

THE LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD
LESSONS ON GALATIANS

By A. S. Copley

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" - Galatians 4:6.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS
PREFACE

The lessons given herein were first spoken by A.S. Copley in Oak Hill Tabernacle, Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1914. Then they appeared in "Grace and Glory" in six issues, a few copies of which were bound and sent forth to bless others. The profit they rendered created a demand for them. Therefore, the lessons were revised and printed in book form, which the Lord made a great blessing to many hungry hearts. Since that time, another edition was printed and the supply exhausted. We now send out this latest edition, in the hope that it will continue to be as great a blessing as before. 1970 Editor. We now bring these lessons to the internet. Web Attendant.

MY HIGH PRIEST

John Wright Follette

So oft when sorely tempted and faith seems very weak,
When battles fierce are raging and help from God I seek;
My failing strength is quickened when in His Word I see,
That Christ is interceding and praying now for me.
The blood He claims in pleading - His hands, His feet, His side;
Before our God disclosing a place where we may hide.
Unknown His words so holy, to us in feeble frame.
The heart of God respondeth, He hears in Jesus' Name.
Believe, my heart, and praise Him, tho' Satan sorely try.
Fear not when shadows darken, tho' hid, thy Lord is nigh.
He knows thy frame and weakness; He will be strength for you.
Have faith! He's interceding. Trust Him, He'll take you through.

THE INTRODUCTION

by Mary M. Bodie

"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead;) and all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia" - Galatians 1:1, 2.

Galatia was a Roman province situated in the central portion of Asia Minor. The inhabitants were not Greeks but Gauls, a fickle effervescent people, very demonstrative, but lacking stability in the natural - which characteristic was also manifest in the spiritual. "Galatia" means "milky," which is most elucidating and instructive. It declares the Galatians' character of childishness, being able to take only the milk and not the meat of the Word. This is expressive of folk under law.

DIVISION ONE

1:1-5 SALUTATION

Paul is the writer of this letter, and he includes others of the brethren who were with him at the time. He declares at the outset that he, Paul, was the authorized apostle - the sent one - not of men, but by God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He mentions "all the brethren which are with me," as lending weight to that which he is about to write.

"Grace be to you, and peace, from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ" - 1:3. Paul introduces all of his epistles except Hebrews, with "grace" and "peace," and ends all of them with "grace." This is his great theme. It occurs seven times in this letter.

"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world (age), according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" - 1:4, 5. Christ giving Himself up to the Cross for us is the basis of all of God's power to us. It was in the will of God that Jesus went to the Cross, in order that we might be set free - loosed from all the power of this evil age. Furthermore, it was the will of the Son in dying that we might be delivered from all the entanglements of this evil age. It is its very religiousness that makes it so devilish. "The Jews' religion" has superseded the grace message, which is the special issue in this letter.

Legality robs God the Father of His glory in giving His Son to the shameful death of the Cross. It robs Christ of His glory of redemption. It spoils God's plans for the manifestation of His grace, in which God is especially glorified. He created wonderful angelic beings that have never sinned and never will sin, but that only magnifies His power. It is in saving sinful humanity at His own expense that God gets the greatest glory. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" - II Cor. 5:19. He must save His sinning creature, man; though He must take on an earthen body and die. Man needs grace not law, for he is weak and helpless; therefore, God bestows His greatest favor upon the most unworthy of His creatures. Hence, we need not try to reform and be good by our own efforts, for God does not save angels but sinners; and He is glorified thereby.

Men are especially senseless as regards spiritual matters. The devil has blinded them to God's real character and salvation. His mercy is an unknown quantity and quality to them. Satan keeps even the saints blinded to the real essence of Paul's Gospel. They need a revelation, in order to understand that God not only saves the wicked but that He helps the helpless. If men are conscientious they are forever endeavoring to propitiate God, for they realize their sinful state. They try to make themselves better by their own works, not realizing that it is their condition of wretchedness and sinfulness that makes them eligible for God's salvation. When we were young we enjoyed singing, "I want to be an angel, and with the angels stand"; and later we tried to be good so that God could save us. But, alas, we never became good enough to deserve His salvation. Finally, when we lost all hope and gave up trying to be religious, we heard the Gospel and were saved.

God never speaks of grace in connection with angels. Grace is loving pardon for wretched criminals - lost guilty humanity. The reason that the majority of folk miss salvation is because they want to deserve God's favor, instead of accepting it as a gift. He has declared that it is the ungodly man, who does not merit anything but just simply believes Him, that He justifies. He pronounces him righteous. God wants to exhibit His own attribute of grace, which is the reason that He saves lost and ruined humanity. He freely pardons any member of this bankrupt race who is willing to be made an object of His charity, a beggar dependent upon His bounty.

Therefore, the first lesson men need to learn is that the human race is a wreck - irretrievably ruined and born this way - with judgment hanging over their heads; there is no chance whatever, but in God's grace. Generally, at first, men rebel at this only alternative. They will endeavor to clean up, reform, make restitution, join the church, or take any other means to be saved. They will even give their money. They will do anything, rather than own up that they can do nothing. Every preacher of legality, human culture, or an ethical religion, is keeping men in darkness and sending them to hell.

Now these Galatian believers had accepted God's verdict as to their need. They received Paul's Gospel and were saved. But some legalists came around later, after Paul had gone on his missionary journey planting churches where Christ was not known, and moved them away from his teaching. This was the reason that he wrote this letter, to call them back to the grace way of salvation; which teaches that God saves men Himself, and saves them forever. He does not do a halfway job. It is a finished work. From the moment a sinner turns to God, accepting His mercy in the Gift of Christ as his Saviour, he is God's child and his Father is looking after him. That saved sinner is as sure of Heaven as though he was already there. He is not counted as being in Adam, but in Christ. Regardless of his failures and sins, he that is trusting in God's mercy and not in his own works is safe and secure. As the poet has so beautifully voiced the truth:

"MY name from the Palms of His hands,
Eternity will not erase.

Impressed on His heart it remains,
In marks of indelible grace.

Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given.
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in Heaven."

God never gives a sinner up, that comes to Him. It is unthinkable! If He did so, He would be acknowledging that He was weak and a failure, that He was not able to save the poor fallen creature that trusted in Him. Satan would thus be proved the stronger than Christ. Imagine such a contingency! It could not be thought of for a minute. God's honor is at stake in this matter. Just

take Him into account, and you will change your theology. It is not a little thing, to charge Christ with such dishonor, to say that He is not able to do as He has promised; that He the living One, who has died for the sinners' offenses and has risen for his justification, is not able to keep him. It is unthinkable, preposterous, and devilish, to say or believe such a travesty of God's faithfulness. Let us not accuse Him of such a breaking of His Word and His Oath - "two immutable things" - whereby "we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge" to Jesus - Hebrews 6:18. He is the Saviour, and "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him" - Hebrews 7:25.

DIVISION TWO

1:6-9 THEME: THE GOSPEL OF GRACE

Paul allows no competitor or rival religion on the platform of this age. His Gospel has the front place on the stage; and he is the chief speaker and steward of the mysteries of God for the Church. He refuses any admixture of law conditions in any form or phase, even the most subtle, as seen in Peter's case - 2:11-14. The very least of law destroys the character of grace. These are opposites in every way.

These Galatians were believers. Paul designates them his "little children" - 4:19. Some folk think the Gospel is not for the saints, but only for sinners. They are mistaken. It is Good News for all men, saved and unsaved. Paul is amazed at these Galatians. He was their spiritual father. He had preached to them the Gospel, which he defines in I Cor. 15:3-8. It has four basic facts or planks: One. "Christ died for our sins." Two. "He was buried." Three. "He rose again the third day." Four. "He was seen" - on six definite occasions: First "of Cephas"; "then of the twelve"; "after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once"; "after that, He was seen of James"; "then of all the apostles." "Last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." To believe these foundation facts is to be saved, the apostle declares - I Cor. 15:2. There is nothing, absolutely nothing of our doings, to be added to the one superb and only sacrifice of the Christ of the Cross.

The Galatians had received Paul's message of grace; but later, when some folk came from James with the Jews' religion, they were influenced and fell from grace. The majority of Christians imagine that the phrase, "fallen from grace," applies to believers who have committed some immoral wicked deed; but that is not the case. It applies to believers - moral religious folk - who have taken up "the Jews' religion" as a means to perfect themselves. It is these Christians who have "fallen from grace." They have quit the faith way of salvation and have taken up the works way - DOING instead of TRUSTING for justification and sanctification.

Paul was surprised at these Galatians. He marveled how quickly they had fallen from their high standing in grace - perfect and complete in Christ - to the lower way of works. It was another message to which they were listening but not another Gospel; for there is no other Good News for sinners or saints, as we are instructed by the apostle. The grace Message - is the only Gospel of salvation. What is there of Good Tidings, if we tell weak, helpless sinful humanity - defiled and corruptible - that they must do something or keep some laws, rules and regulations in order to be saved or keep saved? That is not good news. That is bad news for saint and sinner, because the old creation is as prone to do evil as the sparks fly upward. Man is lawless by nature; therefore, he cannot obey God's law. To tell them that they must do something to please God, is to stir up that lawless element in their being into open revolt. They may want to do that which God demands (and if they are saved they will); but they are unable to do, or not do, that which is commanded. They exclaim even as Israel, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do" (Exodus 19:8); not realizing their own helplessness, and that they are unable to obey in all that they determine to do. Paul gave us his experience and ours also, along this line, in Romans 7:15-25. Our only hope lies in the Gospel of grace. This message provides a salvation for mankind without works. It is a by-faith way of escape from the thralldom of sin and the power of death.

Furthermore Paul, the chief speaker and preacher of this grace Gospel, declares that any other message brings "trouble" instead of blessing and is a perversion of his Gospel - 1:7. He dares to say that even if "an angel from Heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." His language is most emphatic. He goes further declaring vehemently, that even if he could do such a dastardly deed and return with any other message than that which he brought in the beginning, "Let him be accursed." Again, he dares to bring down a curse upon the head of any preacher who does not bring the Glad Tidings of grace. "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" (anathema).

He does not mince his words, for he has a serious matter to discuss. It is not a nonessential item of which he is speaking, though men may so esteem it and declare that it is of little consequence what is taught as to the manner of the perfection of believers. Some say, "If we arrive inside the pearly gates, what difference does it make if more or less self-effort is added to the way of our sanctification?" Paul insists that it is a most vital question; and he is so concerned as to the matter, that he writes a special letter to get these Galatians back under grace. He uses the most positive affirmations in its favor; and is just as positive in his denunciations against all who teach otherwise. "If an angel from Heaven comes to you with any other message, turn away from him. If I should go so astray, be so deceived, be so demented as to come to you with something different, do not listen to me. Curse me and send me away. If any one high or low, rich or poor, brings another way of salvation than the grace Message, heed him not. There is no other Gospel," Paul warns them most solemnly. Faith is the only way.

God has made it possible for men to be saved on the simple condition of faith. That is grace. Likewise, so it is, in the matter of being kept saved. The Lord is the Shepherd. We must trust Him, and not endeavor by our feeble works to merit anything. We must let Him perfect us on the same basis - that of grace. God has provided all this for us in Christ. He has been "made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption" - I Cor. 1:30 R.V. That is, God in His wisdom has perfected a plan whereby all men that avail themselves of the provision may be justified, sanctified, and glorified by His power alone; the Cross being the basis of the plan, the Holy Spirit being the active Agent. Thus, "no flesh should glory in His Presence ... he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" - I Corinthians 1:29, 31.

The Gospel which Paul preached ascribes all the glory to God. If man could save or sanctify himself, he would praise himself; and he would have a right to do so. Heaven would be filled with all manner of inscriptions of glory to man. Each one would have his own little or big horn and would be blowing about himself, telling what a good or great fellow he was and what he had done to make the grade and reach Heaven. But that will not be the case. No one will have any song of praise for himself. Christ will have the center place among the redeemed of all ages. That heavenly throng will all with one accord praise God and the Lamb for the plan of redemption.

These Galatians, in their endeavors to perfect themselves by law, were manifesting their ignorance of the grace Message. They had not learned that all the glory for man's salvation was to fall upon God; that His plan for their justification and sanctification was sufficient for time and eternity. They had not learned that Paul and his Gospel were separated from all the other preachers and their preaching. It was a new Message, a different proclamation than ever had been heard; and it is different still from almost everything heard today. It "is not after man" is the reason. It never originated in his little legal mind. He never could have conceived such a marvelous plan - so unique, so entirely distinct from all his thoughts. It never would have entered his mind to imagine that an offended God would send His Beloved Son to die upon a rugged Cross for those who had sinned against Him - even His very enemies. How did Paul learn of this heavenly holy Gospel? It was "by the revelation of Jesus Christ" - 1:12. The Lord said, "To this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen Me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee" - Acts 26:16 Revised Version.

Paul tells us that he, Paul, wrote this letter to the Galatians. In fact, he wrote fourteen of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. We read, "Paul ... to all that be in Rome." "Paul ... unto the church of God which is at Corinth." Paul ... unto the churches of Galatia." " Paul ... to the saints which are at Ephesus." "Paul ... to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi." "Paul ... to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse." "Paul ... unto the church of the Thessalonians." " Paul ... unto Timothy." "Paul ... to Titus." "Paul ... unto Philemon." Hebrews is the only epistle that is not prefaced with his own name.

FACTS ABOUT LAW

THE LAW WAS GIVEN 430 YEARS AFTER ABRAHAM WAS JUSTIFIED BY GRACE

THROUGH FAITH, wholly independent of works or human effort. Abraham had no law to keep, and was not placed on probation as was Adam before he fell. In walking by faith he became "the friend of God," not by keeping any law whatsoever - James 2:23; II Chron. 20:7.

"THE LAW IS NOT MADE FOR A RIGHTEOUS MAN (he needs no law); but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and

murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine" - I Timothy 1:9, 10. In Christ, "ye are not under the law, but under grace"; therefore, "sin shall not have dominion over you" - Romans 6:14. Neither does the Law have dominion over us in Christ.

THE LAW SPENT ITS STRENGTH AND FINISHED ITS WORK ON US, in executing Christ Jesus on the Cross in our behalf. There "our old man was crucified with Him" - Romans 6:6 Revised Version.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS DO NOT EXPRESS ALL THE WILL OF GOD. They were the written will of God, for a particular people, for a certain limited period of time.

THE LAW IS NOT A RULE OF CONDUCT FOR BELIEVERS. Paul said, "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" - Gal. 6:16. What rule? The rule of the new creation under grace, brought forth by the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus; not by the rule of circumcision, or law.

THE LAW "WAS ADDED BECAUSE OF TRANSGRESSIONS." It was a schoolmaster until Christ, "that we might be justified by faith" - Gal. 3:19, 24. "The law entered, that the offense might abound" - Romans 5:20. As a schoolmaster, it whipped the transgressor into obedience; but he kicked against it, thus proving his inability to keep it. The Law "was weak through the (sinful) flesh" - Romans 8:3.

THE LAW COULD NOT GIVE LIFE TO A SINNER, NOR SAVE HIM. It is not a savior, but a judge. "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" - Galatians 3:21.

THE LAW SCHOOL IS OUT, SINCE CHRIST CAME. The Schoolmaster, the Law, has been dismissed; and it is never hired again except by legalists. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" - Romans 10:4.

THE LAW WAS A MINISTRATION OF CONDEMNATION AND DEATH, an unbearable sight; hence, it was done away - II Corinthians 3:6, 9, 11.

THE LAW WAS AN UNBEARABLE YOKE TO ISRAEL; and to lay down the Law for others to keep is tempting God - Acts 15:10. It is also called witchcraft - Galatians 3:1.

LEGALITY IS LIKE A LEACH that sucks the blood and drains the life of its victims.

LEGALITY WEARS A HIGH HAT, a long imposing beard, and heavy calfskin shoes; and, he is very particular about his company, lest he be defiled.

AS WATER AND OIL WILL NOT MIX, so law-keeping and grace cannot walk together and be agreed. One or the other must vacate. Grace, being modest and yielding, peacefully withdraws and seeks rest elsewhere.

LEGALITY, CONCEIT, AND SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS USUALLY DWELL TOGETHER in the same pious (?) house - air-conditioned, damp, dark, and dangerous. "Daisy Don't" is the mistress of the home, and stern rules of order are the wall mottoes.

"BEWARE OF THE CONCISION" (Phil. 3:2); that is, those who cut down, cut to pieces, cut off others. Legality draws fines or sets bounds, and cuts others off from fellowship. It makes divisions. It prescribes bylaws, and tries to rob brethren of the liberty they have in Christ. "O foolish Galatians! Who hath bewitched you?"

HOW WILL WE GROW?

Less than a hundred years from now,
These trials that are today,
Will be removed forevermore,
Completely passed away.
But what they've made of us will be,
And shall forever stay;
That's why we're being tried today -
This is our testing day.
So trust in Christ, and bear your test,
Though it be the darkest woe!
For as we bear each test and trial,
Is truly how we grow.
So "grow in grace," through every test;

Trust God and you will see,
When this old shell has bid farewell,
It shall be well with thee.
Mary Rice Monroe

LESSONS IN GALATIANS

by A.S. Copley

PAUL IN GOD'S WILL

DIVISION THREE

Galatians 1:10 to 2:21

THEME: PAUL'S DEFENSE OF

HIS APOSTLESHIP AND GOSPEL

Paul was no ordinary messenger of the Church. He was not even classed with the other apostles, but was in a distinct rank by himself. He is to the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, what Moses was to Israel. He is the leader. He went before. He received his call, commission, and revelation from the Lord, independent of men. God arrested him when he was persecuting the brethren, haling them to prison, and witnessing against them. His conversion was of absolute grace on God's part. The Lord appeared to him, as he was on his way to Damascus in high-handed rebellion against God and His Son, and knocked him to the earth - Acts 9. He arose a new man, with a new Message for men, and a new name. Saul, "asked for," figuring man's choice, becomes Paul, "little," representing God's choice - the unpopular one.

Saul was self-righteous, proud, and strong in himself. He was superior in many ways to those of his time and age. He was a legalist of the first grade, fanatical in his zeal for "the Jews' religion"; but the mighty God had a work for him. He took hold of that unlikely material and changed him. He turned him right-about-face and made him just as zealous and earnest for grace, the true way of salvation, as he had been for law. He put him to the front of the new order of things. The twelve Kingdom apostles were earnest and loyal men. They had walked and talked with the Lord for three and a half years. They had their place and Message as the apostles of the Lamb, but the Kingdom was set aside for the time being; hence, they too were set aside. God had another purpose to put over, a new Message to be preached, a new people to be gathered - not only Jews, but Gentiles, were to constitute this heavenly Body the Church; therefore, He needed a new messenger. Then came Paul.

Unto none of the twelve apostles did the Lord reveal the great body of doctrine for this age. It was Saul of Tarsus who was chosen to be the steward of the glorious truths connected with the Lord's death, resurrection, and ascension. All the mysteries of the Church, the great body of Truth concerning that great Body of people, were committed to Paul. Most of the New Testament has been given to us by him. Take Romans to Hebrews out of the Bible, and what have you? To no other apostle were these great secrets revealed. They had to learn them from Paul.

The letter to the Galatians corrects the folly of trying to perfect ourselves in the flesh, in view of the fact that we are without strength. If there had been any hope in man doing anything for himself, God would have given him the chance. He had repeatedly done so. But, after Christ came and died on the Cross, that was the end of all man's doings. His glory passed away, when Christ was nailed to the Tree. It was "Ichabod" for man.

Paul is the only one of the apostles who speaks of the Cross. In fact, there are many great truths which only Paul gives us. In the second chapter of this letter, we are distinctly told that James, Cephas, and John were to go to the Jews, while Paul was to go to the Gentiles. The testimony to the Jewish nation was soon ended, after Paul was commissioned. During this age, there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile. Paul is the one who finally set them aside (Acts 28:28) and opened his great epistle to Rome, the Gentile center of the world, with these words: "There is no difference" between Jew and Gentile; "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Now, "whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved," since the same Lord is Lord of all - Romans 3:22, 23; 10:12, 13. Only nationally was the Jew set aside for the age.

God is sovereign. He does as He chooses, and does not inquire of man as to whether he likes His doings or not. He chose the nation Israel who were His special treasure in the earth for a specified time (Exodus 19:5; Deut. 7:6); but, when they rejected His Son and His authority, He brought to pass another purpose which had been hidden in His counsel from a past eternity. He is saving folk by the preaching of the Cross, and gathering them out of every nation, kindred, and

tongue by the power of the Holy Spirit, to constitute a heavenly company. He also chose Paul to be the great herald of the Gospel for this age, the essence of which is that the believer is justified freely from all things - Acts 13:39; Romans 3:24.

This word "freely" is "dorean" in the Greek, which always bears the meaning "without a cause"; therefore, we may say, that God justifies the man that believes without finding any reason in the man except his faith in the work of Christ. That is what gives Paul's Gospel its unique and distinct place. It is so different from all other ways and means to be saved. There is nothing else like it in the world. Man would never have conceived such a message, in his best moments. It is absolutely foreign to his reason. He never would have thought it out. It is far beyond his natural conception of things. God gave it to Paul from Heaven; therefore, he had to defend it and contend for it all the days of his life. We are following in his footsteps. We dare to believe the Word of God, and stand for this marvelous Message of emancipation from sin's guilt and thralldom. Immediately after the apostle began his missionary journey with Barnabas, false teachers followed him and sought to hinder his work, bringing the saved Gentiles under law; in other words, they tried to get them to take up "the Jews' religion" to keep saved. Is that not ridiculous? No marvel, that he later calls these Galatians "foolish" for yielding to such bewitchment - 3:1. God had handed over Judaism to the Jew. It was their religion. He had a new Message for the Church. Judaism was old, and was passing away with its shadows. The Substance had come - Hebrews 8:13. The Jews' religion meant no more to Paul than a heathen religion; and such it should be to us, as far as its connection with salvation is concerned. The message or ritual and Law, given by Moses to the nation, was a distinct religion for them; likewise the Gospel of grace to the Church, the Body of Christ, is a distinct Message to them. Because of ignorance, religious teachers are continually mixing them together in their interpretation of Scripture and practical experience of the believer.

"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" - 1:10-12.

Those Judaizers had informed the Galatians that the Jews' religion was not out-of-date, and made them believe that Paul was at fault - that he was an apostate Jew, denying the faith of the fathers, and not in good standing with the Jerusalem church. Therefore, the apostle must defend his former manner of life. He declares that he had been a consistent member of Judaism, obeying implicitly all its precepts and laws. He had gone beyond others in his zeal and determination to excel, and that was the reason that he "persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it." He was an example to the Jewish youth. They looked upon him as a great leader. "And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers" - 1:13, 14.

"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" - 1:15, 16. Herein are marvelous statements. God's sovereignty is emphasized in Paul's separation from Judaism (his mother's womb), and in his calling into the Lord's service. "Separated" means "marked out for a purpose," while "called" signifies "bringing about the purpose." The latter, in 1:16, is declared to be the revelation of Christ in him. Saul of Tarsus was set aside. He had received a knockdown blow on the road to Damascus, when he was on his way to bring some of the Nazarene's followers bound to Jerusalem - putting them to death if possible - Acts 9. But God changed Saul's life in a moment of time. When he arose, he was no longer the Pharisee and persecutor of the Church; but he was the preacher and "pestilent fellow" - Acts 24:5. Paul was his name. Saul was dead. He had been crucified; and, henceforth, Christ lived - 2:20. He was to preach Him - not as a mere doctrine, but as a Person - a living vital Person. The man that preaches such a Gospel is bound to be a living voice to others.

"Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus" - 1:17. Paul did not confer with the "big boys" in Jerusalem. That would have been the natural thing to do, but he was not walking in the flesh now. He was doing the unnatural thing. His revelation was a divine Message, different from anything heard before. It was absolutely independent of all human teaching. It was a new Message; therefore, why confer with even the best men, the highest of theologians, if you have something that they

have not heard! This fact is greatly stressed here in order that "the faith of the Son of God" should be seen to be distinct and apart from Judaism, the Law, or any human merit or religion. It cannot be mixed with anything; but, stands even as its Author and Finisher, absolutely apart from anything else. Therefore, God's man hears the Voice of the Spirit and moves on to Arabia - the place where Moses dwelt, and Elijah fled for encouragement - I Kings 19.

Horeb, in Arabia, was the mountain which God glorified by appearing upon it and giving the Law to Moses. It was there that Paul went to iron out the perplexities that had arisen in his theology. We can understand that he should be perplexed, and desire to understand the difference and distinction between Mount Sinai and Mount Zion of which he had lately caught a glimpse. He had been a lover of the Law. Horeb, with its shadows, had been hard hit by his now revelations; and he went there to study Moses. His stay there was not marred by any conferences with men. God met with him and revealed further light. He returned to Damascus more than ever convinced, and afterward went up for a visit with Peter for fifteen days. He also met James, the pastor and leading elder of the Jerusalem church. But they made no change in his theology. "Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not" - 1:20. Paul is most emphatic though concise in his statements. He declares that he did not lie. He desired that the Galatians take him into their hearts and believe in his sincerity and honor, and believe that he was the God-appointed apostle and teacher of the Gentiles. He knew that if they realized his place in the economy of things," - as the one in authority for this age, as having his Message entirely from God as a new revelation - they would heed his words and judge all other doctrines by his Gospel. Therefore, he was vehement and insistent in telling them how it all was. "Before God," he speaks. He declares that his Gospel had no connection with any other so-called good news; and that he had no credentials, calling, or commission from any man or set of men. The Lord appeared to him, not only to convert him, but to make him a personal witness of His glory and a special minister for this dispensation - Acts 26:16-18.

THY VESSEL

Dave MacPherson

I am Thy chosen vessel, Lord,
All that there is of me;
My life is Thine, Thy Word my Sword
To conquer lands for Thee.
My feet shall take the News so sweet
To those lost souls in sin;
I'll tell them of the heavenly treat,
That they may enter in.
My hands shall hold the Book Divine,
I'll point them to the Cross,
Where souls can find the joy that's mine,
And leave their awful dross.
I sense Thy penetrating mind,
Which asks me but to seek
The wand'ring sheep; mine eyes shall find
The ones that are so weak.
I am completely Thine, O Lord,
For all eternity;
Cause me to be just one small chord
In Thy great symphony.

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST DEFENDED

GALATIANS TWO

"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" - 2:1, 2.

We noticed earlier that Paul's Gospel is a revelation of Christ in the believer; therefore, it is all of God. We cannot perform this great transformation. Now in our study we are shown that the Lord

sent him to the Jerusalem church, but not until fourteen years after he had been in Arabia and returned to Damascus was he allowed of the Lord to confer in regard to doctrine with the Kingdom apostles. His Gospel was distinct and separate from all previous revelations, and the special teaching for the Church; and the Lord would keep it thus. But the time had come for him to meet the other leaders, and communicate the news which had been revealed to him. The Lord wanted harmony as to the way of salvation. He had prepared the hearts of the apostles for this meeting, of which Paul was a necessary part.

This convention was the first and only gathering of the ministers of the Church recorded in Scripture - Acts 15. The results of that meeting are outstanding and upstanding, and cannot be ignored. Paul's place as the apostle to the Gentiles, and his Gospel given by revelation, were recognized and endorsed. He was given the right hand of fellowship; and the Jerusalem church went on record as to the grace way of salvation. They set to their seal that God was no respecter of persons, and that salvation was by faith alone. Peter's experience in the house of Cornelius was cited as an example of God's grace. Paul did not compromise the Truth in the very least; even Titus a Gentile, was allowed to sit in conference, though he had not been circumcised. That was a great victory for Paul's Gospel, when these brethren of reputation from Jerusalem agreed with Paul - 2:3-6. The apostle was not cowed one iota. He had gone up to Jerusalem for this very purpose. The Spirit of God directed him; and the results of that conference were satisfying then, and have been so for the entire age. He gave place to none of the older apostles, "that the Truth of the Gospel" might be kept pure and continue with the people.

He declared that "they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: but contrariwise." Paul added something to them. Those who seemed to be pillars - James, Cephas, and John - were impressed with his marvelous experience as he related it to them. They perceived that a special grace had been given to him for a special purpose and special dispensation, and they left hands off. They were not envious of his charge. They had their place in God's economy; and they were not trying to run His business, as so many do today.

When God raises up a man now, many of the other folk who have been fed and blessed by the grace given this one are jealous and envious and seek to hinder and hurt that one. But the Lord always defends His chosen man, for He still makes choice of certain ones. That is His divine right; and who dare rise up and say Him nay? Who dare question His ruling and authority? God is still on His throne. "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" - Daniel 4:35.

In Galatians two we notice especially, as we read it carefully, that Paul our apostle is endeavoring to disconnect himself from those other apostles at Jerusalem - tried and true as they had been proved. Later, he shows up the chief one in a most serious fault of faith and consequent conduct; and that was an unusual procedure, that he should act in such a manner at that time, when beset by critics and false teachers. It was most strange that he should dare set himself apart from the other apostles, and claim that his apostleship and ministry were distinct from theirs at such a crucial hour; but Paul was no shilly-shally fellow. He stood before God and walked with Him, and knew that he was God's man for the age. Furthermore, he was led of the Spirit to so speak; and his utterances were backed up by dynamic power, and became Scripture.

Notice some of his bold statements. In 1:15-22, he most confidently asserts that he had a Message from Heaven - a new Message from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. It was not from man, he insists; for he was not acquainted with any of the churches of Judea. It was the good pleasure of God to choose him that He might reveal His Son in him, to the end that he should preach Him among the heathen. What a contrast to all the religions in the world, with their laws and dogmas of doing. Oh! It is so wonderful! No marvel that Paul dared the devil and all men. His Message was a Person, revealed as the Savior and Keeper of all believers, the Son of God. What have men to offer, after God has given His Son? They have no voice, when Paul's Message is heard from the platform. It is unique, stupendous, and altogether sufficient and satisfying.

THE TWO NATURES

"But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed" - 2:11. In Peter's life, we find recorded two positive proofs of the two natures in a believer. The first occurred before he was anointed with the Holy Spirit; the second occurred afterwards, even after he had known the power of the Spirit for a number of years. Just before

Christ was crucified, Peter failed egregiously. He boldly affirmed that he would not deny his Lord, but he did; and he cursed and swore, because his affirmation was made in his own strength. God permitted that shameful lapse, to show him and us the necessity of being crucified with Christ. Then after Pentecost, after he was filled and empowered with the Spirit, Peter must further learn the weakness of the old creation and to know "no man after the flesh." Peter, though the chiefest of the twelve apostles and anointed with the Holy Spirit, must fully learn to "walk in the Spirit" and thus "not fulfil the lust of the flesh" - not even the desires of his religious friends, the Jews. In this second failure of Peter, which was far worse in God's sight than the former, we have a striking example of a child in grace endued with power from on high. If Christ had been formed in him (4:19), he would not have lapsed back under law to please the Jews. You cannot get a fullgrown man back under law. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" - Romans 8:14. Hence, in order to bring these Galatians into actual experience of fullgrown sonship in Christ, Paul writes this epistle and yearns in prayer over them. To accomplish this, he must also offset the damaging effects of Peter's foolish compromise with error; for the influence of his dissembling went to Galatia. Therefore, Paul relates his experience with Peter and why he reproved him. "He was to be blamed."

Note, here, ten points of blame or censure against Peter for turning from grace to law - he "withdrew" from the Gentiles; he "separated himself"; he feared the law-keepers; others "dissembled ... with him"; another apostle, even "Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation"; thus, "they walked not uprightly"; thus, Peter compelled "the Gentiles to live as do the Jews"; he built again that which he had destroyed; he made himself "a transgressor"; and thus he made "Christ the minister of sin." What a blow to Calvary. What dishonor against Jesus Christ. What a reflection against Pentecost. Little do we grasp the wickedness of turning from grace to law-keeping again. Let me ask, "When was Peter 'fallen from grace' - when he denied his Lord before His death, or after Pentecost when he practically denied the meritorious death of Christ?" Find the answer in 5:4.

