

**STUDIES
IN
GALATIANS**

R. C. BELL

Studies in Galatians

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Racially, the Galatians, Gauls, or Celts, who had migrated from the Black Sea into Europe. The main body of these Gauls finally established themselves in northern Spain, France, and the British Isles. But a branch of these Gauls crossed the Dardanelles and settled, during the third century B.C., in central Asia Minor. The Galatians whom Paul on his first great missionary journey near the middle of the first century A.D. organized several churches, were descendants of these Gauls.

Out of much personal experience with the volatile Gauls, Julius Caesar wrote: "The infirmity of the Gauls is that they are ^{extremely} changeable, fond of change, and not to be trusted." Thierney, a modern historian, says they were, "Frank, impetuous, impressible, eminently intelligent, but at the same time extremely changeable, inconsistent, proud of show, perpetually quarrelling, the fruit of excessive vanity." The Galatians as portrayed ^{in Luke in Acts and in the} epistle Paul later wrote to them answer to these characterizations: "The Galatians of Lystra, whom Paul at first 'scarce restrained' from worshipping him, even afterward stoned him and left him for dead" (Acts 14:8, 9). Their fickle character as sketched in this incident is confirmed and developed in their portrait as painted in the book which we are now to study.

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ESSAY NO. 1

Racially, the Galatians were Gauls, or Celts, who had migrated from north of the Black Sea into Europe. The main body of these Gauls finally established themselves in northern Spain, France, and the British Isles. But a branch of them crossed the Dardanelles and settled, during the third century B.C., in central Asia Minor. The Galatians, among whom Paul on his first great missionary journey near the middle of the first century A.D. organized several churches, were descendants of these Gauls.

Out of much personal experience with the volatile Gauls, Julius Caesar wrote: "The infirmity of the Gauls is that they are fickle in their resolves, fond of change, and not to be trusted." Thierry, a modern historian, says they were, "Frank, impetuous, impressible, eminently intelligent, but at the same time extremely changeable, inconstant, proud of show, perpetually quarrelling, the fruit of excessive vanity." The Galatians as pictured by Luke in Acts and in the epistle Paul later wrote to them answer to these characterizations. The Galatians of Lystra, whom Paul at first "scarce restrained" from worshipping him, soon afterward stoned him and left him for dead (Acts 14:8, 9). Their fickle character as sketched in this incident is confirmed and developed in their portrait as painted in the book which we are now to study.

Many of us Americans with Gaulish blood, coming mainly through Irish, Scottish, Welsh, and French channels, in us have, as might be expected, some of the characteristics, both good and bad, of our ancient Galatian brethren. Should not this put us on guard against the vanity, instability, and untrustworthiness which were so prevalent in them? Alas, however, the Galatians are but an outstanding example of how prone men in general, from Adam onward, have ever been and still are to "drift away from" the blessings they have received from God.

General Survey of Galatians

Theme: Liberty in Christ

1. Personal portion: The apostle of liberty. Paul shows that he is an apostle equal in authority and knowledge to Peter, James, and John. 1—2.
2. Doctrinal portion: The doctrine of liberty. Paul shows that justification is by "faith working through love" instead of by "works of law." 3—4.
3. Hortatory portion: The life of liberty. Paul exhorts those "having begun in the Spirit" to "walk by the Spirit" and to bear "the fruit of the Spirit." 5—6.

This skeletal outline of Galatians is the strong, bony framework that supports the meaty reasoning and the moving exhortation for Christian liberty and spirituality that make up the body of the epistle. Just as Ephesians settles the question of Christian unity, Galatians settles the question of Christian independence and freedom. "Every argument in Galatians is a thunderbolt."

Galatians, which in fewest words reduces Christianity to its simplest elements, is an inspired classic. It sets forth the gospel, without admixture of legal conditions, as the perfected agency of the pure grace of God to rehabilitate ruined humanity. It shows, as we shall see in our studies, the utter impossibility of uniting the religion of the flesh and the religion of the Spirit. Luther wrote: "The epistle to the Galatians is my epistle. To it I am as it were in wedlock." Referring to Luther's commentary on Galatians, John Bunyan said: "I prefer this book of Martin Luther (excepting the Holy Bible) before all other books that I have seen, as most fit for a wounded conscience."

Inasmuch, as Galatians is an open book free to all, let us begin and, no matter what we may find, continue our studies of this spirit-breathed, vital, Christian document with an open mind, fully ready to be guided by, "The Spirit of truth . . . into all the truth" (John 16:13). Our method should be both microscopic and telescopic that

things both near and far may be discovered. May we, "handling aright the word of truth," discern between the great and the small, see truth in perspective, and give fundamental Christian truths their rightful emphasis and place of fixed, dominant centrality.

Antecedent Matter

According to Acts, as Paul first evangelized Galatia, unconverted Jews, "filled with jealousy" because of his success among the Gentiles, incited mobs that forced him to leave several cities. Despite this, the impressible Galatians continued to respond so favorably to his preaching that flourishing churches began to spring up over the country.

Then Jewish legalists and partyists in the church, who had never been really converted from Moses to Christ and consequently did not know the power of God's grace and Spirit over human life, were determined that Gentile Christians should observe the customs of Moses. Paul had led the heathen Galatians to Christ without taking them through Moses, and, if these Judaizers were to succeed in binding Moses on them, they must first shake their confidence in Paul. Therefore they persuaded the Galatians that Paul was not equal to the original apostles in knowledge and authority, and that he did not preach the full, final gospel. They did not repudiate Christianity outright, but said to the Galatian Christians: "Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (.Acts 15:1). That is, these bigots conceded that Paul's gospel was all right as far as it went, but insisted that, being the gospel only in part, it was inadequate and would not save unless it were eked out and perfected by legal ordinances and rites. Since this perversion of the gospel threw the divine part and the human part of salvation out of true proportion, to the disparagement of the divine and to the exaltation of the human, it made an exceeding strong and dangerous appeal to the pride and vanity and unstableness of the Galatians.

To Paul, who had himself struggled up and out of Pharisaical bigotry and slavery and knew their blinding and blighting power, all of this was utterly intolerable. He knew as it had been given to no other man to know the insidious nature of this heresy, which

really destroyed the very essence and spirit of Christianity itself. That he was vilified had little weight with him, only as it had bearings on Christian doctrine. His having to hold the confidence of the Galatians, lest they be "severed from Christ," explains the autobiographical nature of the first two chapters of the book.

1. What were the racial origin and characteristics of the Galatians?
2. What is the general subject of the book of Galatians?
3. State the three main divisions of the book, and the special subject that each division treats.
4. In what attitude of mind should we always study the Bible?
5. Who caused the trouble that arose in the churches of Galatia?
6. State the nature of the error that perverted the Gospel among the Galatians.
7. How did Paul's religious experience help prepare him to combat this deadly heresy?
8. Account for the autobiographic nature of the first part of Galatians.
9. When is a Christian justified in talking about himself?

ESSAY NO. 2

Since the Galatians had been led to doubt Paul's apostolic authority, and as everything depended on it, he confidently affirmed in the first verse that his apostleship, independently of all human intermediaries, derived personally and directly from, "Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." As if to ask, "Can Peter, James, and John have better authority than that?" He deemed this point so important that he made, as we shall see, three arguments, covering about a third of Galatians, to establish it.

The salutatory sentence, consisting of five verses, full of elementary Christian doctrine, continues: "Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father." This scripture teaches that the grace and will of God, as executed in Christ, "Who gave himself (the ultimate in giving) a ransom for all," procure for all men who will accept it as God's free gift the threefold blessing of redemption from sin, deliverance from this evil world, and, "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding." What a blessing! Where are our tears of gratitude?

God's Two Governments

God's government for humanity from the beginning has always been a theocracy—that is, a monarchy over which God himself is sole and absolute Monarch. However when men rebel against this government, God suffers them, under the leadership of the archrebel Satan, to set up a provisional, secondary government, as he suffered the Jews for a time because of their "hardness of heart" to put away their wives; but from the beginning it hath not been so" (Matt. 19:8). Under Moses, God permitted, as expedients, both divorce and secondary government. Though he has long since abolished the former, he still permits and uses the latter, according to his sovereign will.

This primary spiritual government is, "The kingdom of heaven"; these secondary, worldly governments are "the kingdoms of the

world." In saying to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world . . ." (John 18:36), Christ made a sharp distinction between the two, and made them incompatible. It was these "kingdoms of the world" (Matt. 4:8), in the aggregate that the devil, "the deceiver of the whole world" (Rev. 12:9), and "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4), offered Christ. These same kingdoms Paul here calls "this present evil world." Founded in rebellion to God, they all contain the seeds of decay and death within themselves, and as the Bible teaches, God will destroy them as such, after they have served his purpose. "That God may be all in all," this will leave only God's eternal, spiritual kingdom in its solitary grandeur and perfection.

Deliverance "from this present evil world" means much more than remission of sins, or justification, which to us Christians is always a glorious, motivating, past event. Christ tells when and how justification comes: "He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment (with the world), but hath passed out of death into life" (John 5:24). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). We are called out of the world, and are separate from worldlings in life, in death, in resurrection, in judgment, and in eternal destiny. We are in this world, but as strangers in a land occupied by the enemy. We "are not of this world" even as Christ is "not of this world" (John 17:14). During our sojourn on earth as colonists of heaven, "Our citizenship is in heaven; whence we also wait for a Savior" (Phil. 3:20). Father Abraham, as a pilgrim of earth seeking "a better country; that is, a heavenly," could have but little interest and part in the God-doomed Canaanitish civilization amidst which he lived a century in tents. Even so are we delivered from unequal yokings with their frustrations, from strivings after wind with their emptiness, from the waste, the brutality, and the desolation which so largely make up "this present evil world." All this gain and freedom on earth, with "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" to come. Who would not be a Christian pilgrim?

A Perverted Gospel

In the first two chapters of Galatians (the personal part), Paul's concern is to restore the Galatians' confidence in him as an

authentic apostle, qualified, and sent by God, As we have already seen, Judaizers, had persuaded them that Paul did not preach "the whole counsel of God."

After the salutation, Paul, without defining it, refers to a deadly perversion of gospel doctrine in their midst. Since the heresy strikes at the wisdom and throne of God, the gravity of the situation justifies his strong language: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema (accursed)." Then in the next verse as if to assure them that what he was saying, instead of being the hasty, explosive words of an angry man, were the sober, measured words of a most earnest man, he deliberately spells out the curse again. The Galatians and all men since, therefore, may know that if Gabriel from heaven, or Paul back on earth, should come to preach, they would have nothing to add to what Paul had already preached to them. How the impressible Galatians must have solemnly read on to learn the nature of their error which Paul took so seriously.

Evidently Paul's enemies had said that he was an unprincipled, popularity-seeking opportunist. Evil men by misrepresentations, twisted meanings, and half truths can always make out a case, even when their victim is Christ or Paul. We judge from Paul's reply, "If I were still pleasing men, I could not be a servant of Christ" (v. 10), that his traducers probably said they could sustain their indictment by the fact that he circumcised Timothy, but refused to circumcise Titus, in conformity to policy instead of conscience. For simplicity, compression, and completeness, this answer is an incomparable statement of the immutable, fundamental Christian truth that the interests of men-pleasers and of Christians cannot be reconciled. May we not be thankful that since Christians unto the end of time must suffer similarly, this extreme case of such vile slander and persecution occurred long ago while Paul was still living to make his stabilizing and comforting answer?

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1. Explain the statement that Christ went to the ultimate, in giving.
 2. Whom did Paul call "The god of this world"?
 3. Give the occasion, the issue, and the result of Christ's first recorded personal encounter with this "god."
 4. Name God's two governments on earth, and explain why he needs two.
 5. How did Christ before Pilate distinguish between these governments?
 6. What does Paul mean by his expression, "This present evil world"?
 7. Why does Peter call Christians "sojourners and pilgrims"?
 8. Why could Paul not please both men and God?
 9. Put into your own words the meaning of John 5:24.

ESSAY NO. 3

After at least one return visit to the congregations he had founded in Galatia during his first visit to that district, Paul, busily evangelizing other places, heard that Judaizing wolves, piously alleging that they were better informed than Paul, were working havoc in the Galatian churches.

These designing, false men, "wiser for their own generation than the sons of light," could make out a reasonable case against Paul before the facile Galatians. There is ample evidence in Galatians and the Corinthian letters to show that their chief line of attack was that Paul was only an upstart, inferior apostle, independent of and out of fellowship with the real, original apostles; and that he kept his disciples subordinate to other Christians by withholding from them truth essential to their full development. (Imagine how the proud, hot-headed Galatians would boil at that!)

The diabolic cleverness of these "deceitful workers" is better understood when it is remembered that ministers of the old Serpent, who "beguiled Eve in his craftiness" (2 Cor. 11:3) by persuading her that God was withholding good from her, "also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness" (2 Cor. 11:14) in Corinth, Galatia, Moscow, Rome or Washington to serve the fiendish ends of their demonic master. To overthrow the souls of men, the ministers of the Devil have never needed better strategy than the Father of lies used in Eden.

Paul Explains

The small amount of truth in the lying accusations of Paul's detractors made these slanders all the more formidable. By giving the truth that Paul was independent of the real apostles a fatal twist, they had something so plausible, and yet so false, that it could be used against him with deadly effect. At the same time, however it furnished skillful Paul a good occasion to set all fair minded men right on a vital matter.

Paul's explanation is the boldest and fullest statement of his apostolic commission. He concedes, as charged, that he saw none

of the apostles before he began preaching, and tells why: "For I made known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it was not after men, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ." Paul here reminds the Galatians that the gospel which they heard from him was not of human origin; nor did he acquire it by the customary educational methods of men; but it came to him directly from the risen, living, reigning Lord in heaven. Hence, the conclusion that in apostolic knowledge and authority, he, at least, could not be "a whit behind the very chiefest apostles" (2 Cor. 11:5) follows inevitably.

