truths are to be passed on to others, without any changes.
 - 3) 1 Timothy 1:3: "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine."
 - 4) 1 Timothy 6:20: "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."
 - 5) Revelation 22:18-19: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book."

C. Galatians 1:10-12: The Source of Paul's Message.

1. Verse 10: "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."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ."
 - 2) NKJ: "For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ."
 - b. This thought is connected with the foregoing statements. If Paul had wanted to please men, he would not have made the strong affirmation of the previous verses. What he said in verses six through nine was not intended to win friends among the worldly-minded! Many of his time did not want to hear such things, and a very great many of our time find these truths highly unpleasant. He showed his love for the brethren by correcting their errors: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16).
 - c. If one perverts the gospel of Christ, he shows that his desire is to please man, not God. But if he preaches to please men, he ceases to be a servant of Christ, if he ever was such. Compare: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42-43).
 - 1) For a Jew to be put out of the synagogue was extremely dangerous to his standing among the nation and could destroy his livelihood. If he had a job, he would most likely lose it; if he had a business, it would not be patronized by fellow-Jews. His family would feel some hard consequences. The

- leaders cast out from the synagogue the man to whom Jesus had given sight, and threatened to do the same to anyone who confessed the Lord:
- a) John 9:22: "These things said his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue."
 - b) John 9:34: "They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out."
- 2) The faith of these chief rulers was so weak that it did not lead them to repent of their sins and openly confess their belief in Jesus. Their *faith-only* was impossible to save them! This puts beyond denial that no one can be saved from their past sins by faith only!
- d. Paul used good judgment when truth was not endangered. When he took Timothy into his company (Acts 16), he circumcised that young Jew since their work would to a large degree be among the Jewish people. However, he did not circumcise Titus, a young Gentile convert (Gal. 2:3-4), for in that case, he would have seemed to be accommodating his practice to the demands of the Judaizers.
2. Verse 11: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man."
- a. His message was not a human production. Knowing its divine origin, he was committed to preaching it without compromise, even though his auditors might object. A human message could be changed to suit the speaker or the audience, but the divine message must be presented intact.
 - b. Paul assured the brethren that the gospel he preached was not derived from some human source. The ASV has *make known to you* in place of *certify* in the KJV. Scholarship says that the ASV has the better rendering, but to see how the word is used elsewhere, consider these verses:
 - 1) John 17:26: "And I have **declared** unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love where-with thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."
 - 2) Acts 2:28: "Thou hast **made known** to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:1: "Moreover, brethren, I **declare** unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand."
 - 4) Ephesians 3:3,5,10: "How that by revelation he **made known** unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words....Which in other ages was **not made known** unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit....To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might **be known** by the church the manifold wisdom of God."
 - 5) Romans 16:26: "But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, **made known** to all nations for the obedience of faith."
 - 6) 1 Corinthians 12:3: "Wherefore I **give you to understand**, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and *that* no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."
 - 7) Ephesians 1:9: "**Having made known** unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself."
 - 8) Ephesians 6:19: "And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, **to make known** the mystery of the gospel."
 - 9) 2 Peter 1:16: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we **made known** unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty."
 - c. The use of the term in these verses shows that the item indicated had God as their source. There is nothing more reliable than the gospel of Christ, which was given by inspiration to the apostles and a few other inspired men; the revelation thus given was confirmed by supernatural works. God has forever placed his stamp of approval on the gospel, certifying it to be his word. This is the point Paul is making in this context. What was made known in these verses was God's truth; it was definite.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 2:9-14: "But as it is written, 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, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned."

2) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

3) Mark 16:15-20: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

3. Verse 12: "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."
- Reinforcing his statement of verse eleven, Paul declares that he did not receive the gospel from some man, that he was not taught it by any man, but that he obtained it by revelation from Christ himself.
 - We are not given the details of when and where Paul received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which was essential to his being empowered to be an apostle. That it was at Damascus is clear from his immediate work of preaching.
 - "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard *him* were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?" (Acts 9:20-21).
 - "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except *it be* that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong" (2 Cor. 12:12-13).
 - The only logical way to account for his immediate and full knowledge of the gospel is to acknowledge that he received the information through the revelation Christ gave him.
 - Verses eleven and twelve furnish the ground for the remainder of the chapter.

D. Galatians 1:13-24: Paul Describes His Early Experiences as a Christian.

- Verses 13-14: "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 zealous of the traditions of my fathers."
 - Paul reminded the brethren of his former course of life, how that as a zealous Jew, he persecuted the Lord's church. He had progressed in Judaism beyond the accomplishments of his peers. These facts were commonly known.
 - How could his sudden and complete change be accounted for if he is not a genuine apostle? Why would he forfeit his high standing among the Jewish leaders if he is a counterfeit apostle?
 - The apostle openly admits his hatred for the church prior to his conversion. He went to extreme measures in his attempts to destroy Christianity. He took the initiative to obtain letters of authority from the chief priests to go to Damascus to apprehend Christians for punishment (Acts 26:12).
 - He made havoc of the church, seeking its utter destruction.
 - "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of

- Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against *them*. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted *them* even unto strange cities" (Acts 26:9-11).
- 2) By what power could the chief priests issue authority to Saul to go to Damascus to arrest Jewish Christians? Whether they had the right or not, they were able to get by with this outrage. It may be that the Roman authorities took no interest in these proceedings.
 - e. He confesses the fact that he had been exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the Jews, having advanced above his contemporaries in his fervent devotion. "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities" (Acts 26:9-11).
 - f. The Lord had predicted that his followers would be attacked by people who thought they were serving God by their assaults (John 16:2).
2. Verses 15-16: "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."
- a. God could profitably use such a man as Paul, one who lived up to his convictions. None of the saints was apt to consider Paul to be a good prospect. When Ananias was sent to teach and baptize him, he hesitated (Acts 9:10-15). Compare: "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7).
 - b. As he and his company neared Damascus, suddenly a glorious light shone upon him from heaven, and Christ spoke to him (Acts 9:1-6). The miraculous experience convinced Paul that he had been wrong in opposing Jesus of Nazareth, and he resolved to become a follower. He was told to enter Damascus and he would learn what he must do.
 - 1) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Before Paul could serve Christ, he must first become a follower of the Lord; when he obeyed the gospel, the guilt of his past sins was removed.
 - 2) Acts 26:16-18: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." A great, life-long work was given to Paul.
 - c. Apparently, God had determined, before Paul's birth, that he would become an apostle. Similar things are said about other great men.
 - 1) Isaiah 49:1: "Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name."
 - 2) Jeremiah 1:5: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."
 - 3) Luke 1:15: "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb."
 - d. God graciously called him to the apostleship. Paul regretted the evil he had done to the saints, perhaps drawing a large measure of motivation from it: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but 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. This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy
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- of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. 1:13-15). His selection as an apostle and his salvation were two entirely different operations. No miraculous work is involved in being saved.
- e. Through Paul's work as an apostle, Christ was revealed. The Lord described him as a vessel to that end. "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15-16).
 - f. Immediately after his conversion in Damascus (Acts 22:16), Paul began his work. However, he did not confer with some other man or group of men. His apostolic office was not conferred upon him by fleshly hands, and his message did not originate with men.
3. Verse 17: "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus."
- a. The apostles were located at Jerusalem, but Paul did not return there, but rather went into Arabia for a time before returning to Damascus. There was no need for him to go to Jerusalem; the Lord provided him with the authority and power to operate as an apostle. His statement is given as additional evidence that he is a genuine apostle, that he did not derive his calling and authority from the other apostles.
 - b. We are not told why he went into Arabia. We are not told what he did there. In fact, we are not told where in Arabia he went. There is disagreement among the scholars as to the location of the area Paul called Arabia. "For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children" (Acts 4:25). That Arabia included Mount Sinai is clear, hence the Arabian peninsula is indicated. The place Paul went does not appear to be far from Damascus, since he went into Arabia from there and returned there after his sojourn. It seems, therefore, that Arabia was also used in reference to the area lying to the south of Damascus, as well as to the Sinai Peninsula. We have no reason to believe that he made the 400 mile trip to Sinai.
 - c. Why did Paul go there? Knowing his burning zeal, we may confidently believe that he preached the gospel to those he met. It may also be that he spent time fasting and praying. He understood his work and authority from the very first, when he was baptized, since he "straightway" began preaching the gospel (Acts 9:20). He returned to Damascus and preached for another period of time prior to making his escape over the wall, in a basket.
 - 1) Acts 9:20-27: "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard *him* were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let *him* down by the wall in a basket. And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought *him* to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 11:32-33: "In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands."
 - d. How long was he in Arabia? We are not told. However, it was not for very long, since the entire time he was at Damascus, including his Arabian excursion, is given as three years (verse eighteen). He spent a considerable period of time preaching in Damascus, before and after his trip to Arabia.
4. Verses 18-20: "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
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you, behold, before God, I lie not."

a. Other translations:

- 1) ASV: "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now touching the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not."
- 2) NKJ: "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)"

b. McGarvey:

- 1) The term "three years" may be taken to mean three full years, or one year and parts of two others. Assuming that Paul was converted in A. D. 37, the visit to Jerusalem took place somewhere between A. D. 38 and 40. Luke describes this same period as "many days" (Acts 9: 23). For a curious parallel see 1 Kings 2: 38, 39. Persecution drove Paul from Damascus (Acts 9: 22-25 ; 2 Cor. 11: 31, 32), and the desire to form the acquaintance of Peter led him to Jerusalem.
- 2) The James whom he met was, as described, " the Lord's brother," and was neither James, the son of Zebedee, nor James, the son of Alphaeus....
- 3) Paul's reasons for leaving Jerusalem are found at Acts 9: 29, 30; 22. 17-21. Cilicia was commonly coupled with Syria in popular phrase ; for, though part of Asia Minor, it was cut off from that district by the high ridge of Mt. Taurus, and so formed social and commercial affinities with Syria.
- 4) The gist of Paul's argument is this: My gospel did not come to me from Jerusalem, for, 1. I was in no haste to go there. 2. I did not go there for the purpose of perfecting my knowledge of the gospel. 3. I was not there long enough to perfect such knowledge. 4. Leaving there, I was conscious of no deficiency of knowledge, but went at once to localities far distant, and was not personally known in the regions contiguous to Jerusalem, as I must have been had I lingered in that city long enough to learn the gospel history. 5. But I was known to them by my repentance, and by works for which they praised God, which facts show that I was recognized by them as proficient in a gospel which I did not learn from them"

c. He did not see any of the apostles for the first three years following his conversion, but he had been preaching the gospel during that time. Therefore, he did not receive his apostleship and information from the apostles. This is his point in making this reference.

- 1) He returned to Jerusalem after three years at Damascus. Luke (in Acts 9:23) describes this period as "after that many days were fulfilled."
- 2) At Jerusalem, he spent fifteen days with Peter, the only apostle he saw there. He did not meet with Peter in order to receive instruction from him. He had already been preaching for three years.
- 3) Peter was the apostle who took the lead and, although he had no greater power than the others, was thought of as the spokesman for the group (cf. Acts 2:14; Acts 10-11). It was entirely proper that Paul should seek out Peter to establish a connection.
- 4) It was on this visit to Jerusalem that the services of Barnabas were needed to bring Paul into contact with the apostles. "And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought *him* to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus" (Acts 9:26-27). Of the apostles, Paul met only Peter at this time; Luke's use of the plural (apostles) is intended only to say that Paul made contact with the apostles, by meeting with Peter.

d. In our text, Paul states that he saw only one apostle at this time (Peter). He did see James, the Lord's fleshly brother. "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?" (Matt. 13:55).

- 1) The identity of James is one of the most controverted statements in Galatians. Catholic writers contend that Mary remained a perpetual virgin, and that the brothers and sisters of Matthew 13:55

- were actually the Lord's *cousins*! But as Lipscomb observed, brother is not cousin! Paul knew the facts, plus was guided by inspiration; he affirmed that this James was the Lord's brother (the son of Joseph and Mary).
- 2) James was not an apostle of Christ. Notice first that he was the Lord's brother, and none of his brothers believed in him until the resurrection (John 7:5; Acts 1:14); he could not have been an unbeliever and an apostle at the same time. James the son of Alphaeus (Matt. 10:3) is not the James indicated, for he was not the Lord's brother. James the son of Zebedee was not the Lord's brother, thus is not the James of this passage [anyhow, Zebedee's son James was now dead—Acts 12].
- e. Does Paul say that the James he saw was an apostle of Christ? If so, then how do we account for his apostleship? This would be the only statement in the New Testament to indicate it, and no report is given concerning his appointment. When and by what means was he selected?
- 1) Some scholars allege James was an apostle of the church, that the brethren had selected him to perform some special mission. This *could* be so, but there is no clear proof.
 - 2) This same James is mentioned in Acts 15 as being among the apostles and elders, which could mean that he was an elder. Clearly, he was a leader in the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:13ff; Gal. 2:9).
 - 3) The text permits us to understand that Paul saw only one apostle (Peter), but also was able to see James. This harmonizes with the known facts. James was not an apostle of Christ (equal to Paul, and the Twelve); there is no proof even in this text that he was an apostle. He might have been an apostle of the church (cf. Barnabas: Acts 14:4), but this obscure statement is the only evidence.
 - 4) It seems more likely that James (the Lord's brother) is not called an apostle in any sense in the text; that Paul is simply stating the fact that he saw only one apostle, but had seen James, an elder of the congregation.
- f. "Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not." This is a strong affirmation that what he has stated in the epistle is the truth. With the knowledge that God was witness to the truth of the matter, Paul declares the rightness of the things he has written.
- 1) For the first three years following his conversion, Paul had had no contact with the apostles; even when he first returned to Jerusalem, he only saw Peter.
 - 2) His enemies had alleged that Paul was not a genuine apostle; Paul was denying their charge, and set forth the experiences of his Christian life as evidence. "He is showing that he had no opportunity to learn from them [the apostles—bw], that he had only a few days' interview with Peter during the eighteen or twenty years of his early labors, but was entirely under the immediate direction of the Lord who sent him" (Lipscomb, p.199).
5. Verses 21-22: "Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ."
- a. Other details of the case are given in these passages:
- 1) Acts 9:28-30: "And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him. *Which* when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus."
 - 2) Acts 22:17-21: "And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles."
 - 3) Acts 11:25-26: "Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."
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- b. He had to leave Damascus due to persecution (2 Cor. 11:32-33); he left Jerusalem at the end of this visit when persecution was raised against him there. Leaving Jerusalem, he traveled through the regions of Syria and Cilicia. His home was Tarsus, a city of Cilicia. He was in Tarsus when Barnabas sought him out to assist him in the work at Antioch (in Syria).
- c. When he first returned to Jerusalem on the visit of the context, he was not known by the saints there. They knew his past record, and feared him.
 - 1) Barnabas introduced him to the apostles (Peter), and he was made known to the brethren (Acts 9:26-27). They accepted him as a fellow saint. His seeking to join himself to the disciples (Acts 9:26) is not a reference to "joining the church." He was already a member of the Lord's church! He was trying to make contact with them.
 - 2) There were a plurality of congregations in Judea at the time. We often think of there being only one congregation at Jerusalem, but there were at least two, and probably several. Judea was the province in which Jerusalem was located. Converts had been made in other parts of Judea, and since traveling was slower then, congregations were to be found in local communities.
- d. These congregations were *in Christ*. It is impossible for an individual Christian to be in Christ without also being in the church.
 - 1) The church is the body of Christ. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence....Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" (Col. 1:18,24).
 - 2) The church "fills up Christ." "And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23).
 - 3) An individual is added by the Lord to the church; it is not a scriptural concept that we "join" it. "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).
 - 4) An individual is added to the church (enters Christ) when he obeys the gospel in baptism.
 - a) Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."
 - b) Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
 - c) John 3:5: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
 - d) Ephesians 5:23-27: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
 - e) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
 - f) 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

6. Verses 23: "But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed."
 - a. The brethren in Judea could scarcely believe that Saul the Persecuter, had become Paul the Apostle. It is natural that they doubted what they had heard. Barnabas believed Paul, and brought him into their fellowship.
 - b. They had heard that Paul who had persecuted the church in the past was now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy. Paul preached the gospel (Rom. 1:14-17); here it is said that he preached the faith. *The faith* is often used in the Scriptures in reference to *the gospel*.
 - 1) Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."
 - 2) Acts 6:7: "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jeru-salem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."
 - 3) Ephesians 4:4-5: "*There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism."
 - 4) The ASV gives this rendering of the verse: "But they only heard say, He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc." The Greek term translated *made havoc* (or *destroyed*—KJV) is also used in verse thirteen, being translated *wasted*.
 7. Verse 24: "And they glorified God in me."
 - a. This was a case where the good report was not too good to be true! Think of the happiness this news built within the saints! The leading antagonist was now one of their own number.
 - b. Properly, they glorified God for this development. Human wisdom would never have identified Saul of Tarsus as a likely candidate for conversion to Christ, to say nothing of the possibility of his becoming an apostle.
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GALATIANS 2

A. Galatians 2:1-10: Paul's Contact With the Other Apostles.

1. Verses 1-2: "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that 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."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain."
 - 2) NKJ: "Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain."
 - b. "Paul omits his second visit to Jerusalem, which took place about A.D. 44 (Acts 11:30; 12:25). It was not needful to mention this visit, for it was a brief one, and made at a time when persecution raged there, and when James, the son of Zebedee, was beheaded, and Peter cast into prison. It was no time for conference, and had no bearing whatever on Paul's apostleship or gospel" (McGarvey, p.256). The visit Paul and Barnabas made in Acts 11:30 and 12:25 was for the purpose of delivering relief to the needy Judeans from Antioch.
 - c. The visit to Jerusalem indicated in the text was made fourteen years after his conversion, or perhaps fourteen years after his initial return to Jerusalem. The first visit was three years following his baptism.
 - d. On the current trip, Paul was accompanied by Barnabas and Titus. In Acts 15:2, Barnabas and certain other brethren were with him; the text included Titus with the company. The journey was guided by revelation, which means that the Lord gave him directions concerning the trip.
 - e. It will be shown in the next few verses that Titus was with him to demonstrate the fact that Gentile Christians were not required to be circumcised. The Jerusalem Conference, conducted by the inspired apostles of Christ, settled the question of the amenability of the Gentiles to the Mosaic Law; it showed that the Law did not pertain to the Gentiles; Galatians will show that the Law has been superceded by the Gospel.
 - f. Paul conferred with the apostles at Jerusalem to assure them that the gospel he preached among the Gentiles was identical to that which they had been preaching to the Jews. Christ, of course, did not reveal a message to Paul which conflicted with that which he revealed to the other apostles.
 - 1) He met with these other apostles privately to reassure the apostles (the elders may have been present) that his message was the same as theirs.
 - 2) His enemies had likely maligned him before the apostles, so it was necessary that he show them the truth, lest his influence and efforts should be destroyed.
 - 3) If the Judaizers had been successful in forcing circumcision upon the Gentile converts, Paul would have had to return to all the places where he had preached, and circumcise every male Christian.
2. Verse 3: "But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised."
 - a. Titus was a Greek, and as such, had not been circumcised. Paul had not required it of him; the Lord did not command it; and the other apostles would not force it upon him. Timothy, who had a Jewess for a mother and a Greek for a father, had been circumcised; this was necessary if he (and Paul) were to have an influence among the Jews. But Titus was a different case entirely. Robert Taylor sets forth the following differences between the cases of Timothy and Titus (ADL, pp.70f):
 - 1) Titus was all Greek; Timothy was part Jew and part Greek (Acts 16:1-3).

- 2) A doctrinal matter was at stake in the case of Titus, regarding whether the Gentiles must be circumcised in order to be saved; but no one questioned Timothy's spiritual standing.
 - 3) Timothy's case was one of expediency; circumcision would enable him to work among the Jews.
 - 4) Paul would not have circumcised Timothy if his case had been perfectly parallel with that of Titus.
 - b. Paul went to Jerusalem by revelation; the Holy Spirit had guided him to make the journey. The inclusion of Titus with the company was part of the inspired plan. The Judaizers were trying to force circumcision on the Gentile converts; Titus, who was a Gentile Christian, was present; the issue could be brought to a head and the problem could be solved.
 - c. It appears, therefore, that Titus became a test case. If he was required to submit to circumcision, the Jewish element in the church, which was trying to incorporate certain features of the Mosaic Law into Christianity, would have succeeded in leading the church into early apostasy. Paul was resolved that the truth of the gospel would remain pure.
3. Verses 4-5: "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."
- a. Paul's enemies are here described as *false brethren*. They were immersed under false pretensions; their aim was not to obey the gospel sincerely so as to be saved.
 - 1) They entered the church for the unholy purpose of spying "out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus." The apostle, writing by inspiration and operating as an apostle, knew that they were false brethren; they were brethren in the Jewish nation, but they were not genuine Christians.
 - 2) Paul speaks of their entrance into the church in an accommodated fashion. The Lord adds only the saved to his church (Acts 2:37-47; cf. Col. 1:13-14). Since these people had merely gone through the right outward motions and had not sincerely obeyed the gospel, they remained in an unsaved condition and the Lord did not add them to the church. In the absence of information to the contrary, we accept a man's actions as being sincere; as far as could be seen outwardly, these men had become Christians (and had entered the Lord's church).
 - b. These false brethren were *brought in*. They were brought in by whom? The text does not say. Satan instigated this corrupt operation, but not without the involvement of unholy or ignorant men. There may have been some in the church who wanted to hold on to the Law, and encouraged the help of these false brethren.
 - c. The false brethren entered the church in order to discover all they could about the liberty Christians enjoyed in Christ, to the intent that they might enslave the church to the bondage of Judaism. Entering the church under false pretensions, they endeavored to discover some means by which to subvert the faith of the Gentile saints. Energetic, personable, and talented errorists can wreak havoc on a congregation—all under the guise of sincerity.
 - 1) If the scheme had been successful, the Lord's church would have been destroyed. There are many in the church today who will destroy it if they are successful in their efforts to convert the Lord's church into a denominational body.
 - 2) Peter correctly perceived the consequences if the Judaizers were successful: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" (Acts 15:10).
 - d. The liberty we enjoy in Christ includes:
 - 1) Freedom from the guilt of sin.
 - a) Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
 - b) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - c) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

- 2) Freedom from the practice of sin: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:1-7)
 - 3) Freedom from the fear of death.
 - a) Philippians 1:21-23: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."
 - b) Revelation 14:13: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."
 - c) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - 4) Freedom from fear of men or of the circumstances of life.
 - a) Hebrews 13:5-6: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."
 - b) 2 Timothy 1:7: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."
 - 5) Freedom from fear of the Judgment: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 John 4:17-18).
 - e. Paul withstood the false brethren, refusing to give way to them. If they had been given freedom to conduct their program unhindered, the truth of the gospel would not have continued. To allow false teachers room to operate is to permit them to subjugate others to their unholy doctrines and practices. The Bible is very adamant concerning errors and those who promote them.
 - 1) Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."
 - 2) Philippians 3:17-19: "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things)."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
 - 4) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
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4. Verse 6: "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." "But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man's person)— they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me"(ASV).
 - a. Those people Paul speaks of here are not the false teachers; the only ones in the context who could be considered are the apostles and elders with whom he met (cf. Acts 15). These were the ones who "were of reputation" (verse 2).
 - b. Even these were unable to add anything to Paul's stature as an apostle. The continuing emphasis in the context is proof of his apostleship. None of the other apostles, even those who might have been considered the greatest, could contribute any authority to Paul. The twelve apostles had been with Christ during his earthly ministry, but Paul's authority was just as authentic and real as was theirs.
 - c. A person who compared the apostles by outward concerns might get the idea that the twelve, who walked with Christ, and whose repute was long established, were superior to Paul. In fact, this must have been a leading charge the Judaizers leveled against Paul. This contention was foolish and unlearned; his comments in this letter and elsewhere forever settled the matter. After the death of Judas, Matthias was added to the original eleven (Acts 1); then Paul was chosen later, by a direct and personal miraculous communication with Paul (Acts 9).
 - d. Our standing before God does not derive from who we are. A mighty king has no special advantage with God; neither does one of humble circumstances. He accepts only those who will believe and obey his will, with love and reverence.
 - 1) Isaiah 66:2: "For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is* poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."
 - 2) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 3) Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
5. Verses 7-8: "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)."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "But contrariwise, when they saw that I had been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision (for he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles)."
 - 2) NKJ: "But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles)."
 - b. The original apostles recognized from the facts at hand that Paul was as much an apostle as they were, and that Paul's mission primarily concerned the Gentiles, while their work primarily was directed toward the Jews. However, no apostle was prohibited from working with any group. In fact Peter was the first to work with Gentiles (Acts 10-11), and Paul searched out the Jews when he first entered into a new Gentile city (Acts 17:1-3).
 - c. The same One who worked through Peter also worked through Paul. Here is a plain declaration that there was no distinction between the apostles in authority. The faulty doctrine of the Romanists known as "the primacy of Peter" is contrary to Scriptural truth.
6. Verse 9: "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."

- a. The three men named are spoken of as *pillars* in the church. Cephas was Simon; John was the son of Zebedee. James the brother of John had been slain by Herod in Acts 12, about the time when Paul and Barnabas brought the relief to the church at Jerusalem from the saints at Antioch (Acts 11:27-30; 12:1-35).
 - b. The James of this passage must be the same one mentioned in Galatians 1:19, who is declared to be the Lord's brother (cf. Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3). There is no proof that he was an apostle. It is clear that he was not an apostle during the Lord's ministry, for his brothers did not even believe on him until after the resurrection (John 7:1-5; Acts 1:12-14). If he was appointed to the apostolic office, there is no record of that fact.
 - c. James was very likely an elder in the Jerusalem church (cf. Acts 15:2). Peter referred to himself as an elder (1 Pet. 5:1), possibly serving in that capacity in the church at Jerusalem: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" (1 Pet. 5:1).
 - d. These influential men in the church extended full fellowship to Paul, giving him encouragement in his efforts to preach the gospel among the Gentiles. This action on their part furnished Paul with a strong argument to buttress his claim to the apostolic office.
 - e. The *grace* which James, Cephas and John perceived Paul to have, included the miraculous powers which only an apostle exercised. Paul spoke of his ministry as a grace in Ephesians 3:1-11 (vs. 8).
7. Verse 10: "Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do."
- a. The admonition the apostles and elders gave to Paul was that he should not be neglectful of the poor, which was always a matter of concern to him already. Galatians 6:9-10 contains an admonition from Paul to the Galatians (and others) to help the poor: "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."
 - b. The reference to the poor is not limited to any particular nationality or location. It included the poor among the Gentiles and the Jews. The Gentile congregations put together a contribution which Paul and his company carried to Jerusalem at the conclusion of the third missionary excursion (Acts 21).
 - c. Generosity and compassion are not major concerns where the gospel has not gone. Those people in India who believe in reincarnation, for example, discourage helping the poor and afflicted; they think that these unfortunate souls are being punished for sins committed in a previous life, and to help them is to hurt them.

B. Galatians 2:11-21: Paul Rebukes Peter at Antioch.

1. Verse 11: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."
 - a. Paul includes in the list of arguments supporting his apostleship the report of his rebuke of Peter at Antioch. This is the only reference to Peter's visit to Antioch. The context of Paul's comments are clearly chronological, so it seems definite that the occasion was subsequent to the Jerusalem meeting (Acts 15; Gal. 2:1-10).
 - b. Since Paul rebuked the apostle Peter, it is certain that his authority was equal to that of Peter; one does not rebuke his superiors! Would any Catholic be so bold as to rebuke the pope? Catholics are taught that the pope is the successor and equal of Peter, a claim that is utterly out of step with the teachings of the New Testament.
 - c. McClish pointed out some strange interpretations of this passage by those who try to justify the papal system (*Studies in Galatians*, pp.83-85).
 - 1) Clement of Alexandria asserted that the Cephas who was rebuked by Paul was not the apostle Peter. The context denies the assertion.
 - 2) Jerome claimed that Peter and Paul feigned the confrontation so that the Judaizers could be taught a lesson. Such sophistry is hardly worthy of notice. If the argument is true, the integrity and authority of the Scriptures are undermined.

- d. The fact that Peter was at fault in the matter at hand does not disprove his inspiration. No apostle could teach error when he operated by inspiration (1 Cor. 2:9-13; Acts 2:1-4; Mark 13:11). However, inspiration pertained to perfection in teaching; it did not control their conduct.
 - 1) Peter erred in this affair.
 - 2) John affirmed that he was capable of committing sin, even though he was a genuine apostle and had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 John 1:7-10).
 - 3) Paul declared that he had to bring himself into subjection lest he commit sin and be lost (1 Cor. 9:27).
- e. Paul confronted Peter to the face because he was to be blamed ("condemned"—ASV). "But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned" (Gal. 2:11, ASV).
 - 1) What Peter did was sinful. The wages of sin is spiritual and eternal death (Rom. 6:23). Sin is the violation of God's word (1 John 3:4).
 - 2) Paul charged Peter with playing the hypocrite: he fellowshiped the Gentile saints until certain influential Jews arrived. His sinful conduct earned the rebuke Paul courageously delivered.
2. Verse 12: "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."
 - a. Peter assembled with the Gentile saints when he first came to Antioch, but when certain Jewish Christians came, he withdrew from the Gentile brethren. His action was not done out of ignorance, but from fear and peer pressure. He had been taught earlier that the Gentiles were to be accepted fully when they obeyed the gospel.
 - 1) Acts 10:15: "And the voice *spake* unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common."
 - 2) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 3) Acts 11:3-4, 12: "Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. But Peter rehearsed *the matter* from the beginning, and expounded *it* by order unto them, saying.... And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accom-panied me, and we entered into the man's house."
 - b. He had eaten with Cornelius in that man's house, and defended his actions; he had eaten with the saints at Antioch. He had eaten with the Gentiles till the time certain men came from James. It is likely that these men only claimed to have come from James.
 - c. In Acts 15:24, those who are described there had falsely stated that James had authorized their message: "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment" [This statement was made by James]. If these men had actually been sent out by James, they had perverted their mission. False teachers are not above mis-appropriating the name of James [or any other name] in order to gain a hearing from unsuspecting brethren.
 - d. Peter feared these Jews, and withdrew and separated himself from the Gentiles. Obviously, this Jewish faction possessed powerful influence. Peter had shown fear when the Lord was arrested in the garden; three times his fear led him to deny knowing the Lord while the trial was in progress.
 - e. These cases do not make him weak—they show that he is like everyone else at times: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41).
3. Verse 13: "And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." "And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy." (NKJ).
 - a. "These Jews from Jerusalem appear to have swept in like an invading army, and were joined by Peter, and then by the rest of the Jewish Christians in Antioch, and lastly by even Barnabas, who had hitherto been Paul's colleague in defending the gospel liberties. Truly the situation was critical. Either the

- surrender of the Gentiles, or a division of the church, was sure to follow if these conditions continued" (McGarvey, p.261).
- b. Coffman: "The identity of these Judaizers is provided in Acts 6:7; Acts 15:5, where it is made clear that they were priests of the sect of the Pharisees who had accepted the gospel, but were unwilling to give up the customs and ceremonies of Judaism. They were a powerful and very influential group, and Paul here made extenuating remarks regarding the conduct of both Peter and Barnabas, Peter's mistake being due to fear of the powerful Pharisaical party, and Barnabas' being that he was just "carried away" with it in a moment of weakness." [Electronic Version]. (Whether these were the priests of Acts 6:7 is questionable—Bob Winton).
 - c. If this episode occurred after the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15), how could it be that Peter and Barnabas could so quickly give up the positions they had defended on that occasion? Fear can easily and rapidly alter our course! That this incident occurred after Acts 15 is evident in view of the fact that Paul is discussing events chronologically.
 - 1) Galatians 1:18: "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."
 - 2) Galatians 1:21: "Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia."
 - 3) Galatians 2:1: "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also."
 - 4) Galatians 2:9: "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."
 - 5) Galatians 2:11: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."
 - d. "Dissimulation" [*hupokrisis*] means "primarily, a reply, came to mean the acting of a stage-player, because such answered one another in dialogue; hence the meaning dissembling or pretence" (Vine, Vol I, p.324). Peter, Barnabas, and the other Jewish saints were hypocritical in that they claimed to believe the principle that the Gentiles were fully acceptable subjects of the gospel, but denied their claim by their actions.
 - e. Barnabas had been Paul's long-time friend and co-worker. He had lived among the Gentiles on Cyprus (Acts 4:36), and had accompanied Paul on the first missionary journey through Gentile lands (Acts 13-14). He had introduced Paul to the brethren at Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-27). It must have been especially hurtful to Paul to see Barnabas commit such an error. It is possible that this error contributed to the breakup of Paul and Barnabas as a missionary team (Acts 15:36-41).
4. Verse 14: "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?"
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) "But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?" (NKJV).
 - 2) "But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (ASV).
 - 3) "When I saw that they were not straightforward with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, If you, a Jew, are living like a Gentile, and not like a Jew, how can you insist that the Gentiles live like Jews?" (English Study Bible).
 - b. Paul correctly perceived that Peter and the others failed to live up to the truth of the gospel in this matter. Their actions were sinful. He withstood Peter in a face-to-face public confrontation. The others are not specifically named as being rebuked, but since they were parties to the error, their actions were
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- likewise denounced. Peter is named as the chief offender since he had greater influence, being an apostle of Christ.
- c. The confrontation was public. Paul directed his rebuke to Peter "before them all." If it was right for Paul to take such an action, it is right for Christians today to take similar actions in the same or parallel situations. The sin was public, so the rebuke was public.
- 1) False teachers are to be publicly marked so that the brethren may be warned. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:17-18).
 - 2) Those who sin are to be identified and rebuked openly. "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (1 Tim. 5:20).
 - 3) Those withdrawn from are to be marked publicly (1 Cor. 5).
 - a) Matthew 18:15-17: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."
 - b) 2 Thessalonians 2:15: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."
 - c) 2 Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."
 - d) 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother."
 - e) 1 Corinthians 5:1-6: "It is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, that one of you hath his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and did not rather mourn, that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing, in the name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (ASV).
 - f) 2 Corinthians 2:5-8: "But if any hath caused sorrow, he hath caused sorrow, not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all. Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many; so that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you to confirm your love toward him" (ASV).
- d. Peter and the others did not walk *uprightly*. The word means "straight." It is used as a figure of speech to describe the kind of life Christians are required to live. The very point of the passage shows that there is an objective, absolute standard which we are obligated to follow.
- 1) They should have been living in harmony with the truth, but in the particular matter under consideration, Peter and the others were in violation of the standard.
 - 2) Many of our brethren today are being deceived into believing the *new hermeneutics*, a new name for an old-fashioned rejection of the authority of the Scriptures. This theory denies that the Bible was ever intended to be an absolute standard. If that is the case, how is it that Peter was guilty of any offense? Paul clearly shows that Peter stood condemned of violating the truth.
 - 3) Again, the baptism of the Holy Spirit insured perfection in teaching; it did not save the soul; it did not keep the apostles from violating the truth in their lives.
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- e. "If thou, being a Jew to begin with, livest, as is shown by your past custom, like a Gentile, and not like the Jews, by what right do you demand, by your changed custom, that the Gentiles should live like Jews?" (McGarvey, p.262).
 - 1) By separating himself from his Gentile brethren, Peter was effectively teaching that those Gentiles must become Jews in life before he would have fellowship with them.
 - 2) Peter's actions lent credence to the false doctrine of the Judaizers. Not only did Peter violate a precept of truth (cf. Acts 10:34-36; 2:36-39), he also was guilty of supporting false teachers: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (2 John 9-11, ASV).
 - 3) We are not specifically told whether Peter repented, but knowing this good man's heart and his dedication to the truth, he doubtless acknowledged his error and changed his course.
5. Verses 15-16: "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."
 - a. Peter and Paul were Jews by birth; they had been born into the Jewish race and had practiced the Jewish religion (the law of Moses). They were not Gentiles. The Gentiles of the time were characterized by licentious living. *Licentious* is from *license*, and thus denotes unrestrained conduct. Generally, the Jews were morally pure and the Gentiles were impure. Both classes of people were guilty of sin, the Gentiles were offenders especially in the area of morality, and the Jews offended especially in the area of following the teachings of men rather than God's revealed word.
 - b. Both Peter and Paul correctly understood that a man could not be justified by the works of the law of Moses. This point had been well-stated by Peter in Acts 15:10, and by Paul in many places.
 - 1) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
 - 2) Peter taught this truth.
 - a) Acts 10:36,43: "The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)...To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."
 - b) Acts 15:10: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"
 - c. The word *the* [in *the law*] is not in the original, but the translators of both the KJV and the ASV perceived that it was required to express the full thought in English. It is clear from the context that Paul is speaking of the Law of Moses; he teaches that we are saved by the Gospel of Christ, not by the Law of Moses.
 - d. Our salvation is "by the faith of Jesus Christ." If the personal faith which Christ had is meant, then everyone would be saved. But this is not the personal faith of the Lord, but the faith which he revealed—the gospel.
 - 1) There is one faith (Eph. 4:4-5; Jude 3).
 - 2) The one faith is what individuals obey in being saved (Acts 6:7).
 - 3) The one faith is the message which Paul preached (Gal. 1:23). It was the gospel of Christ which he preached (Rom. 15:19), which is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16-17).
 - e. It is true that no one can obey any law to perfection. The speed limit law cannot always be observed perfectly, for if we exceed it by one mile per hour, we have violated it; if our speedometer registers incorrectly and we exceed the limit, we are in violation. No one could keep the Law of Moses perfectly (except Christ), and once the individual violated one of its precepts, he was guilty of sin,

- which the law had no power to forgive. The Law of Moses could not justify the guilty Jew; it is certain that it could not justify the guilty Gentile.
6. Verses 17-18: "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. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. "But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ a minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor" (ASV).
 - a. If one who seeks to be justified by Christ turns back to the Old Law, he becomes a transgressor. Why? Only Christ can justify; if one goes to the Law of Moses, he forfeits the blessings he has under Christ. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:1-4).
 - b. If Christ approved our return to the Law, that sanction would make him a minister of sin, since to return to the Law is to acquire guilt again.
 - c. Before his conversion, Paul sought to destroy the gospel of Christ. When he turned to Christ, he sought to destroy the practice of the Jews who followed the Law (and refused the gospel). If he went back to promoting the Law and undermining the gospel, he would become a transgressor again.
 - d. "Now Paul argued that in the very process of seeking salvation in Christ the converted Jew had not only admitted he was unable to keep the law perfectly so as to be saved by it, but he had also pronounced himself a 'sinner,' just like those godless Gentiles! But, does the fact that in abandoning the law and coming to Christ they were thereby shown to be sinners, mean that Christ is the one who caused them to be sinners?....Paul gave the strongest form of negative response: 'God forbid!'" (McClish, ADL, p.88).
 - e. Keep in mind that these inspired remarks were part of Paul's rebuke of Peter for acquiescing to the pressure applied by the Judaizers.
 7. Verses 19-20: "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 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 live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
 - a. Other Versions:
 - 1) ASV: "What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one."
 - 2) NKJ: "What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one."
 - b. The Old Testament pointed unerringly to the coming of Christ. It offered many types and prophecies of the Messiah.
 - 1) Luke 24:44: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me."
 - 2) John 5:39, 46: "Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me" (ASV).
 - 3) 2 Timothy 3:15: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."
 - c. If a Jew had a proper understanding of the Old Testament, he would be able to recognize that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we

- might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24).
- d. Therefore, Paul (or any Jew who obeyed the gospel) was led by the Law to die to the Law. To be dead to the Law is to be free from its rule. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:2-4).
 - e. In order for Paul to become alive unto God it was necessary that he be dead to the Law. This is the case because the guilt of sin could not be removed by that Law.
 - 1) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
 - 2) Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
 - f. Paul was dead to the Law, being crucified with Christ. He was crucified, but nevertheless he was alive! He was not alive by the Law of Moses or by his own power, but by Christ who lived in him.
 - 1) Paul's crucifixion was figurative; Christ's was literal.
 - a) Ephesians 2:14-15: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace."
 - b) Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
 - 2) The Lord's death ended the reign of the Mosaic Law. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5:17-18).
 - g. Paul died to the law, and he also died to himself. He was still alive physically, but he no longer was the master of his own life. Christ, who was now his Master, lived within him, directing the course of his existence.
 - 1) Ephesians 3:17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love." Christ dwelt within Paul, but not in a literal or personal way. As he believed, obeyed and loved the Lord, Christ was in him.
 - 2) When Paul believed and obeyed the gospel, he committed himself to following Christ regardless of the consequences.
 - a) Luke 9:23: "And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
 - b) Matthew 10:38-39: "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."
 - h. The love which Christ expressed in being crucified for all humanity has a wondrous drawing power, attracting those who perceive the beauty of his gift. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die" (John 12:32-33).
8. Verse 21: "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead
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in vain."

- a. Paul refused to make void [*frustrate*] the grace of God. The Judaizers were seeking to annul God's grace, even though they may not have realized it. Those who seek justification under the Mosaic Law forfeit the grace of God, which is presented through the gospel. "For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).
- b. If it had been possible for one to be saved by the Law, then Christ died in vain! But the death of Christ was essential!
 - 1) John 3:16-17: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *17* For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."
 - 2) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - 3) Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
 - 4) Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
 - 5) 1 Peter 1:18-25: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
- c. There are things, if true, would make the death of Christ null and void:
 - 1) If we can be saved by the Law.
 - 2) If morality alone is able to save us: "And he showed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:13-14). This man (Cornelius) was an outstanding moral specimen, but he still needed the gospel.
 - 3) If Christ did not rise from the grave: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:19-20).
 - 4) If the church was unnecessary.
 - a) Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
 - b) Ephesians 5:25: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

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Excerpt from author's *Outlined Commentary on Acts*

A. Acts 15:1-5: The Problem of Judaizing Teachers.

1. Verse 1: "And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved."
 - a. Following the return of Paul and Barnabas to Antioch of Syria from their first great missionary journey, certain men came to Antioch from Judea, pushing the theory that the Gentiles must be circumcised in order to be saved. They were setting their opinions up as a requirement of God. This quickly became a major problem, threatening to destroy the church. The law of Moses could not save:
 - 1) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
 - 2) Galatians 3:23-29: "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 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. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - b. To appreciate the cause of this disturbance, consider the background of the Jewish people. From the time of Genesis 17 onward, all the male descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, which included the whole nation of Israel, were required to be circumcised. Circumcision was a mark indicating their separation from the world and sanctification to God. This separation from the Gentiles was ingrained in their thinking from their earliest childhood, consequently it was naturally very difficult for them to accept the principle that circumcision was no longer a part of God's spiritual law, especially for those who had the Pharisaic turn of mind.
 - c. The Jewish saints were quite willing for the Gentiles to be given the opportunity to obey the gospel, but the Judaizing teachers, many of whom had a Pharisaic background (15:5), insisted that they be circumcised. They wanted to hold on to some of their old traditions. Since the Gentile population of the world far surpassed the Jews in number, it now appeared likely that the church's membership would soon have a Gentile majority, and that the cherished practices would be ignored. It is evident that these Judaizers were more interested in their traditions than they were in the truth of the gospel, hence they fought the efforts of Paul for many years and in many places.
 - d. The focal point of the contention of the Judaizers was circumcision, but they also demanded that the Gentile converts keep the rest of the law (15:24). To avoid giving unnecessary offense to the Jews, Paul circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3), but he later refused to circumcise Titus (Gal. 2:3-5) since in that case he would have been submitting to the wrongful demands of the Judaizers.
 - e. Paul described these Judaizers as "false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage" (Gal. 2:4). The serious nature of the problem is seen in Galatians 2:5: "To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." If Paul had not withstood these false teachers, the Galatian saints would have been robbed of the pure gospel.
 - f. The greatest threats to the church are internal. Great damage can be done to it by false teaching, for error has a semblance of truth, which many are ill-equipped to discern, and people often make their choices by emotions rather than by a logical examination of truth. This was perhaps the greatest danger the church had faced till that time.

2. Verse 2: "When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question."
 - a. A great controversy ensued. *Dissension* is from a Greek word (*staseos*) meaning "strife." *Disputation* is from *zeteseos* which means "a seeking" or "questioning." The apostolic authority of Paul apparently had little effect on these "sowers of discord" (cf. Prov. 6:16-19).
 - b. The brethren at Antioch decided to dispatch Paul and Barnabas, along with certain other brethren, to Jerusalem to meet with the other apostles and the elders to resolve this problem. Titus was one of those who went with them (Gal. 2:3).
 - c. Paul agreed to make the journey because of a "revelation" (Gal. 2:1-2), that is, he was instructed to go by an inspired revelation given him by the Holy Spirit. There should have been no need for the conference at Jerusalem since Paul was a properly appointed apostle, being selected by Christ personally. His apostleship was fully established by his many miracles, but Paul was ever desirous of maintaining harmony and peace. He knew that the other apostles could not but support his stand.
 - d. The conference in Jerusalem described in this chapter is identical with the meeting Paul reports in Galatians 2. Notice that in both of these cases, Paul and Barnabas are together. Their efforts were joined at Antioch before and after the first missionary journey, but when the second journey was being planned, they parted, never to work as a team again, as far as the Divine Record reports.
 - e. It is clear that Judaizers came to Antioch, claiming to have been sent there by James (Gal. 2:12), but James says in Acts 15:24 that the brethren in Jerusalem had given them no such commandment (to claim that the Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses). That they had traveled to Antioch with the authority of James is apparent (Gal. 2:12), but that they exceeded their commission is also obvious.
 3. Verse 3-5: "And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses."
 - a. Representatives of the church accompanied them for a short distance as they began their journey, in keeping with ancient custom. The delegation passed through Phenice and Samaria, and stayed there long enough to report the success Paul and Barnabas had had during their travels in Asia Minor to the brethren living in these places. Despite the current problem caused by the Judaizers, the brethren greatly rejoiced over the news of the conversion of the Gentiles. Faithful Christians always are glad when the gospel has success and souls are saved. The distance from Antioch to Jerusalem was 300 miles.
 - b. Arriving in Jerusalem, Paul says in Galatians 2:2 that he met with the leaders in the church (the apostles and elders) privately to be sure that his previous efforts had not been in vain. In the current verse, Luke reports that the delegation was warmly received by the church, the apostles, and elders. The initial point to be made was to report the events of the missionary journey.
 - c. The troublemakers in the church arose to assert the need to circumcise the Gentile converts. These dissenters are said to have been Pharisees who had become believers. From outward indications, they had obeyed the gospel, but Paul declared in Galatians 2:4-5 that some had been "brought in" without having true motives, who came in to "spy out our liberty" that "they might bring us into bondage" to the law of Moses again. Paul withstood them strongly so that the "truth of the gospel might continue with you." One of the significant characteristics of Pharisees was their love for outward form and ceremony. Paul had been a zealous Pharisee, but he was able to change (Ph. 3:5).
- B. Acts 15:6-11: Peter Rises to Refute the Doctrine of the Judaizers.
1. Verse 6: "And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter."
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- a. It seems that Paul and Barnabas reported the events of their journey to the whole congregation, and that the Pharisees raised their dissension then. Following this session, a meeting of the apostles and elders was arranged so that the question could be considered.
 - b. Sectarians claim this meeting gives them the right to conduct similar sessions in which policy is set and rules are made. But we must keep in mind that this was a gathering of men who were divinely inspired. The meeting was set up by the authority of inspired men; the decisions reached were not decided by majority vote, but by divine decree. We are forbidden to go beyond the written word of God (1 Cor. 4:6, ASV; 2 John 9; Rev. 22:18-19; Gal. 1:1-12). There are no inspired people on earth today. None can make laws for God today.
 - c. Galatians 2:11-14: "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. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. 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?"
 - 1) Did the events of Galatians 2:11-14 occur prior to this conference? If this took place after the Jerusalem conference, why did Peter and Barnabas fall into one of the errors that they denounced at the Jerusalem meeting (that Gentiles could not be accepted as faithful brethren until they were circumcised)?
 - 2) When certain men came from Jerusalem, to Antioch, Peter was present. Could this apostle and Barnabas have erred on this matter *after* what they had said and learned at the conference in Jerusalem (Acts 15)? Their error in Galatians 2:11-14 was not in binding circumcision upon the Gentile Christians, but rather in their refusal to eat with them after certain Jews came to Antioch. Before their arrival, both Peter and Barnabas had full fellowship with their Gentile brethren, but after those Jews arrived, both of these men acted hypocritically. If this episode occurred after the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15), how could it be that Peter and Barnabas could so quickly give up the positions they had defended on that occasion? Fear can easily and rapidly alter our course!
 - d. That this incident occurred after Acts 15 is evident in view of the fact that Paul is discussing events chronologically in Galatians:
 - 1) Galatians 1:18: "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."
 - 2) Galatians 1:21: "Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;"
 - 3) Galatians 2:1: "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also."
 - 4) Galatians 2:9: "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should* go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."
 - 5) Galatians 2:11: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."
2. Verse 7: "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe."
 - a. The meeting began with much disputing: the dissenters doubtless were vociferous in pressing their views, and others took issue with them. Peter, long held in high esteem by all of the brethren, arose to address the gathering. The Pharisees not only opposed Paul and Barnabas, but Peter also, since it was he who first spoke the word to the Gentiles.
 - b. Peter began his remarks by calling attention to the fact that God had selected him to preach the word of the gospel to the Gentiles. They were all familiar with the story of Cornelius' conversion (Acts
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- 10:1—11:18).
- c. He showed that the faith produced in Cornelius and his company was brought about by his addressing the word to their minds.
 - 1) John 8:30-31: "As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed."
 - 2) Romans 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
 - d. Peter had gone into the house of this Gentile, had spent some time there, and had eaten with him (10:48; 11:1-3). No where in all of these events, which God was guiding, had anything been said about Cornelius being required to be circumcised. Acts 11:3 shows that the men he preached to at Caesarea were uncircumcised.
3. Verse 8: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us."
- a. Peter points out here that God was guiding the affairs at Caesarea. God knew the hearts of the people involved, and showed his approval of the Gentiles' admission into the church by giving them the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:44-48; 11:15-18), even as he had given him to the twelve apostles on Pentecost Day (Acts 2:1-4).
 - b. Keep in mind, that what the apostles and the Gentiles received was a miraculous gift which was provided by the Holy Spirit. Since the conversion of Cornelius and his household was effected by the power of heaven [through the gospel Peter preached], and since no circumcision was required in that case, then circumcision was not to be forced upon the Gentiles.
4. Verse 9: "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."
- a. The great apostle next stated that God did not make any distinction between the Jews and the Gentiles as to the means by which each was saved. The salvation of a Jew or a Gentile is by faith. The original has "the faith." *The faith* in the New Testament is a reference to the gospel.
 - 1) Acts 6:7: "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."
 - 2) Galatians 1:23: "But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed."
 - 3) Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."
 - b. We are purified by the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17; 6:1-18; Jas. 2:21; 1 Cor. 15:1-4). But if the gospel is polluted by error it loses its power to save (Gal. 2:4-5), for it is no longer the gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). These wily enemies of truth "entered the church" (they went through the right motions), but they came in for the express purpose of subverting the membership (Gal. 2:4). The apostles and elders were not about to permit these false teachers to succeed.
 - c. The same mistake these Judaizers made is being made by countless men today who go to the Old Testament for religious authority. The Romanists go to the Law for their separate priesthood, their pomp and ceremony, holy water, and a host of other matters. The other sectarians go to the Old Testament for infant membership, instrument music in worship, etc. Lying at the root of a very great many religious errors is the failure to recognize the distinction between the two testaments. If it is wrong to adopt circumcision, it is wrong to adopt any other part of the Law.
 - d. Those Gentiles at Caesarea were purified by the faith, not by the ceremonies and sacrifices of the Law of Moses.
5. Verse 10: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"
- a. Peter becomes very pointed in his remarks. He demands to know why these men were trying to put a yoke upon the saints, a yoke which no one was able to bear. Only Jesus was able to keep the Law perfectly (1 Pet. 2:21-22; Heb. 4:15).
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- b. One who attempts to follow one part of the Law of Moses is obligated to follow every other part (Gal. 5:3); and to follow the Law of Moses is to fall from grace (Gal. 5:4; 2:23). Thus, Peter makes the point that the Judaizers were tempting God (putting God to the test) in trying to lead the disciples back to the Law.
 - c. Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
 - d. Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
6. Verse 11: "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."
- a. The beloved apostle next states that it is through the grace of Christ that salvation is possible, for both Jew and Gentile. The grace of God is revealed and made available to mankind through the one gospel. It is appropriated by faith and obedience on the part of the individual (Rom. 3:21; Tit. 2:11-12; Acts 2:36-47; 9:1-9; 22:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5).
 - b. The disciples had been led by the Spirit's inspired revelation to believe that salvation is through the Gospel of Christ, not by the Law of Moses.
- C. Acts 15:12: Paul and Barnabas Give Evidence in Rebutting the Claims of the Judaizers.
1. "Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them" (Acts 15:12).
 2. It appears that the church had once again assembled, or the apostles and elders had gone back to where they were assembled, for Luke reports that the multitude (indicative of more than the apostles and elders) kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul. Even the Pharisees were put to silence. Barnabas is named first, likely suggesting that he was the first speaker. This would be wise since he was widely known and respected by the brethren in Jerusalem. It would also give Paul the opportunity to present the concluding statements.
 3. What these two brethren did was to call particular attention to the miracles and wonders God had wrought through them among the Gentiles, at Antioch of Syria and in the various cities of Asia Minor. Their presentation of these facts again shows the real purpose of miracles: that being the confirmation of the gospel (Heb. 2:2-4; Mark 16:20). By reporting to the brethren the various miracles God did by them, they proved that their actions in preaching to the Gentiles, which did not include binding circumcision or the keeping of any other portion of the Law upon the Gentiles, was what God wanted. Therefore, the Judaizing Pharisees were in error.
 4. The miraculous activities done through Paul and Barnabas included their inspired preaching (13:9), the smiting of Elymas (13:7-12), the bestowal of miraculous gifts to the new converts (13:52), and the healing of the lame man at Iconium (14:8-10).
- D. Acts 15:13-21: James Addresses the Brethren.
1. Verses 13-14: "And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men *and* brethren, hearken unto me. Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name."
 - a. This is not the James, the brother of John; that James had been slain earlier by Herod (Acts 12:1-2). This James was a half-brother of Jesus, the author of the book bearing his name, and was a prominent man in the Jerusalem church of Christ. He was a prophet (an inspired spokesman for God) and likely an elder of the church. Galatians 2:9 speaks of him as a pillar of the church, along with Peter and John.
 - b. James reminded the brethren of what Peter (Simeon) had done in his speech: God had initiated Peter's
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- work with the Gentiles (Acts 10). The purpose of that important event was that God might "take out of them a people for his name" (i.e., that the Gentiles might be part of God's spiritual nation).
2. Verses 16-17: "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."
 - a. James stated that this point (verse 15) was in harmony with Old Testament Scriptures. He cited Amos 9:11-12: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this." Although he did not give a precise quotation, he gave the full sense of the prophet's statement. The statement by Amos is the basis of his statement, but he joins to it statements that were made by other Old Testament prophets. Notice that James said that "to this agree the words of the prophets" (plural).
 - 1) 2 Samuel 7:12: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom."
 - 2) Isaiah 2:2-4: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
 - 3) Isaiah 49:6: "And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."
 - 4) Micah 4:1-4: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, *that* the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make *them* afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken *it*."
 - b. What was to be rebuilt was not the Jewish system, but the "tabernacle" of David. The Jewish system never sustained such a relationship to David that it could be called the "tabernacle of David." This could have been said about Moses. But David had been given a promise that his throne would be established forever.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 7:16: "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever."
 - 2) 1 Kings 2:4: "That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel."
 - 3) Psalms 89:3-4: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah."
 - 4) Jeremiah 22:30: "Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any

- more in Judah."
- c. The tabernacle of David is his tent or house (his family; his royal line). It had fallen into ruin. His fleshly descendants had continued, uninterrupted, down to that time, but his royal line had ceased to occupy his throne. Coniah (Jechoniah) was removed from his throne and carried to Babylon with the Jewish nation. Jeremiah 22:30 predicted that Coniah (a descendant of David) would never have a descendant sitting on the throne of Judah: "...For no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah." Jesus is of the lineage of Coniah (Matt. 1:11-12), but no descendant of Coniah would ever sit on an earthly throne, ruling in Judah. It follows that, since Jesus is King, his throne is not (and can never be) upon the earth.
 - d. During the time in which the tabernacle of David was in ruins, "in that day," God would "build it as in the days of old." Premillennialism asserts that this will be done in the *millennium*, but James showed that it was fulfilled already, in the church of Christ (15:13-17).
 - e. "In this speech James shows that God, who knows from eternity what his own works would be, had foretold, through the prophet, the work which he was then performing through the labors of Peter, Barnabas, and Paul. He had said that he would rebuild the tabernacle of David, in order that the residue of men, who had not known the Lord before, 'even all the Gentiles, upon whom his name is called,' should seek after the Lord; and now, he had, through these apostles, selected from among the gentiles 'a people for his name'" (McGarvey, p.185).
 - f. God had promised to King David, "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever" (2 Sam. 7:16; cf. Ps. 89:3-4).
 - 1) Based on outward appearances, this promise had failed, for there had been no king on David's throne since the reign of Zedekiah (586 B.C.).
 - 2) Amos was active about 750 B.C., hence he predicted not only the restoration of David's "tabernacle," he also indirectly predicted its fall into ruin, which took place during the Babylonian invasions (606—586 B.C.).
 - 3) But God had not forgotten his promises. When Jesus was born, the angel told Mary: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).
 - 4) "Thus, the promise, when properly understood, is seen to refer neither to a continuous line of Jewish kings, descended from David, nor to a reconstruction of the Jewish Church, but to the perpetual reign of Jesus, the 'seed of David according to the flesh' [Rom. 1:3]. When, therefore, Jesus sat down upon his throne in heaven, the tabernacle of David was rebuilt, and now, by the labors of Peter, Barnabas, and Paul, the remainder of the prophecy of Amos was being fulfilled, by the extension of his kingdom among the Gentiles" (McGarvey, p.186). Amos' prophecy was being fulfilled as the Gentiles learned the gospel and became citizens in Christ's kingdom (Col. 1:13-14; John 3:5).
 - g. "If the tabernacle of David mentioned here has not been established, the Gentiles cannot seek after God" (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., *God's Prophetic Word*, p.528). James declared that Amos' prophecy was fulfilled in the church, so the millennial view is a base twisting of God's Word. Remember that the premillennialists assert that the kingdom and the church are different; they think that the church was a substitute for the kingdom, and that the kingdom will not be established until their so-called "millenium." The purpose for which David's tabernacle was to be rebuilt was to enable all men, Jews and Gentiles, to seek after the Lord, and for God to be able to apply his name to all of those who sought him. Since Gentiles can seek after God today, the tabernacle of David has been rebuilt.
3. Verse 18: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."
- a. God's future actions are not unknown to him. He knows all that he chooses to know, from the beginning of time to its very end. He did not act impulsively in any of his dealings with man. Therefore, he knew beforehand that he intended to include the Gentiles in his ultimate plan which he
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- purposed from before time began.
- b. "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:25-26; cf. Eph. 3:1-11).
4. Verses 19-20: "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and *from* fornication, and *from* things strangled, and *from* blood."
- a. James, who was obviously an inspired prophet, stated the official decree growing out of the Jerusalem council. Remember that the decision reached was not a human judgment, but was inspired. "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things" (15:28).
 - b. James showed that the Gentile Christians were not to be "troubled" by requiring their obedience to the Mosaic Law. This was the conclusion already reached by Paul and Barnabas. The apostles and inspired men could not dispute this conclusion or reach another verdict contradictory to it. "There was room for no other conclusion than the one which James deduced, that they should impose on the Gentiles, so far as the class of restrictions under consideration were concerned, only those *necessary* things which were necessary independent of the Mosaic law" (McGarvey, p.185).
 - c. James said that a letter should be written to the Gentile believers to instruct them to abstain from idols, fornication, things strangled, and blood. This epistle would carry with it the authority of the apostles, and thus of Christ (cf. Eph. 3:1ff).
 - 1) John 16:13-14: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."
 - 2) Matthew 28:19-20: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."
 - 3) Matthew 19:28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."
 - d. The pollutions of idols include all forms and features of idolatry. Idol worship was attended by all manner of immorality as well as by religious errors. This evil has always been forbidden. Fornication is prohibited, regardless of the setting or kind, whether in multiple wives or marriages, in simple cases of lust, or in a religious situation (which was common in idolatry). Among the ancient heathen societies, fornication was considered innocent. In modern society, it is rapidly taking on the same guise of innocence in the minds of those who reject Biblical morality.
 - e. Forbidden also was the eating of things which had been strangled, and the eating of blood. Eating animals that had been strangled violated the precept of eating blood, since strangling did not usually lead to the removal of blood from the animal. This restriction predates the Law of Moses, going back to at least Genesis 9. When Noah and his family left the ark, God emphasized the preciousness of blood and forbade the eating of blood (Gen. 9:1-6). Blood transfusions do not violate this precept since it is not eating blood.
 - f. Notice that none of the things listed as prohibited items originated with the Law. All of these things predated the time of Moses, and were incorporated in the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ.
5. Verse 21: "For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day."
- a. This statement seems to be given in anticipation of an argument from the Pharisees who instigated the dissension: "If the Gentiles are not amenable to the Law of Moses, it will be neglected and fall into contempt." But James declares that there is little danger of that since there are those in every city
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where Jews lived who preach the Law, it "being read in the synagogues every sabbath day."

- b. Though God does not require that the Law be followed today, yet there is much we can learn from it: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). We still esteem it highly, and read it with great profit.

E. Acts 15:22-35: The Outcome of the Council.

1. Verse 22: "Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren."
 - a. Those who addressed the gathering of the apostles and elders (Peter, Barnabas, Paul, and James) had presented the truth so clearly that the brethren were all in full agreement, that the Gentiles were not to be required to submit to the Law of Moses. Remember, that the decision of the council was not merely the opinion of the brethren, but was in fact the inspired revelation of God: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things" (15:28).
 - b. If Paul and Barnabas had returned to Antioch with this ruling, but without any corroborating testimony, their opponents might well have continued their fight. But the apostles sent Judas Barsabas and Silas with Paul and Barnabas to verify the report.
 - c. Silas is also known in the Scriptures as Silvanus, a companion and fellow-worker with Paul on the second and third missionary journeys. Could this Barsabas be the man by that name in Acts 1:23 (who was also called Joseph and Justus)? Joseph Barsabas had been considered for apostleship (1:15-26). Silas and Barsabas were "chief men" among the brethren at Jerusalem.
2. Verses 23-24: "And they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment."
 - a. A letter was written by the authority of the apostles, which was sent by Paul and the others of the company to the congregations in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. It bore divine authority, and was to be considered by the recipients as the final word on the subject it addressed. If our brethren who are trying to convince us to accept the "new hermeneutics" are correct, the letter would have been meaningless! The letter was a warm and friendly missive from one group of brethren to another. This is the earliest epistle issued by an apostle, predating all of the New Testament documents. It was later incorporated into the Book of Acts (cf. Acts 15:30; 16:4; John 16:13).
 - b. The letter said the apostles had heard about certain men who "went out from us" stirring up trouble among the Gentile saints by asserting that they must be circumcised. The opening statement admits that men had gone out from the church in Jerusalem, but it quickly states that no such commandment concerning the rite of circumcision had been authorized. The unauthorized doctrine advanced by the Judaizers would have *subverted* the souls of the saints if they had accepted it. The Greek term [*anaskuazo*] is used in a military sense "to plunder" a town; it is used figuratively in our text to mean "to unsettle" or "overthrow" the souls of Christians [Vine]. It does make a difference what we believe and practice.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - 2) 2 John 9: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son" (ASV).
3. Verses 25-28: "It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell *you* the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things."

- a. The brethren were in full agreement as to the chosen course of action. They decided to send certain chosen men with Barnabas and Paul, who are all described as greatly esteemed by the church in Jerusalem, back to Antioch with the report of the council's decision. Barnabas and Paul are further described as men who had hazarded their lives for the cause of Christ. That Barnabas and Paul are the ones described as having risked their lives is seen by the Greek construction (McGarvey, p.187).
 - b. Judas and Silas were sent with Barnabas and Paul so that the brethren could know that the report given was fully authenticated. This letter from the apostles would also reveal the conclusion reached in the council. The issue was highly significant, and so every step was taken to avoid any misunderstanding. The keeping of the Law of Moses was not to be imposed on the Gentile saints. Testimony to this end was given by Barnabas and Paul, and by Judas and Silas, and by the letter.
 - c. Again, the letter states that the decision was one which "seemed good" to the brethren in Jerusalem. But, more significantly, it "seemed good to the Holy Ghost." That is, it was approved by the Holy Spirit—it was an inspired revelation. Only those things which were necessary were to be laid upon the Gentiles. Verse 28 shows that this was a very special council because it was the occasion when an important revelation was given, thus it does not furnish a precedent for men today to convene a council in which rules and regulations are established or dissolved. Men do not have any right to make or annul any law for God (Gal. 1:1-12; Rev. 22:18-19; 2 John 9-11).
4. Verse 29: "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well."
- a. The necessary things (which were part of the Law) are stated as proposed in verse 20. The Gentiles (and all saints) are to abstain from meats offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from fornication.
 - b. What is called *pollutions of idols* in verse 20, is called "meats offered to idols" in this verse. A sacrificed animal was only partially consumed by the altar fire; the remainder was often sold in the local markets (1 Cor. 10:25). The ASV renders this phrase, "things sacrificed to idols." There seems to be a problem between the statement here and what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 and 10:14-33.
 - 1) Here, the Gentile saints are directed to abstain from things offered to idols; but Paul taught that to a knowledgeable Christian an idol was nothing, and eating what had been offered to an idol did not pollute his soul. But the apostle said that if the knowledgeable brother ate meat that had been offered to an idol, and his example encouraged another to do the same in violation of this second saint's conscience, both the first and second brother sinned. The first, by encouraging the second to act contrary to what he thought was right; the second, by doing what he believed to be sinful.
 - 2) Since the idol was a non-entity, a Christian could eat meat, which had been used in idol worship, without blame if his understanding was correct. But in those cases where his doing so would likely cause problems with his brethren (or with others), he was to abstain from it.
 - 3) The present case was at a time when the Gentiles and Jews who obeyed the gospel were cautious of each other. If Gentile converts continued to eat meat from an idol's temple, they might be emboldened to participate again in idolatry. Jewish Christians had been taught all their lives that idolatry was to be avoided. If the Gentiles ate the meat indicated, this would likely alienate the two groups, at a time when their fellowship was just beginning.
 - 4) The present ruling appears to be a matter of temporary expediency, that the Gentiles were told to abstain from meats offered to idols. When they were more fully taught, then the situation changed somewhat. When the brethren had become more knowledgeable and could see the matter more clearly, and fellowship between Jewish and Gentile saints had become firm, then the practice of 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 and 10:14-33 could be followed.
 - 5) All idolatry and all things that seem to support idolatry are to be shunned by God's people: "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Th. 5:22).
 - c. They were forbidden to eat blood, and thus also from eating animals which had been slain by strangulation, which left the blood intact. Genesis 9 established the groundwork for the prohibition;
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- it was carried over into the Law (Lev. 17:10-15), and was made part of the gospel. Pagans were gross violators of this timeless law. They caught the blood of animals in a vessel, and consumed it as food. God forbids the eating of blood because the life of the flesh is in the blood.
- d. Fornication, in all its many forms, is to be shunned:
 - 1) Romans 6:12: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 6:18: "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."
 - 4) Galatians 5:19-22: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, 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."
 - 5) Hebrews 13:4: "Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."
 - 6) Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
 - e. The epistle closed with the admonition that if they followed these guidelines, along with the instructions they had been given by Paul and Barnabas and the other prophets among them, they would do well.
 - f. This is the last passage in the Book of Acts in which the apostle Peter has a part.
5. Verses 30-31: "So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle: *Which* when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation."
- a. After the conference in Jerusalem, Paul and his company returned to Antioch. There they gathered the saints together and read to them the message of the epistle.
 - b. The great problem caused by the Judaizers was now settled at Antioch, although there was a continuing battle with them in other places. But the brethren at Antioch were at peace, and rejoiced because of it. Consolations means "encouragement." It is related to the word "exhortation."