The most startling, the most terrible, result of Peter's conduct in Antioch was that it had the effect of making "Christ the minister of sin"; for the apostle asks, "If, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin?" - 2:17. Peter had before claimed that he was justified by faith in Christ alone. Now, by his law-keeping, he was virtually saying that he was not yet justified but was still a sinner though he believed on Him. But, if Peter must keep the law in order to become righteous, that was equivalent to saying that Christ ministered sin to him instead of righteousness. "For if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought" - 2:21 R. V. It is not then true that "by the obedience (unto death) of One (Christ) shall many be made righteous" - Rom. 5:19; but they are still counted sinners. Because, if He does not on account of His death constitute believers righteous, He must by His very failure make them transgressors. Oh, how dreadful! But, thank God! It is emphatically true, that "a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ." We thank God, therefore, for

THE GLORIOUS GROUNDWORK

"For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me" - 2:19, 20 R.V.

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" - 3:13 R.V.

Here is the foundation. May the dear Lord help the reader to see it. In the beginning, God said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" - Genesis 2:17. That was a warning. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die"- Ezekiel 18:4. That was law. "The wages of sin is death" - Romans 6:23. That is law. Here the apostle declares, "I through the law am dead to the law." How did he do that? By making a consecration? Never. Because he died to law before he was born. Well, that sounds like the Quaker who said that he was a Quaker before he was born. No, that is not Paul's meaning. The Quaker spoke in a riddle; but the apostle spoke the truth. Jesus - the holy, harmless, perfect One, the Son of God - came from Heaven; He took upon Himself human flesh, and took the sinner's place. He voluntarily assumed the Headship of the old creation, and thus took upon Himself its sin and sickness and shame. Hence, "He was numbered with the transgressors," by divine justice; and, as a transgressor He died, not for Himself but for

those whose sins He assumed. "He by the grace of God should taste death for every man" - Hebrews 2:9. He fulfilled that first stern edict - "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But there is more than that. Christ not only died in our stead, but we died with Him. His death for us was our death in His. "Our old man was crucified with Him" - Romans 6:6 R.V. The law which executed Him for us, executed us in His execution - "I through the law died" - 2:19 R.V. Of course, when a man is dead, he is dead to law. The law has no more jurisdiction over a dead man after he is buried. Hence, the believer in Christ is forever dead to law. He lives, as raised from the dead, unto God alone. "We are not under the law, but under grace" - Romans 6:15. Here is a criminal. The law says that he must be hung, and so they hang him. Is he not dead to the law? Can the law touch him any more? Nay! Its claim is satisfied against the criminal. He is dead. But what put him to death? The law. That is Paul's meaning in saying: "I through the law died unto the law." The law of God has no more claim upon us who believe on Jesus. We are dead to it and all its claims, having died once for all in the death of Christ our Substitute.

"I have been crucified with Christ," tells the kind of death we died. It was a crucifixion, the most ignominious death that the worst criminal could die. The apostle does not mean that he was crucified when he made a consecration, or laid all on the altar. You hunt in vain for such language in his writings. He was crucified over nineteen hundred years ago, at the same time when we were - when Christ was crucified - even "crucified with Christ." When saints truly see this basic truth, they no longer talk piously (?) about "a daily crucifixion," "a crucified life," "a crucifying of self," and kindred folly; all of which is equivalent to saying that Christ's death for us was insufficient, that His redemptive work was unfinished. Oh! Shame on such blasphemy against the Cross of Christ. Observe the exact words. They are in the past perfect tense - "I have been crucified with Christ." Romans 6:6 R.V. corresponds precisely with this "Our old man was crucified with Him." The "I" of the former agrees with the "old man" of the latter. The "I" is the individual old creation; the "old man" is rather the first Adam, our former sinful head. Hence Jesus, by assuming the place of the first Adam and dying in his stead, put to death the head and body of the old creation in toto and each individual in particular. On this basic fact we should, with the apostle, shout triumphantly: "I have been crucified with Christ!"

Nor is that all. Many stop here and see only their death with Christ, which can scarcely be more to them than a theory or Bible doctrine. There is another shout coming - "Nevertheless I live." There is the truth to be especially emphasized; for only, as we actually count ourselves alive in Christ, can we effectually count the old "I" dead. This living "I" is the new "I", a new creation. Lest anyone suppose that this is the "old man" improved, or even raised from the dead, Paul exclaims: "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me" - 2:20 R.V. He reckons the old creation absolutely dead; and reckons on a new sinless life absolutely apart and distinct from the old, and having nothing in common with it. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" - II Cor. 5:17. People fail continually, lapse into sin, are overcome by the flesh, because they fail to see this truth; or, seeing it, are afraid to swing out into its vast domain. This is made still clearer and more emphatic by the rest of the verse - "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." Even though he is a new creature, he takes no credit for believing. His dependence is absolutely upon Him who loved him and died in his stead. "With Christ I have been crucified, and it is no longer I who live, but there lives in me Christ. And that life which now I live in the sphere of the flesh, by faith I live it, which faith is in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself on my behalf" - 2:20 Wuest.

AN APPEAL TO PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Galatians 3:1-5

"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?" - 3:1.

Every religion of self-effort is here termed witchcraft. Truly, self-righteousness or law-keeping, has a bewitching effect on people. Its face looks so holy, its voice sounds so sacred, its walk appears so upright, that it appeals to the flesh. It sings with deep feeling, "Nearer my God to Thee"; "Let me die"; "Oh, to be nothing, nothing." But God pronounces all that witchcraft. Why? Because, it does not glorify Jesus to call Him a good Man or a beautiful character, while denying His sacrificial death. He cannot save except by means of His death. Law-keeping, self-righteousness, self-perfection - all of these deny Calvary. That is why the apostle's first question indicates that his readers were acting as if Christ had not been set forth among them as crucified.

Law-keepers today speak and write sharply against Christian Science (falsely so-called), not realizing that she is simply the youngest daughter of legality. Christian Science is Christ without the Cross, even as Rome is the Cross without the living Christ. The one is no more to God than the other.

"This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? If it be yet in vain. 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?" - 3:2-5.

The Holy Spirit put six probing questions to believers, which personal experience must answer plainly in favor of divine grace in every honest heart. The former question implies that the Galatians knew that they were not obeying the Truth. If you note carefully the testimony of those under law, their final (unconscious perhaps) admission is that they were saved through faith, if saved at all. Likewise, no matter how much fixing up or fasting or struggling or waiting seekers have indulged in, they always received the Spirit by simply believing the Word of promise. If they have made any progress in the Christian life, it has always been wholly as they walked in the Spirit. Miracles are wrought in the same manner. "Faith is the victory." Being born of the Spirit, we have a new life, a spiritual life, from the beginning to the end, from earth to glory. Our growth and perfection do not come by fleshly effort; but by simple constant faith in Christ's work for us once at Calvary, and His continuous work in us now through the Word and the Spirit.

When we turn to God from idols and from the world, and accept the grace of God and His salvation and the Gift of the Spirit by faith, we suffer reproach and shame and the loss of friends and perhaps of position and goods. Hence, the apostle asks: "What is the use of suffering for believing on Jesus, if ye must be made perfect by the works of the Law?" He shows that that is logical folly. He also means to say that, when we suffer for the Truth, our suffering is not in vain. If we suffer with Christ, we shall also be glorified together with Him - Romans 8:17.

THE COVENANT OF PROMISE

Galatians 3:6-29

"Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" - 3:6.

Let us consider closely Abraham's faith - its basis, progress, and result. Turn to Joshua 24:2 - "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods."

Perhaps you never knew that Abraham's ancestors were idolaters, and that Abraham himself was such when he heard the call of God. Ah! This is the man whom the Lord chose to be His friend. To this man, He made a sevenfold promise (Genesis 12:1-3), the principle one of which is found in this third chapter of Galatians - "In thee shall all nations be blessed" - 3:8. Why do I call your attention to these facts? That you may see the sovereign grace of Jehovah in making a marvelous covenant with a man who was utterly unworthy; and that salvation and all the divine blessings are absolutely by faith in that sovereign promise, and wholly apart from any works whatever. In this chapter, we learn that such a promise was made to Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the Law was given through Moses - 3:17. "Abraham believed God," was counted righteous before God, and "was called the Friend of God," four hundred and thirty years before the Law. That was grace, sovereign divine grace, independent of and without any consultation with or consent from the Law.

There are seventeen "I"s of the Lord in Joshua twenty-four - "I took your father Abraham"; "I sent Moses"; "I brought your fathers out of Egypt"; "I destroyed them" (the Amorites). By this He sought to prove His sovereign unmerited favor to Israel - that they had not done one iota to merit His blessings. All were bestowed wholly by grace. We are overwhelmed with the marvels of God's grace, and increasingly persuaded that it is impossible to emphasize it too much. Men are perpetually putting limitations upon the grace of God. Grace alone is the only limitation to grace. Mark it well, that Abraham was not a good man when the Lord called him. He was an idolater.

Today, he would be called a sinner of the Gentiles. There was nothing in Abraham that demanded or merited God's call, no more than in any other man. His dire need necessitated God's grace. Doubtless, he felt his need and saw his opportunity; and, when he heard the call of Jehovah, he simply believed Him. His faith "was accounted to him for righteousness. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the

Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" - 3:6, 8. Perhaps you did not know before that the Scripture has eyes and foresight, and that the Scripture "preached." That puts the Word of God on a par with Himself. To receive it is to receive Him. Abraham believed these amazing promises of divine favor; and his faith, not his works, "was accounted to him for righteousness" - "and he was called the Friend of God" because of his faith in God. Reader, if you wish to be a friend of God, simply believe and receive His grace, even as the following verse indicates - "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" - 3:9.

THE CURSE OF FAILURE

"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" - 3:10. Compare Deuteronomy twenty-seven.

This is the meaning: If you purpose to earn salvation by your works, you must earn it all by keeping all the law. If you are a law-keeper, you must keep the whole law, or you become a violator of all the law. Hear James - "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" - James 2:10. The strongest chain is broken, if only one link is broken. If you mean to be a law-keeper, either to get saved, or to keep saved, or to perfect yourself, you must rigidly observe every "jot" and "tittle." You must not gather sticks on the Sabbath, but eat your meals cold; you must keep back one tenth of your earnings, for "the tithe ... is the Lord's." You must give to the Lord a tenth of the remaining nine tenths. You must cut your hair and beard a square fashion. If one of your family or assembly should dabble in spiritism, you must put him to death. Read Leviticus. Do not presume to keep God's holy, just, rigid law, unless you keep it absolutely; otherwise, you are under the curse. To do the best you can is but to be under the curse; for the best that any man has done was to fail, because "neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" a yoke of law, exclaims Peter - Acts 15:10.

Suppose you would observe the whole law perfectly; you would be nothing more than a servant, a law-keeper, not a son of God. You would still be a part of the old Adam, the old creation, of the earth earthy; without any new creation life, or heavenly life - no new birth. You could have no fellowship with the Father, the privilege of sons only; you could never receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit, the inheritance of sons only; you could never see inside of Heaven, not even enter the Kingdom of God on earth - "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" - John 3:5. Oh, that believers might see it. Legality is a cold hard bar against Christian privileges and pleasures. "In Thy Presence" (not in any law-keeping) "is fulness of joy" - Psalm 16:11. "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" - 3:21. Then there would have been no need for the last Adam and His Cross. But there was need, and that need was great. Justice demanded a righteousness that man could never reach by works of law. Justice demanded death as the righteous penalty for a broken law. Justice is absolute in its demands. It knows and, hence, shows no pity. Therefore, the remedy -

DIVINE GRACE DISPLAYED

"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" - Galatians 3:13. Compare Deuteronomy 21:23. The law declared that we must die, because we had sinned - "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" - Ezekiel 18:4, 20. But, Christ took our place and assumed our guilt, by voluntarily identifying Himself with the old creation - even taking the headship thereof. As substituted head of the ruined race, "numbered with the transgressors," and "being made a curse for us," He died in our stead - died the kind of death that we deserved to die. He met the penalty due us, in our behalf. We died with Him; that is, the curse that fell on Jesus on our account, fell on us in falling on Him. We died in His dying. We paid our full penalty, in His death. Justice is therefore satisfied, and the voice of justice is hushed forever, to them that believe the Gospel. "He that hath died (Jesus and everyone who receives Him) is justified from sin" (Romans 6:7 R.V.) by Christ's death. Hence, the grave could not hold Him; but He "was raised again for our justification" - Romans 4:25. Sin no longer rests on us who believe. The Greek is very strong here - "Who ... was raised because of," not simply in behalf of, "our justification"; even as before - "Who was delivered up because of our transgressions" - Wuest. Because Jesus took our place as a transgressor, He had to go to Calvary. He could not escape the Cross. Likewise, because He paid our penalty and loosed us from our sins provisionally - "justified by His blood" (Romans 5:9) - He had to be raised from the dead. Our justification demanded His resurrection. Oh, this is wonderful! What grace began, it

must complete. I say then, that law is silenced forever to faith. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" - Romans 10:4.

"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles" - 3:14. What is that blessing? The very blessing that he received through faith in God's Word of grace. He received "righteousness." Divine righteousness was imputed to him, the moment he believed what God said. Gentiles are from the same ungodly idolatrous stock, have the same great need, and are accounted righteous when they believe on Jesus as truly as was Abraham; hence, they are called "Abraham's seed." "Salvation is of the Lord," and salvation is "by grace ... through faith," for both Jews and Gentiles; this is the teaching throughout the whole Bible.

One Greek word in Romans 3:24 will bring blessing to your soul, if you will take it. It is "dorean," translated "freely." In John 15:25, the same word is rendered "without a cause"; Jesus says to His disciples, "They hated Me without a cause." There was no cause in our Lord for men to hate Him; the cause was in their own hearts - their sin. Just so, God justifies the sinner "dorean," without a cause in the sinner that he should be justified - the cause being in God, in His love. That is grace.

We wonder that anyone can read these pages and sayings of Paul, and still insist on being saved in any measure by works, or on being made perfect by the flesh. Surely, such do not read attentively or believingly. Surely, many do not want to know the truth of divine grace. Here is more grace -

"That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" - 3:14. The one hundred and twenty tarried in Jerusalem, and God fulfilled His promise (Acts 2:1-4); and, likewise, He poured the Holy Spirit out on the Gentiles who by faith listened to and received Peter's words as the words of God - Acts 10:44-46. The promise of the Spirit was received by faith; and now we receive the fact of the promise fulfilled, and receive the Spirit Himself by faith. By faith in Jesus, the ungodly is freely justified from all his past sins. By faith in Jesus, the believer is anointed with the Holy Spirit and power. By faith, we are brought into the Presence of God. By faith in Jesus, we are healed in body. "The just shall live by faith." Those who will be translated, will be translated by faith. All we ever are, or have, is through faith in God's Word of grace. We cannot take one acceptable step in salvation or service, in growth or progress, except through faith. This is the faith chapter of this epistle. Faith occurs here fourteen times.

THE PRE-EMINENT COVENANT

"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" - 3:15.

If I enter into a contract with another, that contract is binding. No man can add to it nor take anything from it. If, in the eyes of the law, legal documents are binding and unchangeable - how much more is God's promise binding which was made to Abraham? Continuing the argument, Paul adds: "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" - 3:17, 18.

How very little these facts are considered. How accustomed people are to put Moses before Abraham, though Abraham was "four hundred and thirty years" before Moses. The covenant of grace was "four hundred and thirty years before the covenant of law. Grace was "four hundred and thirty years" ahead of law. If works of law are essential to salvation, then Abraham and his offspring were only partially saved for four hundred and thirty years. Nay! Nay! Not so! God not only gave His promise to Abraham, but He confirmed it unto Christ. "God ... confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things" (His Word and oath), "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" - Hebrews 6:13-18. This divinely-made, divinely-confirmed covenant cannot be annulled by a later law, even though that law be God-given. Moses can never set Abraham aside, nor give him a second place. God gave him the priority, and Moses must do the same always. Grace can never be displaced nor superseded by law. She was first on the scene, always demands the highest honor, and will always have the first place. Why did James say: "Moses ... hath in every city them that preach him"? - Acts 15:21. Because the people misunderstood the meaning and purpose of law, and because they wished to merit something by self-effort, be it said to their shame. Therefore, let us consider the following pertinent question and answer.

PURPOSE OF THE LAW

"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" - 3:19, 20.

If the law was not intended to make us righteous, nor keep us right (see 2:21; 3:3), why then was it given? This is a very significant query. Thank God, the answer is full and clear. "It was added." Mark that fact. Yes, it was added four hundred and thirty years after the grace-covenant was made to Abraham. Mark that fact, too. Why was it added? To help his followers by purifying them? No! "For the sake of transgressions it was added." The common version says, "Because of transgressions"; not, of course, because the people had transgressed - for there could be no transgression till a law was given to be transgressed. "Sin is not imputed (put to the account) when there is no law" - Romans 5:13. In the above answer, the word rendered "because" is "hyarin" in Greek, which means "grace, favor, kindness." Therefore, this is exactly the meaning: The law was added "for the sake of transgressions" - in favor of, for the furtherance of transgressions, in behalf of, for the very expansion of transgression - that the need of grace might be fully seen.

Generally, people think that God gave man His Law as a guide to rectitude, to curb him and make him live right; it is supposed to have been given to stop transgression, to check sin, to correct the sinner, and be to him a rule of action. But the above Scripture teaches just the contrary. In Romans five and seven we read that "the law entered, that the offense might abound," not to curb it; but to make "sin ... appear sin ... that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." "The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless ..."; that is, for those who refuse the grace of God, in order to show up and bring out to the full their incorrigible lawlessness that they might learn the need of grace. "By the law is the knowledge of sin," but never deliverance nor justification from sin. The law made sin manifest - "For without the law sin was dead" - Romans 5:20; 7:13; I Timothy 1:9, 10; Romans 3:20; 7:8.

SCHOOL IS OUT

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto (until) Christ, that we might be justified by faith" - 3:24.

God appointed this schoolmaster over His people, that they might learn the need of grace. It does not "bring us unto Christ." Note that the phrase, "to bring us," is in italics; that means that it is not in the original text. The word rendered "schoolmaster" means "attending or training boys"; hence, an instructor. Such was the purpose of law. God wanted His people to learn by experience, that by nature they were law-breakers and not law-keepers. Instead of the Schoolmaster's corrections and curbing putting a stop to their offenses, they only brought them out - made the offense to abound, exposed the "lawlessness" of the flesh - I John 3:4 R.V. For fifteen hundred years God's child-trainer the Law was magnifying transgression, swelling it up, making it to abound, making a theater of it, putting it on exhibit, as the inevitable product of unregenerate man. Israel had the most propitious environment to live holy (if that were possible), by a code of rules which were "holy, and just, and good." The law was given, not in stern justice; but even "in the hand of a mediator," Moses. Yet it proved to be "a yoke ... which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" - Acts 15:10. The Schoolmaster blushed, that he could not make men walk uprightly; for he "was weak through the flesh" - Romans 8:3. Man was found utterly helpless and hopeless, "every mouth ... stopped, and all the world ... brought under the judgment of God." The Schoolmaster, though "holy, and just, and good," could justify none; but was compelled to announce that "all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" - Romans 3:19-23 R.V.

Today, justice exclaims of the worst criminal: "He must hang! hang! hang!" Similarly, the last stern relentless utterance of God's holy Law was: "He must crucify! crucify! crucify!" For the thrice repeated venom of the Jews - "Crucify Him" - expressed the extreme hatred of their wicked hearts, which spewed forth the seven times heated lava of hatred against the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The holy Son of God must suffer that very shameful death, in order to satisfy the claims of justice and hush the voice of law forever. The Schoolmaster performed his work unto, or until Christ; and he did it well. Why impose on the Schoolmaster a task which God never called him to do, and which he cannot do?

A MEDIATOR'S HAND

The law was "ordained ... in the hand of a mediator." The Law is absolute in its demands, because it is "holy, and just, and good," and cannot endure sin. It would have cut down the transgressors with one ruthless stroke, if Moses had not mediated - Exodus 32:10, 11, 32. Thus,

grace intervened and made law her servant until Christ came, even as Hagar was the handmaid of Sarah. "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one" - 3:20. God is not divided. His Law agrees with Himself. But a mediator supposes at least three parties. In order to spare the offender and still keep in harmony with the offended law, the gracious God must interpose a mediator. However, Moses was only a typical mediator. "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" - I Timothy 2:5, 6. Here are three parties as plainly stated as can be, in both these citations. First, "a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." That is, a person cannot mediate between himself and an offender. There must be a second person in full accord with him, yet distinct from him, and acting in his behalf. He must also have something in common with the third party. Such indeed was Jesus. He maintained the justice of God and met its claims; but also showed pity, and met the need of the third party - the sinner. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" - II Cor. 5:19. The transgressor became the reconciled one; God was the Reconciler; and the Son of God, Jesus Anointed, was the Mediator or Agent of reconciliation. Are there not three Persons? The teaching of salvation or perfection by law-keeping destroys the mediatorship of Christ; for, if life and growth come through law, then His mediation is not needed; even as law-keeping annuls the Cross, for then His redemption is not needed. "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" - 2:21. On the other hand, the so-called "one God" theory either destroys itself or destroys the plan of redemption, because there can be no mediation without three parties; and there can be no redemption without the definite intervention of Jesus between God and men. Oh, the sublime grandeur of the divine plan of redemption. Oh, the rich beauty and entrancing splendor of the three distinct Personalities: Father, Son, and Spirit, in the one Godhead; the Second subject unto the First, the First and Second operating through the power and agency of the Third, and meanwhile the fulness of the Three dwelling in the Second bodily. Why quibble about what we cannot understand? Why not accept plain statements and enjoy expressed facts, instead of drawing wild conclusions? I repeat it, if the "New Issue" is true (it is not a new issue - the Jews fought a plurality of Persons in the Godhead - John 5:18, 19; Matthew 12:24, 28, 32), then the mediatorship of Jesus is annulled and there is no redemption for us. But if He is our Mediator, then the "New Issue" doctrine falls to pieces, because it denies the Personalities of the Godhead; thus rejecting the two distinct Personalities of Reconciler and Mediator, or of Father and Son.

OUR FREEDOM IN CHRIST

"But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor. For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus" - 3:25, 26 Revised Version.

How glad the children are, when school is over and they can go out free. The schoolmaster has no more jurisdiction over them. They are free. They do as they please, as far as the schoolmaster is concerned. His tutorship over them has ceased forever. They are now subject only to the gracious liberty of their parents. Just so, we are free from the Law in Christ Jesus, having died to it and its claim in His substitutionary death. Hence, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" - Romans 10:4. But if the people, even saints, do not believe in the completeness and sufficiency of Christ's redemption - but insist on earning salvation or perfection by their works - there is no "end of the law"; they will still have a law to keep, and they will have to keep that law with absolute precision which is utterly impossible - Acts 15:10.

When we really see our liberty in Christ, how free we feel! What a happy, easy, delightful life we enjoy. Yes, as far as the voice of the Law is concerned, we do as we please. It has no more to say to us, nor about us. It served its term over us. We graduated at Calvary, the end of the old man. What a glorious "commencement" in our resurrection with Christ. Yes, now we do as our Father pleases, because we live by faith in the Presence and power and victory of the Holy Spirit in us - "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" - Romans 8:4.

Note an important fact here. The parents of the children and the schoolmaster are never together. When the children are under the charge of the tutor, they are absent from the parents; and when they are under the care of the parents, they are absent from the tutor. They cannot be under the jurisdiction of both at the same time. Unmanageable confusion would reign. That is, we cannot be under the rule of grace and law at the same time. Indeed, in Christ, "ye are not under the law, but under grace" - Romans 6:14. Law and grace are not to be found in the same house; for "after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." For this reason, law-keepers

have no fellowship with grace-kept believers. The first are working, fretting, criticizing, anxious; the latter are resting, rejoicing, praying, believing. Sooner or later, one of these parties must pack his trunk and travel.

SCHOOL-LIFE VERSUS HOME-LIFE

Notice, also, the contrast between school-life and the home-life. This is no small item. School begins promptly at a set hour, and every pupil must be on time. Absence, or tardiness, is punished. There are certain rigid rules of order and discipline that everyone must observe - no loud talking, nor running around, nor leaving the room without permission. All must sit erect, and either listen to the tutor or give diligent heed to the study in hand. At recess, all march out in unison, keeping step and moving exactly at the command of the schoolmaster. That is law. Furthermore, their conduct and works are weighed by a rigid scale, and credits or discredits given accordingly. Everything is rigid, frigid, firm, precise, regular, and legal. Every "jot" and "tittle" is required. Nothing escapes the searching notice of the schoolmaster. Severe penalties are attached to disobedience to any of the rules of school. Most certainly it is so; for that is law. Oh, Friend, do you not see it? What an unfeeling, critical, cynical, frigid, unsatisfactory, selfish life, self-righteousness imposes. Oh, how glad I am, that the Pacific Ocean of God's love revealed at Calvary lies between me and such a life. Hallelujah!

On the other hand, how different from school-life is the home-life. The children are each a part of the family. There is no set hour for retiring nor for arising. There is no exact minute for dinner, nor certain length of time, nor certain quantity to eat. The children go out and in, walking or running, at their pleasure. They read, or shout, or sing at will. They are children. They are at home. They are free. Their rule of action is in themselves individually. Wise parents seek prudently to direct the pent-up impulses of the children for their own happiness and usefulness. They do not attempt to bring them under a rigid regime. That is not a typical home where Daisy hears, "Daisy don't," so constantly that she comes to think that "Daisy don't" is her name. That savors of law. Children in a rightly regulated home are under the law of love - the perfect law of family liberty - James 1:25. Such is the radical contrast between the legal life and the grace life. Law makes stern rigid demands, disobedience to which entails severe penalties that cannot be evaded. Grace does not confront us with certain rigid, frigid, precise commands, the meanwhile standing over us with a four-foot hickory. Grace occupies us with boundless blessings and beauty, promising plenty for our poverty, food for our hunger, raiment for our nakedness, and shelter from cold and heat. The law sternly roars, "Keep, obey." Grace lovingly exclaims, "Receive, believe, enjoy, kept." The law declared, "Dying, thou shalt die." Grace shouts, "Blessing I will bless thee," and "Thou shalt be a blessing." Is not this the parent-heart? What deed is too great for a father to do for his son? How unceasingly he seeks to make him happy and prosperous. What immense amounts of money parents spend for their children, if they have it. How highly and completely they seek to educate them. Why? They are showing their children parental favor. How can anyone have a lesser view of our heavenly Father? How slow saints are to learn this great lesson concerning His grace toward His children. The whole Bible is "the Word of His grace" - Acts 20:32. Even the law was only given to serve the children of grace, and not to be served by her children. "The sabbath was made for man" (on which to rest and worship God), "and not man for the sabbath" (to serve the day as a slave). Hallelujah!

A holy, happy, hilarious impulse of liberty instinctively possesses us when we are born of the Spirit. At once we feel like sons, for sons we are. With limitless freedom we would praise God aloud, and boldly declare what great things the Lord hath done for us. Law never enters our thought. But our old self-life now posing to be religious, or some impractical legalist, springs a pious (?) caution - "Don't go too far now. Be careful, lest you fall. Now, you must watch your thoughts and steps." Immediately, a legal fear quells that joyous childlike buoyant freedom. The newborn babe gets occupied with His walk and living, and loses sight of his Savior. Oh, the devilish cruelty of Judaism or self-righteousness. Just as wise would be a strong man who would stand before a babe one hour old, and command it to watch its walk - "Be careful, you might fall out of mother's arms; you might roll out of the crib; you may die." Such is the cruel wisdom and blind logic of law-keeping for "babes in Christ."

Reader, let me ask you: "Who was there to guide Abraham, all the sixty-two years of his faith-life?" There was no law, for that came nearly half a millennium later. I will tell you - God Himself, who pledged His constant Presence. What word had he? The word of promise, plainly spoken. Who have we to guide us today? The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who has

come to abide forever, and guide us into all the truth and show us things to come. He dwells in our bodies His temples - I Cor. 6:19. What word have we? The same word spoken to Abraham, written down together with all the revealed will of God - "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" - II Timothy 3:16, 17. As it was written of Jacob, so it is of everyone who simply trusts God - "so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him" - Deut. 32:12.

PETER'S TWO FAILURES

Grace, divine grace, absolute grace - that is, undeserved salvation, absolutely for nothing - is man's hope. That was proven and made possible by Jesus' death in man's stead on the Cross. Wonderful! Helpless, hopeless, despairing sinners welcome this sweet Message of grace.

With all due regard for his office in God's program and for his effectual ministry, we must call attention to Peter's two blunders; for the Spirit recorded them for our instruction.

People, even believers, throw up their hands in shrieking horror at Peter's denial of Jesus. They say that he backslid, or fell from grace. No, he did not do either. They exclaim, "How terrible that was! What a shame! What a reproach it brought on the cause!" Has anyone yet pointed out the reproach or the shame? Not one. What makes people ashamed of Peter's conduct that day is the fact that he only acted out what is in the old creation, and breaks out in some manner in everybody. Why did they not excommunicate him from the apostleship, and put him on six months probation? Peter was in God's care. God could have prevented that outbreak, though Peter could not. But He sought to prove to Peter, and to us, that though he was "Petros" a stone yet he could not keep himself; but that he was dependent absolutely upon Christ, the "Petra," the Rock. By insisting on washing his feet a few hours before, Jesus had sought to teach Peter his helplessness; but now, He had to let him fail, that he might learn his helplessness by shameful defeat. As long as we are self-sufficient, we will not take Christ. Hence, Peter did not backslide. He was simply overcome by the "sin in the flesh," which he had not counted powerless by counting himself helpless or dead. He did not fall from grace; but he fell from his own high pinnacle of self-sufficiency, exactly to where grace could help him. Grace did help him - "The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter ... And Peter went out and wept bitterly" - Luke 22:61, 62. "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" - I John 2:1. The God of grace expects nothing better from the self-life; neither does He blame the new life for the failure - "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" - Romans 7:20. Then, when we cease trying to be firm and faithful of ourselves but take Christ to be firm and faithful in us, we no longer fail Him.

In Galatians 2:11-14, we saw the time when Peter did fall from grace; when with his eyes open to the Truth, having a knowledge of his own weakness by personal experience, he catered to the Jews and by his actions said that he was not saved except he would keep the Law. Thus, he walked not uprightly; he made himself a transgressor; he thus made "Christ the minister of sin" - 2:17. The Christ, who had saved him and called him into service and filled him with the Spirit, was "become of no effect" unto him; he was "fallen from grace" - 5:4. Now, here is an astonishing fact. This was a far greater sin than denying the Lord; yet we never hear of people being horrified by it. This latter was denying the power of Christ's death. It was saying that Christ Himself must keep the law, and thus be saved. The logic of Peter's conduct in Antioch would demoralize the universe. It was a charge against God's justification of all those who believe His grace. Yet outwardly, Peter was that day the holiest man in the city, because he refused to eat with the Gentiles; but, in God's view, he was a transgressor - "fallen from grace."

Peter denied his Lord because he was overcome by sin in the flesh, whose weakness he had not learned; but here he deliberately denied the Cross, repudiating God's grace, putting himself beyond the reach of grace - under law. This also was due to sin in the flesh - the sin of compromise and dissembling - to which he knowingly yielded, because the Christ-life in him was yet of child size; and, he had not really taken Christ to live in him, as his all-sufficient life. It was well for Peter that God did not treat him according to his actions in the flesh, but according to his unchangeable standing in Christ. It is well for all saved people who are still under law, that our Father sees them in Christ; though He can do nothing for them, cannot show His matchless grace, because they insist in doing for themselves. They will be saved "as by fire"; but their works will be burned if they do not learn, like Peter, that they are fearfully mistaken.

O Friend, remember that the law condemns, works wrath, is the minister of death, was not given

for a righteous man; but it was added to show up sin. The law cannot justify, nor purify, nor make fruitful; it cannot give life, nor sustain, nor feed life already given. It has absolutely nothing to do with life. The law ended its own mission and silenced its own voice, in slaying the Son of God as our Substitute over nineteen hundred years ago. O Friend, grace alone can save. Grace alone can keep. Grace stands with infinite arms and cries, "Though He (Christ) was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" - II Corinthians 8:9.

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" - 3:26. This is an unanswerable reason for our freedom from law. Who has any jurisdiction over a son but his father? What schoolmaster, or law, dare raise its voice against him? NOT ONE! Likewise, no one has any jurisdiction over a saint except our heavenly Father. Therefore, we need to be very sure of being led by the Lord, before we put our hands on another saint. Even the voice of law, though it was God's Voice against the transgressor, dare not speak because it was "made" or enacted not for the righteous. "It was added," it came in subsequently to the grace covenant; and, hence, its voice was forever hushed in the death of Christ. We are as free in Christ, as Christ our Elder Brother Himself. Note the next verse. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" - 3:27. Who is Christ? Whose Son is He? Ali! He is the doubly-worthy victorious Son of God. He grappled with the Law, which exclaimed, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" - Ezekiel 18:4, 20.

By faith, we put on this free victorious Christ, when we are saved. In Him, "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" - 3:28. All caste is broken; all nationality is put away; we are a heavenly race - "Our conversation (citizenship) is in Heaven" - Phil. 3:20. See the folly of organization, and of trying to make harmony and unity by human devices. Rather let us declare what God says - "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Hallelujah! This is grace. Oh, the restful place in experience that faith in these facts brings to the one who actually and practically believes them.

"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" - 3:29.

Finally, lest we do not yet quite understand our place by God's grace, the Holy Spirit once more takes us back to the starting point where God made an oath-bound covenant absolutely of grace with Abraham. In that covenant, He declared that in "thy Seed" shall the nations be blessed. Verse sixteen shows that the promised Seed is one - "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ." How wonderful! These two verses together announce the oneness of Christ. Compare I Corinthians 1:13 and 12:12. Our Father leaves no stone unturned that might have hiding under it a sneaking principle of lawkeeping. Every vestige is exposed.

SAFETY THROUGH CHRIST

Mary M. Bodie

Be of good cheer, thou steadfast Soul,
The Christ has conquered all.
On Him, thy grief and sorrow roll.
No winds may harm, nor squall
Upset thy harque. He will control,
In briny deep, or shallow shoal.
Be of good cheer, brave spirit; thou
Shalt reach the goal. Press on.
Win in the race. Christ will endow
With strength till night is gone.
He'll take thee o'er the sullen brow
Of ev'ry hill. He takes thee now.

THE EXALTED RELATIONSHIP

Chapter Four

"But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a bondservant though he is lord of all; but is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed of the father" - Galatians 4:1, 2 Revised Version.

Here the apostle is employing natural and family relationships to illustrate spiritual relationships.

How wise is our God. How simple He has made the Truth for us! Your child, in fact, is heir of all that you possess; though in actual experience he possesses nothing. Instead, he must be nursed, taught, and governed; though by right he is governor of all. Hence, applying this principle, the apostle continues:

"Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 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" - 4:3-5.

Who were under law? The Children of Israel, of course; not the Gentiles, for the law was never given to them. If any Gentiles are under law today, it is because they have voluntarily put themselves under it; which is a proof that the natural man - the old man - wants to earn the favor of God by doing right, by observing some rules of rectitude, as he supposes. The covenant of grace was given to Israel through Abraham. They should have believed God, and received that grace-covenant with delight and been satisfied therewith. Because they did not believe but wanted to merit His grace (Exodus 19:8), therefore, the Lord gave them a fiery law. "For the sake of transgressions it was added" (3:19 Wuest); that is, to show up transgressions. "The law entered, that the offence might abound" - Romans 5:20. Therefore, Paul says, "Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient" (I Timothy 1:9) among the ancient Israel of God, and not for Gentiles at any time.

God's purpose was to beget sons. Christ came to bring "many sons unto glory" - Hebrews 2:10. But, He must first redeem those under law, from its slavery. To do this, Christ was born of a woman - "God was manifest in the flesh" - I Timothy 3:16. He became under law; that is, He took the place where the people were by their ignorant choice, that He might bring them where grace designed they should be. Christ voluntarily surrendered Himself to the law, in order to release its captives forever. Did He succeed? Yes, verily; He prevailed gloriously. He redeemed them; now "we" - Jews and Gentiles of this age - can receive our sonship. Thank God! "They" had to be freed from law, before "we" could be freed from sin.

THE SPIRIT OF SONSHIP

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" - 4:6.

This is a most glorious truth. Its fullness is not generally understood. Most people suppose that salvation only puts us back into the position of the first Adam before his fall - that is, that we are saved from sin and restored to innocence - thus, the result of sin is simply counteracted and nothing more. That falls far short of the truth. That would be an eternal blight on the wisdom and Power of God. Nay! Verily. We were only creatures in the first Adam; but we are sons in the last Adam, Christ. We were sinless in the first Adam; but we "are sanctified in Christ Jesus" - I Cor. 1:2. We were "of the earth, earthy" in the first; but we are "heavenly" in Christ. We were "natural" in the first; but we are "spiritual" in the last. We were "a servant" in the first; but we are "lord of all" in the last. We are not only as the first Adam, without sin; but we are "partakers of Christ," "partakers of the divine nature," haters of sin.

"The Spirit of His Son" - 4:6. What spirit is that? It is exceedingly important to know. Ignorance at this point is a dangerous inlet for much error today. Is that Spirit the Holy Spirit, called the "Comforter" or "the Spirit of Truth," whom Jesus promised to send? - John 14:16, 17. No, indeed. Bear in mind that Christ is both human and divine. He has His own Spirit as a distinct Personality - a divine human Spirit, for He was "God ... Manifest in the flesh." Did He not possess His own distinct Spirit when He stood upon the bank of Jordan and received the Holy Spirit coming upon Him in a bodily shape as a dove? - Luke 3:22. John 15:26 is significant here - "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." Here are mentioned three Personalities, as plainly and distinctly as can be. The Comforter proceeds from the Father, not from the Son; but He is sent by the Son. Now, while the Son is seated with the Father on His throne in Heaven (Rev. 3:21), the Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus. The Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit or Comforter are clearly distinguished in Romans 8:9-16 - "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption (sonship, or the Spirit of God's Son), whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Then the following verse states that "the Spirit Himself (that is, the Holy Spirit or Comforter) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." In verse nine, we read of "the Spirit of God," in distinction from "the Spirit of Christ"; which latter is called "Christ," in verse ten. "If Christ (the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of

sonship) be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit (the Spirit of Christ in us) is life because of righteousness." In God's sight, we are sons, being begotten of His Spirit who witnesses with us that we are children. Then, when we learn to be led by the Spirit, we are sons in actual experience - Romans 8:14. The Spirit of Christ was guarded and guided by the Holy Spirit. In the power of the latter, not in the power of His own Spirit, Jesus Christ taught and wrought miracles. Likewise, believers walk and work and war in the Power Of the Holy Spirit, if their Christian life is Scriptural and normal. Otherwise, they would move as men, even in the flesh.

"Abba, Father." What is the meaning of this phrase? Keep in mind the preeminent teaching of the chapter; namely, that believers are sons of God rather than servants. It is not an accident that these same words occur in Mark 14:36. In the garden, Jesus prayed thus: "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me: nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou wilt." Mark records the biography of Jesus as the Servant of God and as the sin offering, being made sin for all men - Jews and Gentiles. "Ab" is the Hebrew word "Abram" means "high father," for "father" for example "Abraham" means "father of a multitude." "Pater" is the Greek word for "father." Evidently, "Abba" is the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew. Hence, when Jesus addressed His Father in Gethsemane, He emphasized His Sonship though He was in the place of a servant; and, being the sin offering, He addressed His Father prophetically as the Father of all that should believe on Him whether Jews or Gentiles. Now, when we believe on Jesus Christ, we obtain the same spirit of free sonship; and, likewise, acknowledge God to be our Father - or the Father. We do not receive "the spirit of bondage again unto fear" - Romans 8:15 R.V. "Thou art no more a servant, but a son" - 4:7. The newborn Hebrew, realizing by the Holy Spirit his relation to God and his liberty in Christ, exclaims, "Abba"; the Greek exclaims, "Pater"; and the Englishman exclaims, "Father." When saints invariably address our God as "God," or "the Lord," and seldom or never as "Father," it is evident that they have never received the real spirit of sonship; or, having received it, they have lost it through legality or they are ignorant of their real relationship. Therefore, note the climactic conclusion:

"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" - 4:7.

Servants cannot know their masters as sons know their fathers. Servants cannot have the fellowship of sons. Jesus said to the twelve, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth" - John 15:15. Only sons can know a father's movements. Servants receive only a reward for their labor. Sons inherit their father's possessions. Servants only serve. A son is "lord of all," having others to serve him. Most Christians vainly suppose that they must serve God in order to keep saved, though they were saved by grace at first. They imagine that God is a hard Master, and demands nothing but work, work, work. They do not look upon God as their Father, who desires their fellowship and companionship, who longs to keep and guide and instruct them, and reveal to them all His blessed will. Hence, their lives are labored, sad, and discontented. Like Martha, they complain; when, with Mary, others sit down at the feet of our elder Brother and learn of Him. They never find out the freedom and wealth and enjoyment of sons in this life, nor the eternal fellowship and heirship of sons with the Father in the coming glory. Dear Reader, will you not look into this subject for your own profit and for God's high honor?

IDOLATRY, LEGALITY, SLAVERY

"Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods" - 4:8.

Bondage to law is compared to the slavery of idol worship. If I trust to my own efforts, I make a god of myself. If I attempt to crucify and perfect myself, I am guilty of idolatry, because in that measure God is set aside. The Pharisee said, "God, I thank Thee" (he did not address Him as Father), "that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess" - Luke 18:11, 12. He was his own god. The pronoun "I" occurs five times in his prayer. He adored himself. The publican, needy and helpless, exclaimed, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Many of God's children are guilty of this shameful crime - this pharisaical, idolatrous self-effort, trying to keep and perfect themselves by observing the law, trying to please their heavenly Father by leaving home and surroundings to follow the schoolmaster which was dismissed from duty by the Cross of Christ. Hence, the following plaintive query of the Holy Spirit, the Teacher.

"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?" - 4:9. In the margin, these "elements" are called "rudiments." In Colossians 2:17 they are termed "a shadow"; and there we learn that the shadows were displaced by the Substance, which is Christ Himself. The rudiments or shadows were nailed to the Cross. "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?" - Colossians 2:20. Why return to shadows when the Substance is here? Why be again in bondage to it observe days, and months, and seasons, and years?" - 4:10 R. V. Here, they are called weak and beggarly elements or rudiments or shadows. Why be enslaved by weak rudiments, while the mighty fullness and completeness and liberty of sons are here? Reader, are you in any measure subject to these things, or to eating and drinking, or shadows of good things which have come in Christ? - Col. 2:16, 17. Therefore, the apostle adds in Colossians three, "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." That is, set your mind on the substantial things in Christ, not on the shadows. Live as a new creation, as alive from the dead, as born from above, as seated in the heavenlies with Christ, as drawing your strength from on high; and not as living on earth, measuring your piety by dieting, and by keeping the sabbath day holy, and being "subject to ordinances." Avoid "a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility" (Col. 2:23); but take Christ for your wisdom and humility. Count yourself "complete in Him" - Colossians 2:10. "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" 4:11.

Was Paul fearful lest those Galatians might yet be lost, notwithstanding all his teaching and toil? Nothing of the kind. But he knew that, if they did not go on in grace, they could not grow out of babyhood into fully developed saints. No one can grow by self-effort and law-keeping, which they were vainly attempting to do. The notion that the Christian life mean simply to get saved from sin and go to Heaven when you die is the smallest part of salvation. God never intended for us to remain babies, and then go to Heaven as babies. Babies are to grow into youth, and youth into manhood in Christ. Read in the first epistle of John of "little children," "young men," and "fathers." Paul feared that his Galatian children would fail to grow into manhood. Therefore, he declares that he is in "travail in birth again until Christ be formed" in them - 4:19. As yet, Christ in them was only infantile. See 4:1, 3. To the extent that they remained infants in Christ, his labor would have been in vain. They would not be to him a "joy" and a "crown," as the Philippians - Philippians 4:1. "Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all" - 4:12. How were the Galatians when Paul wrote? They were under law. How had he been before? Under law - 1:14; Phil. 3:5, 6. But, having learned that he was "made dead to the law through the body of Christ" (Romans 7:4 R.V.), he announces his freedom and refuses to be under law any more. Hence, he says to those under bondage, "Be as I am; be free. Be no longer slaves to legality or to ordinances. Ye are sons; enjoy the liberty of sons." Then he assures them that they have not hurt him personally by yielding to legality; but they have injured themselves. He who attempts to save himself or perfect himself by works of law, only destroys himself, because thus he falls from grace (5:4) and departs from divine help.

In 4:13-18, the apostle appeals to their waning devotion to him; for at first they did not despise his infirmity - his weak eyes - but received him as God's messenger, even as Christ Jesus. What a great grief it is to have saints laud one to the skies and speak in most flattering terms of the Word taught and write letters of the highest commendation, and then suddenly turn away from the real saving and edifying truth or spend their means in scattering doctrines directly contrary to what they claimed was Scriptural, wonderful, and indispensable. Why do they do so? They are yet babes. They are not built up in the Truth. Christ is not yet formed in them. They have not yet grown to be "trees of righteousness." Saplings bend and break; but trees stand and withstand. Children are more likely to yield to pious performers' (?) who "zealously affect" them, because carnal zeal is more manifest and brazen-faced than spiritual zeal. The devil resists the latter, but helps the former which is untiring in its efforts. What is the purpose of these zealots? "They would exclude you"; that is, from the fellowship of the real truth and grace of God. The Revised Version exclaims, "Nay, they desire to shut you out, that ye may seek them." Oh, the deep-seated selfishness of law-keeping and self-perfection.

THE REMEDY FOR BABES

"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" - 4:19, 20

Revised Version.

Behold the tender loving address of an unselfish father - "My little children." Paul had begotten them in Christ by preaching the Gospel of grace. He had before travailed in soul for their salvation. Immediately after they were born of the Spirit, he began to travail again; not that they might never be lost, but that the Christ-life in them might take shape and grow up in them. We are all sons in fact by birth, though only children in experience; but, the Holy Spirit seeks to nurture that new heavenly life, that we may become sons indeed in experience. As we were saved by grace, so only can we be enabled to "grow in grace," by "the Word of His grace" - II Peter 3:18; Acts 20:32. Babes in Christ need the pure "milk of the Word" - I Peter 2:2. Ms travail had not yet proved effectual with them. Christ was not formed in them, else they could not have been moved away from the Truth. Therefore, the apostle was at a loss to know what to do for them. If he were present with them, he would change his tender wooing voice to a sound of alarm even as he breaks forth in the next verse - "Tell me!" - 4:21.

Oh, my Friend, this is no small matter. The painful need of the children of God generally is that they see this truth, and truly have Christ formed in them. Is it of small concern to us that here only (and in verse twenty-seven) the word "travail" is used in Paul's writings? His travail for their salvation is only implied by the word "again." Even in his seven other great petitions to God, which saints fail to see because they do not come by this growth route, the word "travail" is not used. This is the vital thing. But who is in soul-travail that Christ be formed in believers? Who sees the need of it? We seldom hear or read of such a doctrine. Frequently it has been said: "We are only a lot of children yet." Then these very parties go right on neglecting the one only means of growth out of childhood. All earnest Christians seem to be concerned for the conversion of sinners, the healing of the sick, and the anointing of believers with the Spirit. But how very few are concerned about the real Scriptural growth of the children! This neglect is criminal.