In the next five verses, to support this affirmation of divine instruction and ordination, Paul shows that he could not have learned of Christ, either before or after his conversion, in an ordinary way. Before, with characteristic energy and zeal he so persecuted "beyond measure . . . the church of God" that no Christian could have even thought of trying to win him. After, instead of going "up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before" him to confer with "flesh and blood," he "went away into Arabia."

Paul in Arabia

Christ said to Paul: "For 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). Thus, did Christ pledge himself to be Paul's future teacher. Following this initial appearance, five more appearances, selecting fields of labor, encouraging in prison, sustaining in shipwreck, and revealing the future, are recorded in the books of Acts. Furthermore, Paul to prove to the Corinthians that his apostle-ship was bona fide speaks of "visions and revelations of the Lord," and mentions one very special occasion when he was "caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words" (2 Cor. 12:1-4). Now, we know how Paul learned "the deep things of God" which caused Peter to write: Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, write . . . some things hard to be understood" (2 Peter 3:15, 16).

According to Galatians, part of the three years that elapsed between Paul's conversion and his seeing Peter, Paul spent in Damascus, and the remainder in Arabia. His reason for going to Arabia may be ascertained, I think, with reasonable certainty from the first chapter of Galatians.

Probably the life of no man has ever been so wrecked and so rebuilt as Paul's. Skeptics have always failed as miserably to account for his revolutionized life as for Christ's resurrection. No horizontal line of natural cause and effect can explain it, for it was caused by an original act of super-natural grace, coming down from God. Much vital Christian truth flashed into Paul's mind at the time of his conversion: the despised Nazarene was the Messiah: he had arisen from the dead, and was even now speaking to him from heaven. Dying Stephen had talked with him. Consequently, Paul's life, which he had so laboriously built up to lofty eminence, lay in ashes. Crushing guilt and terror fell upon his soul as he recalled his contempt for Christ and the innocent men and women he had tortured. To learned, successful, proud Paul, Damascus was the loss of everything. All he had prized in life suddenly became mere refuse.

But Paul had more to learn and to suffer. God's schooling for his "chosen vessels" includes solitude as attested by Moses in Midian, the Baptist in the wilderness, and John on Patmos. Even so, Paul needed time and quiet for soul work. "The nurse of full-grown souls is solitude." Could there be a fitter place than lonely Arabia and Sinai where fasting Moses received the law and despairing Elijah heard "a still small voice" that made him feel still smaller? Surely, some of Paul's "visions and revelations" came to him in Arabia. To help him understand the Old Testament, the letter of which he had mastered without getting a taste of its spirit, would not the Lord from heaven commune with him and aid him, as he on earth before his death communed with and aided the other apostles? The Bible would soon become to Paul another book. From every page new meanings would leap out at him. Must it not have amazed him exceedingly to realize that he so grossly, and for so long, had missed it all?

1. Why and how did Paul's enemies slander him in Galatia?
2. When and how did Paul become an apostle of Christ?
3. What bearing did the manner of his becoming an apostle have on the attack his enemies made on him?
4. What promise of future enlightenment did Christ make Paul at the time of his conversion? (See Acts 26:16).
5. According to the book of Acts, give the occasion and the purpose of some of the five other divine appearances granted to Paul.
6. Give the circumstances of another miraculous revelation which he experienced. (See 2 Cor. 12:1-10).
7. Assign a probable reason for Paul's going into Arabia.
8. Cite biblical cases to show that "The nurse of full grown souls is solitude."
9. What revolutionizing changes did Paul's conversion make in him?

ESSAY NO. 4

Even when Paul writes about himself, his self-effacement before God in both nature and religion is apparent. In nature: "God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb"; in religion: "And called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles" (1:15, 16). In writing about himself, his purpose is ever to glorify God, never himself. Paul felt that God had set him apart, at the very beginning of his life, from all other men as his particular apostle to the Gentiles. He saw no more place for human merit in his religious than in his fleshly life. Both were gifts entrusted from God. "When God gets ready to do something great for fallen man, he begins with a baby." Cosmopolitan Paul surely was a divinely prepared and appointed man unto the apostleship for Gentile nations. How many such appointed servants God now has scattered over the earth is something to think about. "Is anything too hard (or too good) for Jehovah?" (Gen. 18:14).

In the closing verses of chapter one, Paul proves that he needs neither instruction nor authentication from other apostles: first, before he saw an apostle, he preached successfully in Damascus (Acts 9:29-35); second, when he first went to Jerusalem three years after his conversion, he saw none of "the twelve" except Peter; and third, after this short, inconsequential visit with Peter he independently executed an extended, fruitful ministry in Syria and Silicia. He might have told the Galatians that he also brought the gospel to them, without further contact with the apostles.

During all these years the churches of Judea, though they had not met Paul, knew the story of his life, "and glorified God in" him. In Paul's writing the Galatians that Judaeans brethren, who had never seen him, thanked God for him, I think I see gentle rebuke and tender pleading for the alienated Galatians, who had known him in closest, personal intimacy, and who had until so recently loved and trusted him fully. Paul was shocked and deeply hurt by their capricious desertion of him and the gospel. Not this human hurt, however, but the fact that "the truth of the gospel" was endangered,

accounts for his determination not to compromise the independence of his apostleship.

Paul's object in the first two chapters of Galatians is to show that he, individually and independently, received his apostolic commission from Christ after he ascended to his Father, just as the original apostles, collectively, received theirs from him before he ascended. In the first chapter, he boldly affirms that upon this prime fact he stakes his authority as an apostle, gives historical evidence that his work was approved by God, and takes oath ("before God, I lie not") that his affirmation and collateral proof are true. How earnest, positive and final he is about the apostleship being twofold. Now, he is ready in the second chapter to make his second argument, namely, that the church in Jerusalem formally endorsed him as an independent apostle, with a new work from God.

Paul Vindicated in Jerusalem

(Gal. 2:1-10)

The unity and fellowship of the church in Antioch, composed largely of Gentile Christians, was soon disrupted by the coming of legalists, "deceitful men," from Judaea, who taught the necessity of circumcision for Gentile disciples. Inasmuch as this heresy perverted Christianity so as to destroy its very foundation principle, "Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them" (Acts 15:2). But it was the wisdom and will of God that this constitutional question pertaining to the all-sufficiency of his grace in Christ should be taken to Jerusalem, where the church began, that "the apostles and the elders, with the whole church" there, guided by the Holy Spirit, should go into the matter thoroughly, and with deliberation and finality hand down a decision once and for all. Consequently, under God's overruling providence, "The brethren (at Antioch) appointed that Paul and Barnabas . . . should go to Jerusalem . . . about this question" (Acts 15:2). (These passages in Galatians and Acts refer to the same occasion, supplement each other, and should therefore be studied together).

Let us now consider the use Paul makes of this divinely prearranged, pivotal meeting in his second argument to establish his independent apostleship. He says that he "went up by revelation" to Jerusalem, taking with him Titus. Titus, being Paul's Gentile fellow-worker who had never been circumcised, would be a test case in the atmosphere to bring out the Christian truth.

Some in the meeting who did not understand how differently grace and law work in the human soul, probably thought that much ado was being made over a small matter, but to Paul, who saw into the heart of things, greatest issues were involved. With him it was a matter of life or death, for if the decision should be circumcision for Titus "the truth of the gospel," Christian liberty, and his years of work among the Gentiles would all be lost. But he so skillfully presented the whole truth and so boldly stood his ground against the troublemakers "privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage," that the church decided Titus, having access to all Christian privileges and blessings already, could "press on unto perfection" without being circumcised. Therefore, Christianity, free from restrictions of rite and race, is a universal religion.

Moreover, Paul tells the Galatians that the other apostles imparted nothing- to him. Rather, when they saw that God had entrusted him with the apostleship to the Gentiles as he had Peter with the apostleship to the Jews, and when they saw the grace that was given to him, Peter, James, and John, "They who were reputed to be pillars," gave him and Barnabas "the right hands of fellowship." Doubtless the Judaizers in Galatia had said that the leaders in Jerusalem stood with them, but Paul by showing instead that they were with him, turned the tables on them. Paul's vindication and triumph were complete. The perverters of the gospel suffered a crushing defeat. When the church in Antioch, where the question came to a head, heard of the divinely ordained division of the apostleship between Paul and Peter, and other results of the meeting, "they rejoiced for the consolation." Neither Antioch nor Galatia nor any other place of any time or country should have ever been troubled again by the mixture of the systems of law and of grace.

1. What evidence of Paul's humility and self-effacement do you find in the first chapter of Galatians?
2. What is Paul's first argument to prove the independence and authenticity of his apostleship?
3. What was the chief matter considered in the meeting which is reported in Gal. 2:1-10?
4. Why was this meeting convened at Jerusalem?
5. Explain the significance of the presence of Titus.
6. Why did Paul, who circumcised Timothy, resolutely refuse to circumcise Titus on this occasion?
7. In this meeting **who** reached **what** conclusion? (See Acts 15:28,29)
8. What division of work among the apostles did this meeting recognize?
9. State Paul's second argument to establish his apostleship, and explain how the events of this meeting support it.

ESSAY NO. 5

Inasmuch as "the truth of the gospel" hangs thereby, Paul lays a broad, deep foundation for his independent apostleship. This foundation consists of three parts: first, he received his apostolic commission directly from heaven; second, the original apostles understood that his apostleship was different from theirs, and gave him full endorsement and fellowship; third, when Peter made a mistake at Antioch, he corrected him. Previous essays have dealt with the first two parts. This essay treats the third part. (2:11-18).

Peter's Mistake

Peter's experience in connection with Cornelius, the first heathen Gentile to become a Christian, convinced him that Christ was for all races and cultures of men. When the church in Jerusalem contended with him for eating with "men uncircumcised," he championed the cause of the Gentiles so effectively that the Jews began to accept uncircumcised Christians into the church.

A little later, Antioch became the cradle, and still later, the citadel and missionary center, of Gentile Christianity. When Peter visited this great church, he engaged freely in social intercourse with its Gentile members, as was his right and custom, until some rigid legalists, who would impose circumcision on baptized Gentiles, came from Jerusalem. Then, "He drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation." But when Paul "saw that they walked not according to the truth of the gospel," he resisted Peter, the leader, "to the face because he stood condemned" (2:12-14). Remarkably strange that Gentile Christians suddenly became unfit associates for Peter! Is there to be one church for Jews and another for Gentiles?

The difference between Paul and Peter was not in doctrine, for both spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance." They agreed that Christianity without additions from Moses would make full-grown Christians. But Peter, under pressure of the Judaizers, ceased in Antioch to fellowship Gentiles as he had been doing since

Cornelius several years before. He had not changed his faith, however; he only acted as if he had. In doctrine, he stood firm; in conduct, overawed by men, he failed. This was "dissimulation," or hypocrisy.

Here are some things to warn and fortify us all. The fact that all the Jewish brethren in Antioch, including Paul's old and tried friend, Barnabas, (how much sleep did Paul lose over this?) were carried away, shows the mighty power of bad example. And if bold Peter and good Barnabas became hypocrites, for whom is hypocrisy impossible? The base motive, "seeking the favor of men," led these two men of good intentions to disguise their attitude toward the law and to pervert the gospel of grace. "The fear of man bringeth a snare" (Prov. 29:25). Probably, they did not realize that they were hypocrites. And hypocrisy of which its victim is unconscious is the worst form of hypocrisy. For Christians to curry favor of men, from whom their calling certainly and definitely separates them, is, any time and anywhere, perilous.

Peter Corrected

Ever after Cornelius, Peter knew that God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile, but that he freed both religiously from the unbearable yoke of the law, cleansed both by faith in Christ, gave both the Holy Spirit, reconciled "both in one body unto God through the cross having slain the enmity thereby," made "in himself of the two one new man, so making peace," and that both equally had through Christ "access in one Spirit unto the Father." Peter knew too much to be guilty of his conduct, and his slowness to see the implication of his retraction is astonishing. Oh, the weakness and fallibility of even good men!

To Peter, who had possessed this vast wealth of unforgettable knowledge (can men forget what they learn by experience?), and had lived accordingly for years, Paul said something like this: "Your ignoring Jewish scruples respecting circumcision, meats, days, and such like, at first, that you might fit smoothly into the life of this Gentile church was your Christian liberty and duty. But your reversing yourself when Judaizers came has involvements of extremely disastrous consequences. Remember, Peter, that you and

I in becoming Christians discarded as a means of salvation all our unavailing legal advantages over lawless sinners of the Gentiles, took our place beside them as condemned sinners all, and, since no man can be justified by law, were justified even as they by God's grace through our faith in Christ. Your going back to Moses implies that you are correcting the mistake you made in giving him up for Christ. Do you not see that your conduct will be interpreted as inability of faith in Christ to satisfy human need, and as inadequacy of Christ himself to fulfil the deeper and higher longings and aspirations of the soul? Dear brother, remember your speech in the meeting at Jerusalem. How can you be such a great transgressor as to pervert the gospel and to make Christ a minister of sin?" (See 2:14-18).

Who, knowing Paul of the Acts and of his epistles can doubt that he reasoned and pleaded wisely, tearfully, and successfully? Who, knowing Peter of the gospels can doubt that he, in bitter weeping and true repentance, was restored to become a better and stronger man than ever? Two big men met in this incident face to face and heart to heart. Peter was good and great enough to acknowledge his mistake when it was made known to him, and to respect and love Paul evermore for the rebuke and correction (See 2 Peter 3:15). Had not the truth of God and the souls of men been at stake, would Paul have written the Galatians about his having corrected Peter? When they read about it, could they still doubt Paul's apostolic knowledge and authority?

Peter was so human—impulsive, energetic, basically honest; an ambitious man of action and magnetic leader of men; a man given to rashness and shrinking from ridicule. His faults were but shadows of his virtues. He always needed a wise friend of deliberate mind and sound judgment for restraint and balance—an eye for his hand. For a few years he had such a friend in Jesus. At Antioch he is in character. Had not Paul saved the situation, would not the caste system have entered the church to rob her of her gospel of pure grace and liberty?

1. What mistake, that Paul corrected, did Peter make at Antioch?
2. Did Peter and Paul differ in essential Christian doctrine?
3. In what did Peter's "dissimulation" consist?
4. What disastrous consequences would follow his mistake in conduct?
5. Did Peter realize the deadly nature of his error?
6. Why do we feel so sure that he knew better than he acted?
7. Characterize both Peter and Paul as they appear in this occurrence.
8. What warning should all of us get from the hypocrisy of Peter and Barnabas?
9. Why did Peter use this occurrence as the third argument to establish his apostolic authority? Summarize his threefold argument thus far in Galatians to authenticate his apostleship.

ESSAY NO. 6

In Galatians 2:19-21, Paul glides out of his personal rebuke of Peter into a compressed exposition of the fundamentals of Christianity. If these verses, as some think, were not spoken to Peter, nonetheless they explain why Paul was so much concerned about Peter's ceasing to associate with Gentile brethren. They show why he thought Peter's defection under the circumstances forfeited constitutional principles of Christianity and perverted the gospel even unto changing its very heart and pulse beat. This scripture focuses Paul's interpretation of Christianity and furnishes the key to his teaching and life.

Dead to the Law

God's written law through Moses was "holy . . . righteous . . . good . . . spiritual" (Rom. 7:12-14), but it was addressed to the flesh, not to the spirit of men. It served its purpose in God's unfolding economy for fifteen centuries, until men were ready for a religion addressed to the spirit. To the obedient, this law promised life; to those who broke it, death. Inasmuch as every Jew without exception broke it, it became to Jews "the ministration of death." Simultaneously, Gentiles without exception, and with the same fatal result, broke God's unwritten moral law. Consequently, Paul's unqualified statement: "By the works of law shall no flesh-be justified." Justification by law, good works, character, and merit is utterly impossible. Under the reign of law, through no default of law however, both Judaism and Heathenism failed to justify, and universal condemnation hung over men. Could they justify men, the grace of God and the cross of Christ would be useless (See Gal. 2:21).

The gracious Father of mankind, knowing that his human children would not render the perfect obedience that legal justification requires, never intended the covenant of law to be final. Rather, he was giving men an opportunity to learn by their unvarying failure in obedience that under law they were hopeless, doomed sinners. In this manner, men might be led in despair to abandon Gods'

provisional, educative system of law for his perfected system of grace when it became accessible to them.

"I, through the law, died unto the law, that I might live unto God," says Paul. He had to give up all hope of being justified by the law before he could be justified by grace. The covenant of law and the covenant of grace, therefore, cannot run concurrently. God cannot save sinners until they cease trying to save themselves by law and their own merit. There is no need of a man's thinking he can live unto God before he is dead to law as a means of salvation. He must, so to speak, attend his own funeral, "for the old man was crucified with him." A clean break must be made with legality and self-righteousness. The two systems are so different that either annuls the other. The law demands unattainable righteousness while the gospel bestows righteousness upon all who will take it. Though Peter did not realize it, to use legal rites as if they were needed to supply deficiencies of the gospel is to go back to law and self-effort, which inevitably means death. This is to fall "away from grace" and stab Christianity through its heart. That Paul saw the subtle poison of Judaism and the danger to the whole structure of Christianity accounts for his rebuking Peter and writing this warning letter to Galatia. The two systems simply will not mix. "They shall not cleave . . . even as iron doth not mingle with clay."

What does Paul's saying, that he "through the law died to the law," mean? He was a breaker of law, subject to God's inexorable decree, "The wages of sin is death." But in amazing grace, Christ took his place as condemned sinner to die for him. Paul felt most poignantly that his sins nailed Christ to the cross and that he himself, not Christ, should have died there. Hence, he means that because God's judgment against his sins was executed upon Christ, he himself died, representatively, on the cross with Christ. Law could not execute him again. (See John 5:24).

Note that not law, but Paul, died. When at Damascus he realized how inhuman, steely, and bloody his years of devotion to the law had left him, he, despairing of ever getting any good from it, fled to the gracious "Jesus of Nazareth," who was unbelievably kind and ready to forgive and forget his terrible past. The law still

speaks as sternly and fatally to men in the flesh as ever. Only men who forsake law as the means of salvation (die to it), thus making it possible for them gratefully to accept Christ's vicarious death in lieu of their own, deserved death, can ever escape God's eternal death penalty for breakers of his law.

Alive Unto God

In further explaining the practical workings of Christianity, Paul writes: "It is no longer I (the old man born of the flesh) that lives, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I (the new man born of the Spirit) now live in the flesh (bodily frame) I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (2:20). Later, from his Roman prison, Paul distilled this into, "For me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:20).

With respect to his flesh and the world, Paul was born into Christ crucified; with respect to his spirit, he lived a risen, Christ-absorbed life. Before he became a Christian, religion was to Paul a grim, hopeless struggle to please God and improve himself by living up to God's moral code. Upon becoming a Christian he exchanged this ineffectual striving to toe a legal chalk line for a grateful, joyous response of his whole personality to the indwelling Christ, and found "a well of water springing up unto, eternal life." Instead of Christ being a dead man that belonged to the past, he was a living, personal companion, living and working in him. Christianity was to Paul a beautiful, warm, fragrant friendship—a personal experience ("Operation Experinece"), "-a divine-human encounter," whereas his religion had been impersonal and traditional. All this sent Paul over land and sea attending to Christ's business as other men were attending to their own business. He lost his life to find it. A Christian is dead to law, sin, flesh, world, and alive to God, to the measure that he really desires to be, but no more. There can be no outer compulsion and no inner reluctance; all must be personal and spontaneous. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

1. In what sense were both Judaism and Heathenism failures?
2. Inasmuch as law is "holy, and righteous, and good," and eternal, why is legal justification for men impossible?
3. In what sense was Paul, when he wrote Galatians, dead to law?
4. Why cannot a sinner be saved before he is dead to law?
5. Why cannot sinners be saved by a mixture of law and gospel grace?
6. In Christian conversion, does law, or the sinner, die?
7. How does Christ's death deliver breakers of law from their own deserved death?
8. Can you justify calling Christianity "a divine-human encounter"?, or "Operation Experience"?
9. Show that Gal. 2:20 is Paul's interpretation of Christianity, and the key to his own life.

ESSAY NO. 7

In these "Studies," we are now leaving, "The apostle of liberty" (Gal. 1, 2), for, "The doctrine of liberty" (Gal. 3, 4).

Paul's Questions

Paul marveled that the Galatians, who had wholeheartedly accepted the gospel when he first went among them, could so quickly embrace "a different gospel"—a gospel so radically and fatally different from the gospel they had received from him that it would not save them. Knowing that they failed to realize the folly and deadliness of the error they were making, he broke out: "O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?" (Gal. 3:1-3).

By these simple, yet discerning questions, Paul hoped to lead the Galatians into seeing that they were under the witchery of blind teachers, and thus to enable them to recover themselves from the infatuation of legalism. To ask the right question in some cases requires more thorough knowledge of the subject, and displays more skill in teaching and exhorting than to make a speech. These questions are still living and apt, and help us get our religion straight. Some Christians, since they fall into the Galatian heresy of thinking they can be "perfected in the flesh," are in range of these explosive questions which Paul shot at the Galatians. If Peter needed Paul's rebuke, who may not need it?

Inasmuch as the body of every Christian is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19), Paul felt no need of asking even these recent converts from heathenism whether or not they had the Spirit. But in order that they might better understand the difference between the basic working principles of grace and law, and their irreparable loss in going back to law, his inquiry focused on the truth that God gave them the Holy Spirit at the same time, and for the same reason, that he gave them remission of sins (Acts 2:38). "He that supplieth the Spirit to you, and worketh miracles among you, doth

he do it by the works of law, or by the hearing of faith?" (3:5). God gives his Spirit to all who obey the gospel (Acts 5:32), but not to men who choose to remain under law, for the death penalty of all breakers of law rests upon them. Upon this grand gospel truth, Paul built an argument to the Galatians, which he expected to convince them of the absurdity, blunder, and sin of thinking they could be "perfected in the flesh."

These provocative questions help to an understanding of some things, namely: men become Christians and receive the Holy Spirit, not by law and works, but by grace and faith; God freely gives both "remission of sins" and "the gift of the Holy Spirit" to men when they obey the gospel; for Christians to rely on law and self-effort for justification and sanctification is to give up Christ, the Holy Spirit, and grace altogether. Justification "is of faith that it may be according to grace" (Rom. 4:16). Grace and faith are correlated and imply each other. Grace and works are antipodes and exclude each other. Grace nullifies law, and faith nullifies meritorious works. As light expels darkness, so grace expels "works of law."

Imbedded in this argument pertaining to Christian doctrine is another question: "Did ye suffer so many things in vain? If it be indeed in vain." According to Acts 14, Paul and his Galatian converts were bitterly persecuted by both Jews and Galatians at the beginning of the gospel in Galatia. His readers had experienced much suffering—too much to get no gain, for there should be great moral value in suffering. "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." "Through tribulation to triumph" is Christian doctrine. On the principle that they already had too much invested to forfeit, Paul exhorted: "Cast not away therefore your boldness which hath great recompense of reward" (Heb. 10:25). After this forceful appeal, he, wistfully pleading, trailed off more winsomely still, "if it be indeed in vain."

Prevalence of Legalism

Legalism and human works hold a strange enchantment over poor man's proud, self-sufficient heart. They have ever inspired the enmity of the flesh and of the world against the gospel of God's

grace. It is to be feared that Christendom today is largely legalized rather than Christianized. Man, used to acquiring things by work and accustomed to working for things in proportion to the value which he puts on them, correctly thinks that salvation from sin and peace with God are of superlative worth, and therefore reasons that he must expend correspondingly great effort in order to secure them. How false such reasoning! How empty such labor! "The Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain." Christianity uniquely gives for the asking these priceless benefits—benefits that men with all their wisdom, asceticism and strivings can neither earn, merit, nor get elsewhere gratuitously. Men can scarcely believe that so much can be had for nothing. It is contrary to all human thinking and experience; it is too good and too great to be true. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Abraham's Religious Experience (3:6-9)

Thus far in the chapter, Paul has reasoned with the Galatians from their own experience. Now, he reasons from the experience of Abraham. Probably the Judaizers in Galatia falsely, though tellingly, taught that to be righteous before God men must, like Abraham and his descendants including Christ, be circumcised. Paul quoting from Gen. 15:6 answers: "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness." Elsewhere, he shows that this took place before Abraham received circumcision as "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which" he had while he was in uncircumcision" (Rom. 4:11). After thus smashing the false reasoning, Paul continues to the Galatians: "Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are the sons of Abraham ... So then they that are of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham." For Abraham, faith in God was equivalent to righteousness, and faith like Abraham's, "who is the father of us all" (Rom. 4:16), is equivalent to righteousness for all his spiritual sons.

1. What action on the part of the Galatians was so unreasonable that Paul asked them who had bewitched them?
2. How may Christians be guilty of such folly today?
3. How did Galatians come into possession of the Holy Spirit?
4. Do Christians still possess the Holy Spirit?
5. What two blessings are promised to Christians on the same conditions in Acts 2:38? (See Acts 5:32 also).
6. Can you explain why legalism so fascinates mankind?
7. Explain Paul's statement that justification "is of faith that it may be according to grace" (Rom. 4:16).
8. What is the difference between being legalized and being Christianized?
9. How was Abraham justified before God? Who are now "sons of Abraham"?

ESSAY NO. 8

Galatians 3:1-14 comprises four short pithy arguments in support of Christianity as a means of salvation contrasted with law. The first argument, built on the experience of the Galatians, and the second, built on the experience of Abraham, have been considered. The third, built on Hebrew scripture, and the fourth, built on Christ's substitutionary death, are now to be studied.

"It Is Written"

Three verses (10-12) contrast legal works and gospel faith as the only two conceivable ways by which men may attain unto righteousness and life. The argument runs: since no man ever has rendered, or ever can render, the perfect obedience to "all things that are written in the book of the law" which righteousness by means of law requires, no man can escape God's curse of death on law breakers. Faith is, therefore, the sole way of life. The two ways cannot co-exist, nor can they be combined. Gospel faith is not primarily faith in acts of obedience, but faith in Christ's death for our sins. Paul reached this same conclusion in his first sermon in the Galatian country years before he wrote Galatians: "By him (Christ) everyone that believeth is justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:39).

Inasmuch as the little sentence, "The righteous shall live by his faith" (Hab. 2:4) is worked into the great doctrinal epistles of Romans (1:17) and Hebrews (10:38) as well as into Galatians, it must hold cardinal Christian doctrine. Taken in its contexts, it teaches not only that men are justified by faith, but also that they must continue to live, suffer, and grow by faith, not by works. The fact that the Galatians after beginning in faith were falling into works of law was the cause of Paul's writing them this sharp, warning letter. Ever since Eden, true religion on the human side has always been based on faith in God. Although Abraham demonstrated his faith by sacrificing Isaac, and Paul his by being baptized, their faith was essentially the same. Who can doubt that Abraham would have been baptized had God commanded him to be? Because of this continuum of faith in God, the entire Bible is

one organic whole. The Old Testament anticipates the New and kindles the fire of redemption that burns and blazes throughout the New.

"It Is Finished"

Before "grace and truth came through Jesus Christ," men, Jews and Gentiles alike, were inevitably and universally doomed because they were under law. "But Christ redeemed us (Christians) from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Before Christ died, there was only one class of men, namely, men condemned to death. His dying created the possibility of another class coming into existence. Condemned men who believe that God in free grace will accept Christ's vicarious death in lieu of their deserved death and act accordingly come out from among lost men into a new class, namely, justified men. These are they, who realizing their doomed state and feeling keenly their inability to change it under law, come, with no plea but, "Be thou merciful to me a sinner," and accept God's gracious, judicial decree to deliver them from the sentence of death and to treat them as if they had never been sinners. A justified man "com-eth not into judgment (with men who remain under law), but hath passed out of death into life" (John 5:24).

Such is Christian justification. Christ's, "It is finished" from his cross signified that the means for justifying condemned humanity was perfected, and that addition from "the flesh" or "will of man," as the Galatians were attempting, could but pervert and ruin it. Think you not that such a great justification should put an end to self, and that God has a moral right to expect Christians, out of sheer gratitude, to be "zealous of good works?" This is the place and the manner in which good works come into Christianity.

The Purpose of the Law

Since Abraham possessed the faith upon which salvation depends, why did not God give him immediately, instead of the promise of Christ's coming, Christ himself? And why was the covenant of law

necessary at all? The last half of Gal. 3, very simple and directly, considers such things.

By his oath, God confirmed his promise to Abraham that in his seed (Christ) all nations should be blessed, "That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong encouragement" (Heb. 6:18). No matter what time might elapse or what events intervene before its fulfillment, this promise so confirmed, could never in any manner whatsoever be altered. After 430 years, God supplemented this immediate, personal promise to Abraham by a covenant of law, which was in a roundabout way "ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator (Moses)," and which was to last only "till the seed should come to whom the promise" was made. This "till" shows that the covenant of law was to be but a temporary, provisional insertion within the longer, larger covenant of promise. It neither superseded nor opposed the prior promise, which was to be fulfilled after the transitory, legal covenant had passed away.

The Abrahamic covenant with its positive emphasis on promise and faith, inadequately emphasized sin and its curse. The Mosaic covenant with its heavy emphasis on sin and death was needed to attain the proper moral balance, and was therefore "added because of transgressions." Is it not meaningful that, though provision was made for six tribes to stand on Mount Gerizim to bless and the other six on Ebal to curse the people after they had crossed the Jordan and assembled in Canaan, in the actual history not a single blessing was heard, but twelve curses with all the people answering "amen" were pronounced? (Deut. 27). Could there be a better commentary on Gal. 3:10, "For as many as are of the law are under a curse"? As there can be no trespassing without a boundary, so, though sin exists, it does not take the character of transgression and rebellion, and "is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13). "The law came in besides that the trespass might abound" (Rom. 5:20). "Through the law cometh the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20). Though the Sinaitic covenant served other purposes too, its prime purpose was to discover wounds for which it had no healing that men might seek the great Physician when he came in fulfillment of the promise of Abraham.

1. What grand truth are the four arguments in Gal. 3:1-14 used to prove?
2. Give the substance of the last two of these arguments.
3. Was the covenant of law intended to save men finally?
4. What was the prime purpose of the religion of law, given through Moses?
5. Cite the four places in the Bible where the expression, "The righteous shall live by his faith," is found. Comment on the fullness of meaning Paul gives this expression in his writings.
6. How did Christ's death make a new class of man on earth possible?
7. What do Christ's words from the cross, "It is finished," signify?
8. Why can they not mean that He would never do anything more for men?
9. Where and how do "good works" come into Christianity?

ESSAY NO. 9

Between the promise to Abraham and its fulfillment in Christ, God gave the law through Moses in order to teach man that under law, which required him to earn his justification by his own doing, he was a lawbreaker, condemned to death. This universal, perpetual human failure was supposed to shatter man's religious faith in himself, and to prepare him to accept justification as a gift procured by the doing of another. Herein lies the chief advantage of Christianity over Mosaism. Were Christianity just another law for man to keep, still he would fail.

"God Is One"

As the foundation of Jewish religion, Moses taught that "Jehovah our God is one Jehovah" (Deut. 6:4). Even men without the Bible have so much evidence in nature that they are without excuse, if they do not see the unity, power, and infinite goodness of God, the Maker and Governor of all (Acts 14:17; Rom. 1:20).

When God promised old, childless Abraham an innumerable progeny to occupy, centuries later, a land three or four times as large as Texas, he was pleased to grant Abraham the assurance he asked. At God's direction, Abraham divided some animals into halves and laid the pieces opposite each other with a passageway between. From time immemorial when two or more parties made an important covenant, they, to seal the compact, walked together along such a passageway. God used this, then, ancient, familiar ceremony as Abraham's pledge. But very singularly only a flaming torch, representing God, passed between the pieces of the offering.

The reason Abraham did not so pass was twofold: first, he was only the recipient of a free promise and was not himself promising anything; second, the relationship between the two was so personal, unifying, and binding that any difference between them, needing a mediator to compose, was impossible. "Abraham my friend" (Isaiah 41:8), was God's own characterization of this remarkable man. To his friends, the promise of the great "I am that I am" (Exod. 3:14), is always, in both natural and religious matters, enough.

Both the circumstances under which and the manner in which the temporal Mosaic covenant was made preclude the idea that it was to supersede the Abrahamic covenant. Despite all that God had done for them in Canaan, Egypt, and the wilderness, over a period of 430 years, the Hebrews utterly failed to understand and appreciate God's promise to Abraham. Moreover, they were so far from realizing their great distance from God and the depth of their depravity that the indirect, parenthetical, legal covenant, with its mere angelic ministry and human mediator, became necessary to reveal to them their miserable moral condition.

Since in God's promise to Abraham only one party was bound, there could be no mediator to arrange terms between two parties. But in the inferior Mosaic covenant much mediatorial work was required. Moses made three up-and-down trips between the people at the base and God at the summit of Mount Sinai (Ex. 19). Even after the people in ignorance and conceit had lightly answered Moses, "All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do," Moses toiled up and down the rugged mountain twice more, cooperating with God to solemnize and sanctify the occasion, to deepen the people's sense of sin and separation from God, and to lead them to make their side of the contract profoundly religious and sacred. But even so, they had scarcely agreed to the terms of the covenant before they flagrantly broke it with their golden calf. So much for men under law, flesh, and self.

All this underlies Paul's reasoning with the Galatians when he says of the Sinaitic covenant: "It was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." In dealing with each other, God and his sons are not two parties, requiring the services of a mediator. Christians are so incorporated into Christ's personality, so instinct with his life that one nature serves the whole Christian organism—head and body alike. They are so surrendered to Christ, so identified with Christ, and so absorbed into Christ that, with all differences and discords silenced, Christ and his friends (John 15:15) become one party, with all need of human mediation forever eliminated. What else can Christ's high priestly prayer to his Father, "That they may all be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they

may be perfected into one" (John 17:22, 23) mean? Paul thought this reasoning should show the Galatians their folly and sin in thinking that the law could add anything to God's everlasting promise to Abraham, fulfilled in Christ. He hoped it would crush their legality, completely and permanently. Can Christians, now, but learn and yield themselves to the truth that God through Christ in the Spirit takes them to his great fatherly heart in a gracious, loving, friendly, personal oneness, they will have the only way of pressing "on unto perfection" that infinite wisdom, power, and love provide.

Law As A Jailor

Because all men are foolish and slow of heart to believe that law never makes alive, but ever kills, Paul, to his beloved Galatians, yearningly lingers over this vital truth. In the last of Gal. 3, he represents law as a jailor who herds all men into a vast house of death, and securely locks them in. Man is truly a sinner by nature. When he knows but little law, he is a slave to his unbridled flesh. Since "the power of sin is the law" (1 Cor. 15:56), when he knows law he becomes a rebel, therefore a greater sinner, by breaking it. Verily, law is a huge jailor who has men fast confined in his great jail till—"Till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made." Law, therefore, with his massy, iron key of sin, curse, and death shuts all in his prison till grace comes with her golden key of faith, justification, and life to open doors for all who, to their imprisonment, prefer freedom. Why do doomed men even hesitate to accept deliverance from sin by God's unmixed grace and their unmixed faith!

The final teaching of the chapter is that Christianity is a universal religion, without restrictions of race or rite. "There can be neither Jew nor Greek . . . bond nor free ... no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus." This does not mean, of course, that Christianity obliterates distinctions in races, social status, and sex, but that, ignoring such things, it offers equal blessings and opportunities to all human beings alike.

1. Were Christianity but another covenant of law, could men be saved under it?
2. Under what law do heathen peoples always live?
3. What should heathens, without a written law, know about God?
4. What did Abraham's not passing between the rows of divided animals in the sacrifice signify?
5. Did the Mosaic covenant counterwork the Abrahamic covenant?
6. Explain, in its context, Gal. 3:20.
7. What does the figure of the jailor teach?
8. How are prisoners delivered from their imprisonment?
9. What is to be learned from the last verses of Gal. 3 about the segregation of races?

ESSAY NO. 10

Thus far in the doctrinal portion of Galatians the following' points stand out prominently: first, "The Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us" is the distinctive and unique possession of all Christians; second, since God's absolute promise to Abraham was that all nations should be blessed through him, the law, which was given to Jews only, chiefly to demonstrate that they were inveterate transgressors of the law, cannot be the fulfillment of the ancient promise of worldwide blessing; third, inasmuch as every man fails to live up to law. he is under God's curse of death, "kept in ward under the law shut unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed"; fourth, the Jewish Scriptures themselves declare that, "The righteous shall live by his faith," not by his self-righteousness.

All Jews were inexorably condemned by the moral laws of Moses, but, lest they lose heart and in utter despair give up the law altogether, their hope was fostered by the pictorial gospel in its types and symbols. Despair is good, when it becomes creative, as God intends it should, and leads sinners, under the conviction that law has no help for victims of lawlessness, to Christ.

The Law As Tutor

"The law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." Simultaneously, the law was both jailor and tutor. It offered tutorial instruction and guardianship to the imprisoned Jews; but incarceration and tutorage were to continue only until Christ, who would set them free and lift them out of bondage and pupilage into son-ship and inheritance. In the very nature of things, a tutor is for the immature, whose maturity will render the tutor, because his work is done, unnecessary. "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 ... ye are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise" (3:25-29).

Man's passing from law (the Mosaic covenant) to faith (the Christian covenant) shifts the emphasis from human to divine activity. Under law, men try to do something to win divine favor,

and thus earn justification by their own doing. Under faith, God does something to win the favor of men, that they may trust him and accept a justification that is based on his doing. This forever separates the two covenants. Under faith, instead of men's being justified by what they do for themselves, or do for Christ, they are justified by what Christ does for them. Under law, each man is for himself. He is safe only, if he does "all things that are written in the book of the law." If he sins, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Under law, no provision is made for a justification that is procured by another. Since man was bruised and put under a curse in Eden, Christianity is the only religion he has known that properly proportions divine and human activity. In this all-important matter, all other religions, being falsely pivoted, are fundamentally wrong and fatally perverted.

To lead men to think they can weave these two contradictory systems together is probably the devil's masterpiece of ingenuity, malice, and success. Paul advised a certain course for the church at Corinth, "that no advantage be gained over us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor. 2:11). But are not some Christians today ignorant of his devices? It seems men can never learn that, "If the inheritance is of law, it is no more of promise"; that justification is not something earned by keeping law, but that it is a free gift of God's grace. This attempt to combine the two covenants was the trouble in Galatia long ago. Is it not a prevalent trouble in the church today? Fallen man has naturally a Judaizing bias. Why do we, as if we mistrusted God's promise to Abraham, made good to us in Christ, persist in trying to add the principle of law to the principle of faith? We must never forget that the road to heaven not only begins in faith, but also continues all the way "from faith unto faith," never once shifting into the works of the flesh. Who can know how much Christ has been in the past, or is now, being straitened in the house of his friends by this insidious, satanic device?

"Baptized into Christ"

"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put ON Christ" (27). This verse tells how men become "sons of God,

through faith." A few years after Gentile Cornelius and his house became Christians, Peter said that God "made no distinction between us (Jews) and them, cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). Now turn to Acts 10, 11 to see what occurred when their hearts were so cleansed. An angel said to Cornelius: "Fetch . . . Peter; who shall speak unto thee words whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house" (Acts 11:13, 14). After Peter came, and while he was speaking the "words" that would save, the falling of the Holy Spirit upon his listeners suddenly interrupted him. But after the interruption, he finished his saving "words." Their faith in Christ led the Gentiles to repent and to be baptized in obedience to Peter's command. The fact that Peter said not one word about the Holy Spirit proves that the Spirit's coming was no part of Peter's "words." God sent the Spirit, not to save Cornelius, but to convince Christian Jews that Christ was for Gentiles as well as for Jews. Thus, was Cornelius justified and cleansed by his faith as it obeyed.

This way of cleansing hearts has never been, nor is it ever to be, changed, for Christ's last charge to his apostles was: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19, 20). In this manner, fulfilling God's ancient promise made to Abraham before there were any Jews, are Jews, Romans, Galatians, and all humanity to be saved.

An actor, taking the part of Hamlet, tries to impersonate and reproduce him. Similarly, to "put on Christ" is, first, to put him on in baptism, then "follow his steps" and always be like him. According to the Bible and human experience too, the way for us really to get Christ on and be clothed in him is to let him, through the Holy Spirit, dwell in us, and take over our lives. Other ways get very imperfect likeness, and easily lead into pride, pretense, and hypocrisy. Said Christ: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" (Luke 12:1).

1. Explain how the Mosaic law served as a tutor.
2. What was the nature and the use of the pictorial gospel?
3. What shift was made in religious center in the transition from Judaism to Christianity?
4. Are men reconciled to God by their own endowments and workings?
5. Show that Christianity begins and ends in faith, never once shifting into meritorious works.
6. How does Satan work so very effectively against Christians?
7. Cite a biblical case of Christian conversion to show how a sinner's heart is cleansed by faith.
8. Show by Peter's sermon to Cornelius and the accompanying events, what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not for and what it is for.
9. In what manner and with what results do men "put on Christ"?

ESSAY NO. 11

Paul begins the fourth chapter of Galatians by tying up what he had just taught in the third. Jews "were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world," until, fulfilling his promise to Abraham, God sent his eternal Son, true man and seed of Abraham however, born of human mother, capable of dying under the law in lieu of the death of actual law-breakers; sent him to be "the end (both aim and the termination) of the law unto righteousness to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 10:4), to redeem men from the status of child and ward, and to promote them to sons and heirs—in short, to lift them out of slavery into acknowledged sonship and liberty.

That Gentiles, who had been strangers to the house, as well as Jews, who had been minors in the house, were so exalted is shown by Paul's' again reminding the Galatians that they had received the Holy Spirit, which is the peculiar seal of Christianity: "And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (4:6). Strangers and minors, having but "the spirit of bondage," could cry only "Master," never, "Father, Father."

"Rudiments of the World"

Why did Paul call the Mosaic covenant "the rudiments of the world . . . the weak and beggarly rudiments"? Although the law itself was holy and spiritual, the legal system in which it was imbedded was a religion of the flesh. It was addressed to the flesh, which "lusteth against the Spirit" (Gal. 6:18); it made its appeal to the natural man, who "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:14). Religious legal systems are for the morally immature. All of them, Jewish and heathen alike, are built upon the elementary principles that underlie natural religion and civil government—the rudimentary principles upon which the Christ-less world, religiously and socially, has ever been, and is, run.

The Jews had in written form a much fuller revelation of God's law than did heathen nations, but they broke it, even as Gentiles broke the law they knew. Knowing that his legal anchor would never hold in the mud bottom of the human mind, God was merely using

it as preparation for the gospel preached "beforehand unto Abraham" (Gal. 3:8). The Sinaic covenant, though adapted to the minority of the Jews, was too weak and poor to bring to maturity the spiritual, Godlike possibilities of men. Something stronger and richer than "weak and beggarly" legalism and ritualism, were all nations to be blessed, was required. Therefore God from all eternity, was graciously building a religion fitted to lead men into obeying his immutable law of life, that they might live abundantly and eternally. Did not Christ tell the woman at "the well (John 4), that the time had come for the spiritual religion, promised from of old, that would reach man's inmost spirit, qualify him to "worship in spirit and truth," and "become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life"?

Legalism Becomes Heathenism

After referring to their former heathen life, Paul says to the Galatians: "But now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments, where-unto ye desire to be in bondage again"? All Judaizers in the church, ancient and modern, magnify man's side of redemption, works of law, and human merit to the disparagement of God's side, works of grace, and human demerit. Because the Galatians were being led into this deep, beguiling error, Paul very emphatically reminds them that their conversion from slavish heathenry began with God's knowing them, rather than with their knowing God. He is amazed and alarmed at their deserting Christian ground, and fears that he has labored with them in vain. He must by all means show them the real nature of the terrible mistake they are making—that religiously to observe Mosaic rites after the cross is to deny the efficacy of the gospel of grace, to relapse into "bondage over again," and to give up Christ altogether. This deceptive tare, if let alone, will supplant Christianity; hence, Paul digs it up by the roots.

What could be more startlingly instructive than this identification of heathenry with the Mosaic system after its tutorship was accomplished? When the Galatians, who had never known Moses, observed circumcision and other "carnal ordinances, imposed until a time of reformation," it was the same in principle as if they had

returned to heathen idolatry with its impure rites, abominable obscenity, and demon worship. Both systems were based on the rudimentary principles of the flesh and "the wisdom of the (Christless) world," which can never lift men higher than the flesh and the world. According to Galatians, Mosaism after the cross has the same deadly effect on men that heathenism has.

Current Galatianism

The core of the Galatians' default was they thought the gospel Paul preached was "weak and beggarly." They were so spiritually shallow and ignorant that they thought the Christian life could not be attained on the principle of divine grace kindling and working with human faith, love, and hope; that the gospel needed to be bolstered up and made sufficient by adding the principle of law. (A very common error today.) It was incidental that they manifested this crass misunderstanding of the power and the working of grace in the human spirit by observing Mosaic rites and ceremonies. The basic error of the Galatians was their thinking that, not grace and faith, but law with its immature, not to say infantile, methods was the dynamics of righteousness. Now, the grand object of the book of Galatians was to show them that it was the other way around—that the principle of law was provisional, "weak and beggarly," while within the church was the full-grown power of God, "wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30).

Of course, Christians today do not show their mistrust of the working principle of Christianity by taking up the ways of Moses, but they may easily show it in other ways. Just to name some: trust in blood, wealth, culture, position, ability to sing or speak, strong character, good works, dead forms, traditions of men, and creeds, written and unwritten. Note how the book relies on the Holy Spirit (3:2-5; 4:6; 5:16-26), a new power inaccessible to men until Pentecost, to counteract the fleshly workings of all these. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" and unity and growth and fruit.

1. State the twofold sense in which Christ "is the end of the law unto righteousness."
2. When and why does God send the Holy Spirit into men's hearts?
3. Why did Paul call the Mosaic covenant "weak and beggarly rudiments" of the world?
4. Study the statement that the Sinaic covenant was a parenthesis within the older, broader, more enduring Abrahamic covenant.
5. When and how did Judaism become no better in principle than heathen idolatry?
6. How was it that the Galatian heresy deserted Christian ground altogether?
7. Explain the statement that not the law itself, but the covenant of law, was a "ministration of death."
8. Show that Christ's conversation with the Samaritan woman throws light on the nature of the connection between Judaism and Christianity.
9. What dynamic power, inaccessible to all others, do Christians have to counteract carnal, legalistic tendencies?

ESSAY NO. 12

"Men spake from God being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). Even without this personal impact of the Holy Spirit upon his own spirit, Paul would have been a very superior man. With his large natural and acquired gifts, wealth of experience, and devotion to God, he was capable of holding more of the mind of God than were others. Consequently, when moved, filled, and possessed by the Spirit, he not only taught some things more fully than other inspired men did, but withal became the most vital and fruitful man in history.

The biography of a good man, from Christ down, is always profitable. When others know a man's motive is right, they like to hear him tell his own life story. Paul, knowing that the narrative of a Christian's conversion and subsequent life was good argument for Christianity, on two occasions related his own experience (Acts 22 & 26). To make and to develop Christians there is no better preaching and exhorting than what the Spirit "moved" Paul to write about himself.

Paul's "Little Children"

(4:12-20)

Paul feared that the Galatians might misconstrue some of the plain, frank things he had written, and even misjudge his motives. Apparently the Judaizers had maligned him and caused them to think he was their enemy, purposely depriving them of necessary rites. When he thought of how the simple Galatians were being imposed upon by the designing partisans, memories of their unprecedented reception of him, a very sick man, when he first came among them, compassion for their distressed state under hireling shepherds, and perplexity concerning their future filled his heart, and he grew tender and tearful.

Probably what he wrote Corinth about the same time, under similar circumstances, "Out of many afflictions and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears" (2 Cor. 2:4), would be appropriate in a second letter to Galatia. Or perhaps, what he said

to Philippi, "Many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil. 3:18), he might have said to Galatia. Contrary to Paul's custom, no thanksgiving is found in Galatians, but it contains one of the tenderest passages in all his writings: "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 change my tone; for I am perplexed about you." Note that the connection between the two verses of this emotionally drenched passage is broken as if by sobs.

This introduces a side of Paul and a basic element in Christianity, also, that we today know none too well. If Christ could weep in human sympathy over the broken image of God in the Jews, with the sisters at the tomb of their brother, and pronounce a blessing upon those who mourn, there can be nothing wrong or weak about tears. Paul, whose commission was signed, "I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16), became a man of profound feeling and many tears before his martyrdom. What better reveals a man's size than that which moves him to tears? As the foundation of the church was cemented in Christ's blood, and the superstructure built in the persecutions and afflictions of the saints, so must the building be finished in the sufferings and the sacrifices of Christians.

Love and tears have a ministry peculiarly their own. What can be more eloquent and moving than the tears of a strong man, like Moses or Paul, who does not weep till he has something to weep about? A wayward son can withstand the arguments of his father longer than he can the tears of his mother. If Euodia and Syntyche could have got off to themselves somewhere and had a good cry together, probably, their difference would not have seemed so important (Phil. 4:2). When Christ (Matt. 22:37-40) and Paul (1 Cor. 13) so certainly give dominant centrality in the kingdom of God to love, it is hard to see why Christians consider it, as compared to intellect and learning, inferior. The church, leaving hearts unexercised and trying to do God's work with only heads and hands, breaks step with Christ and Paul. The only fault Christ found with the church at Ephesus was that she had left her "first love" (Rev. 2:4).

Paul's Allegorizing

After closing his argument for the all-sufficiency of the gospel with a touching reminiscence, Paul, feeling that more written doctrinal matter would be useless to the Galatians, tells them that he would like to talk things out with them face to face and heart to heart. Wondering whether or not they really understand how promise and law differ in nature and workings, and realizing how easy it is to confess Christ, yet rely on self, Paul, knowing the value of parabolic illustrations to clarify doctrine, decides, before taking up the hortatory part of the book proper, to use Abraham again to allegorize the difference.

"Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law (legal system), do ye not hear the law (book of the law)?" Very skillfully, Paul commits the Judaizers to their own Bible before he shows that it is against them. "Moved by the Holy Spirit," Paul says of Hagar and Sarah, "These women are two covenants." He teaches that Ishmael, Abraham's natural son by Hagar, symbolizes and allegorizes the Mosaic covenant; and that Isaac, Abraham's supernatural son by Sarah, the Christian covenant. As Ishmael, because he mocked Isaac, was cast out, so Jews, because they reject Christ, mocking and persecuting his people, must be cast out. These women with their respective sons were no more incompatible than are the two covenants. Sons of the flesh cannot abide sons of the Spirit. No one hates grace like those who try to save themselves by self-effort. The point of the allegory contained in this bit of history is that God casts out the legal mode of earning justification, and freely bestows it upon "Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise." The prophecy Paul quotes, since it shows Isaiah as well as Moses is against them, further embarrasses Judaizers. Furthermore, it gives Christians of all time assurance that they are on the growing, winning side. Paul proves himself to be an elegant, effective allegorizer.

Galatians is the Act of Emancipation for the slaves of law in all ages. It defends the gospel against any invasion of the principles of law, works, and flesh, which would modify its character of pure

grace. It is the Magna Charta of Christian universalism and liberty and freedom.

1. Why is there no thanksgiving in the book of Galatians?
2. Why are the autobiographic notes sprinkled over Paul's writings so interesting and edifying?
3. How do we know that tears are neither wrong nor weak?
4. How do you account for the modern intellectual recoil against emotional demonstration?
5. What position do Christ, Paul and John assign love in Christianity?
6. Why cannot all of God's work be done with heads and hands?
7. What do you think of the efficacy of the ministry of love and tears?
8. What allegorical lesson, based on the story of Isaac and Ishmael, does Paul teach?
9. Elaborate on the statement that Galatians is the Act of Emancipation for slaves of law in all ages.

ESSAY NO. 13

In the last two chapters of Galatians especially, Paul exhorts his readers to apply his teaching by giving the doctrine of sanctification (personal, practical righteousness) by grace an honest trial. In effect he says something like this: "Your false teachers tell you that, unless the principle of law is woven in with the principle of grace, the moral standards of the church will suffer, and the highest type of Christians will not be produced. But I, Paul, (with all my apostolic knowledge and authority, which was proved in the first of this letter), tell you that the workings of grace alone will sanctify as well as justify men; and that any admixture of the legal principle will fatally pervert it." Paul insists -and warns that the two systems being "contrary, the one to the other" will not coalesce, but that pure, unmixed grace will sustain standards, fulfill the law, and make Christians of the highest order.

Christ the Emancipator

"For freedom did Christ set you free." "Everyone that committeth sin is the bondservant (slave) of sin ... If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:34-36). If men are left in Adam's sin and their own sins, being slaves of sin by nature and by practice, imprisoned in themselves their doom is eternally sealed. The story of the Negro slave who, upon being sold by a brutal master, heard his new master graciously say, "My purpose in buying you is to set you free," illustrates Christ's freeing men. Christian freedom is not incidental; Christ's purpose in buying enslaved men is to make them free. "For ye, brethren, were called for freedom" (Gal. 5:13). "I am the door; by me if man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out (freedom of a child in and around the house of its parents), and shall find pasture ... I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:9, 10). In these simple words, Christ offers men, in the language of another, "freedom, fodder, and fullness."

"Be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage." Could the Negro man, after being free for a time, return to his former, hard master? Yet, this is what the Galatians were doing, Their being circumcised

and building hope on the law, nullified grace as though "Christ died for naught," and made them debtors "to do the whole law." Thus, they were being ensnared again in the network of legalism, for Judaism, like the heathenism from which Christ had delivered them, was also a legal system—a "ministration of death." To be thus circumcised was to reinstate law, which was powerless either to prevent or forgive sin. It was to be "severed from Christ" and "fallen away from grace" altogether.

Christians today without falling into Judaism, heathenry, or gross sins, may nonetheless fall "away from grace" into an entanglement of dead formality, Pharisaic self-righteousness, and Christless human merit, "holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof"—form without power. In principle, this is the same deadly perversion of the gospel that filled Paul with apprehension for his "little children" in Galatia, and led him tearfully to warn them that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." May not this powerless form of religion be a termite, now eating out the inner, spiritual life and strength of the church, leaving a hollow, outer shell to collapse later? Christ said to his church in Sardis: "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead" (Rev. 3:1). Sardis must have been bustling with committees, programs, and various activities, a church much alive and gratifying to the flesh, but dead to Christ. Could his church today be drifting into such a state?

Freedom and Obedience

Freedom is not free; nor can it ever be had at a bargain price. It may be possessed only at the same, original, high price. Like peace and happiness, it is not to be sought directly, but as a by-product. Obedience, not freedom, is the primary law of life. When a carnal man seeks freedom by flouting law and authority and by living as he pleases, he soon finds himself physically and morally enslaved. But when men live in obedience to the laws of life, freedom follows as a shadow follows its objects. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God . . . and all these things (including freedom) shall be added unto you." Seek freedom first, and it escapes. Men are free only within bounds—within the frame of law. They are chained back in freedom by law; and the more lawful, the freer men are.

Christian freedom has both a negative and a positive aspect. Men are freed from some things and freed for other things. Christ liberates men from the yoke of traditional, creedal and ceremonial law, for it chokes the freedom he proposes to give. He frees men from the curse of the moral law—from the penalty, power and practice of sin; and from the fear of self, the world, death and hell. Men who fear God rightly, know no other fear. On the positive side, Christianity brims with freedom, Christ gives men the liberty to search the Scriptures with open, yet cautious mind, and in free conscience to accept what they find. Christianity is on the way to dissolution when Christians are afraid to follow their conscience. In Christ men have liberty and privilege to worship, to work, to ponder, to wonder, to wait and dream, to do the right thing, to grow and ripen, to "press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and to go on endlessly with God unto perfection even as He is perfect. Verily freedom, unto speechless wonderment, "above all that we ask or think!"

The secret of Christian freedom is that a Christian chooses to go Christ's way. He believes that since Christ's and his own interests are identical, either both are served or neither is served ; that Christ's will for him is his own will at its highest and best. Therefore, when he chooses Christ's way, he also has his own way. And what is this but freedom? It is the blessed freedom of a Christ-captivated soul — a new kind of slavery, to be sure. But inasmuch as man by purposive creation is a dependent being, the more dependent, the more fulfilled and freer he is. God has worked out a unique plan by which Christ's slave becomes his own master! Christ gets the essential law of life obeyed, human nature fulfilled, and his slave in possession of life abounding — all this without slavish drudgery or "dragging of feet" on the part of the slave. "To him be the glory forever." "In willing chains and sweet captivity," a Christian is the only free, fulfilled, happy man. Who could be a lukewarm Christian?

1. State the respective position of the Judaizers and of Paul on the subject of sanctification.
2. What does the statement that men are imprisoned in themselves mean?
3. How were the Galatians becoming "entangled again in According to Galatians, in what does falling "away from grace" consist?
4. How is it that leaders in the church, now, may be "fallen away from grace"?
5. How is it that leaders in the church, now, may be "fallen away from grace"?
6. What is the Christian interpretation of the statement, "The more dependent men are, the freer they are?"
7. Describe Christian freedom with respect to both its negative and its positive aspect.
8. In what sense is Christianity a new type of slavery?
9. What is the secret that initiates us into the freedom for which Christ sets us free?

ESSAY NO. 14

"Not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but . . . the righteousness which is from God by faith" (Phil. 3:9). This half verse, written by Paul a few years later than Galatians is a distillment of Galatians. Had Paul possessed legal righteousness, it would have been his own because he had earned it as a deserved wage for his perfect law-keeping. Instead, when he believed on Christ he received gospel righteousness from God as a gift.

"Ye are severed from Christ, ye that would be justified by the law . . . for we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness." Note the contrast between legalists and Christians. Christians being already clothed in Christ's righteousness do not wait for righteousness itself, but for its fulfillment, "the crown of righteousness," after earth-life. While they wait, their hope and "faith working through love" fill their lives with patient, joyous work. By grace, through faith, in love, unto crowned hope. Inasmuch as Christians find in Christ every need for life, death, and beyond richly supplied, legalists who desert him for a "weak and beggarly" religion of the flesh are foolish indeed.

If Paul doubted the Galatians, he found hope for them in Christ and wrote: "I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord" that you will not fall away into the entanglements of legalism. He did not judge indiscriminately, but distinguished between the leaders and the led. Out of tender, fatherly love for the Galatians, he spared not the troublemakers, wished they would sever themselves from the church, and warned that they could not escape the judgment of God. It is evident (v. 11) that these "evil workers," willfully forgetting that Paul refused to circumcise Titus because to do so would have compromised essential Christian doctrine, took his circumcising Timothy when only expediency and Christian liberty were involved, and twisted it into the malicious, damaging lie that he was an unprincipled man, who preached circumcision when it suited his purpose to do so. Behold, religious partisanship, prejudice, and bigotry at work!

Men Are Triune Beings

The natural man has a fleshly nature and a spiritual nature living within his body. When he experiences the spiritual birth, the Holy Spirit so identifies himself with and so indwells the man's spirit that a new order of life, the Christian life, which eventuates in eternal life, comes into being. Instead of this spiritual life extirpating "the mind of the flesh," which "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be" (Rom. 8:7), the two live in perpetual strife within the Christian until his death. At the resurrection when Christ comes, a Christian's body, which was "sown a natural body" and "is raised a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:44), shall be his again to live in forever. Wholly spiritual then, "spirit and soul and body" (1 Thes. 5:23), he is forever free from strife.

During this struggle between flesh and spirit throughout the Christian's life on earth, the arrogant flesh is only counterworked and kept in subjection, never eradicated. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (John 3:6); it remains flesh in a regenerate man, and cannot become humble and spiritual. The best a Christian is promised, before death and resurrection deliver him from his fallen fleshly nature, is that sin shall not dominate him, and reign over him. (See Rom. 6:12-14).¹ A Christian is still pursued, but no longer ruled, by Adam's sin.

This world-old conflict heads up in God and Satan, who are deadly, personal enemies. God works through the spirit, and Satan through the flesh of men, "created half to rise, and half to fall." With the passing of time, Christians should increasingly become less sinful, carnal and worldly, and more saintly, spiritual and other-worldly. (On this background, Galatians 5:12-26 may mean more to us.)

"A New Commandment"

"For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants to one another" (Gal. 5:13). Satan is man's resourceful, stubborn, wily foe. One stratagem he uses to trick Christians into the indul-

gence of their flesh is to prompt them -to reason: "Where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly"; therefore let us "continue in sin that grace may abound" (Rom. 5:20; 6:1). Jude calls such as this "Turning the grace of God into Lasciviousness."

But Christian liberty may be abused in many other ways. Satan was beguiling the Galatians into making their freedom a pretext for uncharitable treatment of their brethren. Apparently, they thought they were as free from moral law as from Mosaic ritualism, and had license to be lawless. Paul tells them to serve one another in Christian love, and they will discover: "That the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"; that God has perfected a way of making men, without their becoming legalists, lawful. As the character of Christ proves, law itself and love are not incompatible; Pharisaic legalism, not law, is what contradicts gospel grace, truth, and love.

Codified law is not necessary for Christians, because their "faith working through love" leads them into doing even more than codes can specify. A servant under law, after meeting all requirements, may be off duty for a time; but a servant under love, being unable to do all he wants to do, can never find a stopping place. A Christian often sins more than he pleases, but he never can love and work enough to please himself. His creed is: "Since I am at best only an unprofitable servant, I must ever be going onward, outward, upward, and beyond." Only this attitude can account for the incomparable lawfulness, labor, love, suffering, and success of the author of Galatians. To human merit and all other forms of "confidence in the flesh," Christian love is as dangerous as an atom bomb is to a city.

Just before he went to the cross, Christ said to his apostles: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples" (John 13:34, 5). In giving the prime and pivotal place in his coming kingdom to love, he was launching a strange, new religion that would distill the Mosaic law into an eleventh commandment, so to speak, and create an immeasurably better social order than any order built on law could ever be. A wonderful

King this, who loves men, without their being sensible of law, restraint, and duty, into lawful living plus! Verily, a strange, new religion then, and alack a strange, new religion yet. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!"

1. Distinguish between legal and gospel righteousness.
2. Explain how the phrase, "by grace, through faith, in love, unto hope, apply to gospel righteousness.
3. Why and how did Paul discriminate between the leaders and the led in Galatia?
4. Name the two invisible inhabitants that occupy man's body.
5. What relationship exists between these two as long as they dwell together in fallen mans' body?
6. When and how are Christians to become wholly spiritual, completely redeemed from the flesh?
7. How may Christians turn "the grace of God into lasciviousness"?
8. How is it that Christians may live lawfully without be coming legalists?
9. Explain how it is that Christ's "new commandment" may build a better social order for humanity than could the Decalogue of Moses.

ESSAY NO. 15

"If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (5:15). The Galatians had ceased "running well" and were biting and devouring each other as a result, apparently, of their having "fallen away from grace" into legalism. Paul, who knew from his own past how loveless, bitter, and cruel the legalistic mind could be, and who wrote, "The power of sin is the law" (1 Cor. 15:56), warned "Take heed that ye be not consumed one of another"; and advised, "Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." This declension of the Galatians refutes the theory that the addition of the legal principle increases the power of the gospel to make superior Christians.

The Galatian Heresy

As an antidote for a righteousness of their own according to the law unto which the Galatians were sinking, Paul prescribes in this epistle pure, complete Christianity, which comes to a climax and focus "in the power of the Holy Spirit." God the Father planned Christianity before the foundation of the world, and worked toward its realization some 4000 years after he created Adam, before God the Son became man in order to add the human element; after this, God the Spirit, fulfilling Christ's promise to his apostles, "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts 1:8), with a burst of power on Pentecost brought it to perfection as the divine instrument of redemption. Christianity is, therefore, the grand total of the combined workings of God in these three aspects. God is for, Christ is with (Emmanuel) and the Spirit is in Christians.

God the Spirit through Peter on Pentecost preached perfected Christianity for the first time, promising pardon and that he himself would dwell in Christians as his temple. Under Paul's preaching, the Galatians accepted this same Christianity in its entirety, but were persuaded later that they did not need it all. Consequently, they substituted a dead religion of the flesh for the spiritual, crucial, crowning part of living Christianity. Christianity thus devitalized and shorn of its power to save men from the practice of

sin is not the religion that God created. It is the fatally perverted gospel that aroused Paul to his depths and led him, "being moved by the Holy Spirit," to write a dateless, "living and active" book, which could bless all men for all time.

It is significant that Paul, who had led the Galatians out of heathenism into Christianity, nowhere in this book feels the need to prove that Christians possess the Holy Spirit, but takes for granted that the Galatians knew the Spirit indwelt them. In 3:2, he asks, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of law, or by the hearing of faith?" In 4:6, he reminds them that "God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Now, in 5:18, he admonishes, "If (since) ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law," and closes the chapter with, "If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk." Paul could not see how the Galatians, who still believed that in Christianity justification was graciously given, could be, concerning their sanctification, so foolish and inconsistent as to supplant the climactic, character-forming portion of Christianity, in which God personally contacts, vitalizes and renews man's fallen spirit, with the "weak and beggarly" fleshly religion of human merit.

What wonder that Paul is "again in travail" for his Galatians? They must be saved from deadly heresy! He insists that Christianity, being an indivisible, must be accepted either all, or none; that to think they do not need in their stern struggle against "the flesh" to be "strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man" (Eph. 3:16), is to challenge the wisdom and integrity of God, who fashioned Christianity; and that to refuse the deep, inner workings of the Spirit is to counteract the whole of Christianity.

, Does Paul really teach all this? It behooves us, by reading the Bible honestly, to find out. It will be well, if new wine bursts old skins. But we do not understand how the Spirit works! Are we required to do so? Will Christianity fail to work unless we know all of its infinite workings! When we understand how Satan works in man's flesh, probably we can understand better how the Holy Spirit, without overriding man's will and depersonalizing him, works in his spirit.

Flesh Versus Spirit

Having discussed uncharitableness as one way of abusing Christian liberty Paul proceeds in the last of Gal. 5 to discuss uncleanness as another way. "The flesh" is not merely the human body. Bodiless angels have committed some of the sins listed here in Paul's "works of the flesh." As Adam, before he sinned, and Christ prove, flesh itself is not sinful. Satan makes his attack on men through their flesh. When they yield, he makes the flesh the seat of further operations against the whole man, "spirit and soul and body." "The flesh" is man's fallen, sub-human nature, with its inbred sin. Individual man, with his nature maimed and his flesh already invaded by the enemy, is doomed in this unequal struggle unless he gets divine support. And Christianity, all of it, is this imperative divine support. Blind and foolish indeed, ignorant of himself, of Satan, and of God, is he who dares this warfare without putting "on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11).

The responsibility of Christians is to make the ideal crucifixion of their flesh a reality in their lives. They are not promised exemption from temptations of the flesh, but that, seeing they are not under law, but grace, superhuman aid shall be supplied according to their need (See 1 Cor. 10:13), thus assuring victory over "the flesh." Probably, if we Christians could but realize how miserably we fail to live up to Christian standards, we would not be flesh-sufficient and self-righteous. When we realize what it means really to love our brethren as ourselves and to fulfil the lofty requirements of love as defined by Christ, Paul and John; realize how unruly our tongues, how envious (not to mention our secret joy at the setback of a rival) of the success of others, how touchy of our "rights," reputation and position; and realize, how self-centered we actually are, lifted up when praised and honored, cast down when slighted and set aside, and how little we really love and care for others when we realize that all of this, and more, is of the flesh, which is ideally dead, is it not time to ask ourselves whether or not we have "fallen away from grace" into the flesh and legalism, trying to lift ourselves by our own boot straps?

1. As the Galatians became more legalistic, did they become better Christians?
2. How did God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit (the triune God) cooperate in creating perfected Christianity?
3. Discourse on the meaning of God is for us, Christ is with us, and the Spirit is in us.
4. Why did not Paul try to prove to the Galatians that the Holy Spirit dwelt in them?
5. Where does Christianity reach the summit of its power and efficacy?
6. Were not the Galatians leaving off the essential, crowning climax of Christianity?
7. If Christianity be deprived of the superhuman help of the Holy Spirit, what help do Christians have that Jews before Christ did not have?
8. Is it necessary that men understand intellectually the infinite divine workings in either nature or religion in order to enjoy benefits?
9. Could we but realize how proud, self-centered, fleshly, loveless, and ungrateful we still actually are, and how very little and weak we are in our own natural strength, would it not help us to see how desperately we need "power through his Spirit in the inward man"?

ESSAY NO. 16

The sins in the church at Corinth included partyism, fornication, litigation, idolatry, and drunkenness. Apparently, the Galatians were guilty of like sins, but Paul saw another sin in them that disturbed him far more deeply. They were forsaking God's house, built on the rock, for one of their own building on the sand. After having begun in the Spirit, they were turning back to the flesh; denying a full redemption in the Spirit, they were looking for a supplement in their own natural strength and ability to work out for themselves perfected righteousness. In effect, according to Paul, this made void the grace of God, the cross of Christ, the power of the Spirit, and destroyed the house the triune God built to its deepest foundation. Thus, their religion became all of the flesh.

Inasmuch as the Galatians did not know "the deep things of Satan" (Rev. 2:24), they did not see the doctrinal implications of their legalism. There is no better evidence of Satan's deep malice and demonic sagacity than his perverting the law, which God intended to convict men of sin, to humble them, and to lead them to Christ, into a powerful instrument to make men proud and self-righteous. He is deep and wicked enough to turn Christians into blind, Pharisaic hypocrites.

Doubtless, the Galatians continued to preach baptism "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" for the remission of sins, observe the Lord's Supper, and meet other requirements, yet, all unknown to themselves, they were "fallen away from grace." Christians today should not think that because they do not observe the carnal ordinances of Moses, they are immune to the legal principle. They should realize that, in infinite wisdom and goodness, God in Christianity, without any help from man except his absolute surrender, assumes all responsibility, no matter what Satan knows and does, for enabling and perfecting Christians who really trust him and cooperate with him. This kind of faith would have saved the Galatians from legalism with its truly terrible consequences, as it will save Christians today from legal-ism with its truly terrible consequences.

"Works of the Flesh"

A cursory examination of these "works" shows a catalogue of fifteen items (ASV), all related to the Mosaic Code. The first three items ("fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness") remind us of, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." The next two ("idolatry, sorcery") of, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Then follow eight items ("enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings"), which violate, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "Where love is thin, faults are thick." The last two ("drunkenness, revellings") are beastly self-gratification, which are always beneath human dignity. With authoritative finality that admits no argument, Paul follows this list with: "I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Let us read the list again; it was written for us too.

Sorcery, or witchcraft, which is superhuman knowledge and power acquired by compact with evil spirits and traffic with the dead, is a biblical subject. God gives warning against it in the Old Testament: "There shall not be found with thee any one that useth divination ... or a sorcerer ... or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer (one who communicates with the dead) . . . For whosoever doth these things is an abomination unto Jehovah" (Deut. 18:10, 12). Immediately following this scripture, God promises to send Christ in lieu of such leaders. In 1 Sam. 28, is found the story of King Saul and the witch of Endor. Saul's epitaph reads: "So Saul died for his trespass . . . and also for that he asked counsel of one that had a familiar spirit" (1 Chron. 10:13).

In the New Testament, we meet sorcery often, always opposing Christianity. Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8); "Elymas the sorcerer" (Acts 13); and the maid with "a spirit of divination" (Acts 16) are well-known figures. Sorcery was very prevalent in Ephesus (Acts 19). Satan, "the god of this world," opposed Christianity, especially in new places with sorcery. In Gal. 5:20, written some twenty-five years after Pentecost, Paul brackets it with idolatry, with which it is allied and coeval. At a time yet to come, all sorcerers of all time shall have their part "in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8).

The two leading features of sorcery, reading destiny and commerce with the dead, are prevalent today. Doubtless, there is much humbuggery, based as all idolatry is, on greed, superstition and religious ignorance, yet, according to the Bible, a core of reality exists. The road to Endor, for men like Saul, is still open. For Christians, however, as for the ancient Jews, it is a closed road of disobedience and ruin. They cannot honor Christ as Mediator in some dark room seeking guidance from a "medium." This and all such like is of the flesh.

"Fruit of the Spirit"

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control." The Spirit in this verse is a tree bearing a cluster of ninefold heavenly fruit. Because of its relationship to the rest of the cluster, love comes first. Without love, none of the fruit is sound and wholesome. The joy, the longsuffering, the meekness and all the rest, if they have not love, are rotten at the core and worthless. Magic love is living, contagious, creative, and imparts these qualities to the entire cluster. "The greatest of these is love." Love, joy, peace! What more would you have? Long after the shallow wells of the flesh have run dry, from the perpetual fountain of the Spirit down deep within the human spirit continue to "flow rivers of living water" for "refreshing from the presence of the Lord." "A well of water springing up unto eternal life." "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" and fruit.

The Holy Spirit is the only tree that produces "the fruit of the Spirit." Since such fruit is not native to earth, the flesh does not, and cannot produce it. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit." All Paul knows to do with the flesh is to crucify it "with the passions and lusts thereof." God does not expect men in the flesh to produce spiritual fruit and live his life until he gives them his Spirit, and they "become partakers of the divine nature." As without changing gravity a magnet counteracts it, so without changing the flesh, the Holy Spirit counterworks it, and keeps it in subjection so that it cannot "bite and devour" and destroy. It never becomes spiritual, any more than foolishness becomes wisdom. It is a tiger which only the Spirit can even chain.

1. Explain how the Galatian heresy made void the cross of Christ.
2. Instead of being convicted of sin **by** the law of Moses, how did the Pharisaic Judaizers react to it?
3. How is it that men may be baptized for the remission of sins and observe the Lord's Supper, yet be legalists, fallen from grace?
4. Name some laws of the Decalogue that "the works of the flesh" violate? What does the term, "the flesh," as used in this passage comprise?
5. How are idolatry and sorcery related? (See Rev. 21:8 also).
6. Name some sorcerous enemies of the early church, and tell under what circumstances they were most active.
7. Is there any intimation in the Bible that idolaters and sorcerers will cease to oppose the church during this dispensation?
8. Will the flesh ever become spiritual?
9. Why is it that "the fruit of the Spirit" can be produced only in Christians?

ESSAY NO. 17

The book of Galatians champions Christian liberty and nobility, and challenges legalistic bondage and bigotry; it is a comparative study of the religion of the Spirit and the religion of the flesh. The last two chapters, especially, warn against the perversions and abortions into which legalism sinks the church. To correct the strange misunderstanding that Christian liberty gives license to indulge the flesh, Paul discusses four points under the heading, "Use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh": first, do not be lawless and consume one another; second, do not be unclean and wallow in the filth of the flesh; third, do not be proud and despotic; fourth, do not be avaricious and parsimonious. The legalistic Christian in falling "away from grace," inevitably falls into some or all of these fleshpots. The assertion that the addition of the legal principle would promote good morals and spirituality in the Galatian churches is not being fulfilled. Rather, the flesh is running riot to the peril of clean living and Christianity. Paul shows that the pride of the flesh causes much of their abuse of Christian liberty.

Gaining a Brother

"Even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (6:1). Even a Christian over whom the flesh does not reign, may be so pursued by the flesh, which ever stalks him, that he sins. This verse does not contemplate a reckless sinner who overtakes sin, or meets it head-on. This man, like Adam in Eden, is "afraid" and ashamed. He needs a kind, understanding brother to lift him out of the remorse that leads to despair up to the repentance that restores. In such cases, legalists, smug and secure in their false self-competency, thinking they cannot fall and that all should be just like them, are stern, exacting and incapable of being gentle and tender with others. Paul wrote the church at Corinth about the restoration of penitent brothers who had fallen: "Forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow" (2 Cor. 2:7-11).

In the event his recommendation concerning an offending brother should work, Christ says, "Thou hast gained thy brother" (Matt. 18:15). Gaining the brother is the first purpose of discipline. The self-righteous bigot, who cannot see his brother for whom Christ died with a brother's eye, and who thinks the way to restore him is to "talk down" to him with an air of, "I never would have even thought of doing such a thing," had better not attempt it. I have read of a prisoner who resented all "church workers" until a meek Christian man went to his cell, sat beside him with an arm about him, and said: "Was it not good in God to send his Son to die for poor sinners like you and me?" That thawed the ice at his heart. This man could understand the prisoner because he understood himself and the gospel of grace. He did not deceive himself by thinking he was "something" when he was "nothing." Not until a man realizes that he has no merit before God, and can never have, can he be really gentle with men. Without compromising truth or winking at sin, spiritual men can correct brethren without offending or humiliating them.

Bearing Burdens

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (6:2). To sympathize with and help each other bear the common infirmities of mortal life should be as natural for Christians, who are parts of the same organism and who share the same nature, as for the various members of the human body to help each other. Christians may also share with one another the burdens arising from the troubles and sins of others, as, for instance, a mother brokenhearted over a sinful child. All such bearing of burdens fulfills the law of Christ, which reads: "A new commandment I give unto you that ye should love one another; even as I have loved you." Of course too, Christians are happy to follow and fulfill up to their measure, the life of Christ, the great burden Bearer.

There is an undercurrent of thought here, which comes more to the surface in Rom. 15:15-21 and 2 Cor. 10:12-18. Throughout his missionary career, Paul, resolutely refusing to build on another's foundation, sought out new fields. After he had planted the church in Galatia, Judaizers came in to take over. They thought they were very superior to Paul, gave themselves airs, loaded men down with

"burdens grievous to be borne," which they would not so much as touch with their little fingers, and lorded it over the church generally. That Christians should "mutual burdens bear" never once entered their minds. Are not these Galatian Judaizers much like some pre-Christian Pharisees and lawyers, whom Christ encountered in Jerusalem? Paul's having once been an unbending legalist himself gives him their number precisely. Legalism, because it makes man the center and measure, never has made, nor can it ever make, spiritual men. The religion of the flesh is destructively and fatally off center.

Paul is setting the Judaizers in their place and rescuing the church from their strangle hold. Let them cease being puffed up with fictitious self-importance, and, with envious scorn, setting better men aside; cease boosting the defunct power and glory of Judaism, and, bloated with ignorant pride, cease imposing an impossible legal yoke on the neck of God's free sons. Let them get out and "prove," not just think, they are something; let them do some real honest, independent Christian work, because after all, a Christian is known by his own work and character, not his neighbor's. The Greek word translated "burden" (v. 5) is not the word rendered "burdens" (v. 2). The practical lesson is that a Christian's own life is the basis of his standing and reward. Concerning this class of men in Corinth, Paul wrote: "For we are not bold to number or compare ourselves with certain of them that commend themselves: but they themselves measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding" (2 Cor. 10:12). Men's comparing themselves with other men is idle and wholly of the unwholesome flesh. It is like a child's thinking he is nine feet high because a, false yardstick which he made himself says he is. If they want a standard of comparison, let them use Christ, the proper standard and touchstone of life and work; if they must have law, let them fulfill his law of love.

1. Discourse on the statement that the religion of the flesh and the religion of the Spirit are mutual opposites.
2. Name the four ways, according to Paul, in which the abuse of Christian freedom may "give occasion to the flesh."
3. Discuss the part pride of the flesh plays in abuse of Christian freedom.
4. Why cannot legalists administer effective discipline to weak brethren?
5. With respect to an offending brother, what is the purpose of discipline?
6. How did Paul and Christ deal with traditional ritualists and religious bigots?
7. In what two senses is the word "burden" used in Gal. 6?
8. What does fulfilling the law of Christ mean in this chapter?
9. Should Christian compare themselves with other Christians?

ESSAY NO. 18

Paul teaches that a perpetual struggle between the flesh and the spirit takes place within Christians. The stubborn flesh, though ideally crucified & a hopeless law-breaker, wages in practical life a lingering battle. It insists that Christian liberty grants it indulgences, incompatible with spiritual living. In our studies of Paul's rebuttal, we are now to hear his answer to the clamor of flesh that it has right to money that belongs to the Spirit. What Christians do with their money is pivotal. They must not be covetous and illiberal.

Sowing and Reaping

A passage to Galatia and one to Corinth, two of Paul's great Scriptures on a Christian's use of money, both teach the correspondence between sowing and reaping. Gal. 6:6-10 stresses the truth that the harvest must agree with the seed sown in kind; 2 Cor. 9:6-11 the supplementary truth that the harvest will be proportional to the seed sown in quantity. "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully . . . -And he that supplieth seed for the sower and bread for food (in nature), shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing (in religion), and increase the fruit of your righteousness: ye being enriched unto all liberality." This scripture teaches that God's work done in God's way, shall never lack God's supplies; that one who really desires to give shall never be denied the privilege and blessing of giving. What an opportunity! Why be stingy? Is it reasonable to trust the seed, the soil, and the sun, yet not trust the word of their faithful Maker and Governor?

As if to guard against a misunderstanding of "each man shall bear his own burden" that would lead to illiberality, Paul follows it with: "But 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 what a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." Although this passage deals primarily with material support for

teachers, it also has a much broader scope. In view of "the works of the flesh," which he has just enumerated, Paul means to tell the Galatians that "the flesh" is a dangerous enemy so resourceful and irreconcilable that it must not be pampered, but rather be turned over to the executioner for crucifixion; that to allow it to spend money on its own pleasure that should be used in spreading the gospel is to reap corruption; that only after it is curbed can they sow to the Spirit and reap life eternal; that eternal-life is contingent upon continuance in well-doing, preferably to Christians, though others are not excluded.

Sowing and reaping is truly a solemn matter. In the field of destiny, nations and individuals reap as they sow. The condition of the world today shows that God is not mocked. The world has sown to the flesh, and is now reaping the inevitable destruction and desolation. As for men, the present determines eternity. According to God's wise and inviolable decree, flesh is flesh, and can never evolve into spirit. Grapes are not to be gathered from thorns. The flesh, anywhere, is a marvelously deceitful and diligent architect of misery and ruin. Now as ever, the flesh in the church is its weakness and frustration. The Galatians are not the last Christians to begin in the Spirit, only to be bewitched into finishing in the flesh. The flesh is unbelievably adept in simulating the Spirit. Many things that seem to many Christians to be of the Spirit are of the flesh, and must therefore reap corruption. "God is not mocked."

Concerning this subject, we need to be on our guard against materialism and determinism. The superlative good news of all time is that the personal God of providence proposes to intervene between sowing and reaping that the harvest of flesh need not come to the full. God's offer of pardon and repair constitute Christianity. God, the Maker of the law of sowing and reaping, arrests its operation in this world, and promises more than completely to correct all injury man has suffered, by giving him a spiritual body at the resurrection. All this is but God lawfully exercising his sovereign liberty in grace. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins" (Psa. 103:10). Did Joseph's brothers reap all they sowed? Christ did not say to the thief dying at his side, "You have sown tares, now reap tares." Paul's "if" in "if we faint not" gives light. If

the Galatians ceased sowing to the Spirit, the harvest would fail. Likewise, if men cease sowing to the flesh, corruption is arrested in time, and life wholly spiritual is reaped in eternity. But even sins forgiven leave scars that remain until death.

Double Crucifixion

In the close of his letter to the Galatians, Paul draws a sharp contrast between himself and the Judaizers. He offers as proof of his strong, unselfish, personal attachment the fact that he, apparently with exceptional procedure and discomfort, writes them in his own handwriting (v. 11). Contrariwise, the selfish, insincere Judaizers have no personal interest in them whatsoever. By having Gentile Christians circumcised, they cannot only escape the bitter, unrelenting persecution of orthodox Jews, but also build themselves up as able, skillful founders and leaders of a new Jewish sect. They have no intention of burdening their party with the whole, wearisome law; the crux, circumcision, will suffice. Paul's blunt, unreserved expose of these time-serving politicians and hypocrites with their religion, based, as are all religions except pure Christianity, on law, flesh, and human merit, surely is enough to cause leaders of the church today to probe their souls for the inspiration of their leadership and activities.

"They desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified to me, and I to the world." In this incisive language, Paul gives his interpretation of Christianity. The cross was to Paul, Christ's invitation, "Come, die with me." The glory of the crucified, risen Lord blinded Paul to the world physically three days, and spiritually forever. According to the flesh, it was the end of Paul; he attended his own funeral! To him it was a choice between the church and the world—one or the other, not both. "I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ" (Phil. 3:8). The cross speaks of death and separation, without compromise, It divides mankind into the spiritual church and the fleshly world.

1. In the matter of sowing and reaping, explain how Gal. 6:6-10 and 2 Cor. 9:6-11 supplement each other.
2. Is money the only thing involved in Christian stewardship?
3. Will Christians who really want to give be denied the privilege of giving?
4. How does the doctrine of sowing and reaping apply to nations?
5. How may the harvest of "corruption" in individuals be reduced in this world and obliterated in eternity?
6. Name some fleshly motives that actuated the Judaizers in Galatia.
7. How is it today that Christians may think they are sowing to the Spirit, when in reality they are sowing to the flesh?
8. What is the only proper treatment for the flesh?
9. What is the meaning of the statement that Paul attended his own funeral?

ESSAY NO. 19

The religion of the flesh and the religion of the Spirit are mutual opposites. In the Bible a group of closely interlocked words and phrases (flesh, old man, body of sin, natural man, world, law, sin, death) are descriptive of the former. Another group, similarly interlocked, (spirit, spiritual man, new man, grace, cross, church, righteousness, life) are descriptive of the latter. There is no interlocking between the groups, however ; they are as distinct as are sheep and goats.

After saying that the Judaizers, though they pretended to be the best Christians in Galatia, selfishly gloried in the flesh, Paul, as the antithesis, says: "But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." That is, their chief satisfaction, joy, and crown was, hypocritically, to build up in the church a legalistic party, while Paul's chief delight and glory was in the cross. "The emblem of suffering and shame ... so despised by the world." Elsewhere, Paul says that Christians, "Worship by the Spirit of God, glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3).

The Cross

The irreconcilable warfare between God and Satan came to a crisis in the decisive cross of Christ, where God is revealed at his very best and Satan at his very worst. As Christ faced the cross he said: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth (on the cross), will draw all men unto myself" (John 12:31, 32). In the invincible strategy of God, Christ's being crucified by Satan through his world became the means of ultimately casting out usurping Satan and his doomed, corrupt system of government over the world, which at that time was represented by the Roman Empire and Caesar. As David slew the fallen Goliath with his own sword, so God by the resurrection of Christ snatched Satan's weapon out of his hand and turned it against him. In this long conflict, Adam sided with Satan, and Christ with God; neither could be on both sides.

The struggle, as seen between Christ's church and Satan's world, yet divides men. "What concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever?" (2 Cor. 6:15). The church and the world will not amalgamate. The confusion, wickedness and misery of the world are no more displeasing to God than are the pride and works of the world; the sin of the rebel flesh and the righteousness of the rebel flesh are both abominable to him. Christians, being identified with Christ as they are, must be rejected and hated by the world, which has never repented of murdering Christ. "If the world hate you, ye know it hated me before you . . . because ye are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18, 19).

"Jesus suffered without the gate" of Jerusalem, and "without the camp" of Judaism. (See Heb. 13:11-14). Although this scripture originally pleaded with Jewish Christians not to desert Christ, but to cleave to him, become strangers, pilgrims, even outcasts with him as he literally "went out, bearing the cross for himself," it still applies to all Christians of all races. The cross no more separates Christians from their sins than it separates them from the world; it no more brings them peace with God than it brings them war with the flesh. To help Jewish Christians first, and all Christians since, not to think the narrow gate, the strait way, and the separated life too difficult, or even unreasonable, this scripture closes: "For we have not here an abiding city, but we seek after the city which is to come." Indeed, this is still timely monition for worldly Christians. And who can say it so well as Paul said to the Galatians long ago, "The world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

A New Creation

"For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." This verse is the very heart of Galatians, even of Christianity. All along, Paul had been thundering, "If ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law"; thundering, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" to grow in conformity to the universal principle of life and growth in all realms—the principle that growth proceeds from within to without, never the reverse. When men give themselves over to God in the Christian way, such a renewal takes place in their spirits that a covenant of law is no

longer needed to curb their flesh. And, since Christians are the first and only men ever to experience this constitutional, spiritual renewal, they are properly a new creation. "Wherefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (both here and Gal., ASV, have alternative readings, "a new creation"): old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. But all things are of God" (2 Cor. 5:17, 18). Most men, even some Christians are lamentably slow to learn that only the God who created them in the beginning can re-create them after discreative Satan has bruised their heads.

Lazarus and a few others have been called back from death to live again in their same, resuscitated bodies until released by death again. But the body in which Christ lived after he came back from death was a strange, new creation. It was a type of human body with which earth is unacquainted—a spiritual body— adapted to a spiritual eternity. Christ's new body is not only the "firstfruits" of the bodies to be raised at his coming; it is also a symbol of his body, the church, another new creation. Before the church was created, mankind consisted of only two classes of men—Jews and Gentiles. Out of willing individuals from these two classes, Christ created a "new man, so making peace" (Eph. 2:15), thus creating a third class of men, in which "neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision." "Give no occasion of stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or unto the church of God" (1 Cor. 10:32).

What makes legalists legalists is they fail to see that the transition from legalism (elements of the world, Judaic or otherwise) to Christianity is a change of religious center from flesh to Spirit, from man to God. Christ calls this essential, constitutional change, that really makes old things new, a new birth. This spiritual birth is what makes Christianity a new creation, a new covenant. Christians who fall into legalism, Galatians teaches, "are severed from Christ . . . are fallen away from grace," and have the same old, futile religion of the flesh, which men had before God in grace came to die for them, and to indwell and to strengthen them "with power through his Spirit in the inward man."

1. Why is the reconciliation of the world and the church utterly impossible?
2. In what sense did Satan crucify himself and the world over which he is prince (See John 12:31) when he crucified Christ?
3. What bearing does this question have on Paul's declaration, "The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"?
4. How did the risen body of Christ differ from the risen body of Lazarus?
5. Did Christ's risen body differ in appearance from his body that was buried?
6. What is the import of Paul's affirmation, "But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep"?
7. Of what other new creation is Christ in his uniquely new, risen body a part?
8. What change in center of life must men make in order to be spiritual Christians?
9. Why did Christ say that one experiencing this change was "born anew"?

ESSAY NO. 20

Christians may trust God never to require, or to permit, anything that is inconsistent with the laws of their mind and nature, or that is inimical to their welfare. To them, God is too wise to make mistakes, and too good to betray their confidence and take advantage of their limitations and helplessness. In Christianity, this is the basic relationship between Creator and creature.

Frustration of Christians

It is very difficult for men really to get onto this Christian ground. Even when they intellectually perceive the correct relationship between the divine and the human in Christianity and want to dethrone self that Christ may reign in their lives, there may be no corresponding inner reality to the outer symbolism. Instead of the old man's being buried and a new man's being born in baptism, the old man may remain alive to dominate the desires, ambitions and activities of their lives. Those who go through this pattern of a regenerated life with little or no change in purpose and direction of life should not be surprised when they reap frustration, for "God is not mocked."

Christ taught much that pertains to this matter. He repeatedly warned his disciples against doing things to be seen of men and against the unreality and hypocrisy of the Pharisees. In substance he said: "The attempt of the Pharisees to make men think they are pious and good, when they are not, has eaten the very heart out of Hebrew religion. Beware of their leaven; this must not be repeated in my kingdom." Did Peter, James and John, as well as Judas, need this caution? He warned "his disciples first of all" (Luke 12:1) of this supreme danger. Christ knew that not only his immediate disciples were disposed, but also that many in coming generations would be disposed to pervert his way of living into a code, which they would attempt to "stick on" the old man instead of becoming new creatures, who could live Christ's way naturally, because it would be in harmony with their new nature. He knew that the effort to do good without being good would be as unnatural and

impossible as for thistles to produce figs: he knew that this unreality would dress wolves in sheep's clothing.

Some Christians are frustrated and joyless because their "fruit of the Spirit," like cut flowers, is rootless and artificial. As the foolish Galatians and Colossians (Col. 2:16-23) thought, they foolishly think that Christianity lacks power and effectiveness; that, if the best fruit is to be had, the gospel must be eked out by "rudiments of the world," legalism, and human merit. This perversion upsets the exquisite balance and perfect adaption of the gospel to human need, cuts the tap root of the fruit of the Spirit, and otherwise obstructs the divine "power that works in us" (Eph. 3:20).

God's Sovereign Cure-all

Sin has not distorted the nature of plants and animals as it has the nature of man. They still live naturally according to their original nature. But when Adam rebelled against God, something deep within his inmost being snapped with catastrophic ruin to his whole personality. He was so disorganized that he could never restore himself, because he had lost the power both to do right and to refrain from doing wrong. No matter how heroically men strive in this depraved state to live rightly, they, as Romans 7 attests, always miserably fail. Since other creatures of earth, from animals, birds and insects through flowers, have never so "fallen," such striving is unknown to them. Man's being exceptional among earthly creatures in this respect is good evidence of his having been created in the image of God, of his tragic fall, and of his fitness for restoration.

To correct all the ravages that sin has wrought in human nature is the prodigious task that God has set himself in Christianity. And inasmuch as nothing can reach maturity except through the fulfillment of its nature, God proposes to restore man's original nature so that he may live, naturally, as he was made to live, without moral drudgery. Now, this is a religion worth having, and worthy of God! However, Christians on earth are yet in training, and, by reason of their imperfect surrender to God, much frustration and failure occur. "But now we see not yet all things subjected to him (Jesus). But we behold . . . Jesus . . . saying . . .

Behold, I and the children whom God hath given me" (Heb. 2:8-13). God and Christ are perfecting a host of "children," healed of all wounds, to be "a new harmony yet." "Not yet" do we see it; we are yet to see it.

Sowing seed in soil does not make a harvest. In both nature and religion, sowing seed is prerequisite, but inadequate. The seeded soil must lie exposed to the sun for a season that God with superhuman work may produce his harvest. Likewise, Christians must lie exposed to God's super-human, redemptive workings as he advances his stupendous task of restoring man's original personality.

And as men, knowing that the work of seed, soil and sun cannot be divorced, never vex themselves about the part each plays in making a crop, so they need not argue about the respective work of the inseparable word and Spirit in their souls. Nevertheless, God the Spirit's ministry was not completed with his giving the written word. He takes up his abode in those who receive his word to help their infirmities, and in wordless groanings to pray for them (See Rom. 8:26). Of course, all that he does is in conjunction and agreement with his written word.

Christians, can we but realize how deep our hurt, how on a human level incurable our wound, how when given the best human treatment it but festers and grows worse, surely we can humbly and truly trust God's treatment. Can we but realize the difficulty and the immensity of the task of re-creating wrecked humanity, that, "It is by no (mere) breath, turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation joins issue with death"; realize that not only man's destiny, but also God's name, honor and glory are involved, surely we can see the extreme folly and peril of rending the seamless robe of Christianity and discarding part of it as being unnecessary. If in our redemption,, God, assuming a work that, if any work can tax him, taxes his resources, graciously proposes to dwell in us as his temple and to strengthen us at the place of our greatest weakness and need "with power through his Spirit, in the inward man," who are we to say that such help is contrary to the laws of the human mind! May not such an attitude be responsible for some of our

frustration with its mere fluttering instead of flying? "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."

We close our, "Studies in Galatians" with Paul's benediction: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen."

1. How is it that the old, fleshly man, who is symbolically buried in baptism, often survives in Christians and dominates their lives?
2. What is the significance of the fact that, while mere animals without effort live in harmony with their nature, men with all their human strivings never live in
3. How is it that Christianity enables fallen man to find ever-increasing peace, rest and fulfillment?
4. Discuss the relationship that exists between God's part and man's part as they together work out human redemption.
5. Are the parts that God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Bible play, respectively, in redeeming men isolated? or do these parts supplement each other to make an indivisible whole?
6. Is a Christian in analyzing himself able to find some thing that any one of these four did, or does, for him independently of the others?
7. Did the ministry of God and of Christ and of the Holy Spirit cease when they had completed the Bible? If detached from the triune God, will the Bible save men? (See John 5:39, 40).
8. Comment on the analogy that exists between God's super human workings in nature and in religion. (See Mark 4:26-29).
9. May Christians pervert the work of God through the Holy Spirit by adding flesh to Spirit, as Roman Catholics pervert the work of God through Christ by adding Mary's mediation to Christ's?