GALATIANS 3

A. Galatians 3:1-6: The Galatians are Rebuked for Leaving the Gospel for the Mosaic System.

1. Verse 1: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?" (NKJ).
 - a. Of course, the Galatians were not foolish in the sense of being without good sense or without the power to reason correctly. Rather, they were foolish because they had allowed the Judaizers to deceive them with their error. Paul had taught them the whole counsel of God, confirming the message with apostolic signs.
 - 1) There are hundreds of millions of people [or should we say billions?] inhabiting the earth today who are equally foolish. These have allowed others to hoodwink them into believing every imaginable error, from atheism and evolution to universalism and animism.
 - 2) Many of our own brethren have shown foolishness by their unquestioning acceptance of virtually every denominational dogma that sound brethren refuted in years past in countless debates.
 - 3) Anyone who rejects the clearly-established word of God on any specific subject, and accepts some human tenet, has certainly shown himself to be foolish.
 - b. These Galatians had allowed themselves to be "bewitched" [*baskaino*]. This Greek word means "primarily, to slander, to prate about anyone; then to bring evil on a person by feigned praise, or mislead by an evil eye, and so to charm, bewitch (Eng., fascinate is connected), is used figuratively in Gal. 3:1, of leading into evil doctrine" (Vine, Vol. 1, p.125).
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
 - 2) Paul's very point in the verse implies the existence of an absolute standard of truth; he is charging them with a violation of that criterion. This verse is also a sharp repudiation of those who demand only positive preaching, for the inspired apostle strongly rebuked [a negative lesson] the Galatians for their foolishness in exchanging saving truth for soul-condemning error.
 - c. "Their conduct was so inexplicable that it seemed as if some bewitching fascination like our modern animal magnetism had been made use of, and even this explanation was hardly sufficient, for Christ had been so clearly and forcibly preached unto them, that he had been, as it were, crucified in their very presence, and before their very eyes; so that they had only to look to him to find an antidote to the Satanic poison which was destroying them—Num. 21:9" (McGarvey, p.264). "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived" (Num. 21:9).
 - d. "Therefore, these Galatians were foolish, unwise, as they had forgotten the cross and the crucifixion! In essence, they had forgotten the thing preached by Paul himself and there could certainly not be any excuse for exchanging the cross of Christ for Jewish legalism!" (Gobel Music, ADL, p.105).
 - e. The apostle teaches by means of the question that their failure to continue to obey the truth (the gospel) was not excused by having been bewitched. Neither they nor we can be excused for disobedience by claiming that we were deceived by false teachers! The false teacher must answer for his own crimes against God, and those who were misled by the errorist must pay the penalty for their foolishness in following the falsehood. The gospel is intended for everyone (Mark 16:15), which implies that it is so clear that its truth can be easily learned and verified.
 - 1) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - 2) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - 3) Acts 17:11-12: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few."

- 4) 1 Thessalonians 5:21: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."
 - 5) 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
 - 6) Acts 2:36-41: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."
- f. We are also taught here that to begin to obey only is insufficient; we must continue a life of faithful obedience.
- 1) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - 2) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
 - 3) Galatians 5:7: "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"
 - 4) Hebrews 2:1-4: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them. For if the word spoken through angels proved stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will" (ASV).
 - 5) Hebrews 12:1-4: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."
2. Verse 2: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"
- a. To firmly establish the point, Paul demands that they answer the question he propounds in the verse. If they were honest with themselves and with the truth, they would respond. By referring to their own past, they could answer the simple question.
 - b. "I need ask you but one test question to utterly condemn your conduct....When I came and labored among you, God approved and seconded my labor by imparting to you the miraculous powers (v. 5; Mark 16:17; Heb. 2:4)...of the Spirit. Now did ye receive the Spirit by these works of the law which these gospel perverters would have you perform, or did ye receive him by hearing and believing the gospel which I preach?" (McGarvey, pp.264f).
 - c. That this gift of the Holy Spirit is miraculous power is shown in verse five. The answer to his question is obvious; they received the Spirit as a consequence of having obeyed the gospel, not by adhering to the Mosaic Law!
 - 1) Romans 1:5: "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name."
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- 2) Romans 16:26: "But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
- d. The "hearing of faith" of our text is more than merely hearing; obedience is included. "Here, and in ver. 5, the word *acon* signifies *obedience*, as also in 1 Sam. 15:22, LXX....In like manner, the compounded word...signifies *disobedience*, Rom. 5:19" (MacKnight, Vol. III-IV, p.139).
- e. Certain ones during the first century who obeyed the gospel were blessed with the miraculous gifts which are named in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues." These spiritual gifts were imparted through the laying-on of an apostle's hands.
- 1) Acts 8:14-18: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money."
- 2) Acts 19:1-6: "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."
- 3) Romans 1:11: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established."
3. Verse 3: "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"
- a. The first part of the verse is emphatic, expressing the apostle's consternation that they were so unwise as to turn from the purity of the gospel to the law which had been abrogated (2 Cor. 3:1-18).
- 1) Matthew 5:17: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."
- 2) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
- 3) Ephesians 2:14-15: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace."
- 4) Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
- b. Paul's incredulous questions demand to know whether they were so foolish as to suppose that they, having begun the process by the Spirit, were made perfect by the flesh.
- 1) The process indicated by the expression *the Spirit* is parallel to other expressions in the context: **the hearing of faith** and **obeying the truth**. These phrases represent *the gospel of Christ*.
- 2) Other expressions are also parallel (or opposites): the flesh and the works of the law. These phrases represent *the law of Moses*.
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Law of Moses	Gospel of Christ
Flesh	Spirit
Works of the Law	Hearing of Faith
Obeying Old Law	Obeying the Truth

- c. The Mosaic Law pertained to the flesh.
- 1) Its subjects had to be born into the Israelite nation, or be proselytes to the system. Proselytes were not allowed to partake of some of the most important functions and benefits of Judaism.
 - 2) The law prescribed certain outward ceremonies which were based on fleshly considerations. A man became unclean if he touched a dead body, for example. To be cleansed, there were definite rites and actions that were required. "*Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation" (Heb. 9:10).
- d. To begin on the greatest principle and try to be perfected by the inferior is foolish.
4. Verse 4: "Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain."
- a. The brethren in Galatia had suffered persecution at the hands of their unbelieving neighbors. "But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren....And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use *them* despitefully, and to stone them, They were ware of *it*, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about" (Acts 14:2,5-6). Paul and Barnabas escaped the evil intentions of the unbelievers.
 - b. In the text, Paul affirms that the Galatian believers had undergone tribulations because of their faith. His point is this: Did you suffer those things in vain? Such would be true if they continued their present course. It was not too late for them to return to the Savior.
 - c. How foolish it would have been for them to have obeyed the gospel, faithfully endure persecutions for a while, and then give up the truth for which they had been mistreated. This would have made their earlier faithfulness to have been meaningless. Paul's statement implies that there are definite benefits to be derived from suffering for righteousness' sake.
 - 1) Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - 2) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
5. Verse 5: "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?"
- a. The pronoun *he* refers to the one who provided the Galatians with the Holy Spirit. God was the source, but Paul was the apostle who brought the gospel to Galatia. God provided the power by which miracles were wrought, but it was Paul through whom spiritual gifts were imparted to them, and it was Paul who first worked miracles before them. "Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands....The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed" (Acts 14:3, 9).
 - b. "The idea is this: Does God, who works miracles among you (or perhaps in you—2:8; Matt. 14:2; Eph. 2:2; Phil. 2:13), do it as a result of your obedience to the law, or because you have heard the gospel and believed it? Verily, by your belief; and so our case is like Abraham's" (McGarvey, p.265).
 - c. "The Spirit" is used in reference to the spiritual gifts which were bestowed upon the Galatians. These miraculous gifts came, not through the Old Testament, but as part of the gospel system. Paul worked

miracles in their midst, not through the law of Moses, but through the gospel system.

- d. The passage (verses 1-5) does not address the subject of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This verse ties the Holy Spirit (in the context) to the miraculous powers which the apostles and certain Christians were given. If the reference to the Holy Spirit meant some nebulous indwelling, there would be no evidence to support Paul's point.
 - 1) There is no way to be conscious of the indwelling except by the eternal witness of another person or authority. Therefore, this must refer to the miraculous measure of the spiritual gifts.
 - 2) He is showing that the benefits they had received were supplied to them through the gospel, and not through the law of Moses. The miraculous gifts were received only by the provisions of the gospel, therefore to reject the gospel would be to refuse the spiritual gifts.

B. Galatians 3:7-9: The True Heirs of Abraham are Those Who Follow the Gospel.

1. Verse 6: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."
 - a. Paul shows that the blessings the Galatians have under Christ are given in a similar manner in which Abraham was blessed. The law of Moses had nothing to do with either case. Abraham was justified by an obedient faith; Christians are justified by an obedient faith. The law of Moses could not justify anyone for no one was able to keep it perfectly (except Christ).
 - b. This is another major argument to show the distinction between the law of Moses and the gospel of Christ. The apostle shows in this chapter, beginning at this point, the relationship between the promises God gave to Abraham and their fulfillment in the New Covenant.
 - c. Consider:
 - 1) Genesis 15:6: "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."
 - 2) James 2:21-24: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."
 - 3) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 4) Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
 - 5) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - d. The faith of Abraham was imputed to him for righteousness after he had met the conditions which God had placed before him. His faith was an obedient faith. His faith was accounted to him for [*eis*] righteousness [i.e., in order to obtain righteousness].
 - e. "Abraham's righteousness did not come through circumcision and these Galatians could clearly understand this point and must identify with it. Here is the only kind of faith that could and does lead to justification (cf. Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:16), and if it could come to Abraham, then it could also be for the Galatians" (Gobel Music, ADL, p.107).
 - f. "Recognizing that the Jews relied so heavily on the law of Moses, and also looked with great respect and awe toward Abraham, Paul showed that Abraham was made acceptable before God according to the same plan, in principle, by which men are made acceptable by Christ. God promised Abraham, 'In thee shall all the nations be blessed' (3:8). The one through whom these blessings would come was 'thy seed, which is Christ' (3:16). God approved of Abraham by and through a system of faith (3:6). It was a system of faith that all men would be justified through Christ (3:7, 26, 29). It was obvious that Abraham was not made acceptable by the law given through Moses..." (James Boyd, quoted by Music, p108).
2. Verse 7: "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."

- a. Those who are of faith are faithful Christians. These are the true descendants of Abraham. Those who are connected with Abraham only by physical kinship are not the real children of that great man.
 - 1) Matthew 3:9: "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."
 - 2) John 8:39: "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham."
 - 3) Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God."
 - 4) Romans 4:14-16: "For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression. Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all."
 - b. Those who are of faith are placed in contrast to those who are workers of the law of Moses. "Under the reign of Christ, all who walk by faith are the true children of Abraham, and not those who are born of the flesh, and seek blessings by fleshly relations to Abraham. Many at the present day think that to be a member of the church will save them; but without the faith of the gospel, membership in the church cannot save. Faithful obedience to the gospel alone can save" (Lipscomb, p.222).
 - c. The true relationship with Abraham is not based on bloodlines, but on the lives we live.
3. Verse 8: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before he gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed."
- a. Proof of his proposition is found in the Scriptures. The written word had foretold plainly that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, thus fleshly kinship with Abraham was not the essential element. If any in the world are to be justified, this must be accomplished by faith.
 - b. The specific promise stated: "In thee shall all nations be blessed" (see Gen. 12:1-3). The blessings God envisioned included more than the physical descendants of Abraham; they extended to all humanity, and are given to all on the same basis (obedient faith).
 - c. John 8:56-58: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." Abraham was given a preview of the gospel system. God's long-range plan was to be fulfilled in the gospel of Christ, not in Moses' Law.
4. Verse 9: "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."
- a. Those who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. As Abraham was blessed by God on account of his faithfulness, so those who are faithful today receive God's blessings.
 - b. Galatians 3:29: "And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The physical lineage has nothing to do with being an heir of God; faithfulness to God's word is the criterion.
 - c. Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
 - d. Hebrews 11:8-11: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised."
 - e. James 2:20-24: "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which

saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”

- f. Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
- g. Philippians 2:12: “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

C. Galatians 3:10-14: The Just Shall Live By Faith.

1. Verse 10: "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."
 - a. This is a negative argument to show the need we have for the gospel. Many today look with great disfavor on anything negative. God knew the value of the negative, employing it often in the Bible.
 - b. Those who were amenable to the Mosaic law were under obligation to keep it without any deviation. It did not have the capability to remove the guilt of sin; and it could keep its adherent pure only to the extent that the individual perfectly observed the law.
 - 1) Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
 - 2) Hebrews 9:8-10: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation."
 - 3) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Cf. Acts 15:10; Romans 3:10-23.
 - 4) Acts 15:10: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"
 - 5) Deuteronomy 27:26: "Cursed *be* he that confirmeth not *all* the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen."
 - c. No one (except Christ: Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:21-22) was able to keep the law perfectly. Therefore, those who tried to serve the law, ended up being cursed by the law.
 - 1) Hebrews 4:15: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin."
 - 2) 1 Peter 2:21-22: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."
 - 3) Acts 15:10: “Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?”
2. Verses 11-12: "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it 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."
 - a. Paul quotes from Habakkuk 2:4: "Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith." This Old Testament passage is also quoted in Romans 1:17 and Hebrews 10:38.
 - b. The word *just* is equal to *righteous*. The apostle denies that any man is justified by the law of Moses, because of the statement made in the quoted passage. The righteous shall live by faith (not by the Law of Moses).
 - c. Leviticus 18:5: "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall

live in them: *I am* the LORD." As we have already seen, the law could not be kept perfectly by man, thus it condemned rather than justified. If a man could have observed every detail of the law without a single deviation, the law would not have been a curse to him.

- 1) Romans 7:24: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"
 - 2) Romans 8:1-3: "*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."
- d. Several hundred years before the law ended, Jews were pointed to the Messiah's system under which men would be justified by faith (rather than by the law). Since faith has come, Paul is showing the foolish inconsistency of returning to the old law.
 - e. The law and the faith are distinct systems. "Since man could never, because of his weakness, keep the law, it could not justify. However, the Gospel of Jesus Christ does make provisions for our weaknesses. It is a faith and grace system and our human frailties are understood by him who in all points was tempted just as we are. Our high priest can succor us (cf. Heb. 2:14-18). The Gospel of the grace of God has a realm wherein anyone, in true contrition, can find strength and mercy for his every need (cf. Heb. 4:14-16)" (Music, ADL, p.110).
 - f. 1 John 1:6-10: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
3. Verse 13: "Christ hath 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."
 - a. Salvation is made possible for us because Christ became a curse for us in order to remove the curse of the law. The death of the Savior was that of a common criminal. He was denounced by the Jewish leaders, who incited the multitude to demand his death (Mark 15:14).
 - b. He was forsaken by the Father while he suffered upon the cross. "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46). His "abandonment" by God was foretold in the Scriptures.
 - 1) Isaiah 53:4 "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."
 - 2) Psalm 22:1: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*"
 - c. Christ bore the reproach of mankind's sins in his crucifixion.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 5:18-21: "And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."
 - 2) 1 Peter 2:24-25: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."
 - 3) 1 Peter 3:18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."
 - d. The Mosaic Law pronounced a curse upon one who was hanged on a tree. "His body shall not remain

- all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged *is* accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance" (Deut. 21:23).
- 1) In view of this passage, it would appear to the Lord's Jewish enemies that no one could ever maintain an allegiance to Jesus after he had been crucified.
 - 2) "Once crucified they thought the name of Jesus would surely perish from the minds and lips of men; no Jew would hereafter dare to confess faith in him. His cause could never surmount this ignominy" (Lipscomb, p.227).
- e. "That the Galatians may realize the full meaning of their foolishness, Paul shows them that the condemnation to which they were returning, was the very thing from which the death of Christ redeemed them; for the law brought a curse upon men, but Jesus had delivered from the curse by taking it unto himself, as the Scripture proves; for it called all cursed who were crucified. And Jesus removed this obstructing law and curse, that in himself he might bring Abraham's blessing of justification upon the Gentiles, that all might receive the fulfillment of God's promise, that promise which agreed to give the Spirit to all who rendered the obedience of faith--Acts 2: 38, 39" (McGarvey).
- f. However, in God's marvelous wisdom and power, he was able to change this curse into the greatest blessings, for the Savior and for the lost.
- 1) Acts 2:23-24: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."
 - 2) Hebrews 12:1-3: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."
 - 3) John 12:32-33 "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."
 - 4) Isaiah 53:5-6: "But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."
- g. Redemption is an act usually associated with slavery. Christ redeemed those who were under the law by becoming for them what the law awarded them. Involved in it was the shame of humiliation. He was made a curse by his Father by being appointed to receive the penalty which each sinful person had earned for himself.
4. Verse 14: "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."
- a. The design of Christ's redemption was to bring to reality the blessings of Abraham. Without his death, the Jews would be condemned to live under the law continually, and the Gentiles would be left without hope.
 - b. The gospel was prepared for the Gentiles as much as it was for the Jews. "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph. 3:3-6).
 - c. What is the promise of the Spirit? The reference is to the blessings promised through the Holy Spirit to Abraham's seed. The Holy Spirit revealed and recorded the promise in Old Testament Scriptures.
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The promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3) included everything pertaining to the entire plan of redemption.

- d. The promise given through the Holy Spirit is obtained by the faith (through the gospel system; not by the Mosaic Law).

D. Galatians 3:15-29: The Immutable Promises to Abraham are Fulfilled in Christ.

1. Verse 15: "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."
 - a. Paul uses a common example from the business affairs of men to illustrate the immutability of God's promise to Abraham. His argument states that, since a man's covenant is considered inviolate and binding, and no man has the right to change it once it has been confirmed, God's covenant is infinitely more inviolate and immutable.
 - b. "The Greek word translated 'covenant' here is *diatheke*, and it is different from the contract, or covenant, between two parties. Strictly speaking, it is a binding promise or testament instituted by one party. This word, *diatheke*, corresponds to the Hebrew *berith* in the Old Testament, where it involved not a contract between two parties but a one-party promise, a guarantee in which the party more favored gave to a party less favored (*e.g.*, Jos. 9:6, 15; 1 Sam. 11:1; Eze. 17:13)" (Cates, ADL, p.116).
 - c. In the case of a man's last will and testament, if it has met the legal qualification, once it has been confirmed, no one has the right to set it aside or add anything to it. The document that has been "confirmed" has been ratified, validated, probated, or made final.
 - d. Such a covenant God made with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:18). It was made before the Mosaic Law was given to Israel. The Law did not replace the Abrahamic covenant, but rather was a means to its ultimate fulfillment in Christ. The Judaizers were trying to supplant the covenant God made with Abraham with the Law. They could not annul or emend the covenant of a mere man, but they were trying to do so with God's covenant!
 - e. Hebrews 6:13-18: "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."
 - f. The statement of the text is a strong warning to all who would try to make any changes to God's word.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - 2) Galatians 1:6-9: "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; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 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. 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."
 - 3) Galatians 2:4-5: "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."
 - 4) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
 - 5) Revelation 22:18-19: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this

book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book."

2. Verse 16: "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."
 - a. The promise God made was to Abraham and his seed. The *seed* of Abraham is specifically identified as Christ. Paul pointedly affirmed that the original term [seed] was in the singular, not plural. The reference was not to the people of Israel, but to Christ who entered the human family through the lineage of Abraham, through Judah, through David, and finally through the virgin Mary, who brought the Savior into the world.
 - 1) Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
 - 2) Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
 - 3) Matthew 1:22-25: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
 - 4) Galatians 4:4-5: "But when the fulness 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."
 - 5) Genesis 22:15-18: "And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And **in thy seed** shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
 - b. If the promise had used the plural [seeds], the Jews could have appropriated the term to themselves, and claimed that the promise found its ultimate fulfillment in them. They would have placed themselves as the fountain of God's blessings to all humanity. But the singular *seed* deprives them of such a haughty claim. God's blessings would flow through Christ, not through the Jews.
 - c. God's promises to Abraham could not be fulfilled until the Promised Seed came into the world. He must complete his earthly mission before the blessings could flow to lost mankind.
 - 1) John 3:16-17: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."
 - 2) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:2-3: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."
 - 4) Hebrews 2:9-10: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."
 - 5) Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us

that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

3. Verses 17-18: "And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise."
 - a. The law could not change the promise God made to Abraham. God confirmed the promise by swearing by himself. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Heb. 6:13-18).
 - b. The law was given 430 years after—after what? After the initial promise to Abraham? Abraham was 75 years old when he entered Canaan (Gen. 12:1-4). He was 100 years old when Isaac was born. Isaac was 60 years old when Jacob was born. Jacob was 130 years old when he went to Egypt.
 - 1) These time factors add up to 215 years [25+60+130=215]. This would leave only 215 years for Israel's entire stay in Egypt, which would hardly be sufficient time for them to increase from 75 (Acts 7:14) to 2 or 3 million people. This calculation also depends on a rejection of the Biblical text (Ex. 12:40-41, which puts the time as 430 years), and an acceptance of the LXX's rendition of the passage (215 years). Josephus alleges that the time in Egypt was 215 years (*Antiquities*, ii, 15, 2). This writer is hesitant to accept questionable sources over the inspired text.
 - 2) Exodus 12:40-41, Genesis 15:13, and Acts 7:6 put the time of Israel in Egypt at 400 years (in a round figure) or 430 years (more specific). Their affliction at the hands of the Egyptians began shortly after the death of Joseph.
 - a) Genesis 15:13: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years."
 - b) Exodus 12:40-41: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, *was* four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."
 - c) Acts 7:6: "And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat *them* evil four hundred years."
 - 3) Jacob was 130 when he entered Egypt (Gen. 47:9). Joseph was 39-40 when Jacob came to Egypt. This figure is obtained by the following: he was 30 when he became governor (Gen. 41:46). The 7 years of plenty passed, plus 2 years of famine, before Jacob came to Egypt. Since Jacob was 130 when he entered Egypt, and Joseph was about 40, and Joseph died at the age of 110 (Gen. 50:26), we learn that Joseph lived another 70 years after being reunited with his father. This would allow only 145 years of slavery for Israel [215-70=145]. God stated that Abraham's descendants would be afflicted for 400 years; 145 and 400 are impossible to reconcile.
 - a) Genesis 47:9: "And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."
 - b) Genesis 41:46: "And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt."
 - c) Genesis 50:26: "So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."
 - c. If we figure the time factor from the time that Joseph entered Egypt (when he was 17) to the giving

- of the law, we arrive at the figure of 430 years. The Exodus took place about 1450 B.C., which gives the year 1880 B.C. for Joseph's entry into Egypt.
- d. The law was given the year of the Exodus (Ex. 19:1). The giving of the law is placed 430 years after the confirmation of the promise.
 - 1) Genesis 15:13-18: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full....In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."
 - 2) God gave to Abraham certain promises (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:13-18; 22:13-18); the promises included the vow that he would have a great number of descendants and that they would be given Canaan as a place to live, and that ultimately he was to be a blessing to the whole human family (through his chief descendant, Christ—Genesis 22:18; Galatians 3:16). A prominent prophecy that the promises would be realized was the prediction of a four-century enslavement Abraham's descendants would endure. When Joseph entered Egypt, that prophecy began to be fulfilled, hence a confirmation of God's promise to Abraham was manifested in this great event. This is one reason for the detailed account given of Joseph's experiences.
 - e. Lest we lose sight of Paul's primary point in these verses, notice that he places 430 years between the promise (or its confirmation) and the giving of the law of Moses. Therefore, the promise existed many centuries before the law came into being; the promise preceded the giving of the law.
 - 1) If the blessings God indicated are derived from the law, they do not derive from the Abrahamic promise. However, the apostle affirms that the promise is the source of the blessings.
 - 2) Romans 4:13: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."
 - 3) Romans 8:17: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together." The promise is inherited through Christ and his gospel, and not through Moses and his law.
 - 4) God's integrity was at stake: he would not allow the law to make his promise void. He fulfilled his intentions as promised to Abraham.
 - f. McGarvey:
 - 1) "Brethren, I wish to use an illustration taken from our daily business life, viz.: that of our usage concerning contracts or agreements. Now if, when a human contract has once been confirmed, it becomes so sacred that no man will presume to annul or change it without the consent of both parties, much more is a covenant of God's too sacred to be modified or tampered with.
 - 2) "But God made such a ratified or confirmed contract or covenant with Abraham, for he spoke promises to Abraham, and to his seed. Not in fact meaning to Abraham and all his posterity, but to Abraham and his spiritual posterity (for he used a word which may be so interpreted), for he did not use the plural 'seeds,' but the singular 'seed,' thereby referring especially to Christ as the head of the spiritual posterity. Now, I say therefore, that this covenant, having been confirmed before the law came, still holds good, and can not be annulled by the coming of the law, for the law, as you know, did not come until four hundred and thirty years after the covenant was confirmed.
 - 3) "Now, to sum up what I have said, the promise, being given to the seed of Abraham, becomes to them an inheritance, and inheritances do not come from two parties, but from one; so, if the inheritance had been derived from the law, it could not have been derived from the promise also; but it was derived from the promise, since God thus gave it to Abraham."
 - g. Regarding the 430 years, Jamieson offers these comments under Exodus 12:40: "The plain import of the present Hebrew text is, that the Israelites remained in Egypt, as a tribe or people, during the period
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specified. The Septuagint adds the clause: *kai en gee Chanaan*, and in the land of Canaan, and the Alexandrian Codex, the Samaritan text, and the Targum of Jonathan, have this further insertion [*autoi kai hoi pateres autoon*]; so that the reading is: 'They and their fathers sojourned in Egypt, and in the land of Canaan 430 years.' Without entering into a critical inquiry whether the text in the Septuagint is more accurate than the Masoretic reading, or the Septuagint has interpolated a clause by way of explanatory gloss, it is obvious that the adoption of the one or the other of these readings must materially affect the view taken of the duration of the sojourn.

- 1) "Through the indirect influence of the Septuagint, Josephus, and the Rabbis, the truthfulness of whose views has been supposed to be endorsed by Paul (Gal 3:17), the popular interpretation of this passage is to consider it as embracing the entire period, from the call of Abraham to the exodus:—thus reducing the actual stay of the Israelites in Egypt to 215 years, while the previous half was that passed by the patriarchs in Canaan. The point of commencement in the computation is laid in the prophetic announcement to Abraham.
- 2) "But such an interpretation is not warranted by the terms of that prophecy, which describes the fortunes of Abraham's posterity during a period of 400 years (cf. Acts 7:6-7), not those of the patriarch himself, though, if the specified time is to be reckoned from the call at Haran, it must include a portion of his past life; because he had been several years in Canaan before he was favoured with the vision.
- 3) "Moreover, it speaks of his descendants being 'strangers in a strange land'—a description totally inapplicable to Canaan, which was his as well as theirs by divine promise, and in which, although all the three great patriarchs were frequently annoyed by the petty jealousies of surrounding tribes, they could not be said to be afflicted, much less to lose their independence. Above all, it is added, that 'in the fourth generation (see the note at Gen 15:16) they should come hither again'—words which evidently mean that the servitude and affliction were to be endured in another—a foreign land, from which they were to be restored to Canaan.
- 4) "On these grounds, the old traditionary interpretation, which computes this portion of Israel's early history from the call of Abraham to the exodus, has been abandoned by all the modern commentators of eminence, except Bengel and Baumgarten; and the statement in Ex 12:40 is taken in its natural acceptance, as referring exclusively to the sojourn in Egypt. The difficulties that were supposed to stand in the way of this explanation have disappeared before the searching scrutiny of criticism. Thus,
 - a) "The hypothesis that the sojourn in Egypt lasted for 215 years only was based chiefly on the passage in Gal 3:17, where the apostle alludes to the promise made to Abraham and his seed, which was Christ; a promise which was repeated to Jacob at Beersheba, on the night previous to that patriarch and his household entering within the confines of Egypt. That announcement is related with such solemn particularity, and is so evidently alluded to in the verse under review, that every intelligent and reflecting reader must be persuaded it is from this last repetition of the promise—not the first utterance of it—the 430 years of the apostle must be dated.
 - b) "Another difficulty that stood in the way of the short chronology was the genealogy of Aaron (Ex 6:16-20). But we have shown on that passage (cf. Num 26:59) that the genealogical table must have been abridged; because between Joseph and Joshua there were 10 descents—he being the 11th—i.e., the exodus comprised 10 full generations of 30 or 40 years each, with part of an 11th, amounting to 430 years....
- 5) "The round or general number of 400 years, which was appropriate in a prophecy, is exchanged for the precise and definite date of 430, which is more suited to a historical record. And thus the statement in Ex 12:40 is seen to occupy its natural place as a proper conclusion to the narrative of the exodus. It forms one of two salient points for the chronology of Israel's history in ancient times, and the prophetic type of Ezekiel (Ezek 4:5-6), where the $390 + 40 = 430$ days to be reckoned

years, is obviously borrowed from the duration of this sojourn" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by BibleSoft].

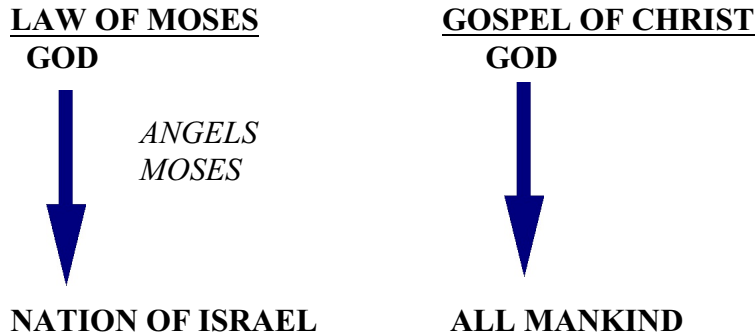
4. Verses 19-20: "Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one."
 - a. The obvious question is: In view of these truths, what purpose did the law serve? Paul provided the inspired answer.
 - 1) "It was added by God for the purpose of revealing and manifesting to man his sinfulness, and was to exist only during the interim between the giving of the promise and the fulfillment of the promise by the coming of Christ (2:18; Rom. 5:13-20; 7:7). It was not given directly by divine lips, as was the gospel, but through the intervention of angels (Deut. 33:2; Heb. 2:2); and it was not given personally, but through Moses, a mediator (Deut. 5:5)" (McGarvey, p.269).
 - 2) The law was *added* [*prostithemi*], meaning "not that something had been added to the promise with a view to complete it, which the Apostle denies, but that something had been given in addition to the promise..." (Vine, Vol. 1, p.29).
 - 3) The law was added "because of transgressions." It was not the purpose of the law to reveal a plan by which man could be redeemed, but to expose the true nature of sin and impress man with its penalty. "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20). The law identified sin and showed man that he could not perfectly follow the law so as to save himself.
 - b. The law had a built-in time limitation [note: *till*]. It was never intended to continue as God's operative system forever. Prophecies were given during the time the law was in force to show that it was to be replaced by a new system, the law of the Messiah. When the Seed [Christ] came, the Mosaic Law was to end.
 - 1) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
 - 2) Isaiah 2:2-4: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
 - 3) Micah 4:1-4: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, *that* the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under

his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make *them* afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken *it*."

- 4) Hebrews 7:12: "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law."
 - 5) Hebrews 9:11-17: "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."
 - 6) Matthew 5:17: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."
 - 7) Ephesians 2:13-16: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."
 - 8) Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
- c. The Seed of Abraham [Christ] was the one to whom the promise was made. It was through him that the promises would be made available; they were not to be fulfilled in the law of Moses.
- d. The Old Law was ordained (appointed) by angels through the work of a mediator. The role angels played in the giving of the Law is not obvious in the Exodus account, but the inspired commentary of New Testament writings shows that angels were directly involved in its revelation, and a human mediator was used in conveying it to Israel.
- 1) Acts 7:51-53: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept *it*."
 - 2) Hebrews 2:1-3: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us...?"
- e. Concerning verse 20, McGarvey writes: "Now, this mediatorship of Moses also argues the temporal nature of the law; for a mediator is no part of the personality of the one whom he represents; he is a different personality; but God is one personality, and can not, therefore, be properly represented by any other than himself. Such a mediatorship, therefore, must, in the very nature of the case, be but temporary. The men who represent God are mortal and pass away, but God is immutable and ever-abiding. His promises, therefore, stand on a different plane from anything which rests on human mediation" (p.269).
- 1) A mediator stands between two different parties, and acts in behalf of each. In the case of the law,

God was one party and Israel was the other, with Moses filling the role of mediator.

- 2) In making and fulfilling his promises, God did not use any human mediator. Christ, who is equal with God, served as God's agent (although this verse says nothing directly about Christ). God and Christ, acting in harmony with each other and with the Holy Spirit, delivered the gospel without the assistance of a human intermediary.



5. Verse 21: "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 the law."
- a. The Mosaic Law was not intended to deliver to mankind the full blessings of the promise God made to Abraham. However, this does not mean that God was unable to fulfill his promise.
 - b. "Very frequently a thing that cannot accomplish an end may be helpful to place in a position that it can be reached....Primary schools that teach no Latin, Greek, or higher mathematics can never teach those branches, yet they are necessary to prepare for the school that can teach them. So the law could not bring righteousness, but it could discipline and educate and fit them for the school that could make them righteous and receive final forgiveness" (Lipscomb, p.233).
 - c. It is not the nature of law to remove guilt, but to prevent violations and to impose the proper penalty on each transgressor. The Mosaic Law was perfect for what God intended it to accomplish, but it could not remove the stain of sin. If one could be made righteous by that law, there would have been no need for Christ to die (Gal. 2:21).
 - d. The virtues of God's Old Testament Law are extolled in Psalm 19:7-14: "The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether. More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward. Who can understand *his* errors? cleanse thou me from secret *faults*. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins*; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."
 - e. The gospel of Christ is superior to the law of Moses in that the full measure of God's abundant grace is included in it:
 - 1) John 1:17: "For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."
 - 2) John 3:16-17: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."
 - 3) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 4) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is

- preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
- 5) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 6) Titus 2:11-14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."
6. Verses 22-23: "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed."
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) NKJ: "But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed."
 - 2) ASV: "But the scriptures shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed."
 - b. The Old Testament Scripture concluded that all were under sin, both Jew and Gentile. The Jews had the law but did not keep it; the Gentiles did not have the law, but violated its precepts anyhow. The need for salvation is universal (Rom. 3:1-23; Eccl. 7:20).
 - c. The Greek term translated *conclude* means "to shut up, to enclose on all sides." God's Old Testament revelation affirmed the guilt of all accountable persons, closing them in on all sides in their liability. The term is used in these passages which illustrate its meaning:
 - 1) Luke 5:6: "And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake."
 - 2) Romans 11:32: "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all."
 - d. Before the faith came, they were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which was to be given in keeping with God's timetable. *The faith* is the gospel system (Gal. 1:23; Acts 6:7; Jude 3).
 - 1) The law of Moses kept them in ward (ASV) unto [*eis*—unto, in order to] such time that the gospel replaced the law. "The figure of speech here [verse 23] is that of a jailer keeping his prisoners shut up. The Law could not save men, and the hope of deliverance from the sin which the Law could not forgive could be realized only by the coming of the Holy One" (Coffman, p.63).
 - 2) Hebrews 7:19: "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God."
 - 3) Hebrews 10:9-10: "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*."
 - e. The Old Testament is of great importance to Christians. Not only do we learn many things about God's activities in ancient days, but we learn eternal principles and glean timeless lessons which aid us in our quest for heaven.
 - 1) Romans 15:4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 10:11: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."
7. Verses 24-25: "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."
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- a. The law was a schoolmaster [tutor—ASV] to the Jews, to bring them to Christ. "Schoolmaster" is from the Greek word *paidagogos*, which was used to identify the person whose job it was to conduct the young scholars to the place of instruction, who guided and protected them.
 - 1) McGarvey notes that "...the pedagogue or tutor was usually a slave, whose duty it was to take charge of a boy from his childhood to his majority, shield him from physical and moral evil, accompany him in all his amusement, and, as it were, keep him as a prisoner at large, lest he should in any way injure himself. Now, the law was such a tutor to bring those under his care to a state of development fit for the society and fellowship of Christ, the spiritual father" (p.270).
 - 2) Paul's illustration of the law is one that fit the Jews who lived prior to the giving of the gospel. The law does not bear this same relationship with those who live on this side of Calvary.
 - b. Instead of showing that the law was useless, Paul gives it the honorable place it deserved. It guided and protected the Israelites, keeping them as close to God as possible. It prepared them for the entry of the Messiah into the world.
 - c. In Acts 2, the apostles spoke before a tremendous audience of Jews who had come to Jerusalem for the religious activities ordained by the Mosaic Law. These people had been trained and guided by that law, a preparation that enabled three thousand of them to comprehend and accept the gospel. A Jew today, who will examine the evidence of the Old Testament, and compare that information with the New Testament, can learn that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, and that the gospel is God's will for all.
 - d. Now that the faith has come, we are no longer in need of the schoolmaster [tutor]. It served its useful purposes until the coming of Christ. Under the gospel, we are justified by faith. The faith is able to bring us into a justified state. Justification is that spiritual condition the redeemed have obtained in which God considers us to be free from contamination, as if we had never been guilty.
8. Verses 26-27: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (ASV).
 - 2) "For you are all children of God in Christ Jesus through the faith. For as many as have been immersed into Christ have put on Christ" (English Study Bible).
 - b. It is by the faith (the gospel system) that we now become children of God. This passage is not speaking about personal faith in Christ, but states that we are God's children by the faith (the word "the" is in the original).
 - c. We are children of God by the faith, and we are in Christ. Sonship is located within Christ, not outside of Christ.
 - 1) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ."
 - 2) Romans 8:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."
 - 3) Romans 8:14-18: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are not worthy to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 - d. We are children of God by the faith, we are in Christ, and we entered Christ by baptism. Baptism puts us into Christ. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4).

- e. To "put on Christ" is a figure of speech denoting the acquisition of the applicable characteristics and practices that our Lord had, and which he requires of his followers, including:
 - 1) The sentiments our Lord has: we love the things he loves, and hate the things he hates.
 - 2) The understanding he has, which we gain by studying his word.
 - a) John 8:31-32: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - b) 2 Timothy 2:15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
 - 3) The thoughts he has, which we have when we fill our minds with his truth: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).
 - 4) The speech which he used, which is done when we teach and practice his will: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1).
 - 5) The actions which he did, which we do when we imitate his practices: "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1, ASV).
 - 6) The attitudes which he manifested, which we do as we tune our hearts to be like his: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph. 2:5-8).

What and Who We Are	Children of God
How We Became Children	By The Faith (the gospel)
Where We Are	In Christ
We Entered Christ By Means Of	Baptism
The Result of Being In Christ	We Have Put On Christ

- 9. Verses 28-29: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - a. Regarding the salvation offered by the gospel, there is no advantage given anyone in its reception. The Jew has no special edge over the Gentile; neither does the man over the woman; neither the free man over the slave. Access to the gospel does not depend on one's earthly status.
 - b. Regarding the relative worth of those who are in Christ, there is no advantage given to anyone on account of nationality, economic standing, social status, or gender.
 - c. Regarding the plan of salvation, there is not one set of requirements for the Jew and another for the Gentile; there is not a standard for the slave and another for the free man; there is not one standard for the male and another for the female. There is only one plan of salvation; it is applicable to all.
 - d. If one belongs to Christ, he is the spiritual descendant of Abraham, and partakes of the promise given to Abraham. This is true of every faithful Christian, whether he is a Jew or Gentile, a slave or free man, or a man or a woman.
 - e. This passage does not address the question of the roles of men and women in the church. Paul does not contradict what he taught plainly in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 and 1 Corinthians 14:34-35.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 14:34-35: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto

them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

- 2) 1 Timothy 2:8-15: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."
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GALATIANS 4

A. Galatians 4:1-11: We Are Delivered From the Law of Moses.

1. Verses 1-2: "Now I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father."
 - a. Illustrating the preceding information, Paul observes that there is little difference between the state of a son, who is his father's heir, and a servant in the family. In Galatians 3:23-24, he had written: "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."
 - b. Even though the son is heir to all of his father's property and will be master of it all, yet while he is growing up, he is under the guidance and control of tutors and stewards. The father in the illustration, apparently dead, has left his estate to his son, who is presently too young to manage his legacy. The father in his will has appointed responsible individuals to tutor the son and tend to the estate until such time that he can take control.
 - c. A servant is under the control of a master, who directs and protects him; the youthful son in Paul's illustration is under the control of guardians and stewards.
2. Verse 3: "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world."
 - a. "The point now illustrated is the reason why the bondage of the law preceded the liberty of the gospel. It was for purposes of development, similar to those by which youth is trained to manhood. The child in this instance is regarded as wholly subject to the terms of a will....
 - 1) "Though the will provides that the son shall eventually be heir of all things, yet for the present he is so hampered, governed and restricted by the inflexible terms of the will that his condition differs, so far as comfort and freedom are concerned, in no respect from that of a bondservant, or slave. His person is under the care of guardians, and his estate is under the direction of stewards, and he can in no way expect to have his affairs bettered until the time has elapsed which is fixed by the will as the period of his subserviency, or minority.
 - 2) "Thus, says the apostle, both Jews and Gentiles, as one common, congregate body, or heirs in God's sight, were held in bondage either to the law of Moses or some other form of law, which laws are collectively described as the rudiments of the world. But when the time arrived which was stipulated in the will for the termination of this period of tutelage, then God took the steps for the liberation of the ward (which steps were also outlined beforehand in the promise to Abraham, and referred to in the types of the will as recorded by Moses), and sent forth his Son to effect the liberation of the ward" (McGarvey, pp.271f).
 - b. The Jews were controlled by the Mosaic Law until the time came when God removed the law and gave the gospel of Christ, which gave them liberty. While they were under the law, they were governed by the elements [rudiments—ASV] of the world. At the same time, the Gentiles were amenable to the eternal principles of right and wrong. Compare: "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another)" (Rom. 2:12-15).
 - c. The term *elements* is used in reference to the components of which the universe is made in 2 Peter 3:10. Vine defines the word as used in our text as "the rudimentary principles of religion, Jewish or Gentile..." (Vol.2, pp.22f). It is used in a similar way elsewhere:
 - 1) Galatians 4:9: "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"
 - 2) Colossians 2:20: "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as

- though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances."
- d. The Mosaic Law could not provide freedom from the guilt of sin to the Jews; the natural religions of the Gentiles could not bring forgiveness to the Gentiles. In this sense, therefore, the former religions gave bondage.
3. Verses 4-5: "But when the fulness 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."
 - a. The foregoing material logically leads to Paul's statement here about God sending Christ into the world to redeem the lost. The apostle only mentions the Jews in these two verses, but they are representative of the whole race.
 - b. God dispatched his Son into the world when the time was ripe. There are definite indicators that the timing of the first advent was perfect.
 - 1) Sin had been fully identified as the transgression of God's will. Universal rebellion against God had brought universal suffering and condemnation, with no hope of escape without Christ.
 - a) Psalms 14:1-4: "The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God. They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one. Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people *as* they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD."
 - b) Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
 - c) Ecclesiastes 7:29: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."
 - 2) Both Jew and Gentile had been taught that they cannot save themselves: "O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23).
 - 3) God had shown man that he could not be saved by the law of Moses, and that the natural religions of the Gentiles were likewise without any saving power.
 - 4) Thinking men had learned that they needed the services of a special Savior.
 - 5) Rome had given the world an orderly system of civil law, constructed a network of roads which facilitated travel, established an empire that enabled men to travel without encountering closed borders, and ruled over a world that was presently at peace.
 - 6) The Greeks had provided a language that was able uniquely to express the message of God's word to human minds clearly and accurately.
 - 7) Morality was at a low ebb in all lands, even among the Jews. Mankind was ripe for the high standard of the gospel.
 - 8) Religion was at an extremely low point; every kind of perverted belief and practice had been invented. Many were able to see the foolishness of idolatry, and wanted something better.
 - 9) How does our world today compare with the world when Christ came? Religion is in perhaps the worst condition it has ever had since the first century! It may be that a horrible calamity is getting close to our time; we hope and pray not. God's patience with sinful mankind has a limit. Let us pray for strong, honest leaders in the country, the world, and especially in the Lord's church.
 - c. God sent forth his Son. Christ bears the relation of sonship to God the Father, but that does not mean that there was a time when Christ did not exist.
 - 1) The relationship indicated by sonship is that of authority. God has greater authority than the Son.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 15:27: "For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him."
 - b) John 13:16: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him."
 - c) God sent Christ (John 3:17); Christ sent the Holy Spirit (John 16:7).
 - 2) Christ's sonship to God is also ascribed to the fact that the Father effected the means by which our

Lord entered the world.

- a) Psalms 2:7: "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee."
 - b) Hebrews 1:5-6: "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."
- 3) His sonship is also declared in his resurrection from the dead.
- a) Acts 13:33: "God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."
 - b) Romans 1:4: "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."
- 4) The sonship of Christ is also seen in the fact that God made him High Priest. "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee" (Heb. 5:5).
- d. Christ was "made of a woman." No man was involved in the conception of his corporal body within the womb of Mary.
- 1) Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
 - 2) Matthew 1:18-25: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
- e. The miraculous nature of his conception is undeniable to one who believes the Scriptures. His birth of a virgin was predicted seven centuries before the fact. The virgin birth is taught in the first prediction of the Messiah, in Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Our Lord's physical body was produced without the seed of man; only the seed of woman was used in the miraculous conception.
- f. The conception and birth of Christ had to do only with his physical body, which he needed in order to fulfill his earthly mission. But his existence did not begin with the formation of that body.
- 1) Hebrews 10:5: "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me."
 - 2) Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting."
 - 3) John 8:56-58: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."
 - 4) John 1:1-3,14: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him

- was not any thing made that was made....And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."
- g. The physical body of Christ was made during the time when the Mosaic Law was in effect. His life on earth was governed by the Mosaic Law, which he kept perfectly. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet without sin*" (Heb. 4:15). If everyone understood the fact that he lived and died under the Old Testament law, common mistakes would be avoided.
- 1) All would know that the salvation of aliens today is not accomplished like that of the penitent thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-43). The thief received pardon prior to the gospel going into effect, since the Lord had not yet died (cf. Heb. 9:15-17).
 - 2) It would be seen clearly that salvation for us today is not effected after the manner in which the palsied man was forgiven (Mark 2:1-12), or after the example of the sinful woman (Luke 7:48).
 - 3) The will of Christ (the gospel system) could not take effect until his death.
 - a) Hebrews 9:15-17: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."
 - b) Galatians 3:15: "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."
 - c) Ephesians 2:14-15: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace."
 - d) Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
 - 4) Without a fleshly body, he could not have become a sacrifice; if fact, he could not have died. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:9).
- h. The purpose of Christ's earthly mission was to redeem the lost. They are described here as those who were under the law. The context shows that the Mosaic Law is the law under consideration. But since he did not come to save only the Jews, the redemption of all is included. Of course, salvation is not obtained by all; it is offered to all, but only those who will believe and obey the gospel are redeemed.
- 1) The Jews needed to be redeemed from the curse of the law. It had "shut up" all of its adherents under the condemnation of sin, for they all violated it if they lived long enough. As stated many times in these remarks, the law did not have the power to remove guilt.
 - 2) The Gentiles needed to be redeemed from the curse of their religious systems. Their religions were sinful in that they honored the creature rather than the Creator (Rom. 1:18-32). Their lives were filled with all kinds of filthy deeds. They needed the redemption which the Savior offered.
- i. The consequence of redemption is we receive the adoption as sons. The Old Testament Jews were born into God's fleshly family (Israel); in the New Testament, we enter God's spiritual nation by means of the new birth (John 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:22-23; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38).
- 1) His spiritual nation is also called the church, the kingdom, the body of Christ, and the family of God. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pet. 2:5, 9).
 - 2) The process by which we become Christians is the process by which we are adopted into God's spiritual family. To be a child of God is to be his heir.
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- a) Galatians 3:29: "And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - b) Romans 8:15-18: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
4. Verses 6-7: "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. Continuing the illustration begun in verse one, Paul affirms that we have reached the proper age to receive our legacy.
 - 1) In the first two verses, the son who was his father's heir was still a minor; until he reached the age specified by the father, he was guided by tutors and his legacy was handled by stewards. Now the son had matured, and has obtained the inheritance.
 - 2) The point of the illustration is to show that the Jews were under the Mosaic Law until the proper time when the Messiah came and established his Law. The Messiah has now come, his kingdom has been set up and his law has been enacted. Those who enter his kingdom receive the legacy he offers.
 - a) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
 - b) Romans 8:16-17: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together."
 - b. Concerning the word *abba*, Vine gives this studied appraisal: Abba "is an Aramaic word, found in Mark 14:36, Rom. 8:15 and Gal. 4:6. In the Gemara (a Rabbinical commentary on the Mishna, the traditional teaching of the Jews) it is stated that slaves were forbidden to address the head of the family by this title. It approximates to a personal name, in contrast to 'Father,' with which it is always joined in the N.T. This is probably due to the fact that, 'Abba' having practically become a proper name, Greek-speaking Jews added the Greek word *pater*, father, from the language they used. 'Abba' is the word framed by the lips of infants, and betokens unreasoning trust; 'father' expresses an intelligent apprehension of the relationship. The two together express the love and intelligent confidence of the child" (Vol. 1, p.9).
 - 1) Mark 14:36: "And he said, Abba, Father, all things *are* possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt."
 - 2) Romans 8:15: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."
 - c. The Spirit of Christ has been sent by the Father into the hearts of Christians; it is by this Spirit in our hearts that we are privileged to address God as "Abba, Father." Fortunately, we have other passages which help us to see how the Holy Spirit in our hearts performs this function.
 - 1) Jeremiah 31:33: "But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." In the gospel age, God writes his law on the hearts of his people. This he does by teaching his word to mankind (Luke 8:11; Mark 16:15-16; Jas. 1:21; Rom. 1:16-17).
 - 2) John 6:63: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life." The Lord declared that the Spirit is inseparably connected

with his word (cf. 1 Cor. 2:9-14; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

- 3) 1 Corinthians 4:15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." By planting the gospel in the hearts of the Corinthians, Paul brought them forth into God's spiritual family (cf. John 3:1-8).
 - 4) James 1:18: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."
 - 5) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." The Holy Spirit delivered the truth by which our souls are purified when we obey it. Our obedience is described as being born again of water (baptism) and the Spirit (John 3:3,5).
 - 6) Ephesians 5:18-19: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:17). As Christians grow in their knowledge and faith, they are filled with the Spirit-given word of Christ. These two passages are parallel; they speak of the same process. What is called being filled with the Spirit in Ephesians, is called having the word of Christ to dwell in us richly (abundantly) in Colossians.
- d. Paul is showing the Galatians, who were on the verge of turning from the gospel of Christ to the law of Moses, what their status under the gospel is.
- 1) One who was under the Mosaic Law was a bond-servant; one who is under the gospel is a son. The slave has no right to expect an inheritance; the son is heir to his father's estate. The inheritance which God promised to give to the spiritual descendants of Abraham is not obtained through the law of Moses; it is obtained through the gospel of Christ.
 - 2) To turn back to the Old Covenant is to forfeit all the superior blessings of the New Covenant. There is as much difference between the law of Moses and the gospel of Christ as there is between Moses and Christ!
- e. The following charts illustrate the truths of this passage:

THE HOLY SPIRIT OPERATES THROUGH GOD'S WORD

WORK	HOLY SPIRIT	WORD
Instructs	Neh. 9:20,30	2 Tim. 3:16-17
Begets	John 3:5	1 Cor. 4:15; Jas. 1:18
New Birth	John 3:5	1 Peter 1:22-23
Quickens	John 6:63	Psalms 119:50
Teaches	John 14:26	John 6:44-45; Titus 2:11-12
Convicts	John 16:8	Titus 1:9
Comforts	Acts 9:31	1 Th. 4:18; Rom. 15:4
Gives Love	Rom. 5:5	1 John 2:5
Saves	1 Cor. 6:11	Acts 4:4; Jas. 1:21
Washes	1 Cor. 6:11	Eph. 5:26
Sanctifies	1 Pet. 1:2	John 17:17
Converts	John 16:7-8	Psalms 19:7
Makes Free	Rom. 8:2	John 8:32; 17:17
Strengthens	Eph. 3:16	Deut. 11:8; Acts 20:32
Indwells Saints	Eph. 5:18-19	Col. 3:16
Leads	Rom. 8:14	Psalms 119:105
Witnesses:	Heb. 10:15; 1 John 5:6-8	Heb. 10:15-16; Jer. 31:31-34
Produces Fruit	Gal. 5:22-23	Col. 1:5-6

CASES OF CONVERSION

CASE	GOSPEL	ACTION	ACTION	ACTION	RESULT
Acts 2	Spoke	Heard	Pricked	Baptized	Added, Saved
Acts 8:1-13	Preached	Heard	Believed	Baptized	Great Joy
Acts 8:26-40	Preached	Heard	Believed	Baptized	Rejoiced
Acts 10 & 11	Spoke	[Heard]	Believed	Baptized	[Saved]
Acts 16:12-15	Spoke	Heart Opened	Attended	Baptized	[Saved]
Acts 16:19-34	Spoke	[Heard]	[Believed]	Baptized	Washed Stripes
Acts 18:1-8	Reasoned	Heard	Believed	Baptized	[Saved]
Paul: Acts 9,22,26	Spoke	Heard	Believed	Baptized	Sins Washed Away

CASES OF NON-CONVERSION

CASE	GOSPEL	ACTION	ACTION	RESULT
Acts 5:29-33	Spoke	Heard	Cut to the Heart	Wanted to Kill
Acts 7	Spoke	Heard	Cut to the Heart	Resisted, Stoned
Acts 13:14-46	Spoke	Heard	Contradicted & Blasphemed	Rejected
Acts 17:16-33	Spoke	Heard	Mocked	Rejected
Acts 24:24-25	Reasoned	[Heard]	Trembled	Put Off
Acts 26	Spoke	[Heard]	Believed	Rejected
Acts 28:23-29	Expounded, Testified	[Heard]	Did Not Believe	Disputed

5. Verses 8-9: "Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"
- a. The ones addressed here are the Gentile Christians. Before they obeyed the gospel, they had been devoted to idols. They were in bondage (ASV) to these non-entities. The very nature of these *gods* makes them devoid of being.
 - b. During this period of their lives when they served these idols, they did not know the true God. A man who has never known God or who turns away from God, accepts some other being or philosophy as his *god*. It might be some worldly position, or money, or power; it might be a false god such as Buddha; it might be some false religion such as the New Age movement or humanism.
 - 1) Matthew 6:24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
 - 2) Matthew 12:30: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."
 - c. When they learned the gospel, they came to know the true God. He is alive and powerful; he knows all, sees all, and is unlimited in his power. The gods invented by men are without being, without life, and without power to either hurt or help.
 - 1) They knew God and were known by God. To know God is to believe in him, to love him, to be obedient to his will.
 - a) Mark 12:29-30: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment."
 - b) John 5:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."
 - c) Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."
 - d) 1 John 2:3-5: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him."
 - e) 1 John 5:1-2: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that

- loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments."
- 2) To be known by God is to be recognized as his child and to receive the benefits thereof. The blessings that grow out of this relationship are beyond compare. It is more important to be known by him than for us to know him; although, without our knowledge of him, he will not own us (Matt. 7:21-23; 25:1-3; 25:31-46).
- d. How is it possible that they would be willing to turn away from God and return to the "weak and beggarly elements" of the world? These ailing Christians were not accused of turning back to their former idolatrous practices, but were on the verge of accepting the perverted doctrine of the Judaizers. Their movement was away from the gospel and toward the Mosaic Law.
- 1) The Old Covenant was weak in that it could not remove the guilt of sin; it could only move it forward from one year to the next (Heb. 10:1-4). Its revelation was only partial, which reflects another weakness.
 - 2) The Old Covenant is spoken of as beggarly. It could not offer the great promises which the gospel gives freely. Under the gospel, the faithful are given remission of sins (Acts 13:38-39), and have the hope of eternal life.
 - a) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
 - b) Titus 1:2: "**In hope of eternal life**, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."
 - c) 1 John 2:25: "And this is the promise that he **hath promised us, even eternal life.**"
 - d) Mark 10:30: "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and **in the world to come eternal life.**"
 - 3) The Old Covenant contained the elements (the rudiments) of God's plan, not its fullness. It was God's elementary or rudimentary revelation. It was perfect for what he intended it to accomplish, but it is vastly inferior to the gospel.
- e. For any to go back to the Old Covenant, and try to serve God by it, is to enter into bondage. Nothing is gained and the greatest blessings are lost (Gal. 5:1-4; Acts 15:10). "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" (Heb. 2:1-4).
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CONTRASTS BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

OLD COVENANT	NEW COVENANT
First: Heb. 10:9	Second: Heb. 10:9
One Nation: Deut. 5:2-3	All Nations: Matt. 28:19
Dedicated by Animal Blood: Heb. 9:19	Dedicated by Christ's Blood: Heb. 9:15-16
Moses the Mediator: Ex. 20:19	Christ the Mediator: Heb. 12:24
Faulty: Heb. 8:7	Better; Perfect: Heb. 8:6; Jas. 1:25
Shadow: Heb. 9:24; 10:1	Reality: Heb. 10:1; 8:1-2
Blood of Animals: Heb. 9:19-20; 10:4	Blood of Christ: Heb. 9:12
Carnal Ordinances: Heb. 9:10	Spiritual Sacrifices: 1 Pet. 2:5
Purify Flesh: Heb. 9:13	Purify Soul: 1 Pet. 1:22; 3:21; Heb. 10:22
Natural Birth: Gen. 17:1ff	Spiritual Birth: John 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:22-23
Infants Included: Gen. 17:1ff	Responsible Persons: Mark 16:15-16
Temporal Rewards: Ps. 105:10-11	Eternal Rewards: 1 Pet. 1:4
Glorious: 2 Cor. 3:9-10	Exceeding in Glory: 2 Cor. 3:10-11
Yearly Atoning Sacrifice: Heb. 10:1ff	One Sacrifice: Heb. 9:26-28
Bondwoman: Gal. 4:30-31	Free Woman: Heb. 4:30-31
High Priests Had Sins: Heb. 7:28	High Priest Perfect: Heb. 7:27
Ministration of Death: 2 Cor. 3:9	Ministration of Righteousness: 2 Cor. 3:9
Priests Without Oath: Heb. 7:21	With Oath: Heb. 7:21
Priests by Carnal Commandment: Heb. 7:16	Priest by Endless Life: Heb. 7:16
Priests from Tribe of Levi: Heb. 7:11	High Priest from Judah: Heb. 7:14
Priests Died: Heb. 7:23	High Priest Eternal: Heb. 7:24
Sins Remembered: Heb. 10:1-4	Sins Removed: Heb. 10:1-4; 8:12
Written in Stone: 2 Cor. 3	Written in Heart: Heb. 8:10
Servitude: Rom. 8:15	Sonship: Rom. 8:15
Letter: 2 Cor. 3:6	Spirit: 2 Cor. 3:6
Not remove Sins: Heb. 10:11; Acts 13:38-39	Saved to Uttermost: Heb. 7:25; 8:12
Passed Away: 2 Cor. 3:11	Remains: 2 Cor. 3:11; Jude 3

6. Verses 10-11: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain."
 - a. When one error creeps in and is accepted, that paves the way for other errors. The Judaizers began by demanding that the Gentile Christians accept circumcision (Acts 15:1). They were now boldly taught that the religious days, months, seasons, and years should also be observed.
 - b. These special days and times were those that pertained to the Old Covenant. These included the Sabbath, the feast days such as Pentecost and the Passover, and the other special religious occasions. The apostles took advantage of these Jewish activities in order to teach the gospel to ready-made audiences, but they recognized that those religious occasions belonged to the Old Covenant, not to the gospel system.
 - c. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ" (Col. 2:14-17). Paul addresses the same matter in this passage. He shows that the Old Covenant has been removed, having been nailed to the Lord's cross. Therefore, the observance of the Jewish sabbath, or any other holyday of the Mosaic Age, is forbidden.
 - d. The apostle bluntly states his fear for their souls. He had bestowed abundant labors upon them, but was now gravely concerned that they had placed themselves beyond the scope of the gospel. He described them in Galatians 1:6-9 as being in the process of removing themselves from the truth; here he declares his apprehension that all that he had done in their behalf was done in vain. His point is that they were going to lose their souls if they did not stay with the pure gospel.
 - 1) Galatians 1:8-9: "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. 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."
 - 2) Galatians 2:21: "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."
 - 3) Galatians 5:1-4: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
 - e. There is a great lesson here for the church of our time. Some congregations have begun observing Easter and other special days; this cannot be done with the Lord's authority.
 - 1) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
 - 2) 2 John 1:9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
 - 3) If an individual or a congregation does one thing without scriptural authority, the door is open for other errors and innovations to enter. The first unauthorized act is sinful; those that follow are likewise sinful.
 - 4) The apostate church corrupted the Jewish Passover into Easter, naming it after a pagan goddess of love. Catholics also have deified old South American idols, and called them saints. The roots of Catholicism go back to apostates of the first century. The departures began small, but mushroomed. The Catholic Church did not exist until 606 A.D., when a certain proud man exalted himself as the "universal bishop"—the first pope!
 - 5) A seemingly innocent belief or practice can be brought in by a few, countenanced by many, and

later develop into an apostasy of major proportions.

B. Galatians 4:12-20: Paul Appeals to Them Based on Their Former Love for Him.

1. Verse 12: "Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) NKJ: "Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you. You have not injured me at all."
 - 2) English Study Bible: "I earnestly entreat you, brethren, become as I am, for I became like you. You did no injustice then."
 - b. Paul had grown up with a strong commitment to the Jewish system. He firmly believed it to be God's way. In the meantime, the Messiah had come and established the New Covenant.
 - 1) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
 - 2) Acts 3:22-23: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."
 - 3) Hebrews 10:9: "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."
 - c. However, when Paul learned the truth, he was quick to perceive its veracity, and accepted it fully. Becoming a Christian required major forfeitures on his part. He was in good standing with high Jewish authorities; they had commissioned him to go to Damascus to persecute Christians (Acts 26:9ff). He had been educated at the feet of Gamaliel, a prominent Jewish educator.
 - 1) Acts 5:34: "Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space."
 - 2) Acts 22:3-5: "I am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, *and* taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished."
 - 3) Philippians 3:4-8: "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ."
 - d. He calls on these Galatians to be as he is. He willingly gave up the Mosaic system for Christ's system; he wants them to stay with the gospel and refrain from turning to the outdated system of Moses.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 11:1: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ."
 - 2) Philippians 3:17: "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have

- us for an ensample."
- 3) Philippians 4:9: "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."
- e. "Ye have not injured me at all." He is saying that his motive for writing these strong words is not because he is trying to avenge some wrong they have done to him. They have not harmed him at all; there is no cause for vengeance. Paul only has their best interests at heart. He writes for their good.
 - f. McGarvey:
 - 1) "I beseech you, brethren, become as I am, and be not Jews; for I forsook Judaism and became simply a Christian, which made me, in the eyes of my brethren, a Gentile like you. Though I have spoken severely to you, it is for no personal reasons. Ye have done me no wrong.
 - 2) "On the contrary, your actions have been very gracious, for you will remember (and here the apostle refers to facts that are nowhere recorded, but which we presume to run thus:) that my journeying was providentially delayed as I was passing through your land, by my sickness ; and so it came about that I preached the gospel unto you ; and though my sickness was of so revolting a nature that ye might well have yielded to the temptation to ridicule or despise me, and reject me because of it, ye did not; for, conversely, ye received me as if I had been an angel of light, or the Lord himself. What, then, has become of your self-gratulation that you felt at having a real apostle among."
2. Verses 13-14: "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "But ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you the first time: and that which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but ye received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus."
 - 2) NKJ: "You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. 14 And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus."
 - b. Paul speaks here of some infirmity of the flesh he had, which had not interfered with their reception of the gospel. He was able to gain their attention and teach them the truth. Paul's work in Iconium and Lystra is reported in Acts 14. At Lystra, he had been stoned by the Jews, and left for dead (14:19). It *might* be that this attack left him with terrible wounds and scars.
 - c. He speaks of his infirmity in 2 Corinthians 12:7-8: "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me."
 - d. Verse fourteen indicates that there was some temptation which grew out of this infirmity. Despite the infirmity, the Galatians did not despise him. Rather, they received him as warmly and sincerely as they would have welcomed an angel of God. In fact, they received him as they would have received Christ. He and Barnabas were thought of at first as *gods* (Acts 14:8-18).
 - e. Evidently these statements were intended to connect with his previous remark that they had not harmed him in any way.
 3. Verse 15: "Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me."
 - a. The people who settled France were from Galatia (cf. *Gauls*). The French are known for having a tendency to be easily excited. Such people can be stirred to extreme emotions; sometimes going from love to hate in a short period of time. Compare: "And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, Said with a loud voice, Stand
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upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them. And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead” (Acts 14:8-19).

- b. When Paul was with them at the first, they readily received him. Now, after the Judaizers had done their evil work, the attitude of the Galatians toward Paul had changed.
 - c. At first, they would have been willing to give him their eyes if such had been possible. This expression does not necessarily mean that Paul's infirmity was a problem with his eyes.
 - 1) First, he lost his eyesight at Damascus, which the Lord restored. Did the Lord only restore partial sight? It is more likely that Paul had perfect eyesight after that miracle.
 - 2) Second, the statement [*ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me*] may only have been a figure of speech. We sometimes say we would give someone our right arm if we could. That does not mean that the other person has a missing or mangled right arm; it only means that he is in need of help which we are willing to supply, even if a great sacrifice is required.
4. Verse 16: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"
- a. This is an extraordinary question. It is rhetorical in nature. It declares that he is not their enemy even though he delivers hard truth to them.
 - b. When we point out some error of which a fellow Christian is guilty, our intention is to help, not to hurt. Oftentimes truth hurts. A policeman may tell a couple that their son has just been killed in an automobile accident; that truthful report will cause great pain to the parents, but it was not delivered to cause the pain.
 - c. We are not acting as an enemy, but as a friend, when we report the truth to men.
 - 1) When we tell the atheist that there is a God in heaven (Ps. 19:1-3; 1 Cor. 8:4,8).
 - 2) When we tell the unbeliever that Jesus is the Christ (John 20:27-31; Acts 2:36; 4:11-12).
 - 3) When we tell the Pentecostal how the Holy Spirit operates (John 16:12-13; Heb. 2:3-4; 1 Pet. 1:22-23).
 - 4) When we tell the infidel that the Bible is the inspired word of God (Heb. 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - 5) When we tell the sectarian of the oneness of the Lord's church (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:25-27; 1:22-23).
 - 6) When we tell the denominationalist of the plan of salvation (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38).
 - 7) When we tell many about acceptable worship (John 4:24; Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7-9).
 - 8) When we tell the worldly-minded about the Christian life (Rom. 12:1ff; Col. 3:5-9; 2 Pet. 1:5-11).
5. Verses 17-18: "They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you." "They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them. But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you." (NKJ).
- a. The ASV gives this rendering of Galatians 4:17-18: "They zealously seek you in no good way; nay, they desire to shut you out, that ye may seek them. But it is good to be zealously sought in a good

- matter at all times, and not only when I am present with you."
- b. Paul draws a contrast between himself and the false teachers. A false teacher is usually very zealous over his error, even those who are fully aware that their doctrine is error. They are highly motivated, in some cases because they firmly believe in their doctrine, and in other cases, because of personal gain. "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is* their belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things)" (Phil. 3:17-19).
 - c. The false teachers in Galatia had been zealous in their evil work. They were dishonest and dishonorable because they were not seeking the good of the people. They were zealously affected, but in error; it is good to be zealously affected in the truth. To be zealously affected is "*to desire one earnestly, to strive after, busy one's self about* him: to exert one's self for one (that he may not be torn from me), 2 Cor. 11:1; to seek to draw over to one's side, Gal. 4:17...; to court one's good will and favor" (Thayer, p.271).
 - d. These Judaizers "would lead them away from Christ that they might serve their selfish ends. Paul denounces unsparingly those who sought to subvert the faith of Christians. (2 Cor. 11:4-14)" (Lipscomb, p.249). The Jews were known for their intense zeal in proselyting. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Matt. 23:15).
 - e. "They were zealous to exclude the Galatians from the church and kingdom of God, by showing them to be not rightly converted; that, feeling themselves forlorn and lost, the Galatians might seek the Judaizers for counsel and advice, and might thus come to look upon them as great shepherds and deliverers. As the apostle sees in imagination the Galatians seeking earnestly for the instruction of the Judaizers, he remembers how they had once sought him, whom they had now forsaken, so he adds: I find no fault with you for zealously courting them, but with the evil cause for which they have you seek them; for it is at all times good to be zealously sought as a teacher in a good cause, and so, for my cause's sake, you should thus seek me, not only when present, but when absent" (McGarvey, p.275).
 - f. Paul could not settle in any one place for very long. When he left Galatia, he knew the possibility existed that troubles such as they had might develop. He had given them enough instruction to get them on the narrow path, but they must exercise caution lest they be deceived by error. While he was with them, they needed to come to him for instruction; when he was absent, they could still obtain guidance from him by means of letters. There was no need for them to accept the error of the false teachers; they could have sent inquiries to Paul, who would have been able to help them.
6. Verses 19-20: "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."
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you-- but I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my tone; for I am perplexed about you."
 - 2) NKJ: "My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you, I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you."
 - b. The apostle expresses his tender regards for them here. *Travail* is a reference to the pangs of childbirth. Paul uses the term figuratively. The mother willingly undergoes the pain of bringing a baby into the world, although she may very well dread the coming travail. Yet she soon forgets the pain in the joy the newborn child brings. "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world" (John 16:21).
 - c. Paul had expended the efforts and experienced the trouble involved in the conversion of the Galatians (cf. 1 Cor. 4:15; Acts 14). Now, because they had become victimized by the false teachers, Paul is experiencing the anguish of travail again. They had had Christ formed in them earlier, but the error
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of the Judaizers has pushed him away; Christ must once again be formed within them.

- d. He would like to be present with them again, so that he might help them; he wants to speak to them with tender words instead of the strong words of admonition he has been using in the letter. He was sincerely concerned about them; he perceived that a personal visit would be of help to them.
- e. The apostle did not have the confidence in them at this time that he wanted to have. He lived in doubt about their spiritual welfare. Compare: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3).

C. Galatians 4:21-31: The Allegory of Hagar and Sarah.

1. Verses 21-22: "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman."
 - a. Paul's question charges those who were turning back to the law of Moses with not heeding what the law taught. A highly significant truth was taught in the Old Testament allegorically by the story of Sarah and Hagar, a truth which many of the Galatian Christians had failed to see.
 - b. He describes the story as an allegory in verse twenty-four. Vine defines the Greek word as being "...formed from *allos*, other, and *agoreuo*, to speak in a place of assembly (*agora*, the market-place), came to signify to speak, not according to the primary sense of the word, but so that the facts stated are applied to illustrate principles. The allegorical meaning does not do away with the literal meaning of the narrative" (Vol. 1, p.47). *Allegoreo* appears in the New Testament only in Galatians 4:24.
 - c. The Old Testament report of Sarah and Hagar tells the true story, but Paul shows that the report has a deeper significance. In the story is found a depiction of the distinctions between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Abraham had two sons, one by Hagar and one by Sarah; the former was the offspring of a bondmaid, while the other was born to a freewoman.
 - d. Incidentally, this passage is one of many New Testament references which places the stamp of divine approval on the book of Genesis. There are many, some in our brotherhood, who deny the historical accuracy of Genesis.
2. Verse 23: "But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise."
 - a. The son of the bondwoman was born "after the flesh." God had nothing to do with the proceedings by which Ishmael was conceived. He had promised Abraham a son, but since his wife was beyond the age of childbearing, Sarah thought another woman would have to be involved; she provided her handmaid (Hagar) for that purpose. Sarah's plan was developed with only earthly factors being considered. God was excluded from her scheme.
 - b. On the other hand, the son born of the freewoman came into being by God's promise. Without God's direct supernatural involvement, Isaac could not have been conceived. Ishmael came into the world by the usual laws of nature, but Isaac came as a result of God's promise.
3. Verse 24: "Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar."
 - a. The two women and their sons represent the two covenants. He is not saying that these individuals are literally the two covenants, but that they are representative of them. When Christ stated that the bread was his body and the fruit of the vine was his blood, he clearly meant that these two food items were representative of his flesh and blood.
 - b. Hagar and her son Ishmael represent the covenant which was delivered at Mount Sinai. Hagar gave birth to Ishmael; since she was a servant, her son was born into servanthood. This covenant (the Mosaic Law) produced bondage in those who were born into it. The followers of that law were unable to obey its many demands perfectly, and when they failed in one or more particulars, the law pronounced them guilty of sin; it contained no means by which the guilt could be removed.
4. Verses 25-26: "For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

- a. Hagar (spelled "Agar" here) corresponded to Mount Sinai in Arabia and the literal city of Jerusalem. Sinai was the site where the law was delivered; Jerusalem was the place of the temple, and served as the representative heart of the Mosaic system.
 - b. Those who were born into this Old Covenant were born into bondage, as noted above. Also, the law was a heavy burden, difficult to be carried.
 - 1) Matthew 23:4: "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers."
 - 2) Acts 15:10: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"
 - c. In addition to the heavy obligations imposed by the Mosaic Law, Jewish teachers bound a great number of other duties on the people.
 - 1) Matthew 23:1-4: "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers."
 - 2) Mark 7:7-8: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do."
 - d. Jerusalem and all of Israel presently groaned under the heavy hand of Rome, who had conquered them prior to the coming of Christ.
 - e. By way of contrast, Paul affirms that spiritual Jerusalem is free. It gives freedom, not bondage. The reference is to the spiritual kingdom of God, the church of Christ.
 - 1) Galatians 6:16: "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."
 - 2) Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he *is a* Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the *spirit*, and not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God."
 - f. The Lord's church (his kingdom) is the "mother" of the redeemed in that it is in the church that spiritual life is obtained.
 - 1) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ."
 - 2) Ephesians 2:12-13: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."
 - 3) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
5. Verse 27: "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 an husband." "For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: For more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath the husband" (ASV).
- a. The quotation Paul cites is from Isaiah 54:1: "Sing, O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD."
 - b. The point in the citation is to illustrate the fact that Sarah, Abraham's legal wife, was barren for many years; Hagar was able to bear children. In the final analysis, however, Sarah had more offspring than Hagar. Included in the figure are the fleshly descendants of Abraham. In the analogy, Sarah's
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- offspring are primarily spiritual—the followers of Christ.
- c. Ishmael was the progenitor of the Arab tribes, whose numbers are presently very great. However, when Mohammedanism went forth with a conquering sword, many other nations and tribes were forced to accept the banner of Islam. Not all who are recognized as Arabs today are the literal offspring of Ishmael.
6. Verse 28: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."
 - a. Speaking to the point, Paul declares that *we* (faithful Christians) are the children of promise, just as Isaac was. If God had not made the promise to Abraham that he and Sarah would have a son, there would have been no Isaac.
 - b. If God had not made the promise to Abraham that he would bless our world through the *seed of Abraham* (Christ—Gal. 3:16), we could not have become followers of Christ; there would have been no Messiah!
 - c. But since God fulfilled his promises, it is possible for men and women to obey the gospel, and receive the blessings and freedom found in Christ.
 7. Verse 29: "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is now*."
 - a. Ishmael was thirteen years older than Isaac. He tormented Isaac. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking" (Gen. 21:9).
 - b. The first persecution that came upon the church originated with the Jews. The frenzied, continual persecution lasted until 70 A.D., when the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem and scattered the surviving Jews. At the time Paul wrote this epistle, Christians were being afflicted by the Jews.
 8. Verse 30: "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."
 - a. When Sarah saw her son being tormented by Ishmael, she demanded that Ishmael and his mother be driven from Abraham's household. "Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *even* with Isaac" (Gen. 21:10).
 - b. Abraham was grieved over this action, but complied (Gen. 21:11ff). "The slave woman must be cast out to give place to the lawful wife. The covenant of Sinai must be done away, taken out of the way to give place to the covenant made with Abraham and his seed, which the law, given afterward, could not annul, and which had its fulfillment in Christ" (Lipscomb, p.255).
 9. Verse 31: "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."
 - a. "Resuming the allegorical history and directly identifying the Christian with Isaac, Paul shows how the history continued to run parallel, for, as Ishmael persecuted Isaac, so the progeny of the law persecuted the children of the gospel. Then, prophetically conscious of God's design to continue the parallel to the end, he gives the final prophecy of the rejection of God's once chosen people, and closes with the incontrovertible conclusion that the Galatians are not children of the bondwoman, or law, but of the freewoman, or gospel. Thus Paul, knowing the passion of the Judaizers for allegorizing, meets them with their own weapon, and casts into this appropriate mold matter which he presents argumentatively and logically at Rom. 9:6-9, and prophetically at Rom. 11:15. The fact that Isaac and the gospel were both matters of promise, forestalled the Judaizers in any attempt to adjust the allegory so as to turn it against Paul" (McGarvey, p.278).
 - 1) Romans 9:6-9: "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son."
 - 2) Romans 11:15: "For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving *of them be*, but life from the dead?"
 - b. "What is the door into the kingdom of heaven? This question was only hinted at in the old dispen-

sation by birth into a Jewish family. The door into the church of Christ is not circumcision nor even a physical birth, but a second birth (John 3:3-5). The great naturalization law of the kingdom was first laid before Nicodemus and then before us all in the great commission (Mat. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16). The ligament or connection of union in this church was not a fleshly connection to Abraham, but a connection to Abraham's faith. '...And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise' comes upon one's entering into Christ by faith and baptism (Gal. 3:26-29). John the Baptist said, 'And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham' (Mat. 3:9)" (Gary Colley, ADL, p.177).

- c. Galatians 5:4-7: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"

THE ALLEGORY OF HAGAR AND SARAH

THE LAW OF MOSES	THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST
Hagar	Sarah
Bondwoman	Freewoman
Ishmael	Isaac
Natural Birth	By Promise (Miraculous)
Mt. Sinai	Mt. Zion
Earthly Jerusalem	Spiritual Jerusalem
Cast Out	Remains
No Inheritance	Inheritance
Persecutor	Persecuted
Bondage	Freedom
Judaism	Christianity
Old Covenant	New Covenant

GALATIANS 5

A. Galatians 5:1-6: To Return to the Law is to Forfeit Salvation.

1. Verse 1: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."
 - a. The liberty Paul mentions stands in opposition to the yoke of bondage he also names in this verse. The yoke of bondage is the Mosaic Law (Acts 15:10). It could not remove guilt; it contained scores of minute physical requirements; it condemned the guilty. But in Christ, freedom from sin's guilt is abundantly given (Acts 13:38-39); we have the advantage of being able to approach God directly through Christ, without the services of another mortal (1 Tim. 2:5).
 - 1) Acts 15:10: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"
 - 2) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
 - 3) 1 Timothy 2:5: "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
 - b. The apostle's point in this verse grows out of what he has taught in the preceding chapters. Many in the churches of Galatia had been hoodwinked into believing that they must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be saved; this was in addition to their obedience to the gospel. Paul has shown in a wonderfully clear way that following Christ and keeping the law of Moses cannot be done simultaneously (cf. Mt. 6:24). His statement here is a strong admonition for them to remain steadfast in the gospel.
 - 1) Matthew 6:24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
 - 3) 1 Peter 5:9: "Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."
 - 4) Hebrews 3:14: "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end."
 - c. Being freed from the bondage of the Mosaic Law does not give us freedom from all law. The Scriptures make it absolutely clear that we are under law to God today.
 - 1) Romans 4:15: "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression."
 - 2) Romans 5:13: "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law."
 - 3) Romans 8:1-3: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."
 - 4) James 1:25: "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
 - 5) If we were not under any law, it would be impossible to sin, for sin is the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4). Many today, even some in the Lord's church, are asserting that freedom in Christ means we are under no law at all. This position is absolutely untenable in the light of Romans 4:14, Romans 5:13, and 1 John 3:4.
 - d. The freedom we have in Christ is given by the truth. We are made free from the guilt of sin when we obey the truth.

- 1) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
- 2) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
- 3) 1 Peter 1:22: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently."
- 4) Romans 6:17-18: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
- e. The freedoms we have in Christ include the following:
 - 1) Freedom from the guilt of sin:
 - a) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - b) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - c) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - 2) Freedom from the love of sin:
 - a) 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
 - b) 1 John 2:15-17: "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and 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 abideth for ever."
 - 3) Freedom from the practice of sin:
 - a) John 8:34: "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."
 - b) 2 Peter 2:19: "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."
 - 4) Freedom from the consequences of sin: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).
 - 5) Freedom from the Law of Moses:
 - a) Romans 7:1-7: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? *is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."
 - b) Galatians 5:1: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."
 - 6) Freedom from man-made religions: "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; but there be some that trouble

you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 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. 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. 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. 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" (Gal. 1:6-12).

7) Freedom from fear and worry:

- a) Matthew 6:25-34: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof."
- b) Matthew 10:28-31: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."
- c) Philippians 4:6-7: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."
- d) Hebrews 13:5-6: "*Let your* conversation *be* without covetousness; *and be* content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

8) Freedom from superstition:

- a) Romans 10:17: "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
- b) 2 Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

9) Freedom from relying on our own strength:

- a) Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death."
- b) Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
- c) Matthew 4:4: "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."
- d) 2 Corinthians 3:5: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency *is* of God."
- e) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

f. Other passages on freedom (liberty):

- 1) Romans 8:21: "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."
- 2) 1 Corinthians 8:9: "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak."
- 3) 1 Corinthians 10:29: "Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another *man's* conscience?"
- 4) 2 Corinthians 3:17: "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty."
- 5) Galatians 2:4: "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."
- 6) Galatians 5:13: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."
- 7) James 1:25: "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
- 8) James 2:12: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."
- 9) 1 Peter 2:16: "As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God."

Excerpt From Author's Material on James 5:19-20:

A. Verse 19: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him."

1. The term "brethren" is prominently used in the epistle in reference to Christians.
 - a. James uses the word *brethren* fifteen times in his short epistle, an expression which affirms the close attachment he felt with his fellow-Christians.
 - 1) James 1:2: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations."
 - 2) James 1:16: "Do not err, my beloved brethren."
 - 3) James 1:19: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."
 - 4) James 2:1: "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons."
 - 5) James 2:5: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"
 - 6) James 2:14: "What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?"
 - 7) James 3:1: "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation."
 - 8) James 3:10: "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."
 - 9) James 3:12: "Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh."
 - 10) James 4:11: "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge."
 - 11) James 5:7: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."
 - 12) James 5:9: "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door."

- 13) James 5:10: Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience."
- 14) James 5:12: "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and *your* nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation."
- 15) James 5:19: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him."
- b. This term is especially meaningful in these two verses (5:19-20).
2. There is a law of pardon for the alien sinner; there is a different law of pardon for the erring saint. This passage addresses the second law of pardon (the law for the erring Christian). An excellent article written by Gus Nichols many years ago delineates these **Two Laws of Pardon**:
- a. A great many people are confused concerning the two laws of pardon. They make no distinction between the conditions of pardon to the alien sinner and the terms upon which children of God, or members of the church, are forgiven. It cannot be successfully denied that there are the two classes. Speaking to alien sinners, Jesus said: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your fathers ye will do." (John 8:44.) John speaks of the "children of God" and the "children of the devil." (1 John 3:10.) All accountable persons who are not the children of God are the children of the devil. Our loving Father offers pardon to each of these classes of persons. And it is important to know that God does not pardon both classes on the same terms. They are not on the same basis before God, and he does not deal with them as if they both stood in the same relation to him. In civil government there is a distinction between an alien, or foreigner, and a citizen. An alien cannot qualify to vote on the same terms as a citizen. If a wife leaves her husband, she may be reconciled to him and become one with him without a second marriage ceremony. (1 Cor. 7:11.) But a maiden must get married before she can live as a wife.
- b. The Alien Sinner Needs Pardon: The alien sinner needs pardon from God. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23.) Those who die in their sins, or without pardon, cannot go where Jesus is. (John 8:21.) No accountable person can detour around the new birth and enter the kingdom of God. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:5.) No man can be so morally good that he does not need the new birth, or that he does not need to be converted and saved. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18:3.)
- c. Children of God Also Need Pardon: David was a child of God, and he sinned grievously. (2 Sam. 12.) He went so far as to commit adultery and murder. (2 Sam. 12:8,13.) The apostle Peter denied his Lord, lied, cursed, and swore, after having followed Jesus for more than three years, and was forgiven as an erring child. (Mark 13:66-72.) The best of God's children need to be cleansed from sin along the heavenly way. (1 John 1:7.) "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1:8.) "There is no man that sinneth not." (1 Kings 8:46.) "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." (Eccles. 7:20.) This being true, the children of God need to be forgiven when they sin, as did David, Peter, and others.
- d. There is a Law of Pardon: Many are being taught that there is no law of pardon—that God has no certain law by which to convert and save sinners. They think God saves in different ways, and upon no certain conditions. According to them, there is no certain rule or regulation about the matter, and the sinner must grope his way in darkness and superstition, not knowing at what point salvation may be had. They are taught to feel their way and "pray through to God." The whole matter is left in confusion. But there is a law of pardon, a certain way of salvation, and one can know exactly the time and the place where it takes place, just as he can point out the time and the place where he became a husband, or was married to his wife. While we are not saved by the "law of works," or by a perfect moral life, we are saved by "the law of faith." (Rom. 3:27.) To say one is converted and saved without any sort of law is to deny the Bible, which says: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." (Ps. 19:7.) The idea that there is no law of pardon also contradicts Paul's statement: "The law of the

- Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Rom. 8:2.)
- e. The Law for Alien Sinners: Isaiah prophesied that the church would be established in the last days, and said: “Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” (Isa. 2:3.) This “law” includes the terms of pardon which were to go forth from Jerusalem. Jesus said: “Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:46,47.) Pentecost is called “the beginning.” (Acts 11:15.) It was on that day that Peter began to preach repentance and remission of sins in the name of Christ. When alien sinners believed in Jesus as Lord and Christ and asked what to do to be saved, Peter said unto them: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2:38.) This is “the law” and “the word of the Lord” which was to go forth from Jerusalem and to be preached among all nations. Those who obeyed the gospel received the promise of the commission, which said: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark 16:16.) Such is the first law of pardon, the law to alien sinners.
 - f. The Law to Children of God: In the case of Simon, the sorcerer, we find the second law of pardon, the law to erring children of God. Philip preached Christ unto the Samaritans; and “when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” (Acts 8:12.) Simon, the sorcerer, did the same things the others did; and if they were saved, so was he. If their faith was genuine, so was his; for the record says: “Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.” (Acts 8:13.) He had come to the promise that said: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark 16:16.)
 - 1) He had done what Peter told alien sinners to do on Pentecost, and thus had obeyed the first law of pardon, the law to alien sinners. However, this man Simon later sinned in trying to buy the power to confer the miraculous gift of the Spirit upon others. Time enough had elapsed between his baptism and his sin that Peter and John heard about the word being received in Samaria, and came down there to confer this power upon those converted. (Acts 8:14-18.) It is false to say he turned right around and sinned after his baptism, as some have said. “But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.” (Acts 8:20-23.)
 - 2) Please note that Peter, the same preacher who told aliens on Pentecost to “repent, and be baptized...for the remission of sins,” told a church member, one who had already been baptized, to “repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God.” Why the different answers? Why tell some to repent and be baptized, and the others to repent and pray? Because there are two different laws of pardon—one to the alien, which includes baptism, and the other to the child of God, which includes prayer instead of baptism. Jesus taught his disciples to pray for pardon. (Luke 11:4.) He also taught them that they would have to forgive others in order to be forgiven. (Matt. 6:9-15.) John teaches disciples to confess their sins. (I John 1:9.) Hence, the second law of pardon is repentance, confession, and prayer.
 - g. Some Quibbles Refuted [Regarding the conversion and apostasy of Simon the Sorcerer].
 - 1) It is argued by some that Simon did not have genuine faith. However, the Bible says he believed “also,” or the same as the others in the previous verse. He was not the only one who believed as he did; neither did the others believe properly if he did not. Simon believed “also.” his faith was like the faith of the Samaritans. (Acts 8:12,13.)
 - 2) But others say Simon had never been truly converted, or saved, else he would not have sinned later.
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One might as well argue that Peter was still a child of the devil when he denied the Lord. (Mark 14:66-72.) Children of God are sometimes so weak that they are soon removed from the right way after conversion. (Gal. 1:6.)

- 3) Others say Simon was not saved, or he would have received the Spirit along with the others and would not have had occasion to try to buy this gift. But he was not trying to buy the Spirit for himself, but rather the power to confer the Spirit upon others. (Acts 8:19.)
 - 4) Still others argue that supposing he was a child of God, he could not have perished, for they say only aliens can perish. But Peter denied this theory of "once in grace, always in grace." He said: "Thy money perish with thee." (Acts 8:20.) He was in danger of perishing.
 - 5) Some say his heart never was right before God, but Peter used the present tense and said: "Thy heart is not right." He did not say it never had been right.
 - 6) It is further argued by some that he never had repented; hence, was never saved. But he was not called upon to repent of all he ever did in his life that was wrong, but to repent of "this thy wickedness." (Acts 8:22.) "This" sin of trying to buy the power to confer the Spirit on others was his only sin. He was not told to repent of all the wickedness he had ever done, as though he had never been converted. Furthermore, he was not told to pray that all the thoughts of his heart be forgiven, as though all his thoughts up to this time had been evil. But Peter said: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought [singular—G.N.] of thine heart may be forgiven thee." (Acts 8:22.) Only one "thought" of his heart needed to be forgiven, and that was the thought "that the gift of God may be purchased with money." (Acts 8:20.)
 - 7) I have heard others say that Peter said Simon was "yet" in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. But Peter did not say this. The word "yet" is not in the passage. Peter simply used the present tense and said: "Thou are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." (Acts 8:23.)
 - 8) All of the foregoing quibbles are made in an effort to prove Simon was an alien sinner so as to have an example of conversion in which an apostle told an unsaved man to pray for pardon without baptism. But remember this man had already been baptized. (Acts 8:13.) It is a clear-cut case of the possibility of apostasy and the second law of pardon. It proves the fact that a child of God can so sin as to "perish," and that if members of the church do not repent of their "wickedness" they will not be forgiven. It is a perversion of the truth to change the two laws of pardon and teach that baptism is for Christians and that aliens should pray for pardon. [Gus Nichols, *Gospel Advocate*, October 5, 1944: Put in outline form by Bob Winton].
- h. In view of James' use of the term *brethren*, it is undeniable that he is speaking to Christians, members of the Lord's church—saved people. What he says here does not apply to alien sinners, but to the people of God. When the term *brother [s]* is used in relationship between people of the same nation, the context denotes that fact (cf. Acts 2:37; 9:17). In the present case, it is obvious that the ones addressed were James' brothers in Christ—the fourteen other cases of the use of the term by James show he had Christians in mind, not unbelieving Jews (cf. Jas. 2:1).
- i. The statement of this passage (5:19-20) shows conclusively that a brother can err from the truth and become guilty of sin so as to be lost. To remain in the saved condition, a Christian must believe the truth and be obedient to the truth—sincerely.
- 1) John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
 - 2) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - 3) Galatians 2:4-5: "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."
 - 4) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
 - 5) 1 Timothy 4:16: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this

- thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."
- 6) James 2:10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all."
 - 7) 1 John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
 - 8) 2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
 - 9) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
- j. "It follows, therefore, that any lapse from what is right is simply *an abandonment of the truth* which elevated them to the point from which they fell. In the light of these facts, it is amazing that men who affect to believe the Bible would nevertheless insist that it is impossible for a child of God to sin and fall away so as to be finally lost in hell" (Woods, p.311).
- 1) Sam Morris, a follower of sectarianism, wrote a tract with the title, *Do a Christian's Sins Damn His Soul?* Mr. Morris asserted: "The way a Christian lives, what he says, his character, his conduct, or his attitude toward other people have nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his soul....All the prayers a man may pray, all the Bibles he may read, all the churches he may belong to, all the services he may attend, all the sermons he may practice, all the debts he may pay, all the ordinances he may observe, all the laws he may keep, all the benevolent acts he may perform will not make his soul one whit safer; and all the sins he may commit from idolatry to murder will not make his soul in any more danger....The way a man lives has nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his soul..." (Quoted by J. Noel Meredith, ADL, p.281).
 - 2) This inviting piece of false doctrine may offer comfort and consolation to deceived souls, but it is in direct opposition to common sense, the Scriptures in general, and to many Biblical statements in particular!
 - a) 1 Corinthians 9:27: "But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
 - b) Galatians 5:3-4: "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
 - c) Hebrews 2:1-4: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
 - d) Hebrews 3:12-13: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."
 - e) 2 Peter 2:20-22: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."
 - f) Hebrews 12:1: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."
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- B. Verse 20: "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."
1. James clearly teaches that a brother, any child of God, can err from the truth and stand in need of salvation, and another child can convert this erring brother. If such an erring brother is converted, his soul shall have been saved from death. This is the very point of the passage.
 2. To "err from the truth" is to stray away from and depart from the word of God.
 - a. John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - b. Galatians 6:1: "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."
 - c. 1 Peter 1:24-25: "For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 3. "And one convert him" means that this erring brother can be turned back [be converted again] to the truth and holiness. The word "convert" has the definition of "to change a thing or a person into something else." In the material world, there are many illustrations: corn is converted into cornmeal; cornmeal is converted into cornbread; rags are converted into paper; paper is converted into books; training and experience can convert a novice into a qualified medical doctor. This primary meaning is retained when the word is used in a religious sense: a moral and spiritual change is effected within an individual by which he is turned back to God in heart, mind, word, and life. Conversion is not pardon, but pardon follows conversion.
 - a. Psalms 19:7: "The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple."
 - b. Psalms 51:13: "*Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee."
 - c. Acts 15:3: "And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren."
 4. If the erring brother is converted from the error of his way, his soul is saved from death. The main idea in *death* is "separation." When the spirit departs from the physical body, the body is dead; it is separated from the spirit. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26). When Adam and Eve transgressed God's law (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:1-6), they became guilty of sin and were immediately separated from the fellowship they enjoyed with God previously. When an individual dies in sin, he suffers the second death—he will be eternally separated from God (Rev. 20:12-15; 21:8; 3:11). To save a soul from death, is to bring the person back into fellowship with God so that he will avoid the second death.
 - a. Revelation 20:12-15: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
 - b. Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
 - c. Revelation 3:11: "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."
 5. A "multitude of sins" are thus hidden. To hide something is to put it out of sight. "So, by enabling a brother to obtain forgiveness, we bring him back from a situation which must, if permitted to proceed, result in eternal separation from God. His sins are put away, hidden, covered. The idea of hiding or covering sin was a concept familiar to the Hebrews and associated with the cover of the ark or as it is sometimes called, 'the mercy seat'" (Merideth, ADL, p.260).
 - a. Psalms 32:1-2: "Blessed *is he* whose transgression *is* forgiven, *whose sin is* covered. 2 Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile."
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- b. Romans 4:6-8: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, *Saying*, Blessed *are* they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."
 - c. Proverbs 10:12: "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins."
 - d. 1 Peter 4:8: "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."
6. Other passages which relate to the so-called "once-saved, always-saved" doctrine.
- a. Luke 8:13: "They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away."
 - b. John 6:66: "From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."
 - c. John 10:27-28: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand." This passage is often misused by the advocates of the theory, but it actually deals a death-blow to it. The conditions of his sheep (1) hearing his voice and (2) following him are necessary before the blessing of the passage applies. What if the Christian (a follower of Christ) ceases to hear his voice? What if he ceases to follow Christ?
 - d. 1 Corinthians 10:12-13: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*."
 - e. 1 Timothy 1:19-20: "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."
 - f. 1 Timothy 4:1: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."
 - g. 1 Timothy 5:12: "Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith."
 - h. Hebrews 12:15: "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled." *Fail of* means *fall from*.
 - i. 2 Peter 3:17: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness."
7. "But Truth can be perverted and those who follow a perverted truth will not be pleasing to God. In writing to the churches of Galatia, Paul marveled that they were forsaking the true Gospel for another or false gospel. He said that there were some among them who would pervert the Gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:7). He then went on to point out that if either man or angels should preach unto them any gospel other than that which was preached they were under the anathema of God. To 'pervert' means to change one thing into another. When one perverts the Gospel of Christ, he is making something else out of it. He is twisting it. When one misinterprets it or holds that it means what it does not really mean, then the result is 'another' gospel—that is, a gospel of a different kind, one that will not save from sin. Such a gospel is the power of the devil unto condemnation. The Gospel teaches just what it teaches without regard to what any man thinks it teaches. We all will be judged by what it really does teach" (Merideth, ADL, p.536). [Bob Winton, Commentary on James, pp.164-171].

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2. Verse 2: "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing."
 - a. Most male babies in this country are circumcised soon after birth. The surgery of circumcision has no bearing on one's spiritual standing. See verse six.
 - b. He states bluntly that if one is circumcised *under the circumstances he is discussing*, then Christ will profit him nothing. Some of the Gentile Christians were being deceived into being circumcised for religious purposes; some of the Jewish Christians were teaching this doctrine. When they went back
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- to the Old Testament as a law, they forfeited the blessings of Christ's gospel. It is impossible to follow Moses and Christ at the same time! No one is able to practice the religious rite of circumcision by the authority of Christ; he must go back to the Old Law, but that old law has been annulled.
- c. Here is another of the many proofs in the Bible that a child of God can so sin as to be lost. To be cut off from the benefits Christ offers is to be lost!
- 1) John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
 - 2) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - 3) Ephesians 2:11-16: "Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."
 - 4) Colossians 1:27: "To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."
 - 5) Colossians 2:10: "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."
 - 6) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
- d. We must operate by the authority of Christ today:
- 1) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
 - 2) Matthew 17:5: "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."
3. Verse 3: "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law."
- a. For those who wished to go back to the Old Testament for circumcision, but leave the animal sacrifices and multitudinous rites and ceremonies, is to be inconsistent. If they were going to take one feature of the law, they were required by the law of consistency to follow every other feature.
 - b. The religious ceremony of circumcision was a sign between the Old Testament Jews and God; for a Gentile to practice religious circumcision was equivalent to adopting the Mosaic Law which was intended only for the Jews.
 - c. There is a strong lesson in this passage for those today who want to go back to the Old Law to find authority for the instruments of music in worship. No one is able to use instrumental music in worship by the authority of Christ. One who goes back to David for his instrument, is obligated to follow every other feature of the Old Law, but that law has been replaced!
 - 1) Matthew 17:1-5: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."
 - 2) Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
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- 3) Hebrews 1:1-4: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."
4. Verse 4: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
 - a. The Galatian Christians who tried to follow Moses and Christ had fallen from God's grace! They were lost; they were lost despite their honesty and sincerity. Moses' Law had been replaced by the gospel of Christ; the gospel provided blessings far superior in quality and scope than those offered by the Law.
 - b. To go back to the Old Law would be to make the death of Christ meaningless to the soul of the individual. We would be rejecting Christ's sacrifice, his priesthood, his mediatorship, and his power as intercessor if we turn from him to the Mosaic Law.
 - c. Paul did not say that these offenders were actually being justified by the Old Law; rather, that they were seeking to obtain justification thereby. The ASV show this to be the meaning: "Ye are severed from Christ, ye would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace."
 - d. God's grace is expressed by his law (the gospel).
 - 1) Romans 5:21: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - 2) Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."
 - 3) If one who has been saved decides to reject the demands God makes in his law, he forfeits the blessings God's grace makes available to the obedient.
5. Verse 5: "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."
 - a. Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:21).
 - b. The Holy Spirit provided the gospel by revelation to the inspired men of the first century.
 - 1) John 16:13-14: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* unto you."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 2:9-14: "But as it is written, 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, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned."
 - c. The gospel gives the information and evidence to lead us to become obedient believers (Rom. 10:17; Jas. 2:14-26).
 - d. We then become righteous: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of

- righteousness" (Rom. 6:16-18);
- e. Our righteous condition furnishes us with hope: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth" (2 Pet. 1:3-12).
 - f. We faithfully await the fruition of that hope: "For in hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. 8:24-25, ASV).
 - g. This brief verse shows that the hope we have as Christians is obtained, not by the Law of Moses, but by the present law—the gospel of Christ. "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Heb. 10:36).
6. Verse 6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
- a. In the religion of Christ, being circumcised or not being circumcised has no bearing on our salvation. Circumcision is not a part of Christianity. It was a feature of Judaism. It was initially given to Abraham (Gen. 17), and later was incorporated into the Mosaic law (Lev. 12:3). If one practices circumcision as a religious rite, he does so without the authority of Christ; to act without his authority is to commit an act of sin!
 - 1) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (ASV).
 - 2) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
 - b. There is no power in circumcision to benefit the soul. Paul quickly points out the items which do benefit the soul: it is faith that works by love.
 - 1) Faith is the firm belief in the facts of the gospel.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."
 - b) Romans 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
 - 2) Faith that benefits the soul is an active faith: it does what Christ teaches. What faith does is called *works* (not the doing of things which we invent, but obedience to those things which God requires). "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works....But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?...Ye see then how that

by works a man is justified, and not by faith only....For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:17-18, 20, 24, 26)

- 3) Faith must work by love. If we believe the gospel, we will obey the gospel; if we believe the gospel, love will accompany our obedience. "Faith working by love" is a beautiful, concise, and accurate picture of the salvation process of the alien sinner, and aptly describes the Christian life.
- 4) 1 Corinthians 13:1-3: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."
- 5) 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

B. Galatians 5:7-15: Paul Rebukes the Galatians.

1. Verse 7: "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" "Ye were running well; who hindered you that ye should not obey the truth?" (ASV).
 - a. They were running the Christian race well when Paul was last with them; in the meantime, they had been hindered so that they were no longer obedient to the gospel.
 - b. They obeyed the gospel and were saved when Paul preached the truth to them. They were obligated to continue their obedience to Christ. A good beginning is not enough; the course must be finished faithfully.
 - 1) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - 2) Revelation 1:10: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet."
 - 3) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - 4) 2 Peter 1:5-12: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 9:24-27: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
 - c. He inquires, "Who hindered you to keep you from continuing your obedience to the gospel?" The real source of that hindrance was Satan (2 Cor. 11:3, 13-15). He operated through the false teachers who deceived them concerning the Mosaic Law. Although the devil and false teachers deceived them, it

- was they who would suffer the penalty! Gehenna is reserved for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41), but individuals whose souls are corrupted by these workers of evil are also doomed to eternal condemnation there.
2. Verse 8: "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you."
 - a. The one who called them from their pagan evils did not persuade them to turn aside from the gospel to which he had initially called them. The man was Paul, who was discharging his obligations as an apostle of Christ. When he was with them (Acts 14), he had proved his apostleship by the miracles he worked before them. The ultimate source of their call was God. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 2:13-14).
 - b. In the letter, Paul has vindicated his claims to apostleship, reminded them of what he had done for them, and of the love they had for him. It is obvious, therefore, that he did not persuade them to reject the truth which he had preached to them at the first.
 - c. They were persuaded to abandon the truth by the Judaizing teachers who came after Paul had gone elsewhere.
 3. Verse 9: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."
 - a. Error is like leaven, which naturally spreads until it affects the entire lump of dough. Paul also used this figure in 1 Corinthians 5:7, and Christ used this figure several times:
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 5:7: "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."
 - 2) Matthew 16:6, 11: "Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees....How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?"
 - 3) Mark 8:15: "And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod."
 - 4) Luke 12:1: "In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."
 - b. Only a little error can so corrupt the truth that it loses its power to save. Rat bait contains only a tiny percent of poison; nearly all of the remainder is good food for rodents. Is there any wonder that there are so many warnings in the Bible against false doctrine? Is there any wonder that there are so many admonitions for us to be careful with the truth?
 - c. The greatest dangers the Lord's people have encountered are those which originate from within, the departures from the truth which seem inevitably to come.
 4. Verse 10: "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." "I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be" (ASV).
 - a. Here Paul issues a warning of certain judgment against the one who brings trouble to the saints. This individual (or group of individuals) will bear his judgment; it will not matter who he might be.
 - b. But the apostle begins the verse with a statement of his confidence in the saints, that they will want to do what is right. He knew most of these people; he knew their mettle. He was confident that they would listen to the truth he presented in the epistle, and would remember what he had taught them when he was present with them.
 - c. It is in our best interest to always keep an open mind as we study God's word, in private or in the public services. There is always more we can learn, and often there are areas in which our understanding and conduct must be corrected.
 5. Verse 11: "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the
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offence of the cross ceased."

6. Other versions:
 - a. ASV: "But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? then hath the stumbling-block of the cross been done away."
 - b. NKJ: "And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased."
 - c. "It is evident that in this verse Paul defends himself against the charge of having taught the necessity of circumcision by having circumcised Timothy. His answer is that false brethren might misconstrue his act for the purpose of founding false teaching upon it, but that the Jews, the real parties in interest, placed a truer construction upon the act, for they still continued to persecute him as an enemy to circumcision" (McGarvey, p.281).
 - d. Paul's reason for circumcising Timothy (Acts 16:3) was for the purpose of enhancing his influence with the Jews, who knew that his father was a Greek. He performed the surgery on that young man because it was expedient, not because it was a God-given requirement. The false teachers evidently used the case to further their contentions in favor of circumcision; the unbelieving Jews understood that Paul did not believe in the necessity of circumcision, and continued to persecute him.
 - e. If he did preach that circumcision was required, then he would not have been persecuted by the Jews; the offense of the cross would have been nullified. The gospel would have been compromised and would cease to be offensive to the Jewish unbelievers.
7. Verse 12: "I would they were even cut off which trouble you."
 - a. The apostle expresses his inspired desire that those who were troubling the Galatians should be cut off. "It is something of a play on the idea. They insisted in cutting off the foreskin. He would that they, as the useless foreskin, were cut off from them....Paul desired that those who troubled the church in turning it away from the truth should be cut off, turned over to Satan" (Lipscomb, p.262).
 - b. These false teachers would be cut off if the churches marked them for what they were, and refused to countenance their ungodly efforts.
 - 1) Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."
 - 2) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."
8. 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."
 - a. There are many liberties which faithful Christians enjoy in the Lord's church. We are free from the Mosaic Law, from the guilt of sin, from the practice of sin, from the penalty of sin, from inordinate anxiety, and from the fear of death. We do not have a license to commit sin and still retain the favor of God. The apostle's point here is that although Christians have been freed from the heavy duty of serving the old law, that freedom does not give us a license to serve the dictates of our fleshly desires.
 - b. Our great country furnishes us with many liberties, but there are limitations. We have freedom of speech, but that does not give us the right to shout "Fire!" in a crowded room if there is no fire. We have the freedom to cut someone's hair, but we must also have the skill and a license before we can charge for our services. No one might prevent us from getting in a car to drive it down the street, but we would face a penalty if we have no license.

- c. Paul affirms that we have been called into a state of liberty in Christ, but we must not use our liberty as an occasion to serve the flesh; rather we must use our freedom to serve others. Our service to each other is an expression of our love; love is not a mere emotion, but a willing of good for others which is manifested in action.
- 1) Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
 - 2) Mark 12:31: "And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
9. Verse 14: "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."
- a. If we love God, we will do what he commands (1 John 5:2-3; Luke 6:46; John 14:15). One of God's requirements is that we love our neighbor as we love our self (Mark 12:31). This also was demanded of the Old Testament Jews: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD" (Lev. 19:18).
 - b. These two obligations [to love God and our neighbor] lie at the very heart of God's law. "Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. 22:36-40).
 - 1) In the main, the first five points of the ten commandments address man's obligations to God; the second five have to do with man's obligations to his fellowman. The further details of the Law of Moses can be classified under one or the other of these two obligations.
 - 2) McGarvey, in his commentary on Matthew, says about the Lord's statement above: "There is a tacit comparison of these two commandments to a hook in the wall on which are hung all the books of the law and the prophets. As the hook supports all, so to keep these two commandments is to do all that is required by the Scriptures. He who loves God as required will keep all of God's commandments, and he who loves his neighbor will fulfill every obligation to his neighbor" (p.193).
 - c. Paul gives a more detailed discussion of this matter in Romans 13:8-10: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law."
 - 1) Romans 13:8: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."
 - a) The first part of this verse has been made to teach that Christians are not to incur a debt. But this is not the subject of the passage. Lying in the background of the verse (13:1-7) is the instruction regarding the requirement that we pay our taxes. However, the rest of this verse sets the context for this statement.
 - b) We have a continuing debt to others, which is to love one another; we are not to let that debt go unpaid. The injunction is stated negatively; the positive requirement is that we show love to each other.
 - c) One who shows love has fulfilled the law in this particular. In other words, the law of God requires that we love each other. The second great commandment is to love our neighbor as we love our self (Mark 12:31). The first is to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength (Mark 12:29-30). We do not fulfill the first only by doing the second; both must be followed.
 - d) It is hard for us to have love for those who are unlovely and unlovable. Nevertheless, that is our God-given duty! But the Lord never expected us to have a warm, close feeling for everyone;

- that kind of love cannot be commanded—it occurs naturally.
- e) But the kind of love commanded is a disposition of heart that causes us to desire the best for another person, even an enemy. If we love him, we will not retaliate if he should attack us; we do not rejoice when he falls into a difficulty; we will sincerely pray for and desire that all will be well with him. This debt is always due and is never paid in full this side of eternity.
- 2) Romans 13: 9: "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."
- a) Having genuine love for another includes adhering to the five prohibitions which Paul names. He lists the last five commandments in the Decalogue.
 - b) One cannot show love for his neighbor if he does any of these five things.
 - (1) Thou shalt not commit adultery. To do so, harms one's spouse; it harms the partner in this sinful act; it harms the spouse of the partner; it harms the individual's family; it harms Christ and his church; and it certainly harms the offender.
 - (2) Thou shalt not kill. To commit murder obviously violates the victim's well-being. Jesus interpreted this sixth commandment in Matthew 19:18 as, "Thou shalt do no murder." When civil authorities execute a criminal for a capital offense, they are not violating this precept. When Noah emerged from the ark, one of the first requirements God placed on him and all his descendants was this: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:6).
 - (3) Thou shalt not steal. To take property from another person clearly violates the victim's interests; we would not want such to be done to us.
 - (4) Thou shalt not bear false witness. To violate this prohibition is to affirm a falsehood against another. This transgression was done when Jezebel connived to have men make false charges against Naboth (1 Kings 21:1-14). The injunction is violated when a lie is told against another, whether in a court of law or privately. Harm is surely done when false witness is borne against another.
 - (5) Thou shalt not covet. There are some things for which any degree of coveting is sinful. One cannot covet a neighbor's wife in any sinless way or degree. To desire something that is wrong, or to desire something that is not wrong in itself to an excessive degree, is sinful. To covet something that does not belong to us is wrong; it violates the law of love.
 - c) Other aspects of the matter are summed up in the second great commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (cf. Mark 12:31). "Not, you shall love your neighbor as much as yourself; for this is neither possible nor necessary; but you shall love him in like manner as you love yourself. You love yourself so truly that you would never have your neighbor injure you. In like manner, you must love him so truly as never to injure him. Thus loving him, you will do him no harm; and so far you fulfill the law towards him. But if we love our neighbor as ourselves, we shall not stop merely at not injuring him. We will go farther; and whatever good our self-love prompts us to wish him to do us, that good our love for him will prompt us to do him" (Lard, p.405).
- 3) Romans 13:10: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."
- a) Paul summarizes the point of this passage by saying, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." Stated positively, he teaches that love seeks the best interests of its object.
 - b) If we love another person as we ought, we will not wish him any harm, we will do him no harm, our words and deeds toward him will be such as we would want for our self (Matt. 7:12).
 - c) "The law requires me not to murder my neighbor, not to steal from him, not to commit adultery against him, not to desire his goods; in a word, not to do him harm of any kind; and if I love him, I will not do him any. Hence, the love of my neighbor is the fulfillment of the law towards him" (Lard, p.406).
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- d) To love our neighbor as we love ourselves is not all of our duty before God. We must still love him with all our being, which includes and requires that we do all that he demands and wishes us to do. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:2-3).
 - e) If there should be any question as to the identity of our neighbor, let the querist look to the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). [The comments on the above passage are taken from my commentary on Romans].
 - d. The Judaizers and their dupes in Galatia were not showing love for their neighbors (brethren) by their false teachings about the Mosaic Law. The command to love others is an essential part of both the Old and New Covenants; it has always been part of God's requirements for his offspring.
10. Verse 15: "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."
- a. Instead of showing love for each other, as both the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ enjoined, the errorists in Galatia were destroying those who accepted their perverted message. The situation that had developed was one of strife and division and anger.
 - b. Figuratively, they were biting and devouring one another. Paul warns them to take heed lest they completely consume each other. This condition was the direct opposite of what the Lord demanded in his command for them to love each other as they love themselves.
 - c. Many congregations of the Lord's people through the years have degenerated into a state of spiritual weakness and decay by allowing false doctrine, malice, and anger to divide them into warring camps. How tragic! The horrible problem can develop only if the will of God is ignored by one or both parties in the fracas.

C. Galatians 5:16-18: Contrasts Drawn Between the Spirit and Flesh.

- 1. Verses 16-17: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."
 - a. Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak." The two components of man, his spiritual being and his physical body, have a continual war with each other. The spirit of man is the real person; the body is the habitation of the spirit while in this life (cf. Jas. 2:26). The flesh has built-in desires which demand gratification; if the spirit has been properly taught the requirements of its Creator, it desires to do what is right, and will control the lusts of the flesh.
 - b. The directions God gives to man were delivered through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9-14). To walk in the Spirit is to obey the teachings given to us by the inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17; John 16:13-14). The individual who sincerely and faithfully follows the Spirit-given Word is one who does not allow the lust of his flesh to control his spirit; his inner being (his spirit or soul) controls the appetites of the flesh. The opposite is true with a sinful person. The difference between a child of God and an alien sinner is decided by the part of the individual that is in control.
 - c. The desires of the flesh have scriptural avenues of fulfillment. When one seeks to gratify a desire of the flesh by an unholy method, sin results; when one places the fulfillment of a fleshly desire above a spiritual duty, sin results; when the flesh rules the spirit, sin results. Although the body is the tool by which overt acts of sin are committed, it is the spirit that pays the great penalty (Rom. 6:23).
 - d. A Christian's spirit wants to obey God; the flesh wants to have its desires satisfied; the flesh wins many of these battles. This was Paul's dilemma (and that of other Jews) while serving God under the Mosaic law. The problem with that law was in its inability to remove guilt once sin was done. The law of the gospel includes God's grace, which makes it possible for the guilt of any sin to be removed. Even though we cannot remain completely free from all acts of sin, we can be forgiven (1 John 1:6-10). Paul discussed this point at length in Romans 7 and 8.
 - e. Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that,

- denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”
- f. James 1:13-15: “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”
2. Verse 18: "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."
- a. If a Christian is led by the teachings of the Holy Spirit, he will not be obedient to the Law of Moses. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Old Testament (2 Pet. 1:20-21; 2 Sam. 23:2; Neh. 9:20,30), but he revealed through them that the Old Covenant was to be replaced by the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Isa. 2:2-4).
- 1) 2 Samuel 23:2: "The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue."
 - 2) Nehemiah 9:20, 30: "Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst... Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands."
 - 3) Isaiah 2:2-4: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
 - 4) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
 - 5) 2 Peter 1:20-21: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost."
- b. The Spirit guided the inspired apostles (and other inspired men on whom they laid hands) of the New Testament to receive, deliver, record, and confirm this final message from heaven (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:5,8; 2:1ff; Heb. 2:1-4; Mark 16:15-20; Jude 3). The New Testament has replaced the Old Testament.
- 1) Acts 1:5: “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”
 - 2) Acts 1:8: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”
 - 3) Acts 2:1-4: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with
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other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

- 4) Mark 16:15-20: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”
- 5) Jude 3: “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”
- c. The Holy Spirit announced God's will through the inspired Scriptures of the New Testament; when a man hears and heeds that message, he is being led by the Spirit.
 - 1) Romans 8:14, 16: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God....The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."
 - 2) Revelation 2:7: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." What the Spirit said to the congregation was the written message he sent.

D. Galatians 5:19-21: The Works of the Flesh.

1. Verses 19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, 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."
 - a. Here Paul identifies seventeen specific works of the flesh. This list is only partial, but includes many of the most common examples of his time. These are very prominent in our society, and are becoming more and more conspicuous.
 - b. The subject of the works of the flesh is most important to our salvation, for without a knowledge of what they are, the penalty they bring, and how to avoid them, we would be deceived into following that kind of life.
 - c. The works of the flesh bar us from heaven (Gal. 5:19-21). "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (5:21). Compare: "*But* whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul" (Prov. 6:32).
 - d. Human definitions of the works of the flesh often differ from each other and from God's. There are people and religious groups who will deny the sinfulness of the items Paul lists here. There are many who might condone social drinking; some think polygamy is acceptable.
 - e. God's word is the only authority on the subject:
 - 1) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - 2) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - 3) 1 John 5:17: "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 4:6: “Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other” (ASV).
 - 5) Colossians 3:17: “And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (ASV).
 - f. The Bible names a large number of works of the flesh, any one of which is sufficiently tainting to the

soul as to keep the guilty party from entering heaven.

- 1) Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
 - 2) Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
2. Sins of a sensual (sexual) nature are given in verse nineteen.
- a. Adultery [*moichao*].
 - 1) This is a form of fornication. It is sexual conduct between one who is married with another who is not his (her) spouse. "So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" (Rom. 7:3).
 - 2) Matthew 15:19: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."
 - 3) John 8:3: "And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst."
 - b. Fornication.
 - 1) The gospel of Christ introduced sexual purity into a world which was steeped in all kinds of sexual misconduct. Fornication of every kind was not only condoned by the ancients, but was regarded normal and necessary in their way of life.
 - 2) There is no morality associated with animals; they bear no sense of guilt; this was the way God made them. But he did not make man thus; we have been given an awareness of right and wrong, and a law which prohibits some things and requires other things. That law says that we sin against our own body if we commit fornication (1 Cor. 6:18). Fornication is the only ground for divorce and remarriage (Matt. 19:9). God requires that we keep ourselves pure from this sin, and permits sexual relations only by a man and a woman who are scripturally married to each other.
 - 3) "Fornication" is from *porneia*, which means "illicit sexual intercourse" (Vine, Vol. 2, p.125). It is defined by Thayer as "illicit sexual intercourse in general" (p.531f). A noun form of the word is used to identify a prostitute. One is guilty of the sin of fornication for money or for lust. The Greek term is used as the name for the entire category of sexual sins: adultery, prostitution, homosexuality, bestiality, etc., are types of fornication.
 - 4) The following news item appeared in the *Vero Beach Press Journal* newspaper on September 14, 1994, with a dateline of San Antonio, Texas: "Sculptures of genitalia. A painting of an angel having intercourse on an altar. Madonna's next book? Try the latest exhibit at an art gallery run by Roman Catholic nuns. The nuns and the Archdiocese of San Antonio have been besieged by irate callers. The archbishop has declared himself 'highly offended, insulted and hurt at this art.' And on Tuesday, one day after the exhibit opened, it was shut down until further notice for review by the religious order that operates the gallery. 'We apologize for any confusion or hurt that the community has felt,' said Edna Perez-Vega, spokeswoman for the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, an order of about 500 nuns throughout the United States, Mexico and Peru. The exhibit of works by Houston artist Donell Hill, titled 'Spiritual, Sensual, Sexual,' opened on Monday at a renovated century-old barn called ReBarn—A center For Spirituality and Art. Sister Alice Holden, the gallery's director, said she prayed before the exhibit went up and decided the work should be shown because 'sexuality is a tremendous gift from God.' 'I am very much opposed to pornography,' she said. 'Yet, I do not believe (this exhibit) is pornography. It's a sacred rendition of the beauty of sexuality.'"
 - c. Uncleaness.
 - 1) This word is used to describe the defilement of an unclean wound; its adjective form (positive) was used to describe a house that has been cleaned and left in good condition. Paul uses the negative

form of the word here.

- 2) The word as used in the text retains these pictures, but has application to the spiritual realm. It is the direct opposite of spiritual purity. "In a moral sense, the impurity of lustful, luxurious, profligate living: Rom. 1:24; 6:19; 2 Co. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19; 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Th. 4:7" (Thayer, p.21).
 - 3) Romans 1:24: "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves." The reference is to homosexuality and other acts of sexual misconduct.
- d. Lasciviousness.
- 1) The Greek word (*aselgeia*) is translated "wantonness" (Rom. 13:13; 2 Pet. 2:18) and "lasciviousness" (Mark 7:22; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19).
 - 2) Thayer defines the word as, "Unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence....wanton (acts or) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females..." (pp.79f).
3. Sins of a religious nature are given in verse twenty.
- a. Idolatry [*eidololatria*].
- 1) This work of the flesh is the worship of false gods; image worship.
 - 2) It is used in the Scriptures to include the worship of anything that usurps the place God rightfully deserves.
 - a) Ephesians 5:5: "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."
 - b) Colossians 3:5: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."
- b. Witchcraft (sorcery).
- 1) This work of the flesh is the use of supposed magical arts, sorcery; it was commonly practiced and accepted as real throughout the ancient world. Today, wherever superstition and ignorance of the Bible are prominent, witchcraft is accepted.
 - 2) The Greek word is *pharmakeia*, from which our English word "pharmacy" is derived. The word suggests some of the practices included in ancient sorcery, namely, the use of drugs and poisons. "In sorcery, the use of drugs, whether simple or potent, was generally accompanied by incantations and appeals to occult powers, with the provision of various charms, amulets, etc., professedly designed to keep the applicant or patient from the attention and power of demons, but actually to impress the applicant with the mysterious resources and powers of the sorcerer" (Vine, Vol. 4, pp.51f).
- c. Hatred [*echthra*].
- 1) The ASV uses the word "enmities" at this place. Hatred or enmity is the quality which turns men into enemies. This characteristic or practice is the reverse of the loving concern and kindness which Christians must possess.
 - 2) Ephesians 4:31-32: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."
- d. Variance [*eris*].
- 1) The ASV renders this word as "strife." The disposition indicated is one which refuses to get along with others.
 - 2) This work of the flesh refers to wrangling, contentions, and strife. The Galatians are described by Paul in this light: "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Gal. 5:15).
- e. Emulations [*zelos*].
- 1) The ASV translates this words as "jealousies." There is a report that Leonardo da Vinci was
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- surpassed by Michelangelo as the former grew older. When his sketch for a proposed work was passed over for one by the younger Michelangelo, da Vinci spent the remaining years of his life in gloom and sorrow.
- 2) Jealousy is a product of pride, which the wise man said precedes a fall and destruction (Prov. 16:18).
- f. Wrath [*thumos*].
 - 1) The ASV translated this word in the plural.
 - 2) This trait is a strong passion or anger. The person consumed by this work of the flesh is quick to give forth with a burst of anger.
 - g. Strife [*eritheia*].
 - 1) The ASV translates this word as "factions." This trait describes one with a party spirit, having a factious spirit. It leads to disunity and division.
 - 2) This work of the flesh fits one who is self-seeking. It originally was applied to one who was a hired laborer. It came to be applied to work which was done for pay; later, it was used in reference to one who wants a public office for what he could get from it. The individual with this disposition in the church is one who is self-serving, without regard to the effect his selfish way has on others or the church.
 - h. Seditions [*dichostasia*].
 - 1) Here the ASV has "divisions." The word is used also in Romans 16:17 and 1 Corinthians 3:3:
 - a) Romans 16:17: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 3:3: "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"
 - 2) Our English word "seditions" has reference to the work of insurrectionists who seek to disrupt or overthrow the government.
 - 3) This work of the flesh in the church divides the congregation or brotherhood; it destroys the unity for which the Lord prayed, and without which there can be no strength.
 - i. Heresies [*hairesis*].
 - 1) The word in the ASV is "parties." Again, the work described is discord and contention. When a congregation has heresies within its ranks, its strength is sapped, and its work nullified.
 - 2) Only in scriptural unity is there strength.
4. Sins of intemperance are given in verse twenty-one. Temperance demands moderation in things that are not wrong in themselves, and total abstinence from things that are wrong.
 - a. Envyings [*phthonos*].
 - 1) Envy is a feeling of pain when another person receives some blessing or advantage which is not given to the afflicted individual.
 - 2) Proverbs 27:4: "Wrath *is* cruel, and anger *is* outrageous; but who *is* able to stand before envy?"
 - 3) Matthew 27:18: "For he knew that for envy they had delivered him."
 - 4) Romans 12:15: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."
 - b. Murders [*phonoï*].
 - 1) This action, of course, is the destruction of human life. This act grows out of anger, hatred, or covetousness. Murder is always sinful.
 - 2) There is a difference in killing and murdering. All murder is killing, but not all killing is murder. The commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," is interpreted by Christ to mean, "Thou shalt do no murder" (Ex. 20:13; Matt. 19:18). When the civil government executes a condemned criminal, it is not murdering the individual, but is fulfilling its God-given responsibility (Gen. 9:4-6; Rom. 13:1-7).
 - c. Drunkenness [*methai*].
 - 1) "Intoxication" is a common word used to describe the state of drunkenness. Somehow, it seems,

this word is not as ugly-sounding as drunkenness. *Intoxicate* is from the Latin word *intoxicare* which means "to smear with poison." *Toxin* means *poison*.

2) For a fuller discussion of the sin of drunkenness, see the outline at the end of this chapter.

d. Revellings [*komoi*].

1) This work of the flesh describes the activity of merry-making, lascivious feasting, carousing, or a drinking party.

2) The picture given is a boisterous festivity in which restraint has been cast off.

e. And such like [*homora*]. Lest anyone should get the idea that only these activities are included in the list of sinful acts, the apostle states that all other such like practices and dispositions are also condemned. Those who are guilty of these or similar sins shall not inherit the kingdom of God. This is a kind way to say that they will go to Gehenna (Matt. 25:41). "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:12-15).

E. Galatians 5:22-23: The Fruit of the Spirit.

1. Verses 22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

a. The fruit named are engendered in Christians by the Holy Spirit. It is not done by some miraculous action on the Spirit's part, but by means of the inspired word of God. The Christian learns, accepts, practices and develops these traits; the Holy Spirit provided the information and motivation in the Bible; hence, the fruit is attributable to him. [The Spirit of the context is the Holy Spirit].

b. In 2 Peter 1:1-12, the responsibility for obtaining these attributes and practices is placed on the individual: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth" (2 Pet. 1:3-12).

2. The fruit of love.

a. This is naturally placed first for it promotes the other virtues, and without it all the others would be without value (1 Cor. 13:1-3). Love emanates from God, and requires a response on our part (1 John 4:9-10,19; John 3:16; 1 John 5:2-3).

1) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

2) 1 John 4:9-10: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins."

3) 1 John 4:19: "We love him, because he first loved us."

4) 1 Corinthians 13:1-3: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*,

- and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."
- 5) 1 John 5:2-3: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
 - b. The love enjoined is *agape*. It is an active principle by which we live; it seeks the highest good for others.
 - c. The Law of Moses commanded love:
 - 1) Leviticus 19:18: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD."
 - 2) Matthew 22:37-39: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."
 - d. Jesus enlarged on the subject:
 - 1) John 13:34-35: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."
 - 2) John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."
 - 3) 1 John 3:18: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."
 - e. Paul analyzed love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, showing that love includes the following qualities: "Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."
 - 1) Suffers long.
 - 2) Is kind.
 - 3) Envieth not.
 - 4) Vaunteth not itself.
 - 5) Does not behave itself unseemly.
 - 6) Seeks not its own.
 - 7) Is not easily provoked.
 - 8) Thinketh no evil.
 - 9) Rejoices not in iniquity, but in truth.
 - 10) Bears all things.
 - 11) Believes all things.
 - 12) Hopeth all things.
 - 13) Endureth all things.
 - 14) Never fails.
3. The fruit of joy.
- a. Psalms 139:17: "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!"
 - b. Joy is a deep happiness over our special relationship with the Lord: "Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).
 - c. Joy is produced when one obeys the gospel.
 - 1) John 13:17: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."
 - 2) John 17:13: "And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves."
 - 3) Acts 2:41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
 - 4) Acts 8:8: "And there was great joy in that city."
 - 5) Acts 8:39: "And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away
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Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."

- d. Joy is not a mere emotion, but a quality of life.
 - 1) Psalms 16:11: "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."
 - 3) Philippians 4:11: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content."
 - 4) 1 Peter 1:8: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."
 - 5) 1 Peter 4:1: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;"
4. The fruit of peace.
 - a. Peace is the absence of discord and the presence of concord (harmony). It obtains when each saint acts in harmony with the others. Peace exists between the saint and God when the saint obeys the will of God.
 - 1) Philippians 4:7: "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Peace is pictured here as a band of figurative soldiers guarding us, removing any cause for our feeling fear or dismay.
 - 2) This peace is within us; it does not depend on outside circumstances, nor is it affected by these outward forces: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:11-13).
 - b. God desires that we be at peace with others:
 - 1) Romans 12:18: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."
 - 2) Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
 - c. God wants peace to exist among his people: Scriptural statements:
 - 1) Romans 14:17: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."
 - 2) Ephesians 4:3: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
 - 3) 1 Thessalonians 5:13: "And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves."
 - d. We are expected to be promoters of peace:
 - 1) Matthew 5:9: "Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."
 - 2) Romans 14:19: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."
 - 3) 1 Peter 3:10-11: "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: // Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it."
 - e. But not all peace is desirable:
 - 1) Matthew 10:34: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."
 - 2) Luke 1:76, 79: "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways....To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."
 - 3) James 3:17: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

- 4) Luke 6:26: "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets."
5. The fruit of longsuffering.
- a. Longsuffering enables us to endure hardship or injury without retaliating. Thayer defined this trait: "To be of a long spirit, not to lose heart, to persevere patiently and bravely and enduring misfortunes and troubles; to be patient in bearing the offenses and injuries of others; to be mild and slow in avenging; to be longsuffering, slow to anger, slow to punish" (p.387).
- b. God is longsuffering:
- 1) Exodus 34:6-7: "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*."
 - 2) Jeremiah 15:15: "O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke."
 - 3) Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
 - 4) 1 Peter 3:20: "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."
 - 5) 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
- c. We must be longsuffering:
- 1) Ephesians 4:2: "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love."
 - 2) Colossians 1:11: "Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness."
 - 3) Colossians 3:12: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering."
6. The fruit of kindness.
- a. Kindness is active (longsuffering is passive). It returns blessing for cursing, good for evil (Rom. 12:17-21). Kindness is goodness and gentleness of heart. It has no desire to injure. "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:17-21).
- b. This is God's attitude toward his offspring (Matt. 5:45-48; Luke 6:35; Titus 3:4-7). However, when the situation demands it, he can be severe (Rom. 11:22).
- 1) Matthew 5:45-48: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."
 - 2) Luke 6:35: "But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil."
 - 3) Romans 11:22: "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity;

- but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."
- 4) Titus 3:4-7: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."
- c. Kindness is required of every saint.
 - 1) Ephesians 4:32: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."
 - 2) Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
 - d. But kindness does not allow us to compromise the truth.
 - 1) Psalms 119:104: "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way."
 - 2) Galatians 1:4-5: "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen."
 - 3) Philippians 1:17: "But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel."
 - 4) Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."
 - e. Christ was perfectly kind but he had to speak and act with strength (cf. Matt. 23).
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 11:1: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ."
 - 2) Hebrews 1:9: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."
 - 3) 1 Peter 2:21: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:"
 - 4) Revelation 2:6: "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate."
7. The fruit of goodness.
- a. Related passages:
 - 1) Ephesians 5:7-9: "Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth)."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 1:11: "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power."
 - b. Without a divine standard, there could be no goodness.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
 - 2) Isaiah 64:6: "But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."
 - 3) Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
 - 4) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - c. The standard of goodness is God's word:
 - 1) Matthew 25:21: "His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."
 - 2) John 14:15: "If ye love me, keep my commandments."
 - 3) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect,
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- thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
- d. Goodness includes benevolence:
 - 1) Acts 9:36: "Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did."
 - 2) Acts 11:23: "Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."
 - 3) Romans 15:14: "And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another."
 - 4) Galatians 6:10: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."
 8. The fruit of faith (faithfulness).
 - a. Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" (ASV). Faith is essential in order to please God (Heb. 11:6). It is the basis of the Christian character (2 Pet. 1:5-11). The faith that avails is the faith that obeys (Jas. 2:14-26; Gal. 5:6).
 - b. Faithfulness characterizes the people of God throughout the Bible: Daniel; Stephen; Paul; Abraham; all the other men and women listed in Hebrews 11.
 - c. The only way to be faithful is to be obedient to all of God's will.
 - d. We have every reason to be faithful.
 - 1) Psalms 119:89: "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven."
 - 2) Matthew 7:21-27: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."
 - 3) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - 4) Mark 10:29-30: "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."
 - 5) John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
 - 6) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - 7) 1 Peter 1:25: "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 - 8) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
 9. The fruit of meekness.
 - a. Meekness is from a Greek term that is not easily expressed in English. The ancient word was used to

- describe a wild horse which had been tamed, but without having his spirit broken. It describes one who has been going his own way, but who has become submissive to God, and now happily goes the way God directs.
- b. The word is associated with lowliness, having a quiet spirit, and gentleness.
 - 1) Ephesians 4:2-3: "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
 - 2) Titus 3:2: "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *but* gentle, showing all meekness unto all men."
 - 3) 1 Peter 3:4: "But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."
 - c. Christ is the perfect example of meekness.
 - 1) Matthew 11:29: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."
 - 2) Matthew 26:39: "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*."
 - 3) Compare Matthew 23.
 - d. Paul was meek, yet strong.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 4:21: "What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and *in* the spirit of meekness?"
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 10:1: "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence *am* base among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you."
 - e. Meekness is required of those who would restore fallen saints. "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" (Gal. 6:1).
 - f. "The humble submissiveness to the teachings of Divine revelation, to which this term probably points, stands in contrast with that self-reliant, headstrong impetuosity which in the temperament of the Celt is apt to hurry him into the adoption of novel ideas which he has not taken the trouble seriously to weigh" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by BibleSoft].
10. The fruit of temperance (self-control).
- a. Gaining and maintaining self-mastery is emphasized in the Scriptures (1 Cor. 9:27). To be in control of self is an important victory (Prov. 6:32; Matt. 26:41).
 - 1) Proverbs 6:32: "*But* whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul."
 - 2) Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 9:27: "But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
 - b. Satan thought that Job could be bought (Job 2:3-4), but learned otherwise (Job 13:15).
 - 1) Job 2:3-4: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life."
 - 2) Job 13:15: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him."
 - c. Paul kept control of himself although he had good reason to fear and flee: "Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done" (Acts 21:13-14).
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- d. "And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). This great precept underlies our self-control.
 - e. We must keep our fleshly passions, thoughts, motives, actions, and words under control. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom. 6:12-13).
11. Against such fruit, there is no law. The fruit of the Spirit violates no law. "Neither God nor man makes laws against such qualities and virtues as these, because they work good to all, and ill to none. Even wicked men make laws only against such things as work evil to them or their interests. These virtues do neither. So the qualities of the Christian are such as to lead men to be at peace, and not to oppress. Through this harmless character is brought about much of the protection from the wicked that God promises to those who love him" (Lipscomb, p.272).
- F. Galatians 5:24-26: Faithfulness and Dedication in the Christian Life.
1. Verse 24: "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."
 - a. Faithful Christians are described by this statement. A faithful Christian is one who has mastered his fleshly desires, making them subservient to his spirit, which is devoted to following Christ regardless of the circumstances of life.
 - b. The crucifixion mentioned is figurative. We maintain such control over the appetites of the flesh that it is as if they have been slain. What Paul stated as a figure of speech in Galatians 2:20, he stated in literal language in 1 Corinthians 9:27.
 - 1) Galatians 2:20: "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."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 9:27: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
 2. Verse 25: "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."
 - a. The ASV gives this rendition of the verse: "If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk."
 - b. If one claims to live by the Holy Spirit, let him prove it by walking as the Spirit directs. We walk in the Holy Spirit if we live by what he has revealed in the inspired word; this is the only way we can walk in him.
 - c. In the Spirit-given word of God, all things that pertain to life and godliness are revealed (2 Pet. 1:3). Everything we need to bring us to spiritual maturity is given in that inspired word (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - 1) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."
 3. Verse 26: "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." "Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another" (ASV).
 - a. If we live our lives in harmony with the inspired revelation of the Holy Spirit, we will not be interested in vain glory, we will not provoke one another, and we will not envy one another.
 - b. Those three statements had reference to some of the failings of the Judaizing teachers: they sought to gain control over the Galatians and thus exalt themselves; they attacked anyone who opposed their doctrine; and they envied anyone who occupied a position of greater influence than they.
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STRONG DRINK

[Note: The Statistics in this outline date back a good many years. See Current Stats at End of This Outline]

A. INTRODUCTION.

1. What is the proper outlook on the drinking of wine?
 - a. Drunkenness is one of the most serious national problems in the United States. [The following statistics have worsened in recent years].
 - 1) It has been called the number 1 social problem ("Gospel Advocate," 3/29/73).
 - 2) It is called the third most serious health problem (ibid., 9/12/68).
 - 3) There are upwards of 30 million alcoholics and problem drinkers in our nation.
 - 4) In 1974 there were 450,000 child alcoholics (Memphis "Commercial Appeal," 10/20/74).
 - 5) The state of Mississippi sold 1,640,151 cases of liquor in 1974 (ibid., 2/2/75).
 - b. The lines dividing right from wrong are being erased in our society.
 - 1) It is more difficult now to show people the difference between sin and righteousness, and between truth and error.
 - 2) More and more are advocating "moderate" drinking—even members of the Lord's church.
2. We must be seriously concerned about the purity of the church.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."
 - b. Matthew 5:8: "Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God."
 - c. Ephesians 5:25-27: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
 - d. Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
 - e. Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

B. DISCUSSION.

1. Young people are especially vulnerable to the enticements of the world.
 - a. We must teach the young (and older) the truth on "doctrinal" issues and moral issues. Drunkenness is plainly forbidden in the Bible.
 - b. The Old Testament gave prohibitions against drunkenness.
 - 1) Leviticus 10:9: "Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations."
 - 2) Proverbs 20:1: "Wine *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."
 - 3) Proverbs 23:29-31: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright."
 - 4) Isaiah 28:7: "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble *in* judgment."
 - 5) Isaiah 28:11,13: "For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people....But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken."

- c. The New Testament gives prohibitions against drunkenness.
- 1) Luke 21:34: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day come upon you unawares."
 - 2) Romans 13:13: "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 5:9-11: "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 6:10: "Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."
 - 5) Galatians 5:21: "Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, 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."
 - 6) Ephesians 5:18: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Where the KJV has "excess," the ASV uses the word "riot." The same Greek word is used in Luke 15:13: "And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living." Drunkenness leads to riotous, shameful, reckless living.
- d. To be drunken is to commit sin, for sin is the transgressing of God's law: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4).
- 1) To become guilty of sin and die in that condition means that the individual is separated from God in eternity (Jas. 1:15; Rom. 6:23).
 - 2) This condition affects one's body, his mind, and his relations with others.
 - 3) It has its most awful effects on the soul!
2. When is one drunk?
- a. At which point:
 - 1) When his speech is slurred and his movements unsteady?
 - 2) When he sees double?
 - 3) When he passes out?
 - b. What point is meant in these verses:
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 6:9-10: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God" (NKJV). *Methusos* is used in 1 Corinthians 6:10; it means "one softened with drink" (Young). The word *soften* means "to weaken the resistance or opposition."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:18: "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit" (NKJV). *Methuskos* is used in Ephesians 5:18 (a different form of the same word); it means "to begin to be softened" (Young).
 - c. The difference between social drinking and drunkenness is a difference in degree, not in kind.
 - 1) One is drunk when he *begins* to be softened (according to definition).
 - 2) 0.005% (1 drop:20,000 drops of blood) causes the will power, the judgment, and self-control to be weakened ("Gospel Advocate," 3/29/73). One-half can of beer or one-half cocktail provides this level of contamination.
 - 3) One drink makes a man one drink drunk; if 10 drinks makes him falling-down drunk, 1 drink makes him one tenth drunk; a difference in degree, not in kind.
3. Objections.
- a. "Wine is mentioned in the Bible, sometimes without opposition. So wine must be all right with God."
 - 1) But *wine* does not always mean intoxicating wine.
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- 2) Sometimes intoxicating wine is meant:
 - a) Genesis 49:12: "His eyes *shall be* red with wine, and his teeth white with milk."
 - b) Luke 1:15: "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb."
 - 3) Non-alcoholic wine is indicated in other passages.
 - a) Isaiah 16:10: "And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treaders shall tread out no wine in *their* presses; I have made *their vintage* shouting to cease." The word "wine" is used in reference to the grape juice as it is pressed from the grapes.
 - b) Isaiah 65:8: "Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster...." The liquid contents of a cluster of grapes is called "wine."
 - c) Matthew 9:17: "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." Freshly-pressed grape juice is called "wine" when it is first put in containers.
 - d) In each case where the Bible speaks of "wine press" it is using "wine" as a reference to grape juice—called wine but without any intoxicating character.
 - 4) *Yayin* (Hebrew—Old Testament) and *oinos* (Greek—New Testament) are the original words; one must consult the context to learn if it is intoxicating or non-intoxicating. In English, *wine* only has reference to an intoxicating drink.
- b. "Jesus turned water into alcoholic wine (John 2:1-11). Therefore, it must be all right for us to drink wine, even though it has an intoxicating power."
- 1) If so, then how do you reconcile that action with those passages which clearly warn against (and forbid) the imbibing of intoxicants?
 - a) Proverbs 20:1: "Wine *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."
 - b) Proverbs 23:29-35: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, *shalt thou say, and* I was not sick; they have beaten me, *and* I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again."
 - c) Habakkuk 2:15: "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to *him*, and makest *him* drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!"
 - d) 1 Corinthians 6:10: "Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."
 - 2) If our Lord encouraged drinking alcoholic wine, he encouraged drunkenness. Six waterpots of wine were produced; each container held 2-3 firkins each, which equals to 100-150 gallons (8½ gallon per firkin). These waterpots were handmade, thus would not all be exactly the same size. This amounts to several hundred gallons of wine. Although we do not know the number of guests attending the feast, the guest list is not likely to number many hundreds. By supplying such a large amount of wine, Christ encouraged those present to drink their fill. If the drink was alcoholic, some would become drunken (even to the passing-out state).
 - 3) Ancient writers said the best wines were unintoxicating; that the ordinary Roman drink was grape juice mixed with spices ("Gospel Advocate," 5/9/74). To preserve grape juice, they boiled it down into a substance like molasses; it was consumed by spreading it on bread; or mixed with water and spices or herbs, and drunk either hot or cold (ibid.).
 - 4) The guests could recognize the high quality of the wine Jesus produced even after having "drunk freely" (John 2:10). One who is intoxicated is not apt to recognize a higher quality of taste, while
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- in a drunken state. It is clear, therefore, that these guests were not intoxicated; hence, what they were imbibing must not have been wine with an alcoholic content.
- 5) There is no proof that Jesus made intoxicating wine; we have good reason to say that he did not.
- c. "Paul told Timothy to partake of wine for its medicinal properties: 'Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities' (1 Tim. 5:23). If it was right for Timothy to drink wine, it is all right for us to drink wine."
- 1) This use of wine is specifically stated to be for medical purposes, not for social or recreational reasons.
 - 2) Timothy was told to **use a little** wine for his stomach's sake, and for other ailments. Clearly Paul's prescription was intended to be for medical purposes, and that Timothy was to use it sparingly. The apostle is not advocating a drunken party or any heavy or continual use of wine.
 - 3) Notice also that it was necessary for Paul to instruct Timothy to use wine; this was an inspired directive. The implication is that Timothy had not been using wine, even for the medicinal purposes for which the apostle here prescribes it. Obviously, therefore, Timothy had been avoiding the use of wine.
 - 4) The context does not indicate whether the wine mentioned was intoxicating or non-intoxicating. We have no information that demands that we understand it as intoxicating wine. Their argument "begs the question." Assuming it had an alcoholic content, it was prescribed by the apostle for its medicinal qualities, not for its intoxicating power.
- d. "Jesus drank wine: 'For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children' (Matt. 11:18-19)."
- 1) Was this intoxicating or non-intoxicating wine? It must be reconciled with the strong prohibitions of Proverbs 20:1 and 23:29-35, which strongly forbid the use of these strong drinks. How could the Bible say our Lord was without sin if he violated these parts of God's word?
 - a) Hebrews 10:7: "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."
 - b) 1 Peter 2:22: "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."
 - c) Hebrews 4:15: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin."
 - d) John 8:46: "Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?"
 - 2) The source of the statement was his enemies—they say. The same people said that John had a devil! Christ's enemies also said he had a devil and was mad (John 10:20). Were these people right? If they were right in one case, we may presume they were right in the other case! If they were wrong in one case (and they were), they we must presume they were wrong in the others also.
 - a) If they were right in saying Jesus was a winebibber, they were also right in saying he was a glutton. But they were wrong in both charges! The Bible strongly affirms that our Lord did no sin of any kind (1 Pet. 2:22; Heb. 4:15).
 - b) John ate locust and wild honey (a strange diet); Jesus ate regular food. This is the contrast the Lord made in the passage.
- e. "In 1 Timothy 3:8, much wine is forbidden of deacons; this implies they can be given to a little wine. If they could imbibe some wine, so can we."
- 1) 1 Timothy 3:8: "Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre."
 - 2) But how much is *much* and how much is *little*? What is the safe course? Total abstinence.
 - 3) To "be given to" is from the Greek *prosecho* which means: "to give one's self up to, be addicted to, engage in, be occupied with" (*Analytical Greek Lexicon*, p.349). Is a Christian right if he is addicted to a little wine? What is forbidden is being addicted to any wine.

- 4) "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9-10).
4. Excerpt from my commentary on Proverbs:
- a. Proverbs 20:1: "Wine *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."
- 1) "The history of the world from the days of Noah (Gen. 9:21) proves, that the love of *wine and strong drink* is a most insidious vice. The wretched victims are convinced too late, that they have been *mocked* and grievously *deceived*. Not only does it overcome them before they are aware, but it promises pleasures which it can never give. And yet so mighty is the spell, that the besotted slave consents to be *mocked* again and again, till 'at last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.' (Chap. 23:29-32.)" [Bridges, Charles A., *A Commentary on Proverbs*, The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, Carlisle, PA, 1968, pp.334f]. "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, *it is* not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted" (Prov. 31:4-5).
- 2) If one wonders whether a Christian can partake of alcoholic beverages in a social setting, let him consider 1 Corinthians 8. Paul shows that even an action that of itself is all right (the eating of meat which had been used earlier in an idol's temple) is wrong if it influences a brother to stumble (8:9-13). When our example influences another Christian to do something that violates his conscience, we sin by causing him to sin!
- a) Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
- b) Romans 14:19: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."
- c) Romans 14:21: "*It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."
- d) Philippians 2:14-16: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
- e) 1 Thessalonians 5:22: "Abstain from all appearance of evil."
- f) If one thinks he can drink in the privacy of his own home and thus avoid evil influence, let him ask how he can buy the product and dispose of the containers without others learning of it. And what about the influence on his wife and children?
- 3) Drunkenness is forbidden as sinful. But the word translated *drunken* is from *methusko* [from *methuo*] which "signifies to make drunk, or to grow drunk (an inceptive verb, marking the process of the state expressed [in *methuo*]" (Vine, vol. 1, p.341). The word "inceptive" means: "beginning; introductory; initial." Drunkenness is sinful from its beginning, introductory, initial stage: i.e., with the first swallow!
- 4) The Greek word "oinos" is the general term for all wine, including grape juice. It is used in the term "winepress" (Rev. 19:15). Grape juice is pressed from the grapes; it is called *oinos*. From the word itself one cannot determine what kind of *wine* is meant—intoxicating or non-intoxicating. It is noteworthy that the Bible never speaks of the contents of the cup in the Lord's Supper as "wine." It is identified as "the fruit of the vine." Though it might be scriptural to serve real wine in the Supper, it is unwise (to say the least) to do so. Reformed alcoholics have been overcome

- again by alcohol by being reintroduced to it by partaking of the Lord's Supper in which alcoholic wine was served.
- 5) One who thinks he can control his appetite for alcoholic beverages while partaking of it "moderately" is playing the fool!
 - a) 1 Corinthians 9:27: "But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 10:12: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
 - c) 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil."
 - 6) Solomon says that one is "unwise" (i.e., is foolish) who allows himself to be deceived by wine or strong drink. One cannot play with fire without being burned! (Prov. 6:27-28). The first effect of alcohol is against the higher faculties of the mind: breaking down inhibitions, muddling the judgment, and weakening the will.
- b. Proverbs 23:29-35: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, *and* I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again."
- 1) The wise man graphically depicts the awful danger of strong drink. He lists six questions in verse 29. He describes one who has woe, sorrow, contentions, babbling, wounds without cause, and redness of eyes. He identifies this individual as the one who tarries long at wine; that go to seek mixed wine. This is the longest single passage on the subject of alcohol in the Bible; its information should not be ignored or depreciated. The "mixed wine" of verse 30 is said to be the strongest kind (Bridges, p.442).
 - 2) Those who come under the influence of alcohol are prone to exaggerate their troubles, become contentious, speak without making sense, get into brawls which cause injuries for no purpose, and develop redness of eyes. When a man begins a bout of drinking, he may be calm and composed for a while, without any apparent effect to the casual observer. But before long, the power of the drug is unleashed in the man, and its presence cannot be denied. Some men turn into crying babies; others become obnoxious or belligerent; some who are usually quiet will become extremely talkative. The end result is the unconscious state and the hangover.
 - 3) Scientific studies have shown that the higher faculties of the mind are first affected by alcohol. The individual's ability to make accurate judgments becomes diminished. A drunken person will speak foolish things; he will attempt feats he would not consider when sober. His will power is overridden, breaking down his inhibitions. Hence, one under the influence of alcohol will do things he would not do if sober: curse, commit fornication, gamble, take drugs, rob, murder, etc. One who has imbibed sufficient alcohol for these faculties to be adversely affected will deny that they have been affected. He simply is not able to understand his true condition. How can any person think that he can "hold his liquor" or that he "knows his limit?"
 - 4) Verse 31 commands that we keep ourselves away from the temptation of wine. There is something pleasant and appealing to the advertisements of the liquor industry. The glass filled with sparkling wine has a certain appeal. The passage describes the wine as moving "itself aright" in the cup, which pictures its *life, texture, and body*. The saliva glands can even be activated by a quick look, for the mind vividly recalls the pleasing taste! If there were nothing wrong with drinking alcoholic beverages, why was this warning issued? To those who think the Savior produced alcoholic wine (John 2), could the Lord have remained sinless while directly opposing the sentiment of this verse? If he produced alcoholic wine for the wedding feast, he most assuredly would have been

- encouraging the very thing Solomon is forbidding! If he drank alcoholic beverages, he would have been violating the very precept Solomon gives here!
- 5) Verse 32 graphically describes its end result: It bites like a serpent and stings like an adder! The results of any drinking bout that leads to drunkenness include redness of eyes, plus the effects of a hangover. The results of a life of such bouts is the intense craving for the effects of alcohol, in many cases the effects of "Dts" result, and often times an early death. Some of the by-products of drunkenness are: lives which are destroyed in accidents caused by drunk driving; economic hardships on the family of the drinker; lost jobs and wages; abuse of family members; destroyed health and happiness. But the worst consequence is the lost soul of the drunkard. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:9-11).
 - 6) Verse 33 shows some of these side effects of drinking. One who is under the influence of this drug will often take interest in other women (or men); they are also prone to speak perverse things. The natural product of sin is more sin. Before one starts drinking, he needs to be aware of the fact that he may be led to do things he would not even consider doing when he is in his right mind. Stopping for a "little drink with the boys" can easily lead to a destroyed marriage and home!
 - 7) Verse 34 points out the foolishness that characterizes many who become drunken. They are as apt to try to sleep in the sea or lie down on the mast of a ship. How many men have lost their lives by going to sleep on a railroad track or on a busy highway, not realizing their great danger? We would know a man was playing the fool if he thought he could lie down in water for a little nap, or that he could sleep on the horizontal part of a ship's sail structure. How many people have committed robbery, or rape, or murder while under the influence of alcohol, never comprehending the criminal nature of their actions?
 - 8) Verse 35 discusses some of the things that others can do to a man who has passed out from drunkenness. He can be beaten, and never be aware of it at the time. Drunks are the prime targets of petty crooks; they can be "rolled" with hardly any danger of arrest. The foolhardiness of a man given to alcohol is seen by the wise man's final thought: "When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." Drunks find it hard to learn the simplest lessons!

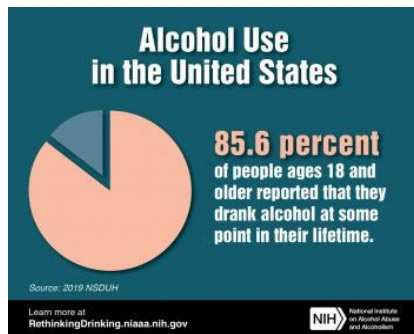
C. CONCLUSION.

1. The arguments made in defense of drinking alcoholic beverages can all be answered.
 - a. We have done so with the primary arguments that we usually hear.
 - b. Any other argument can be handled with equal clarity and force.
 - c. As with all confrontations, we need to exercise as much kindness as possible.
2. The teachings of the Bible are clear on this and every other significant subject.
 - a. We can know the truth on any subject that affects the soul.
 - b. Psalms 119:160: "The sum of thy word is truth; And every one of thy righteous ordinances *endureth* for ever" (ASV).
 - c. John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - d. John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - e. 2 Timothy 2:15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
3. God's grace is expressed in the gospel and offers salvation to all.
 - a. Regardless of the degree of our depravity, if we are willing to meet the conditions God sets, pardon is available to anyone, even those who have been alcoholics (1 Cor. 6:9-11).
 - 1) Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."

- 2) John 8:24: "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins."
 - 3) Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
 - 4) Acts 8:37: "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
 - 5) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
- b. Saul of Tarsus was able to overcome his sinful past: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but 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. This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. 3:13-15).
-

Alcohol Facts and Statistics

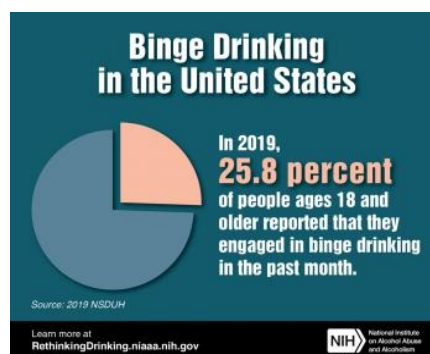
[This Information is Taken From the Internet]



A pie chart showing that 85.6 percent of people ages 18 and older reported having consumed alcohol at some point in their lifetime.

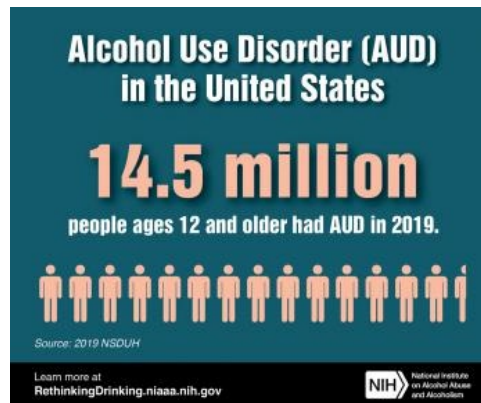
Prevalence of Drinking: According to the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 85.6 percent of people ages 18 and older reported that they drank alcohol at some point in their lifetime,¹ 69.5 percent reported that they drank in the past year,² and 54.9 percent (59.1 percent of men in this age group and 51.0 percent of women in this age group³) reported that they drank in the past month.⁴

Prevalence of Binge Drinking and Heavy Alcohol Use: In 2019, 25.8 percent of people ages 18 and older (29.7 percent of men in this age group and 22.2 percent of women in this age group⁴) reported that they engaged in binge drinking in the past month,⁴ and 6.3 percent (8.3 percent of men in this age group and 4.5 percent of women in this age group⁶) reported that they engaged in heavy alcohol use in the past month.⁷ (See glossary for definitions of binge drinking and heavy alcohol use.)



A pie chart showing that in 2019, 25.8 percent of people ages 18 and older reported that they had engaged in binge drinking in the past month. Emerging Trend—High-Intensity Drinking: High-intensity drinking is defined as consuming alcohol at levels that are two or more times the gender-specific binge drinking thresholds (See glossary for additional details about the definition of high-intensity drinking). Compared with people who did not binge drink, people who drank alcohol at twice the gender-specific binge drinking thresholds were 70 times more likely to have an alcohol-related emergency department (ED) visit, and those who consumed alcohol at 3 times the gender-specific binge thresholds were 93 times more likely to have an alcohol-related ED visit.⁶





Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) in the United States

An illustration indicating that 14.5 million people ages 12 and older had alcohol use disorder in 2019. People Ages 12 and Older: According to the 2019 NSDUH, 14.5 million (nearly 15 million) people ages 12 and older⁸ (5.3 percent of this age group⁸) had AUD. This number includes 9.0 million men⁷ (6.8 percent of men in this age group⁹) and 5.5 million women⁷ (3.9 percent of women in this age group¹⁰).

Youth Ages 12 to 17: According to the 2019 NSDUH, an estimated 414,000 adolescents ages 12 to 17 (1.7 percent of this age group¹¹) had AUD. This number includes 163,000 males¹² (1.3 percent of males in this age group¹³) and 251,000 females¹⁴ (2.1 percent of females in this age group¹⁵).

Treatment of AUD in the United States

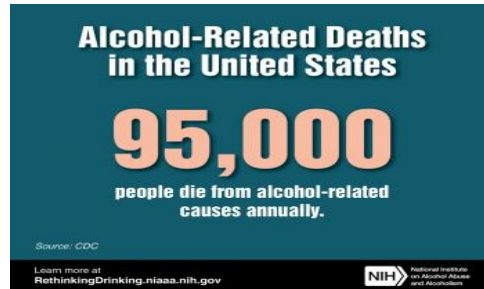
An illustration indicating that 414,000 adolescents ages 12 to 17 had alcohol use disorder in 2019. According to the 2019 NSDUH, about 7.2 percent of people ages 12 and older who had AUD in the past year received any treatment in the past year. This includes about 6.9 percent of males and 7.8 percent of females with past-year AUD in this age group.¹⁶ According to the 2019 NSDUH, about 6.4 percent of adolescents ages 12 to 17 who had AUD in the past year received any treatment in the past year. This includes about 6.4 percent of males and 6.4 percent of females with past-year AUD in this age group.¹⁷

According to the 2019 NSDUH, about 7.3 percent of adults ages 18 and older who had AUD in the past year received any treatment in the past year. This includes about 6.9 percent of males and 7.9 percent of females with past-year AUD in this age group.¹⁸

Less than 4 percent of people with AUD were prescribed a medication approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat their disorder.¹⁹

People with AUD were more likely to seek care from a primary care physician for an alcohol-related medical problem, rather than specifically for drinking too much alcohol.^{20, 21}

Alcohol-Related Emergencies and Deaths in the United States



A graphic indicating that 95,000 people die annually from alcohol-related causes. The rate of all alcohol-related ED visits increased 47 percent between 2006 and 2014, which translates to an average annual increase of 210,000 alcohol-related ED visits.²²

Alcohol contributes to about 18.5 percent of ED visits and 22.1 percent of overdose deaths related to prescription opioids.²³

An estimated 95,000 people (approximately 68,000 men and 27,000 women) die from alcohol-related causes annually,²⁴ making alcohol the third-leading preventable cause of death in the United States. The first is tobacco, and the second is poor diet and physical inactivity.²⁴

Between 2011 and 2015, the leading causes of alcohol-attributable deaths due to chronic conditions in the United States were alcohol-associated liver disease, heart disease and stroke, unspecified liver cirrhosis, upper aerodigestive tract cancers, liver cancer, supraventricular cardiac dysrhythmia, AUD, breast cancer, and hypertension.²⁵

In 2019, alcohol-impaired driving fatalities accounted for 10,142 deaths (28.0 percent of overall driving fatalities).²⁶

Economic Burden in the United States

An illustration representing the \$249 billion that alcohol misuse cost the United States in 2010. In 2010, alcohol misuse cost the United States \$249.0 billion.²⁷

Three-quarters of the total cost of alcohol misuse is related to binge drinking.²⁸

Global Burden

In 2016, 3 million deaths, or 5.3 percent of all global deaths (7.7 percent for men and 2.6 percent for women), were attributable to alcohol consumption.²⁹

Globally, alcohol misuse was the seventh-leading risk factor for premature death and disability in 2016.³⁰

According to a 2014 World Health Organization (WHO) report, among people ages 15 to 49, alcohol misuse was the first-leading risk factor for premature death and disability.³¹

In 2016, approximately 14 percent of total deaths among people ages 20 to 39 are alcohol attributable.³²

In 2016, 5.3 percent of the burden of disease and injury worldwide (134 million disability-adjusted life-years [DALYs]) was attributable to alcohol consumption.³³

In 2018, WHO reported that alcohol contributed to more than 200 diseases and injury-related health conditions, ranging from liver diseases, road injuries, and violence, to cancers, cardiovascular diseases, suicides, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS.³⁴

In 2016, of all deaths attributable to alcohol consumption worldwide, 28.7 percent were due to injuries, 21.3 percent were due to digestive diseases (primarily cirrhosis of the liver and pancreatitis), 35 percent were due to cardiovascular diseases, 12.9 percent were due to infectious diseases (including tuberculosis, pneumonia, and HIV/AIDS), and 12.6 percent were due to cancers (most prominently those of the upper aerodigestive tract.)³⁵

Consequences for Families in the United States

Approximately 10.5 percent (7.5 million) of U.S. children ages 17 and younger live with a parent with AUD, according to a 2017 report.³⁶

Underage Drinking in the United States Prevalence of Underage Alcohol Use

Prevalence of Drinking: According to the 2019 NSDUH, 39.7 percent of 12- to 20-year-olds reported that they have had at least 1 drink in their lives.³⁷ About 7.0 million people ages 12 to 2024 (18.5 percent of this age group³⁸) reported drinking alcohol in the past month (17.2 percent of males and 19.9 percent of females³⁹).

Prevalence of Binge Drinking: According to the 2019 NSDUH, approximately 4.2 million people ages 12 to 2024 reported binge drinking in the past month. This represents 11.1 percent of people in this age group (10.4 percent of males ages 12 to 20 and 11.8 percent of females ages 12 to 2025).

Prevalence of Heavy Alcohol Use: According to the 2019 NSDUH, approximately 825,000 people ages 12 to 2024 reported heavy alcohol use in the past month. This represents 2.2 percent of this age group⁴⁰ (2.1 percent of males ages 12 to 20 and 2.3 percent of females ages 12 to 2025).

Trend in Underage Alcohol Use

NSDUH findings have demonstrated a decline in underage drinking. From 2002 to 2019, the prevalence of past-30-day alcohol use decreased 41.1 percent for 16- to 17-year-olds, 54.7 percent for 14- to 15-year-olds, and 61.9 percent for 12- to 13-year-olds.⁴¹

Consequences of Underage Alcohol Use

Research indicates that alcohol use during the teenage years can interfere with normal adolescent brain development and increase the risk of developing AUD. In addition, underage drinking contributes to a range of acute consequences, such as injuries, sexual assaults, alcohol overdoses, and deaths—including those from motor vehicle crashes.⁴²

Alcohol is a factor in the deaths of thousands of people younger than age 21 in the United States each year. This includes:

1,092 from motor vehicle crashes⁴³

1,000 from homicides⁴⁴

208 from alcohol overdose, falls, burns, and drowning⁴⁵

596 from suicides⁴⁶

Alcohol and Young Adults Ages 18 to 22 Prevalence of Alcohol Use

Prevalence of Drinking: According to the 2019 NSDUH, 47.1 percent of adults ages 18 to 22 drank alcohol in the past month. Within this age group, 52.5 percent of full-time college students ages 18 to 22 and 44.0 percent of other persons of the same age drank alcohol in the past month.⁴⁷

Prevalence of Binge Drinking: According to the 2019 NSDUH, 29.6 percent of adults ages 18 to 22 reported binge drinking in the past month. Within this age group, 33.0 percent of full-time college students ages 18 to 22 and 27.7 percent of other persons of the same age reported binge drinking in the past month.⁴⁸

Prevalence of Heavy Alcohol Use: According to the 2019 NSDUH, 7.0 percent of adults ages 18 to 22 and 8.2 percent of full-time college students ages 18 to 22 and 6.4 percent of other persons of the same age reported heavy alcohol use in the past month.⁴⁹

Consequences of Alcohol Use

Alcohol is a factor in the deaths of thousands of people ages 18 to 22 every year in the United States. The most recent NIAAA statistics estimate that this includes 1,519 college students ages 18 to 24 who die from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including motor vehicle crashes.⁵⁰

According to the 2019 NSDUH, 8.1 percent of adults ages 18 to 22 met the criteria for past-year AUD. Within this age group, 8.7 percent of full-time college students ages 18 to 22 and 7.7 percent of other persons the same age met the criteria for AUD.⁵¹

Alcohol and Pregnancy in the United States

According to the 2019 NSDUH, 9.5 percent of pregnant women ages 15 to 44 in the United States used alcohol in the past month.⁵²

The prevalence of fetal alcohol syndrome in the United States was estimated by the Institute of Medicine in 1996 to be between 0.5 and 3.0 cases per 1,000.⁵³

An NIAAA-supported study of more than 6,000 first graders across four U.S. communities estimated that as many as 1–5 percent of first-grade children have fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD).⁵⁴

Alcohol and the Human Body

In 2019, of the 85,688 liver disease deaths among individuals ages 12 and older, 43.1 percent involved alcohol. Among males, 53,486 liver disease deaths occurred, and 45.6 percent involved alcohol. Among females, 32,202 liver disease deaths occurred, and 39.0 percent involved alcohol.⁵⁵

Among all cirrhosis deaths in 2015, 49.5 percent were alcohol related. The proportion of alcohol-related

cirrhosis deaths was highest (76.8 percent) among persons ages 25 to 34, followed by persons ages 35 to 44, at 72.7 percent.⁵⁶

liver disease was the primary cause of almost 1 in 3 liver transplants in the United States, replacing hepatitis C virus infection as the leading cause of liver transplantation due to chronic liver disease.^{57,58}

Research has shown that people who misuse alcohol have a greater risk of liver disease,⁵⁹ heart disease, depression, stroke, and stomach bleeding, as well as cancers of the oral cavity, esophagus, larynx, pharynx,^{60,61} liver, colon, and rectum.⁶² These individuals may also have problems managing conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, pain, and sleep disorders. They may increase their likelihood of unsafe sexual behavior.

Alcohol consumption is associated with increased risk of drowning⁶³ and injuries from violence,^{63,64} falls,⁶⁵ and motor vehicle crashes.^{66,67} Alcohol consumption is also associated with an increased risk of female breast cancer,^{68,69} oropharyngeal cancer,^{70,71} esophageal cancer (especially in individuals who inherit a deficiency in an enzyme involved in alcohol metabolism),^{72,73,74} and harmful medication interactions.^{75,76,77} Alcohol consumption has been linked to risk for FASD in the offspring of women who consume alcohol during pregnancy⁷⁸

Glossary

Alcohol-impaired driving fatality: A fatality in a crash involving a driver or motorcycle rider (operator) with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 g/dL or more (*A BAC of 0.08 percent corresponds to 0.08 grams per deciliter, or 0.08 grams per 100 milliliters).

Alcohol misuse: Drinking in a manner, situation, amount, or frequency that could cause harm to users or to those around them. For individuals younger than the legal drinking age of 21, or for pregnant females, any alcohol use constitutes alcohol misuse.

Alcohol use disorder: A chronic brain disorder marked by compulsive drinking, loss of control over alcohol use, and negative emotions when not drinking. AUD can be mild, moderate, or severe. Recovery is possible regardless of severity. The DSM-IV, published by the American Psychiatric Association, described two distinct disorders—alcohol abuse and alcohol dependence—with specific criteria for each. The fifth edition, DSM-5, integrates the two DSM-IV disorders into a single disorder called AUD, with mild, moderate, and severe subclassifications.

Any treatment: Treatment received at any location, such as a hospital (inpatient), rehabilitation facility (inpatient or outpatient), mental health center, ED, private doctor's office, self-help group, or prison/jail.

Binge drinking:

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) defines binge drinking as a pattern of drinking that brings BAC levels to 0.08 g/dL or higher. This typically occurs after a woman consumes 4 or more drinks or a man consumes 5 or more drinks—in about 2 hours.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which conducts the annual NSDUH, defines binge drinking as consuming 5 or more alcoholic drinks for males or 4 or more alcoholic drinks for females on the same occasion (i.e., at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other) on at least 1 day in the past month.

The Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey defines binge drinking as having 5 or more drinks in a row in the past

2 weeks.

Disability-adjusted life-years: A measure of years of life lost or lived in less than full health.

Heavy alcohol use (or heavy drinking):

NIAAA defines heavy drinking as follows:

For men, consuming more than 4 drinks on any day or more than 14 drinks per week

For women, consuming more than 3 drinks on any day or more than 7 drinks per week

SAMHSA defines heavy alcohol use as binge drinking on 5 or more days in the past month.

High-intensity drinking:

Consumption of 2 or more times the gender-specific thresholds for binge drinking, which is to say 10 or more standard drinks (or alcoholic drink-equivalents) for males and 8 or more for females. High-intensity drinking is consistent with drinking at binge levels II and III. The levels correspond to one to two times (I), two to three times (II), and three or more times (III) the standard gender-specific binge thresholds.

The MTF survey defines high-intensity drinking as consuming 10 or more or 15 or more drinks in a row in the past two weeks.

Patterns of drinking associated with AUD: Binge drinking and heavy alcohol use can increase an individual's risk of AUD. According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020–2025, adults of legal drinking age can choose not to drink or to drink in moderation by limiting intake to 2 drinks or less in a day for men and 1 drink or less in a day for women, when alcohol is consumed. Drinking less is better for health than drinking more. Some individuals should avoid alcohol completely.

Underage drinking: Alcohol use by anyone under the age of 21. In the United States, the legal drinking age is 21.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov>

Footnotes:

1 SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Table 2.17B – Alcohol Use in Lifetime among Persons Aged 12 or Older, by Age Group and Demographic Characteristics: Percentages, 2018 and 2019. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29394/NSDUHD....> Accessed December 8, 2020.

2 SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Table 2.18B – Alcohol Use in Past Year among Persons Aged 12 or Older, by Age Group and Demographic Characteristics: Percentages, 2018 and 2019. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29394/NSDUHD....> Accessed December 8, 2020.

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4 SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Table 2.20B – Binge Alcohol Use in Past Month among Persons Aged 12 or Older, by Age Group and Demographic Characteristics: Percentages, 2018 and 2019. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29394/NSDUHD....> Accessed December 8, 2020.

5 SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Table 2.21B – Heavy Alcohol Use in Past Month among Persons Aged 12 or Older, by Age Group and Demographic Characteristics: Percentages, 2018 and 2019. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29394/NSDUHD....> Accessed December 8, 2020.

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- 8 SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Table 5.4B – Alcohol Use Disorder in Past Year among Persons Aged 12 or Older, by Age Group and Demographic Characteristics: Percentages, 2018 and 2019. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29394/NSDUHD....> Accessed December 8, 2020.
- 9 Population prevalence estimates (%) are weighted by the person-level analysis weight and derived from the data set, defining “any treatment” as treatment or counseling designed to help reduce or stop alcohol use, including detoxification and any other treatment for medical problems associated with alcohol use, as well as defining AUD as alcohol abuse or alcohol dependence according to the 4th edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV). SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH-2019-DS0001). Public data set. <https://www.datafiles.samhsa.gov/study-dataset/national-survey-drug-use....> Accessed December 8, 2020.
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- 24 SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Table 2.32A – Alcohol Use in Lifetime, Past Year, and Past Month and Binge and Heavy Alcohol Use in Past Month among Persons Aged 12 to 20, by Demographic Characteristics: Numbers in Thousands, 2018 and 2019. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29394/NSDUHD....> Accessed December 8, 2020.
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GALATIANS 6

A. Galatians 6:1-5: Restoring the Erring.

1. Verse 1: "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." "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (ASV).
 - a. The members are addressed as *brethren*, which denotes their relationship to each other in Christ. The previous verse prohibited them from seeking vain glory, provoking one another, and envying each other. They are to treat each other as brothers and sisters.
 - b. If a man is overtaken in a fault, the fallen member is to be restored to faithfulness by his brethren. The *man* who has fallen is not characterized as a *brother*, but that is clearly implied. The context is regulating the relationship that is to exist between brethren.
 - c. The brother in question has been *overtaken* [in a fault]. "Overtaken" is from *pro lambano* [*pro*—before; *lambano*—to take]. The individual has been snared through inattention, weakness, or by being deceived by error.
 - 1) "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12).
 - 2) "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3).
 - d. The word *fault* is from the Greek term *paraptoma*, which means *trespass*. The fault is an act of sin.
 - 1) "Confess *your faults* one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16, KJV).
 - 2) "Confess therefore your **sins** one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working" (Jas. 5:16, ASV). [Some ancient manuscripts have *hamartias* (sin) in James 5:16].
 - e. Those who are spiritual are to restore the fallen brother. If We take "spiritual" to refer to those who possessed one or more of the spiritual [miraculous] gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, the Holy Spirit directs this spiritual man to restore the erring saint, using the miraculous gift he has received. But no one today has any of the spiritual gifts; but we have the Holy Spirit-given word of God!
 - 1) 2 Timothy 3:15-17: "And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (ASV).
 - 2) John 11:10: "But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him" (ASV). Sin and religious error are often depicted in the Scriptures as darkness, where the illuminating light of God's word is present.
 - f. 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober."
 - 1) Those who operate in the bright light of the glorious gospel will not be taken unawares by the coming of Christ; all their Christian life they had lived and prepared for this great occasion; they not only expect it, they long for it.
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 4:3-6: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."
 - 3) Truth and error, and righteousness and unrighteousness are contrasted in the Bible under the figure

of light and darkness, and day and night. There are some who have developed and maintained a hard and indifferent heart, which is impervious to the gospel; there are others who have sought to maintain a soft and pliable heart, which is receptive to the gospel. The individual is responsible for the condition of his own heart; no blame can be directed toward the gospel, that it is not strong enough to penetrate hard hearts.

- a) Matthew 12:34-35: "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."
 - b) Matthew 13:15: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
 - c) John 3:19-21: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."
- g. One is spiritual if he lives in harmony with the teachings of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16, 22-26; 6:7-8). Every faithful Christian is spiritual, thus the command to restore applies to every sincere child of God. The Bible is fully able to supply every truth needed to restore a fallen saint! "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas. 5:19-20).
- 1) Galatians 5:16: "*This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."
 - 2) Galatians 5:22-26: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. 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."
 - 3) Galatians 6:7-8: "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."
 - 4) Romans 8:4-6: "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace."
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 3:1-3: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"
 - 6) True spirituality is pictured in 2 Peter 1:1-12 as developing the Christian graces. It is described in 2 Peter 3:18 as growing in the knowledge and grace of Christ. It is the adornment of the "hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pet. 3:4).
- h. To *restore* means to turn the sinner back to the Savior in penitence, confession of wrongdoing, and prayer (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:8; Jas. 5:16). An example of restoration is given in the case of Simon, who erred after obeying the gospel, was rebuked by Peter, and repented of his sin (Acts 8:13-24).
- 1) Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
 - 2) James 5:16: "Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."
 - 3) 1 John 1:8: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."
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- i. The restoration is to be done "in the spirit of meekness." "There is danger, in the very act of correcting a wrong in another, that the spirit of the Pharisee, thanking God that he is not as other men, may be excited, which is a great sin" (Lipscomb, p.276).
 - 1) Sin lies in patient ambush for every careless Christian, hence we are warned against overconfidence (1 Cor. 10:12; cf. 1 Pet. 5:8-9). The Christian life is such a serious matter that warnings against sin and error can hardly be exaggerated.
 - 2) "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (2 Tim. 2:24-26).
 - 3) Our efforts to restore must be done with meekness, for there is the danger we might be tempted to violate God's will by professing superiority, failing to show love, or by playing the hypocrite.
 - j. The statement of the verse is based on the fact that a child of God can so-sin as to endanger his soul. This truth is so manifestly clear in the Scriptures that it is shocking to discover that many deny it! "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas. 5:19-20).
2. Verse 2: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."
 - a. The penalty of sin is so severe and the reward of righteousness so glorious that each Christian is called on to help each other so that we all can avoid the former and obtain the latter.
 - 1) "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Rom. 15:1). Each saint faces a separate set of problems and burdens. At one time or another, we each will need help in dealing with the problems and bearing the burdens. Christianity has the unique feature that its adherents gladly help each other in such times.
 - 2) "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*" (1 Thess. 5:14).
 - b. A brother who has been overtaken in a sinful act, has encountered a burden too great for him to bear, under the circumstances. Perhaps the temptation caught him unprepared; maybe he blundered into it foolishly; his error may have been one willfully entered. Although he must suffer the guilt for his own sin, yet his faithful brethren can help him by leading him back to the Lord and forgiveness. In this manner we can help him bear his burden.
 - c. By helping our brethren in these burdens, we fulfill the law of Christ. The fact is stated that Christ has a law! It is the gospel. Many think that God's grace annuls his law; that his grace and law are mutually exclusive. This is an awful error!
 - 1) First, we have plain statements declaring that the gospel is God's law: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).
 - 2) Second, if there is no law, there could be no sin (Rom. 4:15; 5:13), for sin is the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4).
 - a) "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression" (Rom. 4:15).
 - b) "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13).
 - d. The word translated "burden" is from the Greek *baros* which is defined as "a weight, anything pressing on one physically, Matt. 20:12, or that makes a demand on one's resources, whether material, 1 Thess. 2:6 (to be burdensome), or spiritual, Gal. 6:2; Rev. 2:24, or religious, Acts 15:28" (Vine, Vol. 1, p.157). The word for burden in verse five is *phortion*.
 3. Verse 3: "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."
 - a. It is easy to over-estimate our spiritual strength and under-estimate the power of temptation.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 10:12: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
 - 2) 1 Peter 5:8: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh

- about, seeking whom he may devour."
- 3) 1 Corinthians 9:27: "But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
 - 4) 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
- b. If we have too high an opinion of ourselves, we will be apt to mishandle any attempts to restore a fallen saint or fall victim to sin ourselves. Since the power to save is not in ourselves, but in God, we must exercise caution in seeking to restore the fallen and in teaching the truth.
 - c. Romans 12:3: "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."
4. Verse 4: "But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."
 - a. We prove our own work by testing it by the infallible word of God.
 - 1) Isaiah 8:20: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them."
 - 2) John 6:63: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life."
 - 3) 2 Timothy 3:15-17: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - 4) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - 5) James 1:25: "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
 - 6) 2 Corinthians 13:5: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"
 - 7) John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
 - 8) Philippians 1:10: "That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ."
 - b. When a Christian examines his heart and life in the light of God's word, and finds that he is sincere in his obedience and faithful in his life, and learns what his strong and weak points are, then he has an accurate picture of himself as God sees him.
 - 1) He will not be concerned with what others may think of him; he knows he is what God expects. The attitudes and judgments of the world toward us are changeable, but God's standard is always the same.
 - 2) If our happiness is dependent on the way others perceive us, we may be doomed to a life of disappointment; but if our happiness is derived from the knowledge that we are right with God, then outside circumstances will have little effect on our peace of mind. "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:11-13).

- c. By testing his own status with God's word instead of comparing himself with his neighbor, a Christian can have the joyful satisfaction that he prospers in God's approval.
- 1) No matter how much the average person may accumulate of this world's goods or how many skills he may be able to develop, there will always be someone else who can surpass him.
 - 2) There may be many other Christians who can give more to the Lord than you, or who have greater talents than you, which can be used in the Lord's church, but no one can be more faithful than **you**. You can have as much faith, love, hope, and dedication as anyone! No one has a greater capacity to offer more sincere worship than you.
- d. The verse does not teach self-exaltation. It does not sanction placing trust in our own strength. It does show us that, after examining ourselves by God's word and finding that we are what God wants, we are to be happy in our standing with God. The Christian life is a life of trusting confidence and joyful hope.
- 1) Hebrews 3:6: "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."
 - 2) Hebrews 3:14: "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end."
 - 3) Hebrews 10:35: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."
 - 4) 1 John 3:21: "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God."
 - 5) 1 John 5:14: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us."
 - 6) Hebrews 4:16: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."
 - 7) 2 Timothy 1:12: "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."
5. Verse 5: "For every man shall bear his own burden."
- a. The Greek term for "burden" in this verse is *phortion* [*baros* is used in verse two].
 - 1) "The Greek words from which the translation comes are diverse; one is *baros*, denotes a *weight*, and is applicable to a *spiritual burden*; whereas the other is *phortion*, which means *load*, being used in Acts 27:10 of the cargo of a ship, thus something that relates to the purpose of being. Thus in verse 2 Paul speaks of Christians bearing each other's sorrows, due to sins or misfortunes; and in verse 5 he speaks of every man bearing his own responsibility, fulfilling the purpose of his own life" (Coffman, p.103).
 - 2) Vine defines *baros* as "a weight, anything pressing on one physically, Matt. 20:12, or that makes demand on one's resources...." (Vol. 1, p.157). Of *phortion*, is "something carried (*phero*, to bear), is always used metaphorically (except in Acts 27:10).... The difference between *phortion* and *baros* is, that *phortion* is simply something to be born, without reference to its weight, but *baros* always suggests what is heavy or burdensome. Thus Christ speaks of His burden (*phortion*) as 'light;' here *baros* would be inappropriate; but the burden of a transgression is *baros*, 'heavy'" (ibid.).
 - 3) "Paul means no one will have occasion to claim moral superiority to his neighbor, *for (gar)* each man's self-examination will reveal infirmities enough of his own, even though they may not be the same as those of his neighbour. His own burdens will absorb his whole attention, and will leave him no time to compare himself with others" (Vincent, p.1000).
 - b. In practical terms, the burden of this verse is that of personal responsibility. It extends to several highly significant areas of an individuals life.
 - 1) The only sin that is charged to a person is that which the individual commits on his own.
 - a) Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous

shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

- b) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
- 2) Only the individual has the capability to obey the gospel.
 - a) Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - b) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - c) No one else can obey the gospel for me.
- 3) No one can discharge a Christian's obligations for him; he must do them himself. He must offer his own obedience, his own worship, and maintain his own purity. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).
- 4) The Judgment of the Last Day will be on an individual level.
 - a) Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*"
 - b) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done in his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."

B. Galatians 6:6-11: Be Not Weary in Well Doing.

- 1. Verse 6: "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."
 - a. The word "communicate" is from *koinoneo* which is used in two senses: "(a) to have a share in, Rom. 15:27; 1 Tim. 5:22; Heb. 2:14; 1 Pet. 4:13; 2 John 11; (b) to give a share to, go shares with, Rom. 12:13, R.V., 'communicating,' for A.V., 'distributing;' Gal. 6:6, 'communicate;' Phil. 4:15..." (Vine, Vol. 1, p.214).
 - b. The apostle's point is an instruction for those who have been taught the gospel, to share their material bounties with the those who teach the word. The "good things" are the "goods" which the person has.
 - 1) Luke 12:19: "And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry."
 - 2) Luke 16:25: "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."
 - c. The Scriptures make it plain that those who devote their time and efforts to preaching and teaching the gospel have the right to receive financial support from the church.
 - 1) This is true of elders who serve the church full-time. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward" (1 Tim. 5:17-18).
 - 2) This is true of gospel preachers. "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and *as* the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" (1 Cor. 9:5-11).

2. Verses 7-8: "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."
 - a. The admonition in this passage is against being deceived. The warning would not have been issued if the danger was not real. The deception named is foolishly thinking that one can mock God. The phrase "be not deceived" appears three other times in the New Testament:
 - 1) Luke 21:8: "And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 6:9: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:33: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."
 - b. God is not mocked. Men may deceive themselves into believing that they can do as they please in this life and somehow avoid facing the consequences.
 - 1) Because many have survived for many years without any obvious penalty for their corrupted lives, they grow convinced that there will be no penalty. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11).
 - 2) Others have been satisfied that there is no God in heaven, or that the Bible is not the inspired and authoritative word of God by which we will be judged, or that there will be no final Judgment, or that there is no heaven or hell, or that God is too good to punish anyone, and therefore there is no need to fear retribution for sinful conduct.
 - 3) Some deny the existence of any absolute standard of religion and morality, and establish their own moral and religious code, foolishly thinking that their way is acceptable.
 - a) Proverbs 16:25: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death."
 - b) Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
 - 4) Sincerity and honesty are required, but so also is truth; those who reject the latter and hold to the former are deceiving themselves. God cannot be defied!
 - c. Whatever it is that a man sows, he reaps accordingly. This is certainly true with literal crops. It would be extreme folly for one to think he could plant corn seed and expect to produce a cotton crop. The principle is equally true when applied to the spiritual crops we sow in our lives.
 - 1) Ahab and Jezebel sowed the spiritual seeds of rebellion against God's will. They got by with their insurrection against God for several years, but the time came when Ahab died and shed his blood in the very vineyard which he had obtained by the death of Naboth. Jezebel had caused Naboth to be slain, and had followed a hate-filled life, but she paid with her own life when she was thrown from an upstairs window and her body was consumed by dogs. See 1 Kings 21-22; 2 Kings 9.
 - 2) Ananias and Sapphira thought they could earn the good pleasure of the brethren by selling some property and giving the proceeds to the church for the poor; but they thought they could satisfy their covetousness by keeping back part of the money for themselves while claiming what they gave was all the property brought. They both were stricken dead by supernatural power (Acts 5).
 - 3) Those who use alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, participate in one of the forms of fornication, or who practice some other type of sin, will not be able to make mockery of God's will on the matter; the penalty of disobedience always comes to the unrepentant offender.
 - 4) One who teaches, accepts, condones, or otherwise promotes false teaching, will not avoid the penalty regardless of his good intentions.
 - d. One who sows to his flesh, will reap corruption. To sow to the flesh is to practice those activities which are designed to gratify the lusts of the flesh by unauthorized means, or which exalts fulfilling legitimate fleshly appetites to the neglect of spiritual responsibilities. The result of such a life is what

Paul describes as "corruption."

- 1) A decaying body is repulsive to the extreme, but the apostle is not referring to a dead body. His reference is to the putrefied soul of a sinner. Those who love sinful ways often sneer at Biblical statements about sin, and ridicule those who expose their iniquitous doings.
 - 2) A repudiation of God's word is an attempt to make mockery of him who gave that message. The word of God will never change; it presently describes a sinful man's spiritual condition as putrefied; it will still say the same in the final Judgment!
 - 3) The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Sin results in the eternal separation from God and all that is holy and good. No person on earth has ever lived even a second completely separated from the goodness of God. The very air he breathes, the water he drinks, the food he eats, the sunshine and rain he enjoys, and all the other bounties of the earth, flow from God. But in Gehenna, none of God's blessings are present!
 - 4) Mark 9:42-49: "And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt."
- e. He that sows to the Spirit will reap everlasting life. This truth is as much a part of the principle as the other aspect. If one follows the teachings of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9-13; Acts 2:1-4,36-47; Gal. 5:25; 2 Tim. 3:16-17), the result is fully predictable.
- 1) Matthew 25:34, 40: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world....And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me."
 - 2) Mark 9:41: "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."
 - 3) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - 4) Hebrews 6:10: "For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."
 - 5) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
 - 6) 1 Peter 1:3-9: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls."
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3. Verse 9: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."
 - a. The work God has given the church to accomplish falls under three headings: evangelism, edification, and helping the needy (Eph. 4:12). Collectively as a congregation, we fulfill these requirements. As individuals, we do whatever our abilities and opportunities permit us to do in fulfilling these duties. There are many things that we can do privately of which the congregation may not be aware.
 - b. Paul's instruction in this verse has application to both the congregation and individual. "Well doing" is doing the will of God. Congregations in the first century participated in collecting and sending financial help to the needy in Judea (1 Cor. 16:1ff; 2 Cor. 8-9; Acts 20-21).
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 9:12-13: "For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal distribution unto them, and unto all *men*." Distribution of these funds was made to both believers and others [*them* and *unto all men*].
 - 2) Individuals can also do these good deeds.
 - a) 1 John 3:17-18: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."
 - b) James 2:14-16: "What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?"
 - c. The apostle promises that if we do not grow weary in performing the good deeds, there will be a reward to be gained in due time. Plainly implied by his statement is the fact that the reward will not be obtained if we grow weary in these duties. The blessing promised is that of the preceding verse: life everlasting.
 - d. To faint is to grow weary in the soul; to cease to do one's God-given duty.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 4:1: "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 4:16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:3, 5: "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds....And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him."
4. Verse 10: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."
 - a. An old adage states that ability plus opportunity equals responsibility. If we have no ability (the means) to provide food or shelter to a needy person, we have no responsibility; if we have the means to make the provision, but there is no needy person available, we have no responsibility.
 - b. Paul recognizes this precept, thus states that we are to do good to others *as we have opportunity* [the ability to help is understood]. Opportunities are not always brought to our door; we must be alert to see opportunities. The talents [money] given to the three servants in the Lord's parable (Matt. 25:14-30) were distributed according to the "several ability" of the individuals. The talents represent the means and opportunities to serve the Lord. The Bible often speaks of opportunity.
 - 1) Acts 14:27: "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 16:9: "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many adversaries."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 2:12-13: "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door

was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia."

- 4) Colossians 4:2-3: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds."
 - 5) 2 Thessalonians 3:1: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you."
 - 6) Revelation 3:7-8: "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."
- c. The requirement is to do good to all men, especially to those who comprise the household of faith. "Especially" [*malista*] means "most, most of all, above all, is the superlative of *mala*, very much..." (Vine, Vol. 2, p.40).
- 1) Our obligation in doing good includes all men (cf. 2 Cor. 9:13); it has special application to those of the household of faith. Clearly, we are to help believers and unbelievers. Since this epistle is directed to the "churches of Galatia," the responsibility to help all men is placed on the church, as well as on the individuals who comprise the church.
 - 2) "The household of faith" is stated literally in the text, "the household of the faith." The household which pertains to the faith (the gospel) is the church. The same word for household [*oikeios*] is also used in Ephesians 2:19: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."
 - 3) God's *household* is his family, the church of Christ. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15).

C. Galatians 6:11-17: The Judaizers.

1. Verse 11: "Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand."
 - a. The apostle is about to address some pointed remarks to the Judaizing teachers who were corrupting the churches of Galatia. His statement here declares that the epistle is authentic, that it was from the apostle Paul. Compare:
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 16:21: "The salutation of *me* Paul with mine own hand."
 - 2) Colossians 4:18: "The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace *be* with you. Amen."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 3:17: "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write."
 - b. Ordinarily, Paul used an amanuensis to inscribe the message. "I Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, salute you in the Lord" (Rom. 16:22). It seems most likely that he used a secretary to write this epistle also, with the apostle writing the closing remarks with his own hand.
 - c. Since each person's handwriting differs from that of others, a notable difference could be seen by those who read this letter. Paul used the large Greek letters called "uncials." He calls attention to the larger letters he used in writing his part than those which his amanuensis used. The original has the plural *letters* instead of the singular *letter* as in the KJV. The Greek term [*gramma*] used here is not the same as "epistle" [*epistole*]. *Gramma* refers to the characters (or letters) of the alphabet (Vine, Vol. 2, pp.332f).
 - d. The part of the epistle Paul personally wrote probably continues to the end of the message.
2. 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."
 - a. Other versions:

- 1) ASV: "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ."
 - 2) NKJ: "As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ."
 - b. Those who wanted to place emphasis upon worldly considerations were those who demanded that the Gentile Christians be circumcised. They were more interested in maintaining the outward features of Judaism than in obeying the truth of the gospel. Their interest was in the form instead of the substance.
 - c. The Judaizers preached a perverted gospel. Because their message was not identical to the gospel, it was not the gospel at all; it merely was a manmade facsimile. Truth mixed with error is no longer truth, but error; and only the truth will make us free from the guilt of sin (John 8:32). This message preached by these men was unable to save anyone. Furthermore, their perverted gospel likely would not incur persecution from the Jews.
 - d. 2 Corinthians 2:17: "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."
 - e. Galatians 2:4-5: "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."
 3. Verse 13: "For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh."
 - a. These false teachers made a great pretense of following the Mosaic Law, but Paul denies that they do so. He had shown in Galatians 5 that if one observes only those parts of the law which appeal to him, he has not followed the law at all; to follow one part of it requires him to follow every part. Since that system had been replaced by the New Covenant, one who adhered to the Old Covenant lost all the benefits of the new and acquired the condemnation prescribed by the old.
 - b. The scribes and Pharisees of the Lord's day demanded that their disciples adhere to the Mosaic Law, but they were remiss in doing so themselves.
 - 1) Matthew 23:1-4: "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers." At that time, the New Covenant had not taken effect.
 - 2) The Judaizers of Paul's time imitated the method set by the scribes and Pharisees. They claimed to be zealous for the will of God, but they were more interested in making an impression on others for the glory that accrued to themselves. "But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matt. 23:5-12).
 - c. These Judaizers tried to win as many converts from among the Gentile Christians to their views as possible, for this would put them in good standing with the unbelieving Jews. In this way, they sought to obtain glory by the number of Gentiles they convinced to be circumcised.
 4. Verse 14: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."
 - a. Paul was adamant in his determination to glory only in the cross of Christ. To the Jews, the cross was a mark of shame (cf. Gal. 3:10-13; Deut. 21:23). The apostle understood the need for the Lord's death, and exulted in the blessings provided thereby.
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- 1) Galatians 3:10-13: "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. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it 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. Christ hath 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."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 21:23: "His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."
 - b. He was not going to glory in such things as the number of converts won, or in the great works which he had accomplished. In fact, he had only been a tool in the hands of Christ; the Lord provided the message, the guidance, the power to confirm the truth by supernatural signs, and the protection Paul needed in order to fulfill his work.
 - c. Weak, worldly-minded people seek the praise of man, and exult in their own accomplishments. The scribes and Pharisees enjoyed being addressed by high-sounding names, and their modern day counterparts do also.
 - 1) Many of the Jewish leaders believed on Christ, but refused to openly confess him for fear they would lose their standing with the other leaders. "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42-43).
 - 2) Such people receive the only reward they can expect in the here and now; there is nothing awaiting them in heaven. "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward" (Matt. 6:5).
 - d. The world with all its allurements was dead to Paul; he had no greater interest in it than he would have if it had been crucified. He was to the world as if he had been crucified. He had no interest in the world and the world had no interest in Paul. He willingly forfeited the advantages he had with the Jews prior to his conversion to Christ.
 - 1) Galatians 2:20: "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."
 - 2) Philippians 3:7-9: "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."
5. Verse 15: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."
- a. This statement resembles Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." Paul declares that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision offers any benefits to the soul. Circumcision pertained to the Mosaic Law; it was not made part of the New Covenant.
 - b. There is a figurative circumcision that avails the heart.
 - 1) Colossians 2:10-13: "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses."
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- 2) When aliens are baptized into Christ, God cuts off their guilt.
- c. Becoming a new creature is of indescribable importance to the soul.
 - 1) "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).
 - 2) "Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:11-13).
6. Verse 16: "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."
 - a. Becoming and remaining a new creature in Christ (verse 15) is the rule by which men and women obtain the peace and mercy of God. This is a unique way of saying that when we are baptized into Christ, for it is then we become a new creature, we receive the benefits of God's grace and peace.
 - b. It is in Christ that we become new creatures (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 1:3); we enter Christ by baptism (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3-4). To enter Christ requires leaving behind the Mosaic System, and everything else that violates the principle of being a new creature.
 - c. It is essential that we walk by the rule in order to remain new creatures in Christ. This means, of course, that we must remain obedient to the gospel.
 - 1) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - 2) Galatians 5:7: "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"
 - 3) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
 - d. The blessings indicated are upon the individual Christians who walk according to this rule, and upon the entire body of Christ collectively. This body is called "the Israel of God." The name *Israel* means *prince of God* (Gen. 32:28, margin). The reference in our text is to the church of Christ, the kingdom of God, which is comprised of spiritual Jews.
 - 1) Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God."
 - 2) Galatians 3:26-29: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 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. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
7. Verse 17: "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "Henceforth, let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus."
 - 2) NKJ: "
 - b. He has defended his apostleship, proving that he is no imposter. He has shown that his message came from God, but the message of the Judaizers was not God's will.
 - c. He has endured many persecutions brought upon him because he preached the truth; his body retained many marks of these afflictions. Undoubtedly, the stoning he received at Lystra left scars; the many stripes laid upon him likewise left scars (Acts 14:19-20; 2 Cor. 11:24-27). The word for *marks* is the Greek word *stigma*.
 - 1) Acts 14:19-20: "And there came thither *certain* Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next

day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe."

2) 2 Corinthians 11:24-27: "Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

d. Some superstitious people might assert that these "marks of the Lord Jesus" were a duplication of the wounds Jesus received from the nails and spear, but such a contention is vain speculation.

D. Galatians 6:18: Farewell.

1. Verse 18: "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen."
 - a. His benediction is that the grace of Christ should be upon them. He began the epistle with a similar statement. The grace of Christ includes all the blessings and advantages which our Lord showers upon his people.
 - b. Notice that Paul relates these blessings to the spirit of these people. The Watchtower Witnesses claim that the human spirit is only our breath. If so, this makes Paul's statement here to be ridiculous. The apostle would not pronounce God's blessing of grace upon their *breath!*
 2. The apostle had delivered some strong rebukes to the brethren of Galatia, but these hard words were not given out of malice or spite; he had their best interests in mind. His genuine love for them is easily seen in this closing statement. His love was not lessened at all by their turning their attention and affections from him when they hearkened to the faulty doctrines of the Judaizers.
 3. The world has never seen such a man as Paul since that great man of God and apostle of Christ departed this life more than nineteen centuries ago.
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