What would we think of a woman who went on begetting children, with no concern for their nourishment and development and education? But is that not what most of us are doing? Pray tell, how shall any of us become adults in Christ? Surely, not by begetting more children and casting them out on the commons. Nor will human circumscriptions supply this need. If Christ is not formed in them by feeding on the Word of divine grace, they will only be children still, though in a religious corral. Beloved, is Christ forming in you? Are you truly feeding on Him through His Word, and growing up into Him in all things? Have you a deep cry that He be formed in others? Are you joining Paul in his "travail ... again"? Or, are you content to be one of the innumerable company who always close their letters by saying, "Yours in His service," or "Yours for lost souls"? The Lord Jesus has a choice ministry for you - even nursing and training children in grace - if you will apply at His "employment bureau." The government found plenty of nurses for service in the war of 1914-1918, even from believers; but how very few care to toil to build up the holy ones! Let us give ourselves to prayer for a revival of Pauline growth in grace. Let us start a crusade of hearty "partakers of Christ." Let us vie with one another in feeding on Christ, and then in feeding others on the pure "milk of the Word." Immature motherhood in the natural is unfortunate. Why is this not true in the spiritual? A healthy, hearty, robust mother gives birth to robust children. Hannah was barren, and cried and waited long for a son; but, when Samuel was born, he proved to be a choice child. Hannah was abundantly repaid for her many days of waiting and vexed patience and hot scalding tears. Oh, how she held him before the Lord in constant prayer for his growth into, manhood for God's glory, for she had "lent him to the Lord." What was the sequel? He "grew before the Lord." "Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord, and also with men." "Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him." "The Lord revealed Himself to Samuel" - I Samuel 2:21, 26; 3:19, 21. Oh! Hallelujah! It is always so - development results from proper teaching, favor follows growth, and revelation comes to those who accept divine favor.

A MARVELOUS ALLEGORY

"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" - 4:21, 22.

If any one doubts the shadowy and typical purpose of the law and the prophets and their great value in these particulars, this allegory should disabuse his mind. Do you not hear by the voice of the law by its own teaching that it cannot save, but that salvation is by grace alone? That is the meaning of the above words.

First, notice that in this narrative, two women of different nationalities are named as types of opposite truths. The one was an Egyptian, a maid, a bondmaid; the other was a Hebrew, a

woman, a freewoman, a mistress, a princess. The word "bondmaid" should be so rendered every time in this narrative; not "bondwoman," as in verse thirty. Hagar was the one who "hath an husband" (4:27), for Abraham took her. Sarah was the one truly married to Abraham. "Hagar" means "stranger," "one that fears." "Sarah" means "princess." "But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise" - 4:23. God had promised Abraham that through Isaac "Shall all nations be blessed" - 3:8. The fulfillment of this promise was delayed many years, until Abraham and Sarah learned to depend absolutely upon God. Having grown tired of waiting God's time and method, at Sarah's suggestion Abraham took Hagar his wife's handmaid and to them Ishmael was born (Genesis 16). Hence, he is here said to be "born after the flesh." Thirteen years later, when Abraham by his own experience had learned his weakness, God renewed the promise of a son; and, when both Abraham and his wife were past age, Isaac was born to them - Genesis 21:1-3. This birth was "by promise"; that is, his strength to beget and hers to conceive, were both supernatural. Therefore, Sarah "laughed"; and she called her baby "Isaac," which means "laughter." Behold the vast difference between the offspring of the flesh and that by divine promise.

"Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants"; namely, the covenant of law given on Mount Sinai, and the covenant of grace announced to Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the law-covenant. This law-covenant is Hagar - "For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children," being then subject to the Roman government. "But Jerusalem which is above" (of which Sarah is a type) "is free, which is the mother of us all"; that is, saints are born from above, born of the Spirit. The heavenly Jerusalem, the city of grace from which the promise came, is indeed the mother of all who believe on Jesus Christ. Since she "is free," all her children are free also - free born, born independently of any law.

Four hundred and thirty years after the Lord gave a promise or covenant of grace to Abraham, He gave a covenant of law (mingled with or moderated by grace) to Israel - Abraham's descendants - in order that they might learn their inability to do right of themselves and thus learn the absolute need of divine grace. Hagar was not Abraham's wife, in God's will and purpose for him; likewise, faith and law are an illicit union. Their progeny is termed "flesh." Hagar could not bring forth "Isaac" or "laughter"; neither can law. Hagar was not mistress; but she was the slave of Sarah the true mistress. Grace is mistress; and law can only be tolerated as her bondsman. As Hagar was commanded to return and be subject to Sarah (Genesis 16:9), so the law was with Israel in the hand of a mediator (that is, it was subject to grace) until Jesus met its claims at Calvary. Now the word comes forth to "cast out the bondwoman and her son," for Ishmael shall not share in Isaac's inheritance. Law shall not even be tolerated any longer as a servant of grace.

BARREN, YET FRUITFUL

"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" - 4:27.

This is quoted from Isaiah 54:1. Who was barren? Sarah, of course; for Hagar became a mother fourteen years before she did. Sarah was the desolate one. Hagar had the husband. Though Ishmael, Hagar's son, was blessed with "twelve princes" and became "a great nation" (Genesis 17:20), yet Sarah's progeny numbers vastly more. God had before said to Abraham that his descendants should be as the stars of heaven and as the sands of the sea for multitude.

Ishmael's seed was wholly natural, or fleshly; Isaac's seed is both earthly and heavenly. Some spiritual Ishmaelites - that is, people who are under law - are really children of Isaac, because they were born of the Spirit, or saved by grace. Sarah, the Jerusalem above, is their mother. Though legality boasts of its numbers even as Peninnah did against Hannah (I Samuel 1:2, 6), yet grace will have the far greater number, because if men are saved at all they are saved by grace though legal methods be mixed with the truth in dealing with souls. This also indicates how legality will be disappointed in the end, and how workers will be surprised when they learn at last that their carnal schemes have proven fruitless - that most of their results were only "turning over a new (?) leaf," a "do better" kind, reforming the old man, making "clean the outside of the cup and of the platter." Their works will be burned. Not only so, many workers themselves will be weighed in the balance and found wanting. We are warned against "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" - II Corinthians 11:13, 14.

A BLESSED CONCLUSION

"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now" - 4:28, 29. Beloved, do you see all the truth here? Do you note that "of promise" and "after the Spirit," mean the same? Though Isaac's conception and birth were natural, yet they were absolutely dependent upon supernatural intervention - Abraham and Sarah both being past age. They were "after (according to) the Spirit." Likewise, every one who is saved is a child of promise, born according to the Spirit, born of the Spirit, the offspring of grace through faith. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith" - Eph. 2:9; Romans 3:27. Abraham made a great feast for Isaac the day he was weaned. Ishmael, who was now fifteen years old, mocked Isaac - Genesis 21:9. The Holy Spirit calls that "mocking" "persecuted" here. The taunts of the offspring of the flesh - the boasting critical mock of self-perfectionists, of law-keepers against believers in absolute grace - are here termed persecution.

These two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, are types respectively and surely of the offspring of legality and grace. The following prophecy of Ishmael is very true of his religious descendants. "And he shall be as a wild ass among men; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell over against all his brethren" - Genesis 16:12 R.V. "And he died in the presence of all his brethren" - Genesis 25:18. Yet he lives on - mocking, dissatisfied, critical, cynical, uncharitable, cold, self-righteous.

But Isaac - laughing, innocent Isaac! Who would not much rather be an Isaac? If you think that faith in the absolute sovereign grace of God makes people careless, reckless, wanton, lawless, or "do as you please," I pray you, take a look at Isaac. Study his character and career. He was happy and free. He was obedient to his father, even yielding to death by his father's hand, if God had not intervened. God said of him, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called" - Genesis 21:12. The Isaac-life is the only really independent life, because it is wholly dependent upon God. It is most happy and contented because it is not self-conscious, not self-supporting, not self-seeking. It is occupied with Another, and for that Other, even Christ. It is delighted and satisfied with Him. It spontaneously flows out in warm streams of tender blessing to others, even as the very heart of Jesus. It is the offspring of grace, and it dispenses grace. Hallelujah! Hosanna to the Highest! "Nevertheless what saith the Scripture?" Behold, what a serious and important question. Observe the like important answer. "Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman" - 4:30.

Legality demands of us to live a pinched life, enjoying nothing except the carnal satisfaction of self-suppression, self-improvement (?), self-stripping, self-righteousness, designedly "neglecting of the body" and glorying in it. But grace has richly provided all things for our comfort and usefulness. Faith is here instructed to take the full liberty, from law and its fruits, which grace offers. Faith should richly appropriate and enjoy all the provisions of grace, that we may "do good ... be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" - I Timothy 6:18. Our faith must rise and throw off "the yoke of bondage," "which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" (Acts 15:10); turn from "the weak and beggarly rudiments (elements)" - namely, the observance of "days, and months, and seasons, and years" (4:9, 10 R.V.), from eating and drinking, and new moons and sabbath-keeping, from "a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels" (Gospel messengers) - all of which proceed from a "fleshly mind" and are "after the commandments and doctrines of men" - Col. 2:16-23. All of these carnal doctrines, however pious they may seem to be, are signs of real weakness - Romans 14:1, 2. Faith turns from them all, and rests solely and wholly upon "the Word of His grace"; for, in grace, God has given "us richly all things to enjoy" - I Timothy 6:17.

The reason for the casting out of the law and its works is evident. The works of law, or the fruit of self-effort, shall not inherit with the fruit of the Spirit. They cannot agreeably mingle here. There is always unavoidable friction between the legal and the spiritual; for law-keepers cannot be spiritual. The legal cannot inherit the blessings, the joy, the victory, and the glory which the spiritual actually enjoy here. They do not understand us, but are envious of our riches; even as Ishmael did not know Isaac's real spirit and place, but was envious of his being at the head of the table. Neither will the legal obtain the hereafter inheritance, the reward of love-service, the gracious joint-reign with Christ, because they do not reign here. "Much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life (this present life) by One, Jesus Christ" - Romans 5:17. How much more shall their reign in the glory be, as a result of

having appropriated God's grace on earth! "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" - Romans 5:21. Hear the sweet finale - "Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a handmaid, but of the freewoman" - Gal. 4:31 R.V. From every point of the compass of study, we arrive at the same destination - the law has no claim upon us, its voice is silenced forever. "Ye are not under the law, but under grace" - Romans 6:14. We are not saved, or kept, or improved, or made more pleasing to the Lord, by our own carnal law-keeping. "The just shall live by faith," not by works. "My ways which be in Christ" (I Cor. 4:17) are so because "Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20), and not by any unbelieving struggle of my own.

POSITIVES ABOUT GRACE PEOPLE

1. Children of grace are children of God - Romans 8:15, 16.
 2. Children of grace are born again - born of the Spirit - John 3:5.
 3. Children of grace are heavenly - born from above - John 1:13.
 4. Children of grace are called sons, not servants - Galatians 4:6, 7.
 5. Children of grace are born free - Galatians 5:1.
 6. Children of grace are born happy - Isaac means "laughter" - Galatians 4:28.
 7. Children of grace are heirs of God - Romans 8:17.
 8. Children of grace outnumber those of law - even as the sand of the sea, and as the stars of heaven - Galatians 4:27.
 9. Children of grace have no rudiments, or shadows, of the world to observe - Colossians 2:8-23.
 10. Children of grace are born according to promise, not after the flesh - Galatians 3:22.
 11. Children of grace never persecute; but they are persecuted by legalists - Galatians 4:29.
 12. Children of grace are led by the Spirit - Galatians 5:18.
- Hallelujah! They "rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks" - I Thessalonians 5: 16-18.

"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 20:32.

THE LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

Chapter Five

"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" - 5:1, 2.

By carefully reading the Word, we find that God never gives an exhortation without previously announcing some ground for that exhortation. That ground is always some wise and full divine provision by which we are enabled to keep the charge. Hence, the word "therefore," in the above verse, points back to the divine arguments and provisions of the four preceding chapters. In those chapters, we have observed at least twelve reasons for standing fast in the freedom of grace:

1. "Called you into the grace of Christ" - 1:6.
 2. Paul's twelve powerful proofs that he preached "the Gospel of Christ" - chapters two and three.
 3. "Christ ... set forth, crucified among you" - 3:1. Then there is no need of self-crucifixion.
 4. "Received ye the Spirit ... by the hearing of faith?" - 3:2.
 5. Miracles wrought by faith, not by works of law - 3:5.
 6. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" - 3:13.
 7. "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse" - 3:10. What a solemn statement! Do you wonder why they are not happy?
 8. God's grace-covenant with Abraham - received by faith alone - was signified, signed, and sealed by circumcision four hundred and thirty years before the law was given - 3:6-9, 16-18; Romans 4:11.
 9. "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto (until) Christ," but it was not our savior - 3:24.
 10. "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" - 4:7.
 11. The heavenly Jerusalem, our mother Sarah, is free; hence, we too are free, being born according to promise, born after the Spirit - 4:22-29.
 12. Finally, we are admonished to "cast out the bondwoman and her son" - 4:30.
- Why shall Christ profit us nothing, if we be circumcised? In the first place, circumcision was never required as a means of salvation. It was only "a token" of God's covenant of grace, and a "sign"

and "seal" of faith on Abraham's part. Then after the law was given, Israel's legal heart made circumcision a law; they classed it with Moses' law, and demanded its observance in order to be saved. Now, since circumcision was but a symbol of death which was wrought "by the circumcision of Christ" in His death on Calvary (Col. 2:11) its observance today is counted with "the works of the flesh," "the works of the law" - 5:19; 3:2. It puts us in the Cain class, which God condemned at the beginning - Genesis 4:3-7. God's way of salvation is for our comfort and usefulness. Faith through the death of His Son was typified by Abel's accepted offering; that is, by the shed blood of another, and not by shedding one's own blood by circumcision. The one plan of salvation offsets the other. If by work, then Christ's salvation is useless. Self-effort, especially expressed here by circumcision, is a blasphemous blow at the redemption of Christ. It argues that His plan is not sufficient. Hence, the stern declaration - "If ye be circumcised" - if you attempt to save yourself by water baptism, or by catechism, or by the Lord's supper, or by keeping the Sabbath, or by any means other than faith in the finished and sufficient work of Calvary - "Christ shall profit you nothing." Then, the apostle repeats what he declared before, that the law-keeper "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" - 5:4.

If we claim to be justified by law, we are no longer justified by grace. Accepting another as your mother is renouncing your real mother. Here we have the correct definition of that mysterious phrase, "fallen from grace." If a believer gets drunk, fights with his neighbor, commits adultery, or such like, he is said to have "fallen from grace." Certainly, that is not the teaching here. Those Galatians were doing just the opposite. They were endeavoring to perfect themselves by not doing these wicked things, but by killing themselves by inches - observing circumcision and "days, and months, and times, and years" - 4:10. Thus, turned from dependence upon God to their own works of law, they fell from grace. They put themselves where grace could not reach them; namely, under law.

When saints are overcome by their own weakness, it is because of "sin in the flesh." This domestic foe they have not yet discovered; or, if they have, they have not exactly located him or they have not learned the divine way of victory over him. These do not boast in their own strength; but they deplore their weaknesses and failures. They are not "fallen from grace" when they fail God; they are just the ones whom grace can help. Grace does help them when they cry to her. Praise God! Those who have learned the sinfulness of sin and the utter weakness of the flesh and are glad for such knowledge, and have put all the responsibility of their victory and keeping on the Lord, those are eternally safe.

"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" - 5:5, 6.

"We," that is, all who are counted righteous because of accepting God's grace are not fallen from grace, even though at times there may appear signs of weakness. By faith we have received the spirit of sonship, and our standing as sons is perfect, because God accepts us in Christ (Eph. 1:6). But we are also "waiting for the adoption (sonship), to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope" - Romans 8:23, 24. As to our heart, or spirit, we are saved by faith. We have "a new heart and a new spirit." But as to our body, "we are saved by hope," for we have not yet received our new bodies; but we still tabernacle in a body of "humiliation," a "mortal body," an earthen vessel. Though we are counted righteous because we put on Christ by faith, yet our full-orbed righteousness cannot be realized and manifested until Jesus comes and changes "our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body" - Phil. 3:21. What self-effort hopes to accomplish here and even claims to have accomplished - namely, entire perfection, immortality in this present life - this absolute perfection we hope through grace to enjoy after Jesus comes. Then to eternity our triumphant song will be, "Salvation is of the Lord" - Jonah 2:9.

CIRCUMCISION DEFINED

What were the meaning and purpose of circumcision? Like everything which God has ordered, it had its place and relative importance. When the Lord confirmed His promise to Abraham that a son should be born to him, He required him and all his servants to be circumcised as "a token of the covenant" - Genesis 17:11. Abraham obeyed. After this, Isaac was born. Because "Abraham believed God," He counted his faith "unto him for righteousness." But, the Holy Spirit declares boldly, that his faith was counted for righteousness BEFORE he was circumcised. That is, he was righteous because he believed God, not because he became circumcised. He observed the rite

of circumcision because he was counted righteous for believing God, and as an expression of his faith. "He received (from God) the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe" - Romans 4:9-12. Mark it well then, that circumcision was never intended to be a means of salvation, not even a shadow. It was only a token, a sign, a seal.

Consider Colossians 2:9-14, where we learn that circumcision literally means "to cut off"; hence, "to put to death." "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." Jesus was circumcised at the age of eight days, in order to fulfill the covenant-token required by Abraham; but that was a plain prefiguring of His actual cutting off by tasting "death for every man" on Calvary. This actual cutting off is here called "the circumcision of Christ." When Abraham observed that rite, he thereby acknowledged God's just judgment upon the flesh that He was forever done with it; and through the Son of promise, the supernatural Gift of grace, God would bring in a new line - a faith progeny. The figurative rite was by human hand; but the real circumcision was by divine power. Our burial with Christ in baptism is here mentioned in the past perfect tense - "having been buried with Him" - (Col. 2:12 R.V.) - because that too was first figurative. Jesus went beneath the crest of Jordan, thus in symbol identifying Himself with us in death; for we too, in figure, went down into the baptismal font with Him.

Circumcision was a token, a sign, a seal until the Cross; even as water baptism is a token, a sign, a symbol since the Cross. The first pointed forward; the last points backward. The former said, "Death to all flesh shall come through the death of Christ." Baptism declares more - "Death to all flesh has come through the death of Christ; and also resurrection to all who believe to walk in newness of life to die no more forever." Hallelujah! Hence (lest we behold only the shadow, the figure), these sweeping words - "Having been entombed with Him in the placing into (Christ by the Holy Spirit), in which act of placing into (Christ) you were also raised with Him through your faith in the effectual working energy of the God who raised Him out from among the dead" - Col. 2:12 Wuest. How do people observe the spirit of circumcision today? By being baptized in water in order to be saved, by counting the baptismal water to be the blood of Christ, by demanding that people must speak in tongues, or they are not saved. Some taught, in apostolic days, that circumcision was essential to salvation - Acts 15:1. Men are daring enough today, to teach that water baptism is essential to salvation. Circumcision was pronounced an unbearable "yoke." When baptism is made to serve more than as a loving symbol of our death, burial, and resurrection with Christ, it also is a "yoke of bondage." Those who attempt to perfect themselves in the flesh - trying to kill themselves to sin, seeking a self-crucifixion, or a deeper crucifixion - do in spirit circumcise themselves again. In that sense and to that extent, Christ is of no effect unto them.

"Faith which worketh by love" - they cannot understand. In a general way, such people have faith in God, if they are saved; but, as to the specifications of a victorious life in Christ, they know nothing and it seems they do not care to know. There is a kind of so-called faith, a legal faith, a faith working by works, a hollering faith, a long-prayer faith, a strenuous-effort faith, a boasting-in-self kind of faith (if we may call that faith), which cannot see the grace of God. But pure faith shows itself by working the "good works," to which we were "created in Christ Jesus ... which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" - Eph. 2:10. This is "the faith of the Son of God." It works by love, if it works at all. This is the faith that availeth. Hear it, my friend. This is the faith that honors Jehovah, that accompanies the Holy Spirit, that complies with the Word, and deeply delights the heart of the Anointed One. It rests wholly and solely and joyously upon the grace of God.

A GOOD BEGINNING - BUT -

"Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the Truth? This persuasion cometh not of Him that caueth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" - 5:7-9.

Here the apostle repeats, only in fewer words, what he said in chapter three. Their salvation began by believing that Christ died for the ungodly - the full expression of divine grace. They were saved by faith alone, wholly apart from works. In this faith and freedom they went on, until some would-be pious fellows came and sowed leaven. Paul asks, "Have you considered the real character and motives of those who did drive you back? They are not Godlike. Their persuasion did not come from the God of grace. That persuasion is leaven." Some think that leaven in the parables (Matthew 13) means the Gospel seed sown in men's hearts. That is far from the truth.

Leaven is never used in a good sense in the Bible. Jesus called the "hypocrisy" of the Pharisees and "the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" leaven. The natural action of leaven is to puff up; it is a make-believe. Faith working by love does not puff up. Love builds up. We are warned against the leaven of carnal glorying and of malice and wickedness - I Cor. 5:8. Paul there exhorts us to "purge out therefore the old leaven" - I Cor. 5:7. Here he shows its widespread damaging effects - "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"; that is, a little teaching of law-keeping soon defiles and poisons and puffs up the whole assembly.

Galatians 5:10 shows that Paul had learned to "have no confidence in the flesh," but to have full confidence in the Lord touching His people - Phil. 3:3. Compare also II Thess. 3:4. He also rested in God's faithfulness; and He would in due time deal justly with Judaizers. "For it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" - Romans 12:19. Pastors and parents and all of us need to learn these valuable lessons; namely, that God can work in the saints by His Word and Spirit the good pleasure of His will, and that He will check evil doers and reward them for their deeds.

"And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offence of the Cross ceased" - 5:11.

Law-keeping does not provoke persecution. Just begin to walk dignified in your own strength; be very punctilious about your conduct, eating, dress, conversation, and your pious habits in general. Then folks will leave you alone; you will have an easy time. They will throw "bouquets" at you - "What a fine fellow he is. He lives above reproach. I tell you he is a saint, if there is one anywhere." Yes, but the gracious Holy Spirit takes a back seat. And over against that carnal commendation stand the blasting words of Jesus Christ - "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" - Luke 16:15.

On the other hand, the preaching of the Cross and the living in its victory are foolishness to the natural man. They provoke ridicule and scorn. Preaching Calvary is a stinging offense to the flesh, because it exposes its sinfulness and pronounces death. The flesh, whether in believers or unbelievers, is the same. Ishmael, the fruit of self-effort - mocked Isaac, the fruit of faith. It is a very solemn fact, that the spirit of murder is in law-keepers, though most of them do not know it. Cain is an example. He was religious. "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord" - Genesis 4:3. But God could not accept his offering because there was no blood shed, no expression that he felt guilty, no atonement for his past sins. His offering was the result of his own carnal effort, and he was saying that no one had to die for him. And, because the Lord rejected him but accepted Abel, he enviously slew his brother whose blood crieth unto God from the ground against every self-savior and self-perfectionist ever since. The offense of preaching Christ crucified never ends.

"THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY"

"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" - 5:13, 14.

What a limitless largeness we are brought into by being "called ... into the grace of Christ" - 1:6. We are drawn on by "the liberty of the glory" (Romans 8:21 R.V.), while governed by "the perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25). What a sure safeguard to that liberty! Critics exclaim: "Well, then, you can do as you please." Statements like that, only show that such people do not know the Gospel. They know that they have an incorrigible old man which, if not curbed, will run riot. But they fail to see that believers have a new sinless heavenly life and, therefore, are a new creation. They do not understand that the same grace that grants this new life boundless liberty has, once for all, executed that old incorrigible fellow in the death of Christ. When we count with God, He assumes the control of the uncontrollable, while the new life enjoys its freedom in Christ. We are then enabled to "walk in newness of life" - Romans 6:4. This new creation never pleases the flesh; hence, it never pleases law-keepers. It seeks only to please God; it seeks to know the will of God.

But, being still in a weak body because sin is not actually taken out of us, there will arise clamorings of the old life when God wisely allows them; that we may learn by experience what is in the old creation. Then we are not to yield to those clamorings, but yield to God - Romans 6:13. We are not to seek the comfort of the old man, nor the comfort of other people. Our freedom in grace has no bounds save the will of God Himself. We are not to depend on man's reason, nor on man's standard of righteousness, nor on any fixed rule of rectitude, nor on human sympathy.

Even God's written law, which is "holy, and just, and good," cannot make us righteous. Jesus and His disciples broke the law of Sabbath-keeping when they "plucked the ears of corn, and did eat"; but, He was doing His Father's perfect will, because His grace-will was before His law-will by four hundred years.

Consider the law. The ten commandments are a code of cold negations. Eleven times we read, "Thou shalt not." A life in grace is far more than simply "not" doing. It is a spontaneous, joyous, fruitful life flowing out from God upon others, and returning back to Him for His glory. Truly, "all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The natural man can never do that; neither can the law-keeper. Jesus sums up the whole law by saying, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself" - Luke 10:27. How can that be done? Here is the answer - "The love of God has been poured out in our hearts and still floods them through the agency of the Holy Spirit who was given to us" - Romans 5:5 Wuest. "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" - Galatians 2:20.

Wonderful provision! Wonderful freedom!

THE FLESH, THE LAW, THE SPIRIT

"But I say, Through the instrumentality of the Spirit habitually order your manner of life, and you will in no wise execute the passionate desire of the evil nature, for the evil nature constantly has a strong desire to suppress the Spirit, and the Spirit constantly has a strong desire to suppress the evil nature. And these are entrenched in an attitude of mutual opposition to one another so that you may not do the things that you desire to do. But if you are being led by the Spirit you are not under law" - 5:16-18 Wuest.

The flesh is our element, our home in the natural - "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." The Holy Spirit is our element, our Home as new creatures in Christ Jesus - "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." See John 3:6; Romans 8:8, 9; I Cor. 15:45-49. Likewise, verse twenty-five teaches that the Spirit is our Home - "If we live in the Spirit." Now though the Holy Spirit is our Home from the moment of our spiritual birth, yet we learn to walk in the Spirit and to be led by the Spirit. Children in grace, first walk in the Spirit by being subject to the instruction of adults in the Lord. By thus moving on with the assembly, by and by they learn to walk in the Spirit; not independent of others, but without leaning upon them, yet in fellowship with them. Each one is led by the Spirit; hence, he is termed a son - "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" - Romans 8:14. Such become the fathers and mothers in the assembly.

By walking in the Spirit, we keep aloof from law. We "are not under the law." We do not try to keep the ten commandments. We simply move with the Spirit. We do not try to keep from stealing or lying. We do not try to love God and our neighbors. Love cannot help loving God and all His will. "Love" not only does not he nor steal, but "thinketh no evil." We simply trust God. To attempt to do or not do any part of the law is to step aside from the Spirit-walk, or the faith-life, into the flesh-life.

THE WORKS OF FLESH

"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" - 5:19-21.

The "such like," unmentioned here, are recorded in Romans one - the darkest catalogue of man's deeds. Observe that over against these seventeen "works of the flesh" is set the ninefold "fruit of the Spirit" - 5:22, 23. "Works" versus "fruit." "The works of the flesh" are unnumbered; "the fruit of the Spirit" is one. Saints often say, "fruits of the Spirit," as if there were more than one. Ignorance is constantly dividing what God counts one. "One Spirit" produces one fruit. Paul's uniform teaching was, "that they who practise such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God" - 5:21 R.V. The unregenerate man practices what he is. By no means can he enter the Kingdom by his deeds, be they ever so pious or self-sacrificing. "Ye must be born again," said Jesus. They who practise the works of the flesh are not "Christ's"; for "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections (or passions and desires) and lusts" - 5:24. That is, they acknowledge that

their flesh with its longings was nailed to Calvary's Cross. This has no reference to present personal self-crucifixion. We did not crucify the flesh by making a consecration, nor by a daily process of religious suicide. Colossians 2:11 makes this plain - "Ye are circumcised (cut off) ... by the circumcision of Christ," and not by your own cutting off. According to God's infallible ledger, we "have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" in the crucifixion of our old man with Christ. Our experience of that crucifixion began when we, by faith in the fact of it, "put off the old man with his deeds"; and, by the same act of faith, "put on the new man" in accepting Christ as Savior. At that moment, God began to count us a new creation, and we began to "live in the Spirit" of whom we were born. Hence, the apostle says here, "If (or since) we live in the Spirit (inasmuch as the Spirit is our Home), let us also walk in the Spirit." Let us be done forever with the flesh - "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another," by fleshly zeal and carnal righteousness.

The flesh, with all its works, is at variance with the Spirit; but, we are not to enter the fray against it, save only to believe and rest in the power and faithfulness of the Holy Spirit. Then our own flesh, or another's, can never conquer us. Our attitude to the flesh is illustrated by Israel and Amalek. The latter stands for the flesh. "And Jehovah said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under Heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi (Jehovah is my banner); and he said, Jehovah hath sworn (because there is a hand against the throne of Jehovah; a hand is lifted up upon the throne of Jah): Jehovah will have war with Amalek from generation to generation" - Exodus 17:14-16 R.V. Israel had only to trust God. He did the fighting. Victory was sure to them as they believed Him. Likewise, "the mind of the flesh is enmity against God" - Romans 8:7 R.V. The Spirit desires against the flesh. We by faith hand it over to the Spirit - "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" - Romans 8:13. Then its power is broken by divine power. Then the law cannot touch us, for we are in the grace realm. Then the devil cannot harm us, because our "life is hid with Christ in God" - Col. 3:3. Glory! Glory!

Notice, in the above list, two kinds of flesh works: The outward - such as adultery, strife, and drunkenness; and the inward - as idolatry, hatred, and envying. It is a sad fact that some saints do not understand the two natures in believers, and that our old nature was nailed to the Cross, and that we are new creatures in Christ; therefore, they do not see the true meaning of the works of the flesh in this connection. These same people may apparently have real victory over the outward works of the flesh, but be rampant with the inward works thereof. They throw up their hands in holy (?) horror at the appearance of fornication, drunkenness, and murder; the meanwhile rankling with variance, hatred, envy, heresies, and the like. They glory in their outward self-conquest; and call down judgment upon those who aim to "walk in the Spirit," and are learning their own weakness, being perchance overcome by "sin in the flesh." They term their emulations, "Zeal for God"; and their wrath, "Holy indignation"; and their self-control, "Perfection." Outwardly, they are pious; inwardly, they are furious. Outwardly, they keep the letter of the law. They are punctilious about their attitude toward men; but are shamefully out of fellowship with God.

Furthermore, beloved, there is an inward adultery which accepts another as head rather than Christ. There is a fornication that assumes the headship which belongs only to Christ. There is an inward uncleanness that sets the affections on the creature. There is inward lasciviousness, extravagance of desire, an inward idolatry - all of which are carnal, though they may seem very pious and wise. I dare say that these are far more abominable in God's sight than the same works outwardly shown, because the former do not seem to need the grace of God, being hidden from man's eye; but the latter know their weakness and need. Only those who accept Christ alone as their only life can understand what I mean by these reflections. Many people are constantly doing fleshly things in a religious garb, supposing to do God service. Most of religious effort today is carnal, people not knowing that everything a believer does out of God's will is fleshly, no matter how pious and prudent it may appear. They cannot do otherwise, as long as Christ has not become by definite choice their life. They will be saved as by fire; their works will be burned - I Corinthians 3:15.

"THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT"

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" - 5:22, 23.

What a constellation of illumination shines about the real believer; for these qualities radiate from his very inner man. There are nine - three times three, divinity multiplied by divinity - the full effulgent exhibition of the character of "the God of all grace" in a bloodwashed human life. There are not nine fruits; but nine facial expressions of one fruit - nine colors blending in one, on one lobe. What only can we say? It is "the fruit of the Spirit." These nine features are inseparable. Where one is, all the others are, though they may not all be manifested at the same moment. They are indeed the certain product of the Holy Spirit in us. How foolish that the natural man, or a believer, should attempt by his own effort to produce such fruit. Yet, men are palming off their own human love, patience, and goodness as the fruit of the Spirit.

Observe that they appear in three distinct groups:

1. Love, joy, and peace express our attitudes toward God and men.
2. Longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness are our attitudes toward men only.
3. Faith, meekness, and temperance enable us to make the second group practical.

In Isaiah 61:3, saints are called - "Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." These trees bring forth fruit because of the fruit-bringing life within them. Jesus "came and sought fruit" on the "fig tree"; that is, the Jewish nation (which stands for the very best the old creation can produce), but He found none. Now He seeks fruit only from the new creation. Shall we not feed Him? The heavenly "Husbandman ... must be first partake of the fruits" - II Timothy 2:6. We feed on Christ. The Father feeds on the Christ in us. Shall we not most gladly refresh and rejoice His loving heart? Shall He not henceforth see only Christ in us? How?

Following is the answer:

Cease from your own works, "as God did from His" - Hebrews 4:10. Count your old life dead. Count Christ only to be your life; and count that very Christ-life continually dependent upon the Father, even as Jesus was - "As for Myself, I am not able to be doing even one thing by Myself. Even as I hear, I judge" - John 5:30 Wuest. Let the Holy Spirit reveal Christ in you more and more, causing you to "grow up into Him in all things" - Eph. 4:15. "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly"; and you will constantly and unconsciously bring forth "much fruit," even "the fruit of the Spirit."

POSITIVES ABOUT THE SPIRIT

1. Christ crucified is the ground for receiving the Spirit through faith - 3:13, 14.
2. The Spirit is ministered by the word of faith - 3:5.
3. The Galatians began in the Spirit - 3:3.
4. The Galatians received the Spirit by the hearing of faith - 3:2.
5. Grace believers are born after the Spirit - 4:29.
6. Believers live in the Spirit. He is their Home - 5:25. Compare Romans 8:9.
7. Walking in the Spirit gives victory over the flesh - 5:16.
8. If we are led by the Spirit, law has no jurisdiction over us - 5:18; Romans 8: 14, 15.
9. The fruit of the Spirit is ninefold - 5:22, 23.
10. The fruit of the Spirit is not subject to law - 5:18, 23.
11. The flesh and the Spirit are diametrically opposed - 5:17.
12. Finally and gloriously - "He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" - 6:8.

THE VISION

The world, I thought, belonged to me -
Goods, gold and people, land and sea -
Where'er I walked beneath God's sky,
In those old days, my word Was "I."
Years passed; there flashed, my pathway near,
The fragment of a vision dear.
My former word no more sufficed.
And what I said was - "I and Christ."
And then the more I looked on Him,
His glory grew, while mine grew dim.
I shrank so small. He towered so high.
All I dared say was - "Christ and I."
Years more the vision held its place,

And looked me steadily in the face.
I speak now in a humbler tone.
And what I say is - "Christ alone."

CONCLUDING COUNSELS

Chapter Six

"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" - Galatians 6:1.

This implies that some of those Galatian Christians were spiritual. They were not all under law. They were to do their part in recovering the legal from legality, or from any offense by which they might be overcome. The spiritual dare not boast of their spirituality. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" They, too, may be tempted; for they still dwell in a mortal body. No matter how spiritual we may become, we can glory in the Cross only - 6:14.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" - 6:2.

The law of Christ is to "love thy neighbour as thyself." A man's fault becomes to him a burden, a pressure, a grief; especially when he discovers that he is wrong. Satan, of course, is the original cause of that offense. Therefore, the oppressed one needs the help of the spiritual, who are to get under the burden and lift it off.

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" - 6:3.

The root cause of being overtaken is one's own self-conceit. Law-keepers are invariably conceited; for the old man always thinks more highly of himself than he ought. If the spiritual yield to the conceit of their own flesh, they are also overtaken by a fault. Self-sufficiency is sure to have a tumble.

"But let every man prove his own work" - 6:4.

If he is a self-effort man, let him prove by the outcome of his effort that it is acceptable to God. If he is a grace man - that is, spiritual - let him also prove the acceptance of his work by its outcome. The latter cannot be faulty, cannot depreciate the work of redemption, because he is depending upon the Lord alone. He finds his God sufficient. Hence, "shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone" (6:4 R.V.), because he trusts Christ only. Let the other do likewise, if he can. But, how can he, since he is his own god?

"For each man shall bear his own burden" - 6:5 R.V. This does not contradict verse two. The Greek words translated "burden," in these two verses, are not the same. In the former, the word means "pressure, grief, or misery arising from defeat or failure." In this verse, it means "a load." Each is to help the other bear his grief; but each is to carry his own load, and do the work assigned to him. God gives ability for service to him who trusts Him; but He cannot give help to him who trusts in his own wisdom or strength. It is not true that "God helps those who help themselves." He helps the helpless. He is strength to the weak.

"Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" - 6:6, 7.

Not every teacher really teaches "in all good things." To teach law-keeping or self-improvement is not good at all. If your teacher instructs you by the Word of divine grace, you should support him with your substance as a thank-offering to the God of grace. Is giving a duty? Yes, verily. See Romans 15:27. Jesus said, "Freely ye have received, freely give" - Matthew 10:8. But it is also a blessed co-operative privilege - "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal (material) things?" - I Cor. 9:11. There is scarcely a stronger test of loyalty to truth than giving. "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" - Luke 16:11. He that withholds his money from God's service does not love God's Truth, no matter how tall his testimony may be.

"Be not deceived." Not every religious enterprise is God's cause. Not all that seems pious is really so. Not every preacher and teacher is God-sent. Of course, those Judaizers received abundant support from the dear Galatians whom they deceived. Carnal workers always receive more financial aid than spiritual workers. Why? Because their hearers are only babes. They do not know what is Truth. Fleshly efforts are pompously pious, spectacular, big, and showy. Leaven puffs up. Such workers also work their hearers for support. The flesh life being in preponderance in them, they freely respond to the fleshly labors and demands of the workers. But spiritual workers trust Him whom they serve. They receive their appointment and equipment from God,

and He is their "Paymaster." Many have told me that they would help me, if I would tell them my needs. But it is written, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." Those who trust God only always get what they need; but not what their flesh may want. "God is not mocked." You cannot expect a reward from Him for helping to propagate error. Many of God's people are giving thousands of dollars for which they will receive no recompense save the deceived satisfaction of having given something.

"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" - 6:7, 8.

This is an unchangeable law. Sow wheat, and you reap wheat; sow chess, and you reap chess. Likewise, if you propagate self-righteousness, self-improvement, self-crucifixion, and law-keeping, you will reap a carnal harvest. Support the carnal with your means, and there will appear over against your liberality the sad credit - "Waste." Your hard earnings will go up in smoke; for the building of wood and hay and stubble will be burned - I Cor. 3:12-15. But if you sow to the Spirit, that is, if you help to propagate the Word of grace whose teaching is gold and silver and precious stones - you will receive a reward from God, an eternal reward, according to your deeds. Reader, remember that the Holy Spirit operates only along grace lines, showing up all the sinfulness of sin and the horridness and depravity of the flesh; and hence, magnifies the Cross of Christ, through which alone we can be saved by faith.

The apostle is not speaking here primarily of salvation, but of compensation for service. If you support carnal institutions, you will not reap damnation or separation from God; but you will reap corruption. The teaching you support, corrupts, defiles, and disintegrates, instead of feeding and building up. You will be "saved; yet so as by fire," but your works will be burned. If you scatter the Truth, the very beginning of which in experience is eternal life through faith in Jesus, your harvest will also be of life - even eternal life. Your own spiritual life will grow in giving out the Truth to others; and, at harvest time, you will rejoice to see the abundant life in those whom you taught here by giving of your earnings. Therefore, two exhortations follow.

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" - 6:9. The harvest day will be on schedule time. Unfainting sowing is the condition of harvest reaping; but faith alone is the condition of eternal salvation - John 5:24.

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" - 6:10.

How can we do good to sinners? Not by reforming them, nor educating them, nor building almshouses for them. These are not the mission of the Church. How then? Preach Christ unto them. Offer them salvation through Him. Men "dead in trespasses and sins" must hear the Word of life and be born again. There is an "especially" here, which is generally overlooked. Our chief ministry is "unto them who are of the household of faith." The majority of saints are deceived in this particular. The flesh exclaims, "Oh, you are lazy, you are just a self-admiration society, you do not care for sinners. Oh, they have no power; they are dry; they are all taken up with studying the Word." Of course, such people do not know that they know nothing but have only a childhood experience. They know God's Word so little that they have no love for it, and no sense of the need of understanding it. They have a very meager idea of the wideness and depth of God's will. They do not know that the whole Bible was written to the Lord's people, incidentally describing the nature, career, and destiny of the wicked. Thirteen of Paul's epistles are addressed to the Church, or to some member of it. Study Ephesians 4:11-15, a portion criminally neglected.

"Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand" - 6:11.

Because of his weak eyes, intimated in 4:15, the apostle mentions the size of the characters in his letter to them. He wrote with large characters. This is one of the infirmities in which he gloried. Christ was magnified through Paul's weakness. This he sets over against the carnal boast of legalists. Hence, we have the following verse:

"As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the Cross of Christ" - 6:12.

By way of review, look at the spirit and motives of Judaizers. They are saint-troublers and Gospel-perverters - 1:7; 5:12. They are "false brethren," liberty-spies, slave-makers - 2:4. They are sorcerers - 3:1. This is God's view of legalism. They are saint-seekers and door-shutters, all for their own sake. But love "seeketh not her own." They are Cross-shunners, for the flesh denies our death with Christ; but, it would fain be crucified on its own self-erected cross, that it may

boast in its own effort. Self-killing brings no persecution. It wears a solemn face, walks uprightly, bows piously, and seems very humble and holy. Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, They have their reward"; that is, they receive the plaudits of other people. But Jesus also declared, "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" - Luke 16:15. They are self-exhibitors - "desire to make a fair shew in the flesh." True humility, salvation by grace, victory through grace, never seek to make any kind of a show. True humility is modest, retiring, seeks the good of others, seeks to exhibit Christ for His sake alone. They glory in the flesh - 6:13. This is the last of seven sharp shameful inditements against Judaizers or law-keepers. Dear Reader, do you understand that after all this is only hypocrisy? "For not, even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the law" - 6:13 R.V. Jesus declared of the Pharisees, that "they say, and do not" - Matthew 23:3. Peter had declared long before this epistle was written, that Judaizers by their teaching were tempting God and putting an unbearable yoke upon the disciples' necks - Acts 15:10. Why then should we yield to them? Why should we attempt to wear the galling yoke of law-keeping? Let us wear only Jesus' yoke of grace; for He invites us, saying, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" - Matthew 11:30. Wear God's will as a yoke of "grace to thy neck" here, then you will wear its reward as "a crown of glory" hereafter - Proverbs 3:22; 4:9.

CONCLUDING CONTRAST

"For, as for me, far be it from me to be glorying except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom to me the world stands crucified and I to the world" - 6:14 Wuest.

We have often heard people declare with shouting that they had made a full surrender, that they had laid all on the altar, that they died out to this old world; and, hence, were crucified with Christ. That was not Paul's experience; that is not his meaning at all. That is boasting in surrender, in consecration, in an experience. That is not boasting in Christ, or His Cross. That is not deriving any good from Calvary. It is only imitation. Though well meant, yet there can be no gain, but irreparable loss from all such. The apostle boasts, not in his own cross but in the Cross of Christ, because in Christ's death he died to the world and the world died to him.

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that One (Christ) died for all, therefore all died" - II Corinthians 5:14 Revised Version.

Because he gloried in Christ's experience of death for him, he experienced the power of Christ's death in his life. He did not boast in a personal experience, but in an all-sufficient, judicial, provisional, accomplished fact. He gloried in an ignominious "must" (Mark 8:31), which his own sins had necessitated. He saw that the only way of salvation was life out of death. He saw that Jesus "was delivered up (to death and the grave) because of our transgressions and was raised because of our justification" - Romans 4:25 Wuest. This explains the following verse - "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature (creation) - 6:15. As elsewhere stated, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (creation)" - II Cor. 5:17. The flesh was once for all crucified, or put to death, in the cutting off of Christ on Calvary - Col. 2:11. It cannot be cut off again by any self-crucifixion, or daily dying. Nor can anyone boast in not being circumcised; for he has been cut off at Calvary. All boasting is absolutely excluded, except boasting in our death with Christ nineteen centuries ago. Only the new creation can join this boast.

FERVENT FINALE

"And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" - 6:16.

The word here translated "rule" was the carpenter's rule, the weaver's shuttle, the beam, or tongue of the balance, and the key or stop of the flute. It also represented a rule or standard of excellence. Here it means God's measuring rod of salvation, which is none other than "the Word of His grace." "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ... by faith without (apart from) the deeds of the law" - Romans 3:24, 28. Peace and mercy from God cannot be expected, except we walk according to "the Word of His grace." This accounts for the unsettled, restless, peaceless, feverish condition among the saints. They are attempting to walk by man's rule, instead of God's rule. We walk by His rule by believing it heartily and practically; and by constantly yielding ourselves it unto God, as those that are alive from the dead," and our "members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Romans 6:13); and not yielding to shadows and ordinances, "as though living in the world" - Col. 2:17, 20. Who are "the Israel of God?" An Israelite is one who prevails. He is an overcomer. "As a prince hast thou power with

God and with men, and hast prevailed" - Genesis 32:24-32.

"From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" - 6:17.

Some people give fanciful interpretations of Scripture. Here is a sample. It is claimed that Paul had the nail prints of Jesus' death in his hands, and the sword print in his side. That is not at all the apostle's meaning. If people believe that, they would seek it as a necessary sign of deep piety. Nay. But if we seek the Lord and yield to God continually we, too, will have some marks of the Lord Jesus. Paul's weak eyes through exposure, his humped back from being stoned, and his thirty-nine stripes were indeed marks of the Lord Jesus - even "branded" by the hot iron of trial and persecution. It was the daily dying of Jesus, not His death on Calvary, whose marks Paul bore. The Judaizers boast in their mark of circumcision, in a daily carnal cutting off by self-effort. The victorious saints, "the Israel of God," with Paul in the lead, having died once with Christ, now live by the power of Christ dwelling in them - 2:20. They pour out their lives by divine enabling, not counting their lives dear unto themselves. Because Paul bears in his body the proof of being a new creation, therefore, he forbids anyone again troubling him with hypocritical bewitching self-righteousness; and we boldly join with him in this prohibition. Amen and Amen!

"Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen" - 6:18.

Observe the different titles of address - "The churches of Galatia," "Brethren," "Foolish Galatians," "Children of God," "Sons," "My little children"; and finally, and the seventh time, he calls them "Brethren." In this last, he recognizes their standing in Christ continually; though, by calling them children, he also causes them to realize their actual state that they may by growth come up in state to their standing.

As usual, in Paul's letters, the benediction is grace. Seven times the word "grace" occurs in this letter. The benediction is peculiar in that it pronounces, "grace ... be with your spirit." Though they were many, he recognizes them as one spirit. Similar are Jesus' words to the disciples "Let not your heart be troubled" - regarding them as having one heart (The End)

THIS IS FAITH

If You're going on with Jesus,
Still abiding in His Word,
Standing firm upon His promise,
Taking heed to all you've heard;
If it seems His face is hidden
And You're in a desert place,
Keep on trusting, He's beholding.
For Beloved, this is faith.
If while others are rejoicing,
Seems no trials come their way,
While you are severely tested
Overcoming day by day;
Knowing all is for His purpose,
You're contented in this place,
Trusting only in His mercy,
O Beloved, this is faith.
It is not when we're rejoicing
That He knows what's in our heart;
For in such a time of feasting,
How could anyone depart?
So in order thus to know
If we are trusting in His grace,
Knowing that He cannot fail us -
Keep on trusting, this is faith.
Let us be as Job, Beloved,
For he understood the test.
Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Daniel -
And You probably know the rest.
Paul, John, James, and Simon Peter

Won the victory in this place;
Each has left us words exhorting -
"Fight a good fight," this is faith.
All expensive things are costly,
How much more the things of God?
So let's follow our dear Saviour
In the STRAIT pathway He trod.
Laying hold on life eternal,
If we hope to see His face;
Pleasing Him, expecting nothing,
Walking not by sight, but faith.
If we're fully trusting Jesus,
This one thing I know for sure,
That "the crown of life" is promised
To the ones that will endure.
When we love and understand Him
We can visualize His face;
Even though we cannot see Him,
Waiting, trusting - this is faith.
Mary Rice Monroe

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