

Introduction

Author

Who wrote the book of Galatians? There is no doubt as to its authorship — the Holy Spirit wrote it. Who was the human being He chose to write this letter, the apostle Paul (1:1).

Date Written

Most writers access a date for this letter of between 53 -57 A.D. The other possibility which is mentioned by some is about 48-49 A.D.

Why Was the Letter Written?

Wacaster gives a concise reason for the existence of this letter. *“The background of the letter is rooted in the attempt on the part of the Judaizing teachers to bind certain aspects of the law of Moses, and to dent, by implication, the allsufficiency of Christ’s atoning work...The Judaizing teachers **depended** upon keeping the law to save them. Paul teaches us that we are to **depend** upon Christ”* (Wacaster, p. 6).

Galatia

Much could be written about the province of Galatia and its history. For this study a simple history will be quoted from Brewer. *“Galatia was populated by a Celtic people, known as Gauls, who had invaded Greece from the North in about 300 B.C. After a time of independence in which the Roman government recognized their kings, they became a part of the Roman empire during the reign of Augustus Caesar”* (Brewer, p. vi).

Galatians Chapter One

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

“Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and GOD the Father, who raised Him from the dead), and all the brethren that are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:” (ASV)

APOSTLE — •πόστολος — *“A delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“One sent, apostle, ambassador...it designates the office as instituted by Christ to witness of Him before the world (John 17:18). It also designates the authority which those called to this office possess”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

Paul began this epistle, as he did several others (Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians), by defending his apostleship. The word **“apostle”** is defined by Thayer as *“A delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders.”* It could therefore signify anyone who was sent on a mission by another. This is why one finds a clause in this place designating who made Paul an apostle. Paul stated that Christ made him an apostle, just as He had designated the original twelve and later Matthias. (Note: The apostles did not appoint Matthias to replace Judas; he was chosen by GOD — Acts 1:24-26).

Paul was defending his apostolic office against those who had come among the Galatians questioning his authority. They were apparently saying that he had no right to base his claims, commands, et cetera, on the authority of Jesus Christ. Paul went one step further by bringing GOD the Father into the picture. In other words, ultimately his authority for the things he had spoken and would speak came from the Father Himself. It seems that the link or the thing which allowed him to make this claim was that the Father had raised Jesus from the grave. If GOD

approved of His Son by raising him from the dead, and that Son then gave Paul his apostleship, then that apostleship was approved, and attested to, by GOD the Father.

Someone might raise the question, *“What about the part of Ananias in Damascus? Is this how Paul became an apostle, through the agency of men?”* Human agency was involved in Paul’s conversion, this one cannot deny. But human agency did not have anything to do with his call to the office of an apostle (Acts 26:12-18). One should go back to Acts 1:20-22 to notice the qualification of an apostle. When Judas because of transgression needed to be replaced, they had to choose between two who had been with Jesus from the very beginning of the ministry — being an eyewitness of all the events in his life; not just His resurrection. It was Christ who sent Paul to the Gentiles with the message of salvation — not Ananias. Ananias only taught Paul what he must do to become a child of GOD — a Christian.

One should take a closer look at Paul’s appointment. While he traveled on the road to Damascus, for the purpose of persecuting Christians, the Lord appeared to him.

“At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks” (Acts 26:13-14).

Paul asked Him, **“Who art Thou, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest”** (v. 15). Then the Lord gave Paul this information:

“Rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister

and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee” (Acts 26:16).

Notice carefully that it was the Lord who appeared to and talked to Paul. What was His purpose in doing so? **“To make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee”** (v. 16, emphasis mine – RK). Notice the future tense, **“I will appear unto thee.”** When did this appearance take place? This writer believes the answer is found in the following passage:

“To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days” (Galatians 1:16-18).

There is a three-year gap here during which it would seem that Paul received the teaching he needed to be a witness. (Consider that the Lord spent about three years teaching the original twelve.) One should also notice what the Lord told Ananias concerning Paul:

“The Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake” (Acts 9:15-16).

Note that Paul was a **“chosen vessel unto Me”** before Ananias ever spoke to him.

Verse two only refers to the greetings which follow in this text. These people were joining Paul in his greetings to the Galatians. These words did not weaken Paul’s claim for the authority behind the admonitions which

would follow. He was not relying upon these brethren for authority, i.e., to stand behind him regarding what he would write. Chances are that they did agree with what Paul said, but what was said did not depend upon their agreement to make it so. The message came from GOD and did not need the backing of any man for its authority.

It is not known where these congregations were specifically located, but they were probably scattered over the vast region of Galatia. In addressing the book as he did, it appears that this was a letter which was supposed to be passed along to the other churches in this region. Concerning the phrase “**churches of Galatia,**” Coffman wrote,

“It is remarkable that Paul did not address them as churches ‘of God’ or ‘of Christ,’ possibly ‘because they did not deserve such honorable appellations because of their great defection.’ However, Paul’s omission of this usual designation does not deny it in their case but merely avoids emphasis of it” (Coffman, p. 11).

In observing the greeting of this book, it should be noted that it is not nearly as cordial as the other books which Paul wrote.

“The address implies that there were many churches in Galatia, yet to none of them does he attach any honorable title, for none of them does he offer the usual expression of thanksgiving, and to none of them does he speak the customary words of commendation and praise. This ominous silence on the part of the apostle constitutes a telling rebuke” (McGarvey, p. 249).

Gal. 1:3 “Grace be to you and peace from GOD the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,”

“Grace to you and peace from GOD the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ,” (ASV)

GRACE — χάρις — *“That which affords joy,*

pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness...good-will, lovingkindness, favor” (Thayer, p. 666); *“Grace, particularly that which causes joy, pleasure, gratification, favor, acceptance, for a kindness granted or desired, a benefit, thanks, gratitude. A favor done without expectation of return; the absolutely free expression of the loving kindness of God to men finding its only motive in the bounty and benevolence of the Giver; unearned and unmerited favor”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Graciousness, attractiveness...favor, grace, gracious care or help, goodwill...practical application of goodwill, a (sign of) favor, gracious deed or gift, benefaction”* (Bauer, p. 877); **“Charis** denotes ‘favor,’ ‘grace,’ as well as a variety of related nuances, throughout the usage. The large majority of occurrences indicate ‘grace’ originating from God. This ‘grace’ denotes the limitless kindness and mercy of God that is freely given to human beings undeserved” (Renn, p. 448); *“1. Objectively, that which causes favorable regard, gracefulness, grace, loveliness of form, graciousness of speech. 2. Subjectively, (a) on the part of the giver, grace, graciousness, kindness, goodwill, favor; esp. in N.T. of the divine favor, grace, with emphasis on its freeness and universality; (b) on the part of the receiver, a sense of favor received, thanks, gratitude”* (Abbott-Smith, p. 479).

PEACE — εἰρήνη — *“The tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is”* (Thayer, p. 182); *“Particularly in a single sense, the opposite of war and dissension...By implication, a state of peace, tranquility...Peace, meaning health, welfare, prosperity, every kind of good...In the OT the equivalent word shalom meant wholeness, soundness, hence health, well-being, prosperity; more particularly, peace as opposed to war...Characteristic of the NT is*

the view of peace as the present possession of the believer” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “The word ‘peace’ (eirene) means more than freedom from outward strife. It means essentially an inner harmony, something that can be brought about only by the grace of God” (Earle, p. 267).

The salutation of **“grace”** is found in all of Paul’s epistles except Hebrews. Paul always wished the best for his readers, especially that they might receive the saving grace GOD offers. As noticed from the definitions above, **“grace”** is from χάρις, which part of Thayer’s definition is *“kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved.”* Paul was wishing the very best of GOD’s blessings upon the Galatians. This desire is stated even though they were not being faithful at this time and occasioned this letter of strong rebuke for their unfaithfulness. Through His grace, GOD has provided the way for man to be saved by offering His Son on the cross. It should be the desire of every Christian for every person on the face of this earth to accept the grace which GOD offers. This is true even for those who torment and persecute Christians.

It should be remembered that man deserves death for his transgressions (Rom. 6:23), but Christ paid the price necessary to bring about the possible reconciliation needed by man for a return to GOD. The only requirement is that man accept the conditions of grace set forth by the Lord, so that Christ’s sacrifice will remove man’s sins. In other words, the grace of GOD is subject to man’s acceptance of the terms of that grace. When one rejects the terms of grace, then saving grace will not be issued to him.

It is observed that the Father and the Son have been mentioned together twice in the first three verses, thus emphasizing their authority for what follows in this letter. Notice that peace is attributed as coming from GOD the Father as well as His Son — the Christ. This is because the only true peace that one

can have is when he is in harmony with GOD through obedience to His will.

“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him” (Hebrews 5:8-9).

There is no other true peace. Men seek peace and proclaim peace at every possible opportunity. But outside of obedience to GOD and the grace He extends, there is no peace. How beautiful is the salutation of Paul to these brethren, his wish for the Galatians to have grace and peace. Notice some passages which deal with peace:

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

“The word which GOD sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ” (Acts 10:36).

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with GOD through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

“The peace of GOD, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).

“Having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven” (Colossians 1:20).

Notice the terms **“Lord Jesus Christ:”**

1. **“Lord”** is applied to Christ in the sense of absolute Deity. It signifies that He is to be the absolute ruler of one’s life.

2. **“Jesus”** is the same as the Hebrew word for Joshua, meaning, “Jehovah is salvation” or “Jehovah is Savior.”
3. **“Christ”** is the Greek word for Messiah, meaning “anointed.”

Putting these terms together means that Jesus is the anointed Savior who is to be the absolute ruler in one’s life. Notice the following thoughts that Boatman has on the word **“Lord.”**

“The full force of ‘Lord’ (kurios) is not appreciated by English-speaking people...The kurios was originally the owner of a piece of property. Next, the kurios was the owner and master of a slave. When the Greek mystery religions began to develop, kurios was used in reference to the deity they worshipped. To this point, then, the kurios was recognized as owner, and obeyed as master, and honored as a god” (Boatman, p. 12).

Gal. 1:4 “Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of GOD and our Father:”

“who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our GOD and Father:” (ASV)

DELIVER --- ἵξαιρέω — *“To pluck out, draw out, i.e., to root out...to choose out (for one’s self), select...to rescue, deliver” (Thayer, p. 221); “To take or pluck out...To take or pluck out, as an eye...To take out of affliction or danger, to deliver...To take out from a number, select, in the mid., to select for oneself, to choose” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Take out, tear out something...set free, deliver, rescue...select, choose out (for oneself)” (Bauer, p. 271); “To extract, cut out, destroy, exclude, set aside” (Spicq, Vol. 2, p. 14).*

“Many people are willing to bestow

some favor upon others if it does not require any personal inconvenience upon themselves. And it is usually even then in a case where the person to be benefitted is ‘a worthy individual.’ But Jesus made this supreme sacrifice for the sins of the world” (Zerr, p. 71).

Christ, unselfishly, willingly, gave Himself for man.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of GOD, thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:5-8).

“As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father” (John 10:15-18).

Man is the one who deserves to die, but Jesus gave Himself in our place. What was His purpose in doing this? To **“deliver us from this present evil world.”**

“When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet

peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But GOD commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to GOD by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (Romans 5:6-10).

What is this “**evil world?**” Some have taught that matter is evil, and so they reason that the evil world being spoken of here is literally the physical planet on which man lives. Such people, obviously, do not know the scriptures well, for when GOD finished creating the earth and all that is in it, His statement was, “**GOD saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good**” (Genesis 1:31). The material world was made good - not evil; it cannot change its nature.

To be delivered from “**this present evil world**” signifies deliverance from the evil influences of the present age. The word “**world**” here is not COSMOS, which would signify the physical world, universe, et cetera. Instead, it is the word αἰών which means, “*a period of time of significant character; like an era; and age; hence, a state of things marking an age or era; the present order of nature; the natural condition of man, the world*”(Analytical Greek Lexicon, p. 11).

“Here it means the world as it is, without religion, a world of bad passions, false opinions, corrupt desires; a world full of ambition, and of the love of pleasure, and of gold; a world where GOD is not loved or obeyed; a world where men are regardless of right, and truth, and duty; where they live for themselves, and not for God; in short, that great community, which in the Scriptures is called THE

WORLD, in contradistinction from the kingdom of God” (Barnes, p. 287).

“All that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world, which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, but which constitutes a most real and effective power, being the moral, or immoral, atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again inevitably to exhale, — all this is included in the aion, which is, as Bengel has expressed it, the subtle informing spirit of the kosmos, or world of men who are living alienated and apart from God” (Trench, p. 217).

What Jesus did was the will of GOD. This shows the interest that GOD has in His creation. He did not put man here simply to die. He **planned** for man’s salvation before He created him. Christ gave Himself in obedience (Hebrews 5:8-9) to His Father’s will, so that man might not suffer. Not that man **would not** suffer, but that he **might not** suffer; the choice is man’s to make. Nor is this speaking of the physical pain one might suffer in this life. There is no promise when one obeys Christ that he will never again have any physical pain. If such were the case, everyone would obey Christ. The suffering he speaks of is that which will come upon the ungodly in the last day.

Since it was the will of the Father that Christ die for the sins of the world from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8), then those who advocated that Christ’s mission on earth was a failure because He died on the cross are found to be upholding error.

Gal. 1:5 “To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

“to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (ASV)

GLORY — δόξα — “Majesty...a thing

belonging to God...the kingly majesty which belongs to Him as supreme ruler, majesty in the sense of the absolute perfection of the deity" (Thayer, p 155); "A look at the root word of *doxa*, i.e., *dokeom*, to think or suppose, is necessary. Etymologically, the word primarily means thought or opinion, especially favorable human opinion, and thus in a secondary sense reputation, praise, honor (true and false), splendor, light, perfection, rewards (temporal and eternal)...The glory of God must mean His unchanging essence. Giving glory to God is ascribing to Him as His full recognition...Spoken of honor due or rendered, i.e., praise, applause (Luke 14:10; John 5:41, 44; 7:18; 8:50, 54; 2 Cor. 6:8; 1 Thess. 2:6); of God, e.g., to the honor and glory of God, i.e., that God may be honored, glorified" (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

AMEN — •μήν — "Verily, amen...at the beginning of a discourse - surely, truly, of a truth...at the end - so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled. It was a custom, which passed over from the synagogues to the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or discoursed, had offered up solemn prayer to God, the others responded Amen, and thus made the substance of what was uttered their own" (Thayer, CD Rom Version); "Amen, to be firm, steady, truth worthy. Rendered also as 'truth' (Is. 56:16, 'God of amen;' Jer. 11:5, "So be it')...In the NT, it indicates affirmation, in truth, verily, it is so" (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

The "**glory,**" all of the praise. GOD deserves all of the praise for the plan which He devised and which was accomplished by His will, through the obedience of His Son.

"Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the

Lamb for ever and ever" (Revelation 5:13).

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Ephesians 3:20-21).

How do Christians glorify GOD?

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Who does the passage in the present text say should receive glory? Lipscomb believes it refers to Christ, but the pronoun "**whom**" would refer back to the planner who made all of this possible — the Father. No matter which position one takes (this writer takes the Father), the glory belongs to Deity. When anyone formulates his own doctrine, whether it be these Judaizers or a modern "Judaizer," glory is not given to GOD. Rather, that one denigrates GOD; he dishonors Him. When one refuses to recognize the sovereign will of GOD, GOD will refuse to recognize him. Such a person seeks to establish a man-conceived path to righteousness, which will only lead to his eternal destruction.

The term "**for ever and ever**" "*is an emphatic way of saying that God deserves to receive glory without end*" (Zerr, p. 71). His glory is indeed eternal.

"**Amen.**" Thayer says that "**amen,**" when used at the close of a sentence, means "*so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled.*" After giving the definition of the word, he then went on to make these interesting comments.

"It was a custom, which passed over from the synagogue into the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or discoursed had offered up a solemn prayer to God, the others in

attendance responded Amen, and thus made the substance of what was uttered their own (Thayer, CD Rom Version).

“Amen’ — The word served as an affirmation of some statement as being certain or valid, hence binding” (Wacaster, p. 20).

Gal. 1:6 “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:”

“I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from Him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel;” (ASV)

MARVEL — θαυμάζω — *“To wonder, wonder at, marvel”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“To wonder, marvel, be struck with admiration or astonishment”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Wonder, marvel, be astonished (the context determines whether in a good or bad sense)”* (Bauer, p. 352).

SOON — ταχέως — *“Quickly, shortly”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“Quickly, speedily. In the NT, equivalent to soon, shortly, quickly, hastily”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Quickly, at once, without delay, soon...also in an unfavorable sense too quickly, too easily, hastily”* (Bauer, p. 806).

REMOVED — μετατίθημι — *“To transfer one’s self or suffer one’s self to be transferred...to go or pass over...to fall away or desert from one person or thing to another”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“To transpose, put in another place and hence to transport, transfer, translate...to transfer oneself, change sides or parties, turn away from someone”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Change (the position of).”* (Bauer, p. 513); *“‘Transfer to another place, change.’ Vincent notes that in classical Greek it is used ‘of altering a treaty, changing an opinion, deserting an army’”* (Earle, p. 269).

ANOTHER — ἄλλος — *“To quality...another: i.e., one not of the same nature, form, class, kind, different”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“Other but different, another...Of another kind, another, different, in another form”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

The first five verses of this chapter are introductory material. The body of the letter now begins. Paul began by expressing wonder or astonishment at what they were doing (Present tense is used, so they were presently involved in this removal — the action had not been completed.) Wesley states,

“The Greek word here rendered marvel usually expressed surprise at something blameworthy” (Wesley quoted by Coffman, p. 15).

Note that Paul does not follow his normal procedure in writing this letter. His other letters contain commendation and encouragement. This letter begins with an immediate rebuke. This would emphasize the immediate and extreme danger in which they found themselves. It might be likened to the action of a mother who saw her child about to put his hand on the hot eye of a stove. Her action would be swift and blunt in order to try to spare the child from harm. Paul is quickly advancing to stop the Galatians from further harm by the Judaizing teachers.

At what was Paul astonished? **“That ye are so soon removed.”** The word **“soon”** here means *“shortly, quickly, hastily”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). And the word **“removed”** is the idea of changing sides or parties. Crouch states,

“Their fickleness was surprising and pronounced, but not rare. The Gaul’s, as Frenchmen were then called, were well known for their restless, impetuous and changeable nature. Instability of character was a Galatian weakness described by Caesar, Lightfoot and many others” (Crouch, p. 7).

The Galatians were quickly changing sides,

moving away from GOD who had called them through the grace of Christ. In changing sides they were becoming the enemy of GOD (James 4:4).

“There are several possible meanings of this clause: (a) ‘It refers to moral speed,’ that is they were more quickly accepting the false teachers than they had accepted the gospel at first; (b) it means, ‘So soon after Paul’s visit to them;’ (Barnes believes this was between two and five years after Paul had initially visited and converted them, p. 288) or (c) it means ‘So soon after their conversion.’ There is no certain way to know exactly what shade of meaning Paul had in mind” (Coffman, p. 15).

The **“grace of Christ”** deals with the whole plan of salvation and, in particular, Christ’s part in it.

“Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Since they were removing themselves from Him, where were they turning? He says to **“another Gospel.”** The word **“gospel”** simply means *“good news.”* Is Paul saying that they were removing themselves from GOD (implied by “His Gospel”) to another system of good news? The word **“another”** clarifies the situation before one gets to the next few verses. This word (ἄλλος) refers to *“quality”* and speaks of a different kind — not the same. It is a different kind of gospel. But why does he call it a gospel if it is not truly good news? Probably because the false teachers were saying that it was additional good news. Paul was pointing to what the Galatians thought was good news (gospel) and said it was not the Gospel of Christ. It was not the Gospel, because something had been added to or taken away from the original; thus, it was no longer that Gospel.

Adding or taking away anything from the Gospel means that it is no longer pure — it becomes a perversion (v. 7). A perversion of the Gospel will destroy — not save. Friend, it does not take much arsenic in a drink to poison one. It does not take much false doctrine to make what is otherwise pure impure and damnable.

Gal. 1:7 “Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.”

“which is not another gospel only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.” (ASV)

ANOTHER — ἄλλος — *“Another, other”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“Another, numerically but of the same kind in contrasts to heteros, another qualitatively, other, different one...Without the art., meaning other, another, some other”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

TROUBLE — ταρασσω — *“To agitate, trouble a thing, by the movement of its parts to and fro)...to cause one inward commotion, take away his calmness of mind, disturb his equanimity...to disquiet, make restless...to stir up...to trouble...to strike one’s spirit with fear and dread...to render anxious or distressed...to perplex the mind of one by suggesting scruples or doubts”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“To stir up, to trouble, agitate...Figuratively used of the mind, to stir up, trouble, disturb with various emotions such as fear, put in trepidation. In the pass., to be in trepidation”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Shake together, stir up water...Stir up, disturb, unsettle, throw into confusion”* (Bauer, p. 805); *“‘trouble,’ ‘cause distress,’ as well as ‘be troubled, fearful, or anxious’”* (Renn, p. 989).

PERVERT — μεταστρέφω — *“To turn around, turn around”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“Denoting change of place or condition, and*

streptom, to turn. To turn about from one direction to another. In the NT, to turn into something else, to change...In a bad sense, to change for the worse, to pervert” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Change, alter, pervert” (Bauer, p. 513); “Wish to turn about” (Robertson, p. 454); ““Turn about, change, reverse;’ and in an evil sense, ‘pervert, corrupt”” (Earle, p. 269).

The false teachers (Judaizers) claimed to have a gospel which was as good as or better than the one Paul had brought the Galatians. But Paul showed in verse six that they were teaching a different doctrine which was inferior to the Gospel of Christ. In this present verse, Paul stated that there was not another Gospel. Anything that is more or less than the Gospel which was once for all time delivered to man (Jude 3) is a damnable doctrine. It can be called a Bible, but that does not make it one. One can call a bird a flower all he wants to but the bird will always be a bird no matter what one calls it. “Bibles” like the New International Version are nothing more than perversions which will cause those who believe and practice them to be lost. In essence, Paul was saying that there is only ONE true Gospel and what these men were teaching was not “good news” (gospel).

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One GOD and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:4-6).

All church divisions (denominationalism) are caused by a perversion of the Gospel of Christ.

Those who were teaching this false doctrine were troubling the disciples, the church. The word “**trouble**” signifies that they were stirring them up, agitating them, causing dread, fear, and uncertainty in their minds. How were they doing this? By perverting “**the Gospel of Christ.**” The word “**pervert**” means to “*turn around.*” They were

turning around the minds of brethren by turning them away from the Gospel, the only truly good news of Jesus Christ, and the salvation GOD offers through Him. Note that they were intentionally doing this. Some want to attribute ignorance to false teachers, but the vast majority of them in any age are not teaching their false doctrines out of ignorance. The Devil and his false teachers are purposely trying to turn people away from the Christ. Further study of this letter shows that they were trying to mix Judaism and Christianity, and Paul will clearly show that this causes one to fall from grace.

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:4).

To put it simply and bluntly, they were “*subverting the souls of believers by evil doctrine*” (Vine as quoted by Coffman, p. 17).

“Error mingled with Truth always results in error and there was never a case of Truth advancing or triumphing through compromise or mixing with error” (Brewer, p. 11).

Gal. 1:8 “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

“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.” (ASV)

ACCURSED — •νάθεμα — “*A thing devoted to God without hope of being redeemed, and, if an animal, to be slain; therefore a person or thing doomed to destruction, a thing abominable and detestable, an accursed thing...a curse: a man accursed, devoted to the direst woes*” (Thayer, p. 37); “*A gift given by vow or in fulfillment of a promise, and given up or devoted to destruction for God’s sake; therefore, given up to the curse and destruction, accursed...The word does not*

denote punishment intended as discipline but being given over or devoted to divine condemnation. It denotes an indissoluble vow” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *Object of a curse*” (Bauer, p. 54); *“The essential idea of the noun is ‘devoted to destruction, something given up to death on account of God’”* (Earle, p. 269).

The **“we”** of this passage seems to refer to the apostles as a group. It could also refer to a group which may have been traveling with Paul. The apostles were the men specifically chosen to open the door of the kingdom through the doctrines they taught (Matthew 16:19; John 20:23). These are the men who had walked with and communed with Christ throughout His earthly ministry. An angel is a “messenger,” specifically here, those heavenly beings most often referred to by man as angels. By using these two groups, Paul was saying that it does not matter who it may be; anyone who teaches a gospel (doctrine) different from the one you first received is to be accursed. This emphasizes that once the Gospel was delivered it could not be changed by anyone (Jude 3). Anyone who tried to change it in any way was offering a perverted gospel which could only condemn that one to eternal hell. To be **“accursed”** is to be *“given over or devoted to divine condemnation”* ((Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). One should carefully note that Paul even placed himself under this condemnation if he were to begin teaching a doctrine different from the one he first proclaimed to them. The word **“accursed”** is far stronger than the idea commonly thought with regard to it; it is the idea of one being delivered to GOD for destruction — eternal death — eternal hell!

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Corinthians 9:27).

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be

in the faith; prove your own selves”

(2 Cor. 13:5).

The implication of this is that any doctrine which is different from what Christ delivered is to be rejected. Any teacher who does not proclaim the original Gospel of Christ, but instead offers a perverted version of it, is to be rejected — NO MATTER WHO THAT ONE MAY BE!

“A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject”

(Titus 3:10).

HERETIC — ἀίρετικός — *“Schismatic, factious, a follower of a false doctrine...heretic”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version). Thayer and Zodhiates also show that this is a person who is capable of choice. Thus, these are people who have made the wrong choice and must be excluded.

One needs to take the advice of Solomon with regard to false teachers:

“Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge” (Proverbs 19:27).

The question should be asked, “How should a false teacher be treated?” Wacaster gives a great answer to this question:

“(1) We are to withdraw from their teaching; having nothing to do with it, nor any way endorsing it; (2) we are to regard their doctrine with abhorrence; (3) we are not to extend any fellowship unto them (Eph. 5:11); (4) we are to mark them (Rom. 16:17-18)” (Wacaster, p. 25).

Gal. 1:9 “As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

“As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema.” (ASV)

Why is this passage repeated? It is for emphasize in order to show how important it is. Plain words sometimes need to be repeated to emphasize the severity of a warning.

This verse has a subtle difference from verse eight. If an apostle or an angel were to be given over to divine condemnation for perverting the Gospel of Christ (v. 8), the same would surely be true for any one else who perverts that Gospel. What a powerful condemnation this is for anyone who teaches a doctrine as “Christian” which is not found in GOD’s Word. No wonder the Spirit said,

“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him GOD speed: For he that biddeth him GOD speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 10-11).

Why is the condemnation in the Scriptures so strong for one who teaches a perverted gospel? One who teaches a false doctrine not only affects his own soul but also the souls of anyone who might believe his teachings.

“If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Matthew 15:16).

This does not take away the responsibility of the hearer, for he has the responsibility to study for himself, the responsibility to determine if what he has heard is the truth. The Bereans did this and were declared to be noble:

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

No wonder then that teachers are held to an extremely high standard.

“My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation” (James 3:1).

Gal. 1:10 “For do I now persuade men, or GOD? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”

“For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of GOD? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.” (ASV)

PERSUADE — πείθω — *“To persuade, i.e., to induce one by words to believe...to make friends of, to win one’s favor, gain one’s good will, or to seek to win one, strive to please one...to tranquillize...to persuade unto, i.e., move or induce one to persuasion to do something”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version). *“To persuade, particularly to move or affect by kind words or motives...Generally, to persuade another to receive a belief, meaning to convince”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Convince...persuade, appeal to, also in a bad sense cajole, mislead...win over, strive to please...conciliate, pacify, set at ease or rest”* (Bauer, p. 639); *“The meaning ‘persuade’ indicates, first of all, the sense of inducing someone to change his or her course of action or way of thinking”* (Renn, p. 727); *“To (try to) persuade”* (Spicq, Vol. 3, p. 66).

PLEASE — •ρέσκω — *“To strive to please...to accommodate one’s self to the opinions and desires and interests of others”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“To fit, adapt, please. To make one inclined to, to be content with, soften one’s heart towards another. In the NT, the meaning has evolved from the pass. ‘Being pleased’ to the active ‘to please,’ i.e., passing from a relationship to behavior (Matt. 14:6; Mark 6:22; Rom. 8:8; 1 Cor. 7:32-34; Gal. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:15; 4:1; 2 Tim. 2:4; Sept.: Josh. 22:30, 33; Esth.2:4; 5:14). In Acts 6:5 ‘to please in the sight of someone’ (a.t.) Means to be acceptable to him (Sept.: Deut. 1:23; 2 Sam. 3:36). In Rom. 15:1-3; Gal. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:4 it means to seek to please or gratify, to accommodate oneself to”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version);

“Strive to please, accommodate...please, be pleasing” (Bauer, p. 105); *“To please...The general sense of ‘pleasing’ someone conveys the idea of making a favorable impression on others”* (Renn, p. 740).

SERVANT — δούλος — *“ slave...metaph., one who gives himself up to another’s will, those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing his cause among men...devoted to another to the disregard of one’s own interests”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“A slave, one who is in a permanent relation of servitude to another, his will being altogether consumed in the will of the other”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

The word **“persuade”** is the concept of trying to win the favor or good will of another (see definitions above). Many have looked at this as trying to persuade men of the truth of the Gospel, but the original word and the context show that this is not the meaning. The idea refers to the one whom Paul was trying to please, whose favor he was trying to gain — GOD’s or man’s. This is more clearly seen in the word **“please”** in his second question. The words **“to please”** means that one is trying *“to accommodate one’s self to the opinions and desires and interests of others”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version). Again, whose favor was Paul trying to gain? Who was he trying to accommodate — GOD or man? Even though these thoughts are put in the form of questions, they are actually statements of intent regarding his actions. When it came down to a choice, Paul was going to try to win GOD’s favor and accommodate his thinking and actions to that which would please GOD first and foremost — not man. GOD had the priority in Paul’s life. Does GOD have priority in Christian’s lives today?

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye

cannot serve GOD and mammon”
(Matthew 6:24).

Paul next stated that if it were his purpose to **“please,”** i.e., *“to accommodate one’s self to the opinions and desires and interests of others”* (men), he would not be the servant of GOD. Paul said one cannot please men and be GOD’s servant (Matthew 6:24)! While it is true that those who truly serve GOD will be pleasing to others who truly try to serve Him, the majority of men of whom Paul speaks, will not be pleased with the slaves (servants) of Christ. The admonition for the Galatians (and for Christians today) is to STOP TRYING TO PLEASE MANKIND! The Lord could not please all men, and if He could not do it, what makes any Christian think he can please men?

“As we were allowed of GOD to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but GOD, which trieth our hearts” (1 Thessalonians 2:4).

As a Christian, one ought to be alarmed if all men speak well of him. Jesus said, **“Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets”** (Luke 6:26).

If all men speak well of a Christian, it probably means one of two things: (1) The Christian is not living as he should, i.e., setting a distinct example of Christianity, or (2) They are setting the Christian up to entrap him through some temptation.

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Corinthians 6:17).

Christians are not to be like the world in which they live, but rather transform their lives into conformity to the pattern GOD has given them.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of GOD, that ye

present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto GOD, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of GOD” (Romans 12:1-2).

As Barnes correctly stated,

“True Christians must differ from the world. Their aims, feelings, purposes must be unlike the world” (Barnes, p. 293).

Instead, Christians must be a separated people, a peculiar people. Christ **“gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works”** (Titus 2:14). This is further shown in the admonitions of Peter when he said,

“Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

The determination of every Christian must be that he is going to serve GOD no matter what the world wants him to say or do. The question each Christian must ask himself is, “Who am I trying to please? GOD or man?” Full commitment to GOD is demanded for one to gain the reward of Heaven.

Paul’s previous words, and those to follow, show that he was not willing to be man’s servant. Paul totally belonged to GOD.

“Seek ye first the kingdom of GOD, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first

commandment” (Mark 12:30).

Gal. 1:11 “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.”

“For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man.” (ASV)

CERTIFY — γνωρίζω — *“To make known...to become known, be recognized...to know, to gain knowledge of, have thorough knowledge of...in earlier Greek it means ‘to gain a knowledge of’ or ‘have thorough knowledge of’” (Thayer, CD Rom Version); “To make known, trans. And with the dat. or pros, toward to someone...to others: generally to make known, declare, reveal” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).*

To **“certify”** is to make known, to have thorough knowledge of the things which will be said or thought. Paul is guaranteeing them that what he presently said and had told them in the past was indeed THE Gospel of Christ. What he taught had not come from man; it was not **“after man,”** i.e., “according to man.” No human being had anything to do with formulating what Paul had taught them. If it had come from man, then it could be changed at will. Paul did not change anything he had previously taught, because it did not come from a man. Being a Divine revelation meant it was perfect to begin with; it could not be improved upon.

In reading these verses, there is little room for doubt that Paul’s apostleship was being challenged by some on the basis that he had not been one of Jesus’ disciples as were the original apostles. More on this will be noted in comments on the next verse.

Gal. 1:12 “For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

“For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ.” (ASV)

TAUGHT — διδάσκω — *“To hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses”* (Thayer, p. 144); *“Teach, instruct by word of mouth”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

REVELATION — • αποκάλυψις — *“A disclosure of truth, instruction...concerning things before unknown...used of events by which things or states or persons hitherto withdrawn from view are made visible to all”* (Thayer, CD Rom Version); *“To reveal. Revelation, uncovering, unveiling, disclosure.”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Revelation, disclosure”* (Bauer, p. 92); *“Uncover, disclose.” It ‘refers primarily to the removal of what conceals, an uncovering’* (Earle, p. 270).

It should be remembered that when Matthias was chosen to be an apostle (replacing Judas), the context clearly showed the qualifications which would allow one to be an apostle. Note these qualifications: (1) He had to have been with the Lord all the days of His public ministry — starting with His baptism, (2) He had to be a witness of His resurrection (Acts 1:21-22). Based on this information, the enemies of Paul would claim that he could not really be an apostle. Therefore, they would maintain that what he taught had to come from the teaching of some mere man. This would imply the possibility that Paul had not learned all that he needed to teach, or that possibly what he had received was not complete or was polluted. Paul was refuting this error. He emphatically stated that the knowledge he had, and which he imparted, had not been gained by talking with any man. Rather, it had been directly imparted to him by the Lord Himself. Notice what the Lord told Ananias about Paul when he sent him to him:

“Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer

for My name's sake” (Acts 9:15-16).

The Lord told Ananias that He was going to **“show him”** things (future tense). In Acts 22:14, Paul related Ananias' words to him, **“The GOD of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth”** (Acts 22:16).

Notice, Paul was going to see the **“Just One”** and would **“hear the voice of His mouth,”** which indicated that he would hear Him directly, face to face. If the Lord had taught Paul by sending Peter or one of the other apostles, then the Judaizers might have had a valid point. That would have meant that Paul was not an apostle and would have less authority than they did. Further, Paul would not be a **“witness,”** because one cannot be a witness unless he has actually seen what he reports. When Paul was converted, he did not go to Jerusalem where the apostles were so that they could teach him (Galatians 1:17). Instead he went into Arabia, returned to Damascus, and then went up to Jerusalem. How long did this take? Three years (Galatians 1:18). How long were the original apostles with our Lord from His baptism to His ascension? About three years. Remember verse sixteen Acts 22:16) where Paul said that GOD had revealed His Son in him (Paul)? He then told about his sojourn in Arabia and the time frame before going to Jerusalem, et cetera.

All that Paul taught was personally revealed to him by Jesus Christ. Consider this: any time the word “revelation” is used in the New Testament, it carries the concept of something done miraculously. It is not revealed as to how this revelation was made known to Paul except by words from the mouth of Jesus. One wonders if the Lord simply told him about the miracles He performed, or whether through a vision of some sort he relived them with the Lord. The thought is repeated — this side of Heaven,

one cannot know exactly how Paul received the revelation.

The next verse begins a section of proof for the things Paul has just claimed regarding the revelation given to him. It did not come from men.

Gal. 1:13 “For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of GOD, and wasted it:”

“For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of GOD, and made havoc of it:” (ASV)

WASTED — πορθέω — *“To destroy, to overthrow”* (Thayer, p. 531); *“To ravage, destroy”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Pillage, make havoc of, destroy, annihilate”* (Bauer, p. 693); *“To lay waste, to sack”* (Robertson, p. 455); *To sack, ravage, ruin, lay waste. This verb, unknown in the LXX, is current from Homer to the Koine with the meaning ‘sack, ravage, ruin’ a city, ‘lay waste’ a territory. The word implies physical or moral violence against persons”* (Spicq, Vol. 3, p. 141); Translated **“destroyed”** in verse twenty-three.

It would be beneficial for the reader to turn back and read the accounts of Paul’s conversion (Acts 9:1-20; 22:1-16).

The Spirit led Paul to show that he had not learned the Gospel from men but had received such from the Lord Himself. Now he offered them some things to think about which would prove the assertion. He began by reminding them of his former life before his conversion. It was well known that his life had been devoted to the destruction of the Christian religion. The report of his activities would have been spread among Christians for the purpose of warning them to stay away from him. Regarding this thought, remember the reaction of Ananias when the Lord told him to go to Saul — he did not want to go

even though it was the Lord who told him to go. Why? Listen to Ananias’ own words:

“Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name” (Acts 9:13-14).

He was afraid of Saul because of his exceeding persecution of the church.

He also used the term **“Jew’s religion,”** which he used as a means of identifying the body of belief he was speaking about. When he did such, he was not speaking of the original body of belief, i.e., the law of Moses and the prophets. Instead, he was speaking of what the Pharisees and other religious leaders had made it — more precisely, what that religion had become in his day.

Paul reminds them that he had persecuted the church (Christianity) **“beyond measure.”** Jesus had previously warned of people like Saul of Tarsus:

“These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth GOD service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me” (John 16:1-3).

When Paul reminded these Galatians of how he had previously acted toward the church, it should have brought back to their memories what the Lord had predicted. The Lord had said that some would be killed by those who thought they were doing GOD service, i.e., obeying what they thought GOD would have them to do. But notice that the Lord gave a reason why they would do this: **“because they have not known the Father, nor Me.”** Reasoning correctly would tell anyone that there was no way that Paul had been learning Christianity at that time and was in fact alienated from GOD, because when he had

come in contact with Christians he had harassed them, pillaged them, cast them into prison, and even murdered them. The term **“beyond measure”** shows that he did this to excess — to the highest possible degree.

To the highest possible degree he had persecuted the church and **“wasted it.”** The idea is that he would have destroyed it if possible. There have always been those who have hated GOD and His people to the extent that they would wipe them off the face of the earth if they could. But the Bible promises that they cannot do this. As long as this world exists, Christians will walk its surface.

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of GOD: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18).

Gal. 1:14 “And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.”

“and I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.” (ASV)

MORE EXCEEDINGLY — περισσοτέρως — *“More abundantly...in the N.T. more, in a greater degree; more earnestly, more exceedingly...especially above others”* (Thayer, p. 506); *“Exceedingly, much more, more frequently, more superabundantly”*

(Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *To a much greater degree, far more, far greater”* (Bauer, p. 651).

ZEALOUS — ζηλωτής — *“One burning with zeal; a zealot...most eagerly desirous of, zealous for, a thing”* (Thayer, p. 271); *“A zealot, one zealous for or eagerly desirous of something”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Zealot, enthusiast, fanatic”* (Bauer, p. 338); *“Zealous or eager enthusiasm for”* (Renn, p. 1079).

TRADITIONS — παρά-δοσις — *“A giving over, giving up...a giving over which is done by word of mouth or in writing, i.e., tradition by instruction, narrative, precept, etc.”* (Thayer, p. 481); *“A tradition, doctrine or injunction delivered or communicated from one to another, whether divine or human”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Handing down or over”* (Bauer, p. 615); *“That which is handed down”* (Renn, p. 979).

The idea of **“profited”** in this passage is that of advancement. Saul of Tarsus advanced beyond those of his own age because of his zeal for the traditions of the fathers. Paul described himself as **“a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee”** (Acts 23:6), i.e., a “Hebrew sprung of Hebrews.” This signified that he was of a very high caste of the Hebrews who outvied others in their zeal and strictness for the law and traditions. The ASV accurately translates the word **“equals”** (KJV) as “age” (it could also be translated “peers”). This refers to those who were the same age as Saul. But in doing so he would probably have advanced even beyond many who were older than he was. Lipscomb states, *“He is said to have been a member of the Sanhedrin when yet young”* (Lipscomb, p. 195).

Paul had been extremely zealous in following the traditions of the fathers, which might have something to do with his going to the school of Gamaliel, where they would

have been taught to him (Acts 22:3; Philippians 3:4-6). The word **“traditions”** can refer to the truth GOD taught (2 Thessalonians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 11:2) or the traditions of men. Here it probably has reference to the traditions of men, particularly the traditions of the Pharisees. Jesus often faced these traditions as He and His disciples came under attack for violating these man-made rules. A few examples of this would be their supposed violations of the sabbath traditions (Healing - Matthew 5:1-10; Casting out demons - Luke 13:10-16; Plucking the grain and eating it - Matthew 12:1-8). Paul was fanatical (zealot — more excessively) in pursuing and persecuting those he deemed to have violated the traditions of the **“fathers.”** Speaking of the Jews traditions, Jesus asked them the following question:

“Why do ye also transgress the commandment of GOD by your tradition” (Matthew 15:3).

Speaking of their traditions, He went on to state,

“In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:9).

This passage is showing that what Paul had taught them could not have been because of the teaching he received before his conversion. Everything he had been taught then was contrary to the doctrine of Christ.

“The point Paul is making is that in leaving Judaism and coming to the Gospel, he was not seeking some balm for disappointment over failure, for he was highly successful before” (Zerr, p. 72).

Gal. 1:15 “But when it pleased GOD, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace,”

“But when it was the good pleasure of GOD, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace,” (ASV)

There are three things to note in this verse. (1) There was a time (**“when”**) that it pleased GOD to call Paul to be an apostle. (2) There was a separation from his mother's womb. (3) Through GOD's grace Paul was called to be an apostle.

Most writers say that Paul was called to be an apostle from his mother's womb (while still there) or at the time of his birth. This writer may be wrong, but when he saw the first commentary advocating this position, he considered the explanation of this passage in that regard to be wrong. Many of these writers pointed to passages where someone was specifically called in such a way that there is no denying that they were separated for GOD's work from the very beginning of their lives. Notice a few of the passages which are cited by these authors.

“Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath He made mention of my name” (Isaiah 49:1).

“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (Jeremiah 1:5).

“For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb” (Luke 1:15).

The specific language of these texts cannot be denied, but the language used in these cases is in stark contrast to the one under consideration in this study — **“who separated me from my mother's womb.”** Notice that in all three cases cited above they were called while they were still in the womb. It also interests this writer that in each case

none of these men ever tried to persecute the Lord's people.

From the first time this writer began to analyze this passage, before he ever looked at a commentary, his thoughts were that the phrase **“who separated me from my mother's womb”** was referring to Paul's physical birth as a separate act from the spiritual call which he received (**“called me by His grace”**). In studying the commentaries there was only one which was found by this writer who believes as he does.

“The separation from his mother's womb simply means the same God Who is the Author of physical life, also called Paul to salvation (spiritual life) and apostleship by His grace. This has no reference to any calling from the time of his birth, but only that both his physical and spiritual life derived from the same source” (Brewer, p. 15).

Having said all of this, this author will leave it up to each individual to decide what he believes on this matter, realizing that he is in a very small minority in his thoughts here.

“When it pleased GOD.” There was a set time, when everything was right, that GOD called Paul to His work. Paul had lived during the time when the Lord walked the earth, but Paul was not ready, or the Lord would have approached him then. Paul was no different in many respects to other people of all time in that sometimes the life one is living makes it impossible to reach him at that moment in time. Yet, at another time, he may be persuaded by the evidence.

“Called me by His grace.” To anyone who has casually read his Bible, the time spoken of here is clear. Paul was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians (Acts 9:1ff). While on his journey, the Lord appeared to him and gave him instructions which led him to Ananias, who told him what to do to be saved. It should be noticed that the Lord told Saul that He had called Him to be an apostle to the Gentiles. The Lord did

not say anything about his being saved on the road to Damascus, but sent him to Ananias, who told him how to be saved. Question: *“Does GOD appear to anyone today to call him to His work as he did Saul of Tarsus?”* The answer is “No!” Paul was called in the way he was as a special case. This was a special act of grace issued to Paul, and that is what he is talking about here. But as far as his call to salvation is concerned, he was called in the same way anyone today is called — through GOD's Word!

“The grace of GOD that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great GOD and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:11-14).

How does man receive the saving grace of GOD? Through instruction that tells what GOD expects of him. When Ananias came to Saul, notice carefully what he told him:

“And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The GOD of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard” (Acts 22:12-15 - emphasis mine, RK).

It was immediately after these words were

spoken that Ananias asked Paul, **“And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord”** (v. 15). His sins were not washed away on the road to Damascus. They were washed away when he was baptized. Paul was not in newness of life when the Lord appeared to him on the road to Damascus. According to Paul, newness of life only comes AFTER one has been baptized.

Gal. 1:16 “To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:”

“to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood:” (ASV)

REVEAL — • αποκάλυπτω — *“To uncover, lay open what has been veiled or covered up; to disclose, make bare...to make known, make manifest, disclose, what was before unknown”* (Thayer, p. 62); *“To cover, conceal. Literally, to remove a veil or covering exposing to open view what was before hidden. To make manifest or reveal a thing previously secret or unknown. Particularly applied to supernatural revelation”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Reveal, disclose, bring to light pass. Be revealed...esp. Of divine revelation of certain supernatural secrets”* (Bauer, p. 92); *“Uncovering, or laying open what has previously been hidden”* (Renn, p. 820).

When the time was right, GOD revealed His Son to Paul. This grace was advanced to him for the purpose of sending him as a messenger to the Gentiles (heathen). The marching orders that the Lord gave His disciples were to take the Gospel into all of the world (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8). This was the primary work of Paul, whereas Peter’s primary work was taking the Gospel to the Jews. When Christ initially spoke to Paul, He specifically told him that this was his mission.

“He said unto me, Depart: for I will

send thee far hence unto the Gentiles” (Acts 22:21).

Ananias was also told what Paul’s work for the Lord would be.

“The Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My name’s sake” (Acts 9:15-16).

How long did it take for Paul to decide whether to obey the Lord or reject him? How many people did he consult with before making his decision? As soon as he knew that it was the Lord speaking to him, he obeyed. This decision was probably easy once he knew this, for he had trained himself to obey GOD without hesitation. Remember that the point of Paul’s writing these verses was to show that he had not become an apostle due to the appointment of some man. Further, he had not sought this office; it was bestowed upon him by the Lord Himself. Also, the knowledge of the Lord and Paul’s training in that knowledge had not come from any man — the Lord taught him. We might also notice that Paul immediately began the work assigned to him; he did not delay to “bury his father” (Matthew 8:21; Luke 9:59), et cetera.

Paul’s authority for preaching and teaching the Gospel came from GOD; there was no human source for any of his work.

“He was a divinely chosen apostle to carry a divinely revealed message of salvation to lost and ruined people through words divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit of God” (Crouch, p. 12).

Gal. 1:17-18 “Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.”

“neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that

were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days." (ASV)

There is no doubt that Paul needed instruction with regard to the doctrines of Christ. Some would probably say that this was received by direct inspiration as he needed it. There is no doubt that such happened from time to time, because the Lord had informed the apostles that they would be reminded of His teaching by the Holy Spirit.

"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

Paul had already affirmed that he did not receive his information or instruction from any human being. To back this up, he reminded them that after his conversion, he went into Arabia and then returned to Damascus. He made the point that it was three years after his conversion before he went to Jerusalem.

So where did Paul get his instructions? In Acts, when a replacement was needed for Judas, the Bible states the requirements for the one who would replace him.

"Wherefore of these men which have accompanied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection" (Acts 1:21-22).

It should be noticed that there were two basic requirements: (1) He had to have been in the company of Jesus from His baptism until that present time, and (2) he had to be a witness of the resurrection. Why was it important for them to have journeyed with Jesus all of that time? Because that is when they would have truly gotten to know Him and learn His

doctrine. It is during that time that they would have seen the mighty works which proved Him to be the Son of GOD. How long did these men spend with Jesus in preparation for their work? About three years. How long did Paul spend in Arabia and Damascus? Three years. How that time was divided up between Arabia and Damascus is unknown. It is this author's opinion that most of that time was spent in Arabia, where in some way he experienced all he needed to fulfill the work of an apostle.

It was pointed out by Paul that when he did go up to Jerusalem to spend some time with the disciples (Peter is specifically mentioned here), he only stayed there for fifteen days. This was far too short a time to learn what he needed to know if he had simply gotten his knowledge from mortal men.

An interesting geography lesson will be added here. In the Bible, it always speaks of either going "up" to Jerusalem or "down" from Jerusalem. This is because Jerusalem was situated on a high mountain, and a traveler either went up to it or down from it.

Gal. 1:19 "But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother."

"But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother." (ASV)

On this particular trip which Paul made to Jerusalem, the only ones that he saw were Peter and James. Who was this James who is referred to as an apostle in this passage? He is also called the Lord's brother. Could the Lord's brother be an apostle like Peter, John, et cetera, when Jesus' brother did not believe on him until around the time of His resurrection (John 7:5; Acts 1:14)? Obviously the answer to that question is "No!" With that point made, how then could this James be linked with the apostles or be called an apostle?

First, the meaning of the word "apostle" should be understood. The word simply means one sent with a message. In considering that meaning, one can understand

how it was that Barnabas was called an apostle (Acts 14:14). Barnabas was not one of the apostles, but he was called one in the sense of the meaning of the word, because he had been sent by the church on that mission with the apostle Paul.

Second, there is an interesting bit of knowledge which can be gained by a study of the original language.

“In the Greek there are two different words which we translate ‘other.’ One of these means ‘other of the same kind,’ while the second means ‘other of a different kind.’ Paul actually says, ‘but other of the apostles (of a different kind) saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother” (Wacaster, p. 35).

There can be no doubt that James, the Lord’s brother, held an important position in the congregation at Jerusalem. Nor can there be any doubt that he was held in high esteem by the brethren. In Acts chapter fifteen, when a dispute arose he was at the center of those who brought a resolution to the question.

Gal. 1:20 “Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before GOD, I lie not.”

“Now touching the things which I write unto you, behold, before GOD, I lie not.” (ASV)

In all of this text, it must be remembered that Paul is defending his apostleship. One does not have to defend himself unless a charge has been made. In this case the charge is quite serious, because his authority as GOD’s spokesman is being challenged. If the people can be convinced that he was not really an apostle, then the enemies of truth would prevail, and Christianity in that region would be severely crippled — if not destroyed.

Therefore, Paul is in essence calling upon GOD as his witness. He is making a strong statement that amounts to taking an oath regarding his truthfulness. Stancliff states:

“Paul then did much the same as a witness in court today would do when he raises his right hand and swears

before God to ‘tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth” (Stancliff, p. 22).

A moment needs to be taken regarding oaths. Some good brother/sister at this point would say that Paul sinned, because the Lord said to **“Swear not at all”** (Matthew 5:34). The same would say that anyone taking an oath today would be guilty of the same sin. In that context, it is clear that Jesus was dealing with the frivolous and vain oaths which the Jews were so fond of taking and which they did not intend to keep. The Lord was not forbidding a solemn promise that what one said he would do would be done. When a person promises to do something today, whether he admits it or not, he has taken an oath.

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to GOD and the Father by Him” (Colossians 3:17).

To do something in the name of the Lord is to do it by and with His authority. Paul is assuring the Galatians that he has given them only the truth — on all matters.

Gal. 1:21 “Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;”

“Then I came unto the regions of Syria and Cilicia.” (ASV)

Paul was giving a general overview of his travels after being converted to Christianity without giving many details. Acts 9:29-30 shows that the reason he went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia was because he had to leave Jerusalem because the brethren feared for his life. Those whom he tried to teach became violent.

In these two regions, Antioch was the capital of Syria, and Tarsus was the capital of Cilicia. Tarsus was of course the home city of Paul (Acts 21:39) and the place where Barnabas sought him to do their teaching at Antioch (Acts 11:25-26). Antioch was the “home base” for Paul as he journeyed on his

mission to take the Gospel to the Gentiles.

As learned in verse eighteen, Paul only spent fifteen days in Jerusalem before moving on to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. After leaving Jerusalem, it would not be until Acts fifteen before he returned to Jerusalem, which Galatians chapter two states was fourteen years later. Thus, he could not have learned the Gospel he taught from the apostles.

The Lord had told Paul that he would have to suffer many things for following Him. It is interesting that the great persecutor had to leave Damascus because of persecution and then leave Jerusalem for the same reason. His life was filled with persecution because of his new faith.

Gal. 1:22 “And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:”

“And I was still unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:” (ASV)

Why would Paul point out that he was unknown by “**face**” to the churches (brethren) in Judea? Because it shows that he did not spend enough time there for them to know him. Again this emphasizes that he did not learn the Gospel from the apostles or any other man in Judea.

The term “**church**” was also used to designate the people of Israel (Jews). Therefore Paul designates whom he was talking about by adding the phrase “**in Christ.**” The phrase “**in Christ**” is a favorite expression, and thus the Holy Spirit has designated it as a very important phrase. Simply, it is important because one cannot be saved without being “**in Christ.**” According to this writer’s computer search engine, the phrase “**in Christ**” is found in 186 verses of Paul’s writings.

Gal. 1:23 “But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he

destroyed.”

“but they only heard say, he that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc;” (ASV)

Brethren had known that Paul persecuted the church relentlessly. Now they had heard of his conversion. As the context shows, they knew what he had been and what he was at the present time.

Was the Gospel that Paul presently preached different from the one delivered by him and the other apostles? This verse shows that the same faith he formerly persecuted is the identical faith he was presently preaching. “**The faith**” is the same faith Jude spoke about in Jude three. It is that body of doctrine that GOD gave to man for the purpose of directing him in all spiritual avenues, as well as one’s life outside of religion.

Gal. 1:24 “And they glorified GOD in me.”

“and they glorified GOD in me.” (ASV)

Why would GOD be given glory by Christians because of Paul? (1) Because the one who had led a severe persecution now suffered with them because he taught the faith. (2) Because he who had been their enemy was now their friend. (3) Because of the demonstration of the power of GOD’s word to convert someone like Saul of Tarsus into Paul the apostle.

Galatians Chapter Two

Gal. 2:1 “Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.”

“Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me.” (ASV)

When did Paul go up to Jerusalem on the occasion he writes about here? Was it fourteen years after his conversion or fourteen

years after his first visit to Jerusalem, which was mentioned in the last chapter? Most commentators believe that this verse is speaking of fourteen years after his conversion. One of the things which should be pointed out is that he was not giving a detailed history of every visit he made to Jerusalem. The one under review in this text was his third visit. In Acts chapter eleven, he and Barnabas had gone to Jerusalem with famine relief from the churches of Asia. The visit mentioned in this text was the so-called Jerusalem conference of Acts chapter fifteen, where the question of obligations for the Gentiles was discussed (in particular, the act of circumcision).

Notice the distinction made between Barnabas and Titus in this passage. Paul went **“with Barnabas,”** but **“took Titus.”** This was the visit which discussed whether or not circumcision should be bound on the Gentiles, and Titus was a Gentile.

“Paul took Titus along as a test case to see whether or not the apostles at Jerusalem would insist that he be circumcised in order to be saved” (Willis, p. 52).

Further, Barnabas was his fellow laborer, both being appointed by the church to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles. Titus was a Gentile convert who at the time of this writing appears to be a student under Paul’s instruction. In looking through the Scriptures, Titus is seen as a great teacher of the Gospel, loyal to it and to Paul.

“Titus was a Greek, and was doubtless converted by the labours of Paul, for he calls him his own son, Tit. 1:4. He attended Paul frequently in his travels: was employed by him in important services; was left by him in Crete to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders there (Tit. 1:5); subsequently he went into Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10), and is supposed to have returned again to Crete, whence it is

said he propagated the gospel in the neighboring islands, and died at the age of 94” (Calmut, quoted by Barnes).

Gal. 2:2 “And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.”

“And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain.” (ASV)

COMMUNICATED — • νατίθημι — *“To set forth a thing drawn forth...declare” (Thayer, p. 42); “To lay up, suspend, as a gift in a temple, to propose, place before, communicate, declare, make known” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Declare, communicate” (Bauer, p. 62).*

REPUTATION — δοκέω — *“To be of opinion, think, suppose...to seem, be accounted, reputed” (Thayer, p. 154); “To think, imagine, consider, appear. Expresses the subjective mental estimate or opinion formed by man concerning a matter” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Think, believe, suppose, consider of subjective opinion...seem” (Bauer, p. 202).*

“And I went up by revelation.” There is little doubt that this context deals with the events of Acts chapter fifteen, where Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem for what is often called the “Jerusalem conference.” It should be remembered that in that context there were men who had come from Judea (Jerusalem was in Judea) and were teaching that Gentiles had to be circumcised to gain salvation. This caused a great deal of contention with Paul and Barnabas taking the side of truth. Because of the contention which this situation caused, it was determined that Paul and Barnabas would be sent to Jerusalem to talk with the apostles and elders

about this issue. In the present text, Paul declared that they went up to Jerusalem by the Spirit of GOD. There is no contradiction here, because there are two possibilities as to why these two things are mentioned. First, it may be that the Holy Spirit directed the leaders of the congregation at Antioch to send them to Jerusalem. The other possibility is that the church decided to send them to Jerusalem, but Paul may have been reluctant to go where he had previously been forced to flee because of persecution. If such were the case, then he needed to be told to go by the Spirit. A previous example of this was Peter being called to go to the centurion, and the Spirit telling him to go when he hesitated (Acts 11).

When by revelation he went up to Jerusalem, what did he do? Did he go up to get the apostles' and elders' opinion on this matter? When the word "**communicated**" is studied, it is learned that it does not mean that he simply talked to them. What it indicates is that he laid the case out before them, much like a lawyer in court. It would be the same as a teacher laying out the logical case as to why he taught what he was teaching. Paul told them what he had been teaching the Gentiles, the good news (Gospel) of salvation (Acts 15:4). Further, Paul did not have to gain their permission to teach against the false position being held — he was inspired and was teaching what had been delivered to him by the Spirit.

Remember, there were a lot of Hebrews who had been converted who still needed to grow. Because of their regard for the old covenant, some of them may have honestly believed that circumcision was needed by everyone to have salvation. If Paul had gone to a large public assembly to present what he had been doing, this could very easily have caused an uproar that could have hindered all of their efforts. Instead, he went to the leaders first, which allowed them to be on the same page when this was presented to the

brethren. Further, by going first to the leaders, they were getting the information about what he taught first-hand; there could be no false report or confused report given to the other apostles about what Paul had been teaching. Wisdom was used on this occasion.

When considering this context, and the proofs Paul had been presenting to the Galatians as to his apostleship, it is very possible that those from Judea may have been arguing that Paul taught a different Gospel from what the apostles were teaching. By first going to those who were leaders in Judea, they then presented a united front, which verified his apostleship. It had to be demonstrated that the apostles in Jerusalem and the apostle Paul were teaching EXACTLY the same thing. If indeed it was necessary for one to be circumcised in order to be saved, then all of those whom Paul had taught among the Gentiles were still in their sins if they had not been circumcised. But, as one knows from inspiration, his labors had not been in vain.

To show how important this "conference" was, notice the words of Taylor here.

"Error and Truth were engaged in a life and death struggle upon this deeply crucial and absolutely critical occasion. At stake was liberty in the Lord. At stake was freedom in the faith for all Christians. At stake was whether Christianity was really a new religion in its own right or was to be simply an inferior annex tacked on to continuing Judaism — an acknowledged system of spiritual bondage, as Peter affirms in Acts 15:10" (Taylor, p. 69).

Gal. 2:3 "But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:"

"But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:" (ASV)

COMPELLED — • ναγκάζω — "To

necessitate, compel, drive to, constrain" (Thayer, p. 36); *"To force, to compel by force or persuasion"* (Berry, p. 7); *"Compel, force of inner and outer compulsion"* (Bauer, p. 52).

Titus was introduced in verse one, and here one finds out why Paul brought him to this conference. Titus was a Greek who had obeyed the Gospel. The contention of some of the Pharisees which had become Christians was that circumcision was necessary in order for one to be saved (Acts 15:5). The point of this would have been that the Old Law (Mosaic Law) was binding and therefore a part of the Christian law or faith. If circumcision had been forced upon Gentile converts to Christianity, then Christianity would not stand alone. Later Paul would forcefully state that obedience to the law made one unfaithful to Christ.

"For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:3-4).

If circumcision was made a part of the Law of Christ, then one was obligated to do all of the Law of Moses in order to be saved. The Scriptures are clear that the law of Moses could no longer justify anyone.

"No man is justified by the law in the sight of GOD, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live by them" (Galatians 3:11-12).

At this point the question should be asked, *"Why was Timothy circumcised but Titus was not?"* The answer is that Timothy was part Jew, and if he would work among the Jews, his uncircumcision would have been a hindrance in that work. Further, the case here was made a doctrinal issue, i.e., was circumcision or non-circumcision a doctrinal matter — a doctrinal necessity? In the case of Timothy it was not a question of doctrine,

but rather one of expediency as a means of influencing the Jews. Titus' case was a doctrinal one.

"It appears therefore, that Titus became a test case. If he was required to submit to circumcision, the Jewish element in the church, which was trying to incorporate certain features of the Mosaic Law into Christianity, would have succeeded in leading the church into early apostasy. Paul was resolved that the truth of the gospel would remain pure" (Winton, p. 19).

"We learn that it is not wrong to participate in the social customs of the day, so long as they do not violate any of God's laws. But when men make laws binding where God has not bound, then we are to resist efforts to bind those things that may, in fact, be right in and of themselves, but not obligatory" (Wacaster, p. 45).

Gal. 2:4 "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:"

"and that because of the false brethren 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:" (ASV)

FALSE BROTHERN — ψευδάδελφος — *"A false brother, i.e., one who ostentiously professes to be a Christian, but is destitute of Christian knowledge and piety"* (Thayer, p. 675); *"A false brother. In Gal. 2:4 it denotes those who had become outwardly members of the Christian church, sharers in its fellowship of life and love, but in reality were not so inwardly. Therefore, they had no right to be counted as brothers. They had the companionship of the brothers but the real kinship of spiritual life was missing"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *"False brother,*

i.e., one who pretends to be a Christian brother, but whose claim is belied by his unbrotherly conduct" (Bauer, p. 891).

UNAWARES BROUGHT IN — παρείσακτος — *"Secretly or surreptitiously brought in; one who has stolen in"* (Thayer, p. 487); *"Smuggled in, brought in secretly. Used subst. of false brothers (Judaizers) who were allowed to join the fellowship of the church"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *"Bring in from the side, introduce"* (Willis, p. 59).

PRIVILY — παρεισέρχομαι — *"To come in secretly or by stealth, to creep or steal in...to enter in addition, come in besides"* (Thayer, p. 487); *"To enter, to come in privily...To come in to, near, or with something so as to be present with or beside it...To go or come in by stealth, to enter unawares"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *"Slip in, come in as a side issue; slip in with unworthy motives, sneak in"* (Willis, p. 59); *"To bring beside; i.e., secretly, as spies or traitors"* (Vine, p. 215).

SPY OUT — κατασκοπέω — *"To inspect, view closely, in order to spy out and plot against"* (Thayer, p. 337); *"To view accurately, contemplate. In the NT with sinister intent, to spy out, explore"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

The term **"false brethren"** has been thought by some to represent those who only pretended to be brethren for the purpose of infiltrating the brethren. In Luke's account, he identified these **"false brethren"** as **"certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed"** (Acts 15:5). Regardless of their actually being brethren, they had made themselves **"false brethren"** by adding to the Gospel of Christ and thus making their brand of Christianity a false religion.

Paul also stated that they were **"brought in."** Zodhiates states that this word means *"Smuggled in, brought in secretly"* (See above definitions). There are two possibilities

regarding what this may mean. (1) They were quietly brought among the brethren by those who were already there for the purpose of introducing their doctrines in an effort to convert others to their way of thinking. (2) They came among the brethren and quietly, secretly, disseminated their doctrines to those whom they believed could be more easily swayed, eventually acting as leaven and influencing the whole body (or possibly splitting the body). Is not the second of these ideas the way Jesus said false teachers would come among the brethren?

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matthew 7:15).

The evil intent of these men is further verified by the fact that they were **"unawares brought in"** **"privily."** Again, Zodhiates helps one here by showing that the word **"privily"** means that something was brought in beside the original. They did not bring the doctrine of Christ, but were bringing (at best a modified form of) the Mosaic law (Gal. 1:6-9). They wanted to lay this law beside the law of Christ and claim that it was equally important to fulfill that law as well as the Law of Christ for one to be a Christian, i.e., to be saved.

What did these men sneak in to do? To spy out the liberty Christians had. But what liberty was this? It was liberty from the Law of Moses and freedom in Christianity from that old law. That old law is described as a **"yoke...which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear"** (Acts 15:10).

"The liberty that they spied out pertained to non-submittance to the Law of Moses in regard to such things as circumcision, non-observance of feast days and the dietary regulations, intermingling of Jews and Gentiles, as well as other liberties practiced by those who did not consider the Mosaical Law as binding on them" (Willis, p. 60).

Release from the Law of Moses was indeed liberty for all, Jew and Gentile.

What was the purpose in these false brethren privily coming among them? To put the Galatian Christians into bondage. The original language here refers to placing one in slavery. Slavery to what? The Mosaic Law. Christians must constantly guard against those who would place them in bondage by following any doctrine which is not the Gospel.

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness” (Romans 6:16)?

Winton listed the following areas of a Christian’s liberty, which are presented here for the reader’s consideration.

1. *Freedom from the guilt of sin* (Heb. 8:12; John 8:32; Acts 13:38-39).
2. *Freedom from the practice of sin* (Rom. 6:1-7).
3. *Freedom from the fear of death* (Phil. 1:21-23; Rev. 14:13; 2 Tim. 4:6-8).
4. *Freedom from fear of men or of the circumstances of life* (Heb. 13:5-6; 2 Tim. 1:7).
5. *Freedom from the fear of judgment* (1 John 4:17-18)” (Winton, p. 19).

Speaking of the Judaistic teachers of whom Paul spoke in this passage, Taylor makes the following interesting observation.

“They desired to rewrite the Great Commission so as to make it read, ‘He that believeth, is baptized, is circumcised and keeps the law of Moses shall be saved.’ This is not how Mark 16:16 reads; it is how they proposed Judaism 16:16 to read when they finished with their Judaistic intentions with Great Commission tamperings of Truth” (Taylor, p. 73)

Gal. 2:5 **“To whom we gave place by**

subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.”

“to whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” (ASV)

GAVE PLACE — εἶκω — *“To yield”* (Thayer, p. 175); *“To give place, yield, give way, to obey, submit”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Yield”* (Bauer, p. 223).

SUBJECTION — ὑποταγή — *“The act of subjecting; obedience, subjection”* (Thayer, p. 645); *“Subordination, subjection, submission, obedience”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Subjection, subordination, obedience”* (Bauer, p. 847).

CONTINUE — διαμένω — *“To stay permanently, remain permanently, continue”* (Thayer, p. 140); *“To remain permanently or to continue in the same place. Spoken of state, condition, circumstances, meaning to remain the same, continue, endure, not to change”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“‘To remain’ in the sense of ‘continue in the same state, or condition’”* (Renn, p. 803).

“To whom.” This refers to these false brethren who had secretly been brought in (v. 4).

“Gave place by subjection.” Those who taught that one must submit to circumcision in order to be saved were apparently demanding that the Galatians obey them by submitting to this rite of the Old Testament. Paul stated that he would not obey them. The fact is that Paul could not obey them without compromising the Gospel of Christ. This passage shows that Paul would never compromise the Gospel in any way, nor would he allow it to be compromised without objection. Paul is one who, upon hearing someone try to compromise the truth, would immediately oppose his error. More of his tribe are needed in every generation. Those who try to compromise the truth are not the

servants of GOD; rather, they serve the Devil.

“Neither give place to the devil”
(Ephesians 4:27).

**“Put on the whole armour of GOD,
that ye may be able to stand against
the wiles of the devil”** (Ephesians
6:11).

**“Give not that which is holy unto the
dogs, neither cast ye your pearls
before swine, lest they trample them
under their feet, and turn again and
rend you”** (Matthew 7:6).

Paul would not submit to false teachers for one moment of time, and neither should anyone in any era.

The argument is made by some that one should consider the social or cultural conditions he is in as he preaches the Gospel. This idea suggests that if the social norms surrounding one are contrary to the Gospel, then one should soften his position. This doctrine is often used to try to silence those who attempt to uphold a strict observance of GOD’s laws. Paul clearly showed that to do so causes one to forfeit his Christianity and be guilty of following or promoting damnable error (whichever the case may be).

On the other hand, if one is in a society which has a social custom which in no way conflicts with the Scriptures, then one should follow that custom to keep from offending people and allow him to have the greatest possible influence in promoting the Gospel. Paul was not opposed to doing that. In fact, in First Corinthians 9:21ff, Paul stated that exact principle. He never compromised the truth in any way by following some custom of the people with which he mingled. One can never be faithful to GOD by compromising His Word.

What does the Bible say about those who advocate doctrinal error or who would compromise the truth?

**“I beseech you, brethren, mark them
which cause divisions and offences**

**contrary to the doctrine which ye
have learned; and avoid them. For
they that are such serve not our
Lord Jesus Christ, but their own
belly; and by good words and fair
speeches deceive the hearts of the
simple”** (Romans 16:17-18).

**“And with all deceivableness of
unrighteousness in them that perish;
because they received not the love
of the truth, that they might be
saved. And for this cause GOD shall
send them strong delusion, that they
should believe a lie: That they all
might be damned who believed not
the truth, but had pleasure in
unrighteousness”** (2 Thessalonians
2:10-12).

**“Whosoever transgresseth, and
abideth not in the doctrine of Christ,
hath not GOD. He that abideth in the
doctrine of Christ, he hath both the
Father and the Son. If there come
any unto you, and bring not this
doctrine, receive him not into your
house, neither bid him GOD speed:
For he that biddeth him GOD speed
is partaker of his evil deeds”** (2 John
9-11).

**“Have no fellowship with the
unfruitful works of darkness, but
rather reprove them”** (Ephesians
5:11).

“No, not for an hour.” Brewer states that the “hour” was the smallest unit of time in the Jewish language (Brewer, p. 23). Paul was saying that not for a moment of time would he submit to such false teachers. This implies that his response to their false doctrine was immediate, and so it should always be. The moment that false doctrine is recognized, it must be opposed! Why?

“That the truth of the Gospel might continue with you.” Paul was determined that they would have the whole truth and nothing but the truth. He had already stated that there was only one Gospel in this letter (1:6-7). If they had compromised with those who wanted to introduce elements of the Law of Moses, then it would have opened the door for any other religious belief to have been grafted into Christianity (exactly what the Catholic church has done). Paul was determined that they would have THE UNCONTAMINATED TRUTH upon which to rely for all their religious needs. Notice the word definitions for **“continue”** above. The Gospel of Christ is the same from generation to generation, from society to society; it cannot be changed and remain THE GOSPEL OF TRUTH!

Gal. 2:6 “But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: GOD accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:”

“But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: GOD accepteth not man's person)-- they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me:” (ASV)

“But of these who seemed to be somewhat.” This section deals with another proof of the apostleship of Paul and his authority as such. The setting for this reference is Acts chapter fifteen. The argument seems to be based upon an argument by the Judaizers who attacked the authority of Paul. They desired to cause (as noted earlier in this study) Gentile Christians to practice Judaism along with Christianity, particularly in the area of circumcision. They appear to have taught that one could not be saved unless he also practiced Judaism with his Christianity.

There is an interesting parallel here to

what happens many times today. Often those who are converted from a denomination to Christianity bring many of their ideas with them. If these ideas and practices are not eliminated, it will not be long until these new Christians have the same kind of problem that was faced by the Galatians. Christianity cannot be mixed with the slightest particle of any other religion and remain Christianity!

The words **“they who seemed to be somewhat”** are not said in derision. It is a statement recognizing a position. There were those who had walked with the Lord, and unfortunately some would place them in a higher position of authority than anyone else. How often one has heard people justify a position because their “pastor” said that was the way it was. What about those who look at “red-letter Bibles” who believe that red letter words are more important than the black-letter words? It would seem that it was probably the Judaizers who said that Paul had no authority, because he was not like the apostles or even the Lord's brother. The accusation would then be that Paul was not teaching the same thing as those men were; therefore, he was not to be believed and followed when he opposed these Judaizing teachers.

“(Whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: GOD accepteth no man's person:) This is another way of saying that GOD's estimation of a person does not depend on who he is, but what he is. Family connections mean nothing when determining what truth is. Whether one is an elder, deacon, preacher, et cetera, such position does not determine the significance of what one teaches and how GOD looks at that individual. Who has GOD's approval?

“Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that ye build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest? For all those things hath Mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the

LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word” (Isaiah 66:1-2).

“In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love” (Galatians 5:6).

The word **“person”** in this text would be better translated **“face”** as the original indicates. This refers to the ancient practice of actors having a mask which portrayed who they represented. It was simply an outward appearance, not the real person. Appearances can be deceiving, but GOD knows the inner man and sees man as he really is.

“For they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me.” Those whom the Judaizers held up as superior to Paul (the apostles and James) spoke the same thing Paul did. In this “conference,” Paul presented what he had been teaching the Gentiles. When he was finished, they had nothing to add to what he had been teaching, nor did they take anything away from what he had taught. He was not corrected by them for teaching some error on the subject of circumcision, nor had he neglected to teach all that needed to be taught on the subject. Since that was the case, it proved that those who were “somewhat” taught exactly the same thing Paul taught, which proved that the Judaizers were proclaiming something which was not the truth — they had perverted the Gospel (Galatians 1:7). Anything which adds to or takes away from the teachings of the Gospel is a perversion.

Gal. 2:7 “But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;”

“But contrariwise, when they saw that I had

been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision” (ASV)

Though two groups are mentioned here (circumcision = Jews; uncircumcision = Gentiles), there are not two Gospels. The rules which applied to the one are the same for the other. When the law of Moses ended and Christ’s law began, all laws with regard to that old system were done away for all.

“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law” (Hebrews 7:12).

The law had changed for all, not just Jew or Gentile.

Paul did not speak of two laws; rather, he was dealing with primary spheres of responsibility. The Lord told Ananias, the preacher He sent to Paul (Saul), that Paul’s work would be among the Gentiles (Acts 9:15) and afterward told Paul the same thing (Acts 22:21). The primary work of Paul was done among the Gentiles, and Peter’s primary work was among the Jews.

“Paul’s work was primarily in Gentile lands and Peter’s work was primarily in Jewish lands” (Willis, p. 68).

But their work was not exclusively in these areas; there was naturally some overlapping. Peter opened the door to the first Gentile converts (Cornelius and his house – Acts 10). Further, wherever Paul went, there was a synagogue, and that is where he started his work, using it as a stepping stone, so-to-speak, to reach the Gentile population of the cities he visited. On the other hand, the letters of First and Second Peter appear to be written primarily to Gentiles. Why was their message the same? Because they were both guided by the same Comforter — the Holy Spirit. He would not give conflicting messages of salvation to anyone. There was to be perfect unity among the brethren.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that

there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10).

Question: If it is true, as the Catholics assert, that Peter was the head of the church on earth, how can it be that his primary work was to the Jews but Paul had the primary work of spreading the Gospel to the Gentiles? This passage and context clearly show that no one apostle had pre-eminence over any other apostle. In fact, James' name will be mentioned first in verse nine, which order usually indicates a higher position of importance in the Scriptures — and James was not an apostle. This is but another example of the Scriptures anticipating any and all errors which men might advocate.

It might also be noted that Christian liberty was on display here (Galatians 2:4; 5:1, 13). Gentiles had the liberty to refuse circumcision, and Jews had the liberty to continue that act. Neither could bind the opinion (scruple) upon the other. Circumcision is no longer a requirement for GOD's people, as it had previously been (Genesis 17:11). Physical circumcision is not a condition of salvation. Circumcision of the heart is a condition of salvation (Acts 7:51).

“He is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of GOD” (Romans 2:29).

Gal. 2:8 “(For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)”

“(for He that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles);” (ASV)

EFFECTUALLY & MIGHTY — Why two different English words were used here in the KJV is unknown, for the ASV and NKJV have it right — they are the same word in the

Greek. It is the word ἵνεργέω — “*To be operative, be at work, put forth power...to effect*” (Thayer, p. 215); “*To be at work, to be effective, operative...To work, be active, produce an effect, spoken of things*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “*Work, be at work, operate, be effective...work, produce, effect*” (Bauer, p. 265); “*Be at work, be in action, operate...the verb ‘seems always to have the idea of effective working’*” (Earle, p. 272); “*To be operative, be at work, put forth power*” (Willis, p. 70).

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One GOD and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:4-6).

It was the same GOD who enabled and empowered both Paul and Peter to do the work they did. Each was endued with the power to perform miracles which confirmed that his message was from GOD. If GOD recognized them as being equal in office and authority, then no one had the right to look at one as being inferior to the other. No one could say that one was an apostle and the other was not.

It should be remembered that there is no sense of competition between Paul and Peter. The problem has not come into existence because of them or what each taught. Lighthouses are not in competition with one another. They preached the same Gospel and did the same works. They were not trying to cause division but rather pulled the plow together for the Lord.

Gal. 2:9 “And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.”

“and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to

me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision;" (ASV)

SEEMED — δοκέω — *"To be of opinion, think, suppose...to seem, be accounted, reputed"* (Thayer, p. 154); *"To think, imagine, consider, appear. Expresses the subjective mental estimate or opinion formed by man concerning a matter"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *"Think, believe, suppose, consider...have the appearance"* (Bauer, p. 202).

This verse begins with the names of three prominent men in Jerusalem. James is listed first though not an apostle, for the apostle James had been murdered by Herod (Acts 12:1-2). This was the half-brother of Jesus (Galatians 1:19). The events spoken of here happened approximately six years after the apostle James was murdered. Interestingly, the Holy Spirit anticipated the false theory that Peter held the preeminence in the church, by listing James before Peter on this most important occasion.

The phrase **"who seemed to be pillars"** is most interesting. A physical pillar is that which supports something, i.e., which holds something up. Spiritually speaking, the Bible teaches that the church (and each individual who makes up the church) is the pillar of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). Considering the definition above of the word **"seemed,"** one arrives at an interesting thought. These three men (James, Peter and John) were thought to be pillars of truth, i.e., those who upheld truth. But, did they uphold all truth? What about the truth that the Gentiles were acceptable to GOD and that no difference should be made between Jew and Gentile (Acts 15:9)? After the events of Acts chapter ten, in which GOD showed Peter that no distinction was to be made between Jew and Gentile, and after he had relayed these things to the apostles, there was no misunderstanding of GOD's intent for all to be one. Yet, in the next few verses of the present chapter, it will be shown that Peter and those from the Jerusalem church had

sinned in the way they treated the Gentiles of Galatia. It would seem to this writer that the words chosen by the Holy Spirit here are intended to show the Galatians that the man under attack (Paul) had acted in a Christian way toward them, while those who were held up by the Judaizers as the true authorities in Christianity had not so acted (see verses 11-13). In a sense, Paul may be hinting at the question, *"Who actually treated you like an apostle should?"* Yet, one should not forget that, even with their weakness, these were influential men in the church at Jerusalem (possibly all three being elders in that congregation).

What is the **"grace"** they perceived in Paul? It includes his conversion, the Gospel which he proclaimed, and the miracles GOD gave him to confirm his teaching. The Gospel he proclaimed was the same Gospel they taught, and the miracles he performed were identical to those which the other apostles performed. In this conference, these details were abundantly evident to all who took part in it.

What were the results of this meeting? These men (James, Peter and John) extended **"the right hands of fellowship"** to Paul and Barnabas. What is the significance of this action? (1) It showed an acknowledgment that Paul was preaching the same Gospel that they taught. No fellowship could be extended to them if Paul taught a false doctrine (Ephesians 5:11). (2) It showed a partnership between them in the effort to convert souls. (3) It reaffirmed that there was no difference between Jew and Gentile, as there had been under the Old Law. (4) It was an agreement as to the primary work of these men. This was not a racial distinction — it was a distinction with regard to where they would geographically work. Paul and Barnabas spent most of their time in Gentile lands, whereas James, Peter, and John spent the majority of their time in the Jewish homeland. Yet, neither exclusively worked among either

the Jews or Gentiles.

This interesting observation is found in Wacaster's excellent commentary on Galatians:

"It is rather interesting that the five men, whose 'handclasp of ringing harmony is here described, produced between them, no less than twenty-one of the twenty seven books' (of the New Testament, RK)" (Wacaster, p. 50).

This writer believes it is twenty-two books, considering Paul to have been chosen to write Hebrews. Of those twenty-two books of the New Testament, the one the Judaizers were attacking (Paul) was chosen by the Spirit to write fourteen, or about two-thirds of those books.

Gal. 2:10 "Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do."

"only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do." (ASV)

FORWARD — σπουδάζω — *"To hasten, make haste...to exert one's self, endeavor, give diligence" (Thayer, p. 585); "To be diligent, earnest, or eager...To make every effort to do one's best, to be eager" (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); "Hasten, hurry...be zealous or eager, take pains, make every effort" (Bauer, p. 763).*

There was no correction made by those leaders in Jerusalem to what Paul had taught. They did not say that he did not know all of the facts and needed further instruction in the doctrines he was teaching, as had Apollos (Acts 18:24ff). Instead, they agreed with what he had said, which was symbolized and affirmed by their giving him the right hand of fellowship.

They did ask one thing of Paul and Barnabas — that they remember the poor. This might be better understood by saying that they should continue to remember the poor. The word **"remember"** in this verse is

continuous action (present subjunctive active) in the original. This appears to be borne out that they were urging him to continue his care for the poor, in that he had already raised a great contribution for the poor in Judea. Further, after this time he again raised a great contribution for the needs of the poor in Jerusalem (Acts 21).

What benefits could this remembrance bring? (1) It would obey GOD's many commands to care for the poor, thus helping them and providing treasures in Heaven for the giver. (2) It would demonstrate that Paul had a great care for his Jewish brethren (nation). (3) What better way to cement the bonds of brotherhood between Jew and Gentile Christians than for brethren to help one another in time of need?

"Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:9-10).

Gal. 2:11 "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."

"But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned." (ASV)

WITHSTOOD — •νθίστημι — *"To set against...to set one's self against, to withstand, resist, oppose" (Thayer, p. 45); "To stand against, resist, whether in deed or word" (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); "Set oneself against, oppose, resist, withstand" (Bauer, p. 67).*

BLAME — καταγινώσκω — *"To find fault with, blame...to accuse, condemn" (Thayer, p. 330); "To perceive something concerning one, observe, usually to discern in a bad sense and therefore to detect something bad about another, to incriminate, condemn" (Zodhiates,*

CD Rom Version); *“Condemn, convict”* (Bauer, p. 409).

It is not known when this visit to Antioch was made by Peter, but most believe it was after the Jerusalem conference referred to in the previous context notes. It would seem to this writer that this may especially be true considering the intent of this letter so far, i.e., a defense of the apostleship of Paul.

Whenever this was, Paul had to withstand or resist Peter, because Peter did that which was wrong. There are several things to consider with regard to Paul withstanding Peter. (1) It shows an equality of Paul with Peter, in that an inferior does not stand against a superior. (2) Similar in nature to the first point, this shows that Peter was not and is not the superior apostle, as the Catholic church maintains. (3) It shows that even an apostle could sin. As Boatman well stated, *“These men who were given the keys of the kingdom were not given perfection”* (Boatman, p. 67). (4) It shows that public condemnation of one is not only proper but sometimes necessary. (5) Unlike the Judiazing teachers which had slipped in unawares to sow their seeds behind the back of Paul, proper correction and instruction should be done face to face.

Why did Paul do this rebuking? Because Peter was condemned by GOD for his actions, and Paul did not want to see Peter lose his soul. Why was Peter to be condemned? Because he knew he had violated GOD’s law and in reality condemned himself. Long before this time, GOD had first shown Peter that no man should be denied the Gospel and that it was not wrong for a Jew to eat with a Gentile: **“What GOD hath cleansed, that call not thou unclean”** (Acts 10:15). Further, on that occasion Peter had eaten with Gentiles (Cornelius), as Acts 11:3 clearly shows. Now he withdrew himself from association with his Gentile **brethren**.

“Knowledge of the truth does not guarantee that we will always practice

what we know, keep us from falling into sin, or preserve us from undue fear of men (Luke 22:54-62)” (Crouch, p. 21).

Consider that on another occasion, Peter had confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of GOD (Matthew 16:16). A short time later when the Lord revealed that He was going to be killed, Peter professed that he would be loyal to Him even if it cost him his life (Matthew 26:35; Mark 14:31). Yet, a short time later Peter did not deny the Lord once, but three times (Matthew 26:69ff).

The apostles never claimed perfection in their lives. Though they were endued with miraculous powers and inspired so that they could not make a mistake in what they taught and wrote, they also had the same weaknesses as other men and were subject to the same temptations all face.

“If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us” (1 John 1:7-10).

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Corinthians 9:27).

“Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak” (Mark 14:38).

What did Peter do which deserved GOD’s condemnation? The next verse tells us.

Gal. 2:12 “For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.”

“For before that certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision.” (ASV)

The first bit of information revealed is that some came from James. Were these sent by James on a mission or with a message to them? Did these claim to have a message from James regarding these matters as those discussed earlier in the text had falsely done (Acts 15:24)? Did James believe it was still wrong for a Jew to eat or have social intercourse with the Gentiles? Did some of the Jews who had become Christians believe that they should keep some of the rites of the old law (Acts 21:17-26)?

*“The words **from James** can refer to (a) some who came from Jerusalem where James was (if so, why not plainly state ‘from Jerusalem’), (b) some close associates of James, (c) some who implied that they were sent from James when, in reality, they were not, or (d) some who were truly representatives of James who also would have been in error on this matter. This is a difficult problem to untangle”* (Willis, p. 80).

The second bit of information revealed is that Peter had been eating with the Gentiles before these men came (See above notes on eating with the Gentiles.). Eating with the Gentiles is another way of saying that he had fellowship with them. But when these men came, he separated himself from the Gentiles; he pulled away from them. Why did he do this? Because he was afraid of the Jews (circumcised). Why had he previously denied the Lord three times when He was on trial? Fear of the Jews. Why had he begun to sink when he walked on the water toward Jesus? Fear.

“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe” (Proverbs 29:25).

How often have Christians down through the ages been like Peter — strong on one occasion, weak on another? It is easy to stand for truth in the assembly of the saints, but what about Monday morning in the “courts” of the heathen? Peter bowed to peer pressure on this occasion, and Christians of all ages have faced the same kind of peer pressure. How have “we” handled that pressure in the past? How will “we” handle it in the future?

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12).

“It should be noted that Peter’s problem was one of conduct, not of doctrine. Peter believed and preached the truth; however, he did not live up to what he knew was right” (Willis, p. 82).

One should beware an attitude which seeks men’s approval and sacrifices the approval of GOD.

Gal. 2:13 “And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.”

“And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation.” (ASV)

DISSEMBLED — συνυποκρίνομαι — “To dissemble with” (Thayer, p. 607); “Join in pretending...to play the hypocrite with someone, to dissemble with” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Join in pretending or playing a part, join in playing the hypocrite” (Bauer, p. 793); “The verb *hypokrinomai* – to which syn (‘with’) is added here — means literally ‘answer from under;’ that is, from under a mask as an actor would do when playing his part” (Earle, p. 273).

The very first thing that one should notice in this passage is the word “**dissembled**,” which is more accurately translated in the NKJV as “hypocrite.” Originally, the word “**hypocrite**” was used of the play actors on the Greek stage. They used masks to represent different kinds of characters — one might represent a wise man, another might represent a fool, another a poor man, et cetera. In Indonesia, they have also used masks in their plays, and in this writer’s office he has the mask which represents the “wise old man” (hopefully some day he may fit that mask). Thus, these actors were really someone else, but outwardly they appeared to be another character.

The Jews who were assembled here acted the hypocrite, with Peter and Barnabas joining in with them. How were they acting the hypocrite? They had understood from GOD’s directions to Peter in the past that the Gentiles were no longer “unclean” and that fellowship could be had with them on every level. Further, they had participated with the Gentiles in fellowship until the Jews came from Jerusalem. Paul implied that they were pretending that the Gentiles could not be fellowshipped, when in reality they knew that they could. They had put on a false face to appease those Jews whom they feared: thus, they were hypocrites.

Consider Barnabas and draw a lesson on discipline. Discipline can take all forms, from teaching to (ultimately) withdrawal of fellowship. When one considers the extremely close relationship of these two men (Paul and Barnabas), he is forced to realize how difficult, and yes, even distasteful this must have been for Paul. He had to rebuke publicly (in a strong manner) the man who had vouched for him at Jerusalem when he first became a Christian and who had worked so closely with him in converting the Gentiles at Antioch and other places. Such a task would not be easy, but Paul was more concerned with (1) obedience to GOD, and (2) the

salvation of the souls of the Gentiles. For the sake of his own soul and those whom he had taught, this must be done — no matter how painful it might be personally.

“The fact that Peter’s actions had the influence it did upon Barnabas made it all the more important that Paul call Peter’s hand regarding his behavior. It also helps us to see the contagious effect of fear coupled with peer pressure” (Wacaster, p. 55).

Paul understood the dire threat posed to the church by the actions of Peter and these hypocrites. If their actions had been successful in separating the Jew from the Gentile, then there would have been an ungodly division in the church. What was true then is also true today. A division which is just as ungodly as division over any other doctrinal matter is the division which exists in the church between racial groups. There is no justification in the Scriptures for “*White churches*,” “*Black churches*,” “*Brown churches*,” or any other color barriers. Such division ought not to exist and would not exist if there were not racial prejudices which are just as damnable as the one Paul dealt with in this text. Further, the excuse often used for these divisions today is the “cultural division” between the groups. What greater cultural division could there have been than between the Jewish and Gentile communities? Yet their separation into distinct groups was here condemned. Shame on members of the Lord’s church who perpetuate racial division!

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:28-29).

One of the dangers shown in this passage deals with following men. The text shows that other Jews followed the example of Peter, including Barnabas. No matter who the

individual is that one might be inclined to hold in high esteem, that individual is not Christ. That being the case, when someone does or teaches something, before one follows him, he needs to check and see if what is being done is Scriptural or not. No one should blindly follow the lead of another man, no matter who he is.

This also points out the danger of influence. No man is an island unto himself. Everyone has influence on someone else. As a Christian, one should always consider carefully his actions and teachings. A Christian certainly does not want to lead anyone to a Devil's Hell. This writer has often publicly told his audiences that they should never believe anything because he said it or does it. Look to GOD's Word as the only infallible source of guidance in all areas of life and spirituality.

Gal. 2:14 “But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?”

“But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” (ASV)

WALKED NOT UPRIGHTLY — ἴρθοποδέω — *“To walk in a straight course; metaphorically to act uprightly”* (Thayer, p. 452); *“To walk uprightly, correctly, carefully...to walk in an orderly manner; to proceed on a straight course”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Walk straight, upright, fig. act rightly, be straightforward”* (Bauer, p. 580); *“Make a straight path, pursue a straight course”* (Earle, p. 273); *“Walk straight, upright, figuratively act rightly, be straightforward”* (Willis, p. 85). It should be noted that these

definitions deal simply with the word **“uprightly.”** The word **“not”** which precedes it then shows the negative connotation in the text.

Since they were not following the instructions of Scripture in their conduct the situation must be corrected. How would this be done? By public rebuke for their public sin. Many object to any kind of public condemnation of another. They often turn to Matthew 18:15-17 to try to make their case that sin should always be pointed out to one in private. Those who do such miss the fact that Jesus was dealing with an individual who was sinning against another (private matter between two brethren) and that knowledge of their sin was not known until the one sinned against had tried to get the sinner to repent. Because the sinner would not repent, then his brother took it to a witness and finally to the church as a whole. The Bible teaches that Christ is to be one's example in all things (John 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:21). When Peter sinned, Jesus told him, **“Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offence unto Me: for thou savourest not the things that be of GOD, but those that be of men”** (Matthew 16:23). The situation in that text was in front of all of the other disciples — public. Should one follow the example of Jesus when sin is committed in public (cf. Matthew 23), or should he follow the example of those who are fearful of the reaction they will receive from the public? Further, the Holy Spirit guided Paul to put a principle into play regarding public condemnation for public sin (well known actions or words). This principle would include those who write in publications or who write books.

“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear” (1 Timothy 5:20).

This text was talking about elders who sinned, but if an elder should be rebuked publicly for his transgressions, does not that apply to all who so do?

“How can a public sin, one that casts a stumbling block before many others, be corrected in private? It can’t” (McClish, p. 87).

“The sin committed by Peter was not against Paul. It was a public offense against Christ and against the Gentile brethren — against the church of Christ” (Littrell, p. 347).

Further, how are brethren warned about false teachers if the teachers are not publicly exposed for their error (Romans 16:17-18)? How may brethren withdraw from those who walk disorderly if they have not been told the disorderly conduct of the individual and who that individual is (2 Thessalonians 3:6)? How can a man be marked for his disobedience to the inspired writers’ words without everyone knowing what he has done (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15)? Secrecy in these matters allows the destructive leaven to continue to influence the flock to their destruction.

“Suppose a child is asked to come to the front of the class and provide an answer for a mathematical problem which has been placed on the chalkboard. And, let us further suppose that the child gives an incorrect answer. Is the teacher to ignore the mistake and correct the child only in private? Of course not. The mistake must be corrected before all, so that all may learn the nature of the error” (Wacaster, p. 56).

Peter was born a Jew and had lived under the law while it was still in force. That law had been done away with, as was emphasized to him with the example of Cornelius (Acts 10). Further, at Antioch, Peter had lived like the Gentiles, having fellowship with them in every area. Now his conduct drew a distinction between them. Now he was saying, by his actions, that the law (Mosaic) must be followed by the Gentiles. If Paul had allowed this to stand, then the Judaizers who taught

that one had to add the law of Moses to the laws of Christianity in order to be saved would have won and thus destroyed Christianity.

The basic choice being presented by Peter and those who dissembled with him was clear. *“Either you Gentiles start following the ways of the Jews (dietary restrictions, etc.) and preserve unity in the church or refuse and cause division.”* This sounds similar to what liberals in the church do today. The liberal basically says, *“Follow our liberal agenda. If you do not, it will cause division, and you are the ones who cause the division because you only want to follow what the Bible says instead of any additions or subtractions that we might make to that word.”* When men want to digress from the truth (and division occurs as a result), they almost always blame those who stick with the truth for that division.

While among the Gentiles, Peter had previously conformed to their customs (obviously for the purpose of having as much influence among them as possible so that they might be saved). It is also certain that he did not conform to any custom which would have been a violation of GOD’s law. Conforming to the customs of those among whom one lives and is trying to convert is not wrong, as long as those customs do not violate GOD’s laws. In fact, one should, according to the teachings of Paul, conform to those customs (1 Corinthians 9:19-22). This is a principle which should carefully be heeded, especially when doing mission work in a foreign land. One is not there to insult them, but to win them to Christ.

Gal. 2:15-16 “We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

“We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” (ASV)

A comparison is being made in verse fifteen between Jew and Gentile (from a Jew’s perspective). The Jew considered himself (and rightly so) to have had many more advantages than the Gentile. As time went on, he arrogantly began to look at himself as being superior. Paul showed that from that former vantage point, they could see that all must turn to the faith of Christ in order to gain justification — the law of Moses could never justify anyone. The “faith of Christ” refers to the system of faith which He has given to mankind.

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law.” Living under the law of Moses (the law referred to in this passage), the Jew had learned that there was no justification under that law.

“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:38-39).

Paul reminded Peter and those Jews who followed him of this fact, which was well-known to them.

“Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that GOD is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him. The word which GOD sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (He is Lord of all:)...To Him give all the prophets

witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:34-36, 43).

Paul next stated, **“even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law.”** Paul (a Jew) and those Jews to whom he spoke had all given up the works of the law of Moses, because they understood that no one could keep that law perfectly and that it was only through the keeping of that law perfectly that one could receive justification under that law. They had then given up that old law and placed their obedient faith in Christ, Who would then justify them.

“Declared to be the Son of GOD with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for His name: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ” (Romans 1:4-6).

It takes faith in Christ and obedience to that faith which He has delivered to mankind to receive justification.

In his commentary on Galatians, Brewer offered this translation of these two verses, which captures their essence.

“Even we who are Jews by birth and of the seed of Abraham recognize that no one can be justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we have believed in Christ that we might be justified by the faith and not by works of the law” (Brewer, p. 29).

“Peter and all Jewish Christians, by the very act of becoming Christians, admitted the inability of the law to save” (Crouch, p. 24).

Gal. 2:17 **“But if, while we seek to be**

justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? GOD forbid.”

“But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ a minister of sin? GOD forbid.” (ASV)

This verse refers to the action of Peter and those who followed him in acting as if eating with the Gentiles was a sin. To reach that conclusion, they had to be saying that they were still bound by the old law (Law of Moses). But had they sinned by eating with the Gentiles? If they had, then Christ had led them to sin, because He had directed them to have fellowship with the Gentiles as they had formerly had only with fellow Jews. Notice the excellent argumentation of Willis here.

“Through following Christ for salvation, Peter and Paul had been led to abandon the Law of Moses for justification. Peter had also been specifically instructed to go into a Gentile’s house in order to preach to them. The Holy Spirit told him to go to Cornelius’ home ‘doubting nothing’ (Acts 10:20); later he defended his practice of eating with Gentiles on the basis that the Lord had led him to do what he had done (Acts 11:1-18). If eating with Gentiles was sinful, then the Christ who directed him to eat with Gentiles was a ‘minister of sin.’ If a preacher taught us to do that which was sinful, then he would be a ‘minister of sin’ (a promoter of sin, one who led others to sin). In the same way, if following what the Christ directed caused one to commit sin, then Christ was a ‘minister of sin’...Paul was attacking a false premise by showing the absurd conclusion to which it leads” (Willis, p. 95).

The term **“GOD forbid”** seems to carry the idea of “How could such a thing be stated or even thought, i.e., that Christ was a minister of sin?”

Gal. 2:18 “For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.”

“For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor.” (ASV)

The Judaizers were teaching that those who did not keep the law (Moses’ law) were sinners. Paul taught that those who kept the Law of Moses were sinning. Implied is that if you were right in the one, you were wrong in the other; and if one tried to blend the two laws together, that person could not be both right and wrong. A choice between the two laws must be made.

“If Peter did right in refusing to eat with the Gentiles, he had done wrong in associating with them earlier; if he had done right to obey the vision from heaven, he was a transgressor in disobeying it now” (Lipscomb, p. 214).

Jesus did not come into this world to refurbish the Law of Moses, but to fulfil it (Matt. 5:17), thus putting it aside as a worn out garment.

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross” (Colossians 2:14).

Having done this, why would He now have His apostles rebuild the very system that He replaced with a better covenant? Jesus came into this world to break down the wall which had been between Jew and Gentile, but by his actions Peter was trying to rebuild that wall.

“He is our peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that He might reconcile

both unto GOD in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh” (Ephesians 2:14-17).

Since Peter and these other Jews were in effect trying to re-establish the laws of the covenant which was now rejected by GOD, they had become sinners (“**transgressor**”) by trying to re-institute what was now a false religion (Law of Moses).

Gal. 2:19 “For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto GOD.”

“For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto GOD.” (ASV)

How could the Law of Moses cause him to be dead to the Law of Moses? Jesus told the people, “**Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me**” (John 5:39). Why search the Old Law? Because it predicted a time when its lawgiver would be replaced with another, and thus the law given by him would be replaced. Why search that old law? Because that law could not give life but predicted a law which gives life.

“Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your GOD raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:22-23, cf. Deuteronomy 18:15ff).

If one truly searched the Old Law and accepted it, then when the new law came he would have to abandon the old law; he would die to that law so that he might live in the new law.

“For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have

been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a GOD, and they shall be to Me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away” (Hebrews 8:7-13, cf. Jeremiah 31:31-34).

In another place, Paul said, “**Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto GOD through Jesus Christ our Lord**” (Romans 6:11). Notice that life is in Christ. How is this new life obtained?

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so

we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:3-4).

Baptism is the figurative putting to death of the old man of sin and arising as a new man. This new life is had only in Christ, Whom one puts on in baptism. At that point of death, one dies to any other religious system which he may have followed. Why does he become dead to that old system? Because to follow that system is sin, which will not bring him life but rather will cause his soul to be lost. The Law of Moses had been done away with; it was no longer valid. To go back to that law would be to return to death, i.e., separation from GOD and all that is holy. Paul made this point very clear later in this letter.

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:4).

This writer would further suggest that any Jew who claimed to obey the Law of Moses but did not become a Christian when given the opportunity did not really believe that law. Jesus said, **“Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not His writings, how shall ye believe My words” (John 5:46-47)?** The Law of Moses was given for the purpose of guiding man to Christ and the law which He would give.

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of GOD by faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:24-26).

Implied in this is the fact that if one follows the Law of Moses, he is **not** a child of GOD; therefore, he is not saved but rather lost. The law itself led man to eventually reject it for the Law of Christ.

Was Paul saying that he was dead to all law in this passage, or did he reference a

particular law to which he was dead? Paul knew that he was freed from the Mosaic law by the death of Christ on the cross. But he also knew he had been freed from one law so that he could follow another law — the law of Christ. Rather than be a servant of the law (Mosaic), he became a servant of righteousness (Law of Christ).

“Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Romans 6:18).

Paul said he was **“not without law to GOD, but under the law to Christ” (1 Corinthians 9:21).** ALL CHRISTIANS ARE UNDER LAW — THE LAW OF CHRIST!!!

“If ye love me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15).

“Whenever anything is said in disparagement of law, the concept law must be carefully described. The hue and cry of the present day, to the effect that as Christians ‘we have nothing whatever to do with the law’ has no Scriptural justification at all. It is, in fact, a dangerous slogan, especially in an era of lawlessness” (Hendriksen, p. 102 --- quoted by Willis, p. 99).

When people begin to state that one is not under law today but rather under grace, they are trying to eliminate absolute governing influences in their lives. They want to do their own thing without any criticism of their actions.

Gal. 2:20 **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of GOD, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”**

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ living in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of GOD, Who loved me, and gave Himself up for me.” (ASV)

“I am crucified with Christ.” Crucifixion meant death. Paul said that he was crucified with Christ, yet it was two thieves who were literally crucified with Christ and not Paul. Obviously then, he could not be speaking about a literal crucifixion which the next phrase declared. Thus, the crucifixion, he spoke of is figurative. So what is meant by his statement? When someone dies, those things which meant something to him while he was alive no longer have meaning to him; they are no longer the things which govern his life. Something had been put to death in the life of Paul, but what? The old man of sin to be sure, but this means more than that when the context of this letter is viewed. Paul had to leave behind the Law of Moses. That law no longer governed his life, and the fulfillment of that law was no longer his goal.

Wacaster showed two similarities of Jesus' crucifixion and the crucifixion of one who becomes a Christian, which are outstanding thoughts.

“(1) Crucifixion is painful. Similarly, giving up those things of our former lives is often painful. But like Paul, we are to count them but refuse for the sake of our Lord (Philippians 3:8). (2) Crucifixion is slow — and as we struggle with our old habits, change will come gradually” (Wacaster, p. 68).

Jesus helps one to understand what is required in this crucifixion when He says, **“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up His cross daily, and follow Me”** (Luke 9:23). The cross is the symbol of death, i.e., crucifixion. Jesus said that His disciples must take up the cross **daily** and follow Him. When one took up his cross and was led to the place of crucifixion by the Roman soldiers, he did not get a chance to take up that cross the next day. Obviously then, the cross Jesus wants one to take up is figurative, one which he bears while he lives for Christ. Paul's writing further helps one understand what is required by the Lord.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of GOD, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto GOD, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of GOD” (Romans 12:1-2).

While one lives on this earth, he is to sacrifice anything which conflicts with the will of GOD, and in doing so, he becomes a living sacrifice.

The American Standard gives a little clearer translation here when it says, *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ living in me.”*

“We no longer live to SELF. It is no longer MY life, MY wants, MY desires, or MY plans and purposes; it is no longer the ‘me’ on the throne of my life, but the Christ” (Wacaster, p. 68).

“The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of GOD.” Paul showed a contrast between the way he lived at that present time and the way he had lived in the past. What does the term **“faith”** mean in this passage? It is the same thing as the word **“faith”** in Jude verse three.

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

In both cases, the word **“faith”** refers to that body of doctrine by which all are to be directed in order to please GOD. If one would be a Christian, it is the faith once and for all time delivered to mankind which must be believed and practiced. If one who has become a Christian wishes to complete his journey to Heaven, it is the faith once and for all time delivered to mankind which he must

continue to believe and practice to the end of his life which will allow him to safely arrive at the destination of Heaven. Man cannot be a Christian by doing his own thing. In the flesh, man must live by the body of doctrine GOD brought to light in His Son — the Christ.

Paul next stated that Christ **“loved me, and gave Himself for me.”** On one occasion Jesus said, **“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends”** (John 15:13). Paul knew that Jesus had not only claimed to love him but had demonstrated that love by allowing Himself to be crucified — to die — for him. Paul understood that Christ did not die for one single individual but for all of mankind. Each one reading these words MUST understand that Christ made that sacrifice for him personally. Christ died for “me,” and Christ died equally for “you.”

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing” (2 Timothy 4:8).

All who look forward in loving obedience to the coming of Christ will gain the reward Paul gained — **HEAVEN.**

How does Christ live in one? The same way the Father does. The same way the Holy Spirit does. How? He dwells in one’s heart through faith (Ephesians 3:17). Consider also that faith only comes after one has heard GOD’s Word. **“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of GOD”** (Romans 10:17).

Gal. 2:21 “I do not frustrate the grace of GOD: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

“I do not make void the grace of GOD: for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought.” (ASV)

FRUSTRATE — • θετέω — *“Do away with*

something laid down, prescribed, established...to thwart the efficacy of anything, nullify, make void, frustrate” (Thayer, p. 13); *“To displace, to abrogate, abolish, get rid of...To make void, render null...To deny, despise, condemn”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Declare invalid, nullify, set aside...reject, not recognize”* (Bauer, p. 21).

Paul was saying that he would do nothing that would nullify, make void, displace, abolish the grace of GOD. On the other hand, Peter’s actions, if continued, would set aside the grace of GOD. The perverted doctrine of the Judaizers (Galatians 1:6-7), i.e., that salvation could be had only through obedience to Moses law, would frustrate GOD’s grace.

How was this true? Because righteousness, a right relationship with GOD, can only come through the blood of Jesus. If one’s salvation could be had through obedience to the Mosaic law, then Christ wasted His time and effort by dying on the cross. Jesus came to this earth to die so that man could have forgiveness of his sins. Listen to what Jesus proclaimed about His mission to this earth.

“The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

Notice also John 3:16-17.

“For GOD so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For GOD sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved” (emphasis mine RK).

If one teaches that he can be saved through obedience to the law of Moses, then he is declaring that Christ’s death was worthless, contrary to the Word of GOD.

Why do men reject GOD’s Word, thus frustrating the grace of GOD? It is always in order to do what they want to do instead of what GOD has told them to do.

“Full well ye reject the commandment of GOD, that ye may keep your own tradition” (Mark 7:9).

Galatians — Chapter Three

Gal. 3:1 “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?”

“O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified?” (ASV)

FOOLISH — • νόητος — *“Not understanding, unintelligible; generally active, not understanding, unwise, foolish” (Thayer, p. 48); “Lacking intelligence, foolish; one who does not govern his lusts, one without mind” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Unintelligent, foolish” (Bauer, p. 70).*

BEWITCHED — βασκαίνω — *“To bring evil on one by feigned praise or an evil eye, to charm, bewitch one” (Thayer, p. 98); “In the NT, it means to utter foolish babble, i.e., to mislead by pretenses as if by magic arts, to bewitch” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Bewitch, as with the ‘evil eye’” (Bauer, p. 137); “Blight by the evil eye, fascinate, bewitch” (Earle, p. 274); “Properly means, to prate about any one; and then to mislead by pretenses, as if by magic arts; to fascinate; to influence by a charm” (Barnes, p. 326); “Bewitched (‘from baskaino) means’ primarily, to slander, to prate about anyone; to bring evil on a person by feigned praise, or mislead by an evil eye, and to charm” (Vine as quoted by Wacaster, p. 72).*

“O foolish Galatians.” The word **“foolish”** speaks of a lack of understanding, as if one had lost his mind. In this case, however, it does not refer to the fact that the Galatians were without understanding. It implies that they had the ability to understand

the difference between what the Judaizers taught and what Paul taught (and to understand the right course to follow). They were not using the ability they had; therefore, they were acting in an unwise manner.

“Who hath bewitched you?” In studying the definitions above and the context of Paul’s letter, it becomes apparent that the Galatians had been seduced by the Judiazers to turn/begin to turn from the doctrine of Christ. It may have been the oratory ability of the speakers which accomplished this, the personality of the teachers, et cetera. Whatever the influence was it should not have taken away their ability to reason correctly and thus discern between the true and the false.

“The greatest threats to the church are internal. Great damage can be done to it by false teaching, for error has a semblance of truth, which many are ill-equipped to discern, and people often make their choices by emotions rather than by a logical examination of truth” (Winton, p. 28).

Indeed, one of the greatest dangers faced by Christians is not from those without the body, but from those who either profess to be Christians or are Christians who advocate a doctrine which is close to the truth but which contains a mustard seed of error. For an example of this, compare what GOD said in Genesis 2:17 and what the Devil said in Genesis 3:4. One word made all the difference in seducing Eve into sin.

“That ye should not obey the truth.” *“These words do not belong in the text at this place; none of the better Greek manuscripts contain them. Scholars conjecture that they are interpolated from 5:7. Recent editions of the Greek text, such as that issued by the United Bible Societies, do not even list the words as a variant reading, the evidence against their inclusion is so strong” (Willis, p. 109).*

“Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath

been evidently set forth, crucified among you.” In Corinth, Paul stated that he had **“determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”** (1 Corinthians 2:2). It was the goal of Paul, with regard to his proclamations, to cause people to recognize the crucifixion of Christ and what that crucifixion meant to them with regard to the salvation of their souls. Why would he desire people to have this knowledge? Because once one understands this, it is hard for him to deny the Christ. Yet, in the case of the Galatians, they were now doing just that and replacing it with the teachings of the Judaizers. It is this writer’s belief that Paul had so thoroughly taught the crucifixion to these people that, though they had not physically seen the crucifixion of Jesus, yet in their minds eyes it was if they had been at the foot of Calvary on that glorious day.

Gal. 3:2 “This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”

“This only would I learn from you. Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” (ASV)

“This only would I learn of you.” Here is a decisive question, the answer of which could settle the whole issue before them. One must keep in mind that the whole of this book is dedicated to showing the contrast between the Law of Moses, which these Judaizers were attempting to force upon the Gentiles, and the law of faith which Paul taught. If the Galatians answered this question truthfully, they would stop following the Judaizers and return to faithfulness to Christ.

How did they receive the Spirit of GOD? Was it by the works of the law (Law of Moses) or was it by the hearing of faith (the faith of obedience). What does the receiving of the Spirit entail? If it is the miraculous which is intended here, then they knew that obedience to the law of Moses had never given them

these gifts. If this refers to the fellowship and salvation offered by the Spirit, then again, they knew that they had not received these from obedience to the law of Moses. By honestly answering this one question, they would know whose teachings they should follow, i.e., who the true messenger of GOD was — the Judaizers or Paul. By answering this one question they would know who really cared about their souls — the Judaizers or Paul.

What does the phrase **“hearing of faith”** mean? Does it mean that all one has to do is believe and he receives the Spirit? The word **“hear”** can simply mean the sounds (words) which pass through one’s ears into his brain. The Bible also shows that the word **“hear”** is often used to speak about obedient faith. For instance, who would deny that obedient faith is meant by the word **“hear”** in the following passages (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22)? It should be obvious that in this present study, the word **“hear”** refers to more than simply listening to words and thus refers to faith which is obedient.

“We have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for His name” (Romans 1:5).

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting GOD, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To GOD only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen” (Romans 16:25-27).

Why was the Gospel made known to mankind? So that man could render

obedience to GOD and receive the gift of salvation.

Gal. 3:3 “Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

“Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?” (ASV)

BEGUN — ἰνάρχομαι — “*To begin, make a beginning*” (Thayer, p. 213); “*To make a beginning, to begin, commence*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “*Begin, make a beginning*” (Bauer. P. 262).

PERFECT — ἰπιτελέω — “*To bring to an end, accomplish, perfect, execute, complete*” (Thayer, p. 244); “*To finish, complete, perfect*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “*End, bring to an end, finish something...complete, accomplish, perform, bring about*” (Bauer, p. 302).

The word “**foolish**” is the same as that found in verse one. Paul is again challenging their thinking process, goading them (so-to-speak) into using logical (common sense) reasoning to come to a correct conclusion.

“Any man who acts in a manner contrary to available evidence is foolish. For example, the Psalmist said, ‘the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God’ (Psalm 14:1). The man who affirms that God does not exist does so despite the evidence” (Wacaster, p. 74).

Later in this chapter (3:23ff), Paul will declare the correct order of spiritual progression. There he will show that the Law of Moses was a guide to lead man to the perfect law of liberty—the law of Christ. In the present text, Paul was showing that the Galatians were practicing the opposite. By trying to turn back to Judaism, they were declaring that the starting point was Christianity, which then led to Judaism in order to complete their spiritual journey. Paul declares their thinking in this manner to be

foolish.

Their spiritual beginning was rooted in the Gospel wherein they gained spirituality, not in the fleshly works of the law. If they went to the Law of Moses, they would be going backward not forward. Spiritual maturity was not found in the Law — it was to be found in Christ.

The word “**spirit**” in this verse is interesting. Most authors believe this word should be capitalized to signify the third member of the GODHEAD. This line of thinking seems to be based on the word “**Spirit**” in verse two, which does refer to the Holy Spirit. It is this writer’s view that the word “**spirit**” in this passage is in direct contrast to the term “**the flesh,**” which signifies the Law of Moses and the outward actions contained in the law (particularly circumcision in this book). If this writer is correct, the contrast is between the Law of Moses (“the flesh”) and the Law of Christ, which is the Gospel (“spirit”). It was not intelligent to turn from the Gospel to the Law of Moses, because Moses’ law could not bring them to completion. They began the journey to Heaven in the Gospel, and to finish that journey they had to remain in the Gospel (in Christ).

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

Gal. 3:4 “Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.”

“Did ye suffer so many things in vain? if it be indeed in vain.” (ASV)

SUFFERED — πάσχω — “*To be affected or have been affected, to feel, have a sensible experience, to undergo...in a bad sense, of misfortunes, to suffer, to undergo evils, to be afflicted...in a good sense, of pleasant*

experiences” (Thayer, p. 494); *“To suffer, to be affected by something from without, to be acted upon, to undergo an experience...Used of good, meaning to experience, to have happen to oneself, to receive...Used of evil, meaning to suffer, be subjected to evil”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Experience, be treated of everything that befalls a person, whether good or ill”* (Bauer, p. 633); *“‘To suffer,’ referring to enduring both physical and emotional trauma”* (Renn, p. 944).

VAIN — εἰς- — *“Inconsiderately, without purpose, without just cause”* (Thayer, p. 174); *“Without purpose, inconsiderately, groundlessly, without cause”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Without cause...in vain, to no avail...to no purpose...without due consideration, in a haphazard manner”* (Bauer, p. 221); *“‘without reason,’ or ‘for nothing’”* (Renn, p. 1008).

The suffering in this passage no doubt refers to the evil things which had been done to them because they were Christians, whether it were from family members, the community in which they lived, or the Jews.

“Ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of GOD which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not GOD, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost” (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16).

Their suffering for the cause of Christ is described here as **“so many.”** This indicates that a great number of things had been done to cause them agony of heart and body.

Paul asks if they had suffered all of these

things in vain. Were these sufferings without purpose, without reason? It would be if they turned to Judaism and away from Christianity. The suffering of which Paul speaks in this text is the result of Jewish brethren who were moving back to the Law of Moses. If they did not want to suffer, they should simply have turned to Judaism in the first place. Paul suffered often from the Jews, simply because he abandoned the Law of Moses for the law which Christ gave. He will speak of that later in 5:11. The teachings of the cross have always been offensive to the adherents of false religion. If one lives for Christ, he must expect to suffer for that cause.

“All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12).

Paul had not given in to the ills he had suffered for Christ, and neither should anyone else!

“The pioneers of the restoration movement of the nineteenth century staked their lives on a ‘thus saith the Lord in faith and practice.’ For this glorious principle they suffered bitter persecution and ostracism; and now that the victory is won, there are those among their children who scout the very idea of such a struggle and even ostracize those who ‘contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints’ (Jude 3)” (Lipscomb, p. 220).

The above words were written over seventy years ago. Imagine what Lipscomb would have written regarding the apostasy seen among men like Shelly, Harris, Lucado, Walling and many others.

“If it be yet in vain.” The idea behind this phrase seems to be the hope and desire of Paul that they had not suffered in vain, which would be the case if they turned to Judaism.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,

forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you” (Matthew 5:10-12).

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1).

Gal. 3:5 “He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth He it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”

“He therefore that supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth He it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” (ASV)

MINISTERETH — ἰπιχορηγεω — *“To supply, furnish, present”* (Thayer, p. 246); *“To furnish upon, i.e., besides, in addition, to supply further, to add more unto. With the acc., to supply, furnish, or furnish abundantly”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Furnish or provide (at one’s own expense)...give, grant”* (Bauer, p. 305); *“The verb choregeo comes from choros (chorus, choir) and hegeomai (lead). So the word originally meant ‘lead a chorus;’ then, ‘supply a chorus;’ that is, defray the expense of providing a chorus at a public feast. In later Greek it means simply, ‘furnish, supply.’ But it also carries the added idea of supplying lavishly or abundantly”* (Earle, p. 275).

“Did the Spirit come to the Galatians

with miracle working power as a result of obedience to the law of Moses, or because you heard and believed the Gospel of Christ? Since the New Testament shows plainly that the miracle-working power of the Spirit was given by the laying on of the apostles’ hands (Acts 8:14-24; 19:1-7), to those who believed and obeyed the Gospel of Christ (Acts 2:26-39; 5:32), God had plainly manifested His presence among the Galatians through the hearing of faith in the gospel of Christ, not by the works of the law” (Crouch, p. 30).

The meaning of this verse is not disputed, though explanations of it may vary slightly. There is, however, an area of dispute with regard to who the “He” is at the beginning of this verse. There are only two possibilities: (1) Paul or (2) GOD. This writer agrees with those who believe that GOD is the one under consideration here.

“It is either (1) Paul, or (2) God, and most likely the latter. Paul may have been the agent through whom those things were given, but it is God Who supplies. Either view, however, does not alter the meaning of the text” (Wacaster, p. 76).

The Galatians could take the question Paul asked and easily deduce the truth. It does not appear that they had ever been a part of the Law of Moses, i.e., obedient to that law. It was only after they had been obedient to the Gospel that the Holy Spirit had been given to them. Who had taught them these truths? Paul or these Judaizers? To whom should they listen to now regarding whether the rites of the Old Law should be followed in Christianity?

Gal. 3:6 “Even as Abraham believed GOD, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

“Even as Abraham believed GOD, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness.” (ASV)

ACCOUNTED — λογίζομαι — “To reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over; hence to take into account, to make account of; metaph. to pass to one’s account, to impute” (Thayer, p. 379); “To reckon, impute, number...the verb *logízomai* means to put together with one’s mind, to count, to occupy oneself with reckonings or calculations...To count something to somebody means to reckon something to a person, to put to his account, either in his favor or for what he must be answerable”(Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Reckon, calculate”(Bauer, p. 475); “Reckon, take into account”(Earle, p. 276).

“He believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness”
(Genesis 15:6).

“What saith the scripture? Abraham believed GOD, and it was counted unto him for righteousness”
(Romans 4:3).

The idea revolves around a book of accounting where records are kept regarding one’s transactions.

“I saw the dead, small and great, stand before GOD; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works”
(Revelation 20:12).

In GOD’s record, the faith which Abraham exercised was recorded by GOD as righteousness (righteous behavior). What kind of faith did Abraham have? It was the kind of faith that, when GOD spoke, in Abraham’s mind, whatever He promised was as good as done. It was the kind of faith that, when GOD told him to do something, he did it because he knew GOD only demanded of him what was right. When the record is examined closely, it becomes evident that GOD declared Abraham to be righteous when he heard and

then obeyed GOD’s will (Heb. 11:8-19). The “faith only” crowd gains no comfort from this passage except when they take it out of context from the rest of what the Bible says about Abraham (or anyone else).

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar”
(James 2:21)?

Again, when was he justified? When GOD tested his faith and he obeyed GOD’s instructions (Genesis 22:1, 12). Hebrews chapter eleven is a great commentary on the kind of faith that saves, for in case after case it is shown that the faith which saves is a faith which obeys GOD.

Paul will show that Abraham was accounted righteous by his faith before The Law was given. Therefore, they would be accounted righteous in the same way without the deeds of the law. If obedience to the law was necessary for justification as the Judaizers were affirming, then Abraham could not have been justified.

Regarding faith (belief), Brewer makes these comments which should be carefully considered by all who desire to go to Heaven.

“Notice that Paul does not say ‘Abraham believed in God,’ but that, ‘Abraham believed God.’ When Moses disobeyed God’s instruction to speak to the rock at Kadesh and struck it twice with his rod, God told him he could not enter Canaan, ‘Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel...’ (Num. 20:12). Moses believed in God, but did not believe God. One may profess his belief in God, but if one does not obey God, he is an unbeliever” (Brewer, p. 36).

“Faith is doing what God says because God says to do it” (Gary Colley as quoted by Brewer, p. 36).

Gal. 3:7 “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.”

“Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are sons of Abraham.” (ASV)

To the Jew, circumcision was the mark of belonging to the family of Abraham, being one of his descendants. Paul showed that it did not matter whether one was a physical child of Abraham; what mattered was whether he was a spiritual child of Abraham.

“He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of GOD” (Romans 2:28-29).

All who have the same kind of attitude and obedient faith which Abraham had are his true children. The allegory which Paul will present later in this book will emphasize the difference between children even of the same parent — one the child of promise and the other not. Physical birth means nothing as to whether one is a child of GOD (represented by Abraham) or is not His child. The spiritual birthright is what is important.

“According to the Judaizers, a man became an heir of Abraham through accepting circumcision and obedience to the Law of Moses” (Willis, p. 123).

Abraham never lived under nor was he ever subject to the Law of Moses.

“They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill Me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of GOD: this did not Abraham” (John 8:39-40).

Gal. 3:8 “And the Scripture, foreseeing that GOD would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.”

“And the Scripture, foreseeing that GOD would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed.” (ASV)

FORESEEING — προεἶδον — *“To foresee”* (Thayer, p. 538); *“To see ahead of oneself, see afar off”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

Here is a passage showing the predictive nature of the Old Testament. Providing a means of salvation for the Gentiles was not a new provision; it was something GOD said would happen long before this time. The text takes one back to the time of Abraham.

“I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).

This promise that all nations would be blessed with justification was made to Abraham long before the Law of Moses was ever put into effect. But this promise also goes back further than Abraham to Genesis 3:15. The promise of One Who would defeat Satan was a promise of giving victory to all of mankind through that One which was to come.

The word **“preached”** signifies that something was proclaimed. This does not carry the same idea of “formal” preaching which is done today. It simply refers to the fact that something was proclaimed. What was the something proclaimed? It was the good news (Gospel) that all nations would have an opportunity to be justified through the Messiah. Notice that the groundwork is laid for all nations’ being justified, not by the Law of Moses, but by the same kind of obedient faith exercised by Abraham. The Gentiles could never be the sons of Abraham by fleshly descent, but rather spiritually, through obedient faith.

Gal. 3:9 “So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

“So then they that are of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham.” (ASV)

A passage which should be noted here is James 2:21-23, which shows the kind of faith which caused Abraham to be justified in the sight of GOD and reveals at the same time the kind of faith which justifies one in the Christian age.

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed GOD, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of GOD.”

Again, physical lineage has nothing to do with one’s being saved (blessed) as was Abraham. Faithful obedience is the key to GOD’s blessing in any of the three eras the Scriptures speak about. One does not have to be a Jew or follow Jewish practices to be justified, since Christ died on the cross.

“Abraham was not justified by circumcision or by perfect obedience to the Law of Moses; therefore, those seeking to be justified in that manner could not be justified with Abraham” (Willis, p. 126).

Gal. 3:10 “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them.” (ASV)

“Cursed be he that confirmeth not

all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen” (Deuteronomy 27:26).

“Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10).

There is no distinction in any of these passages between the moral law or ceremonial law given by Moses. They are one and the same. It should be remembered that, under that law, anyone who did not keep the law perfectly, in every respect, stood condemned. Therefore, anyone today (Christian Age) who tries to go back to that law for justification stands condemned, because no one except Christ could keep the law perfectly.

“It (“curse” - RK) is here used evidently in the sense of devoting to punishment or destruction, and the idea is, that all who attempt to secure salvation by the works of the law, must be exposed to its penalty. It denounces a curse on all who do not yield entire obedience; and no partial compliance with its demands can save from the penalty” (Barnes, p. 332).

Why would anyone desire to go back to any part of the law of Moses for justification? Under that law, the blood of bulls and goats was offered for their sins, and yet that blood could not take away any of their sins.

“In those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Hebrews 10:3-4).

Why would anyone want to return to a law which could not justify them, when a better law has been established which can justify him?

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the

flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, GOD sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:1-4).

What these Judaizers were attempting to do was **“to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear”** (Acts 15:10).

“If one accepts the position that a man must obey the Law in order to stand justified in God’s sight, he must obey all of the Law; he must perfectly obey or else he stands under the curse of the Law” (Willis, p. 128).

Since no one could perfectly keep the law, that law brought a curse (punishment) upon man which he could not avoid.

Gal. 3:11 “But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of GOD, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.”

“Now that no man is justified by the law before GOD, is evident: for, The righteous shall live by faith;” (ASV)

EVIDENT — δ-λος — *“Clear, evident, manifest”* (Thayer, p. 131); *“Plain, evident, manifest”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Clear, plain, evident”* (Bauer, p. 178).

“Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith” (Hab. 2:4). This verse is also quoted at Hebrews 10:38 and Romans 1:17. In considering the passage in Habakkuk and its application in the New Testament, it is evident that GOD has never accepted any action which has not been based upon faith. Mindless adherence to the Law of Moses was

never pleasing to GOD.

Paul pointed to something which he said was clear and easily understood. Since no one could perfectly keep the law, then no one has justification by that law. Justification can only come through a faith which attempts to the best of one’s ability to keep the law (of Christ).

Gal. 3:12 “And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.”

“and the law is not of faith; but, He that doeth them shall live in them.” (ASV)

Stancliff makes the following observation concerning this verse. *“Faith rests upon trust. Law rests upon regulations. If we are to live through the keeping of law, that law must never be broken. If we live by faith, the weaknesses and frailties we fall into may be forgiven when we repent and change our course of action”* (Stancliff, p. 42).

Notice also the thoughts of Wacaster on this verse: *“If one is to live by law, it simply requires unwavering obedience to its precepts. One does not have to have faith to comply to law; he has but to be in submission. Paul’s argument seems to be this. ‘God has always decreed that the righteous shall live by faith. But one can keep the law, and strive to live by its precepts, while being totally void of any faith in God’”* (Wacaster, p. 81).

One of the things to avoid here is the notion that there was no faith on the part of GOD’s people in the Old Testament. Hebrews chapter eleven clearly shows a number of “heroes of faith.” They obeyed GOD because they believed Him. Their kind of faith was not what was being talked about here. Paul speaks of those who tried to find justification through adherence to a legal system, which can never bring anyone justification. As pointed out above, such an attempt can only bring condemnation at the first violation of that legal system. Under the system of faith as given by the Lord, one never tries to rely upon

perfect obedience for justification but rather upon the mercy and grace of GOD through his faith and obedience.

Gal. 3:13 “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:”

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:” (ASV)

TREE — ξύλον — *“Wood...that which is made of wood, as a beam from which one is suspended, a gibbet, a cross”* (Thayer, p. 432); *“Wood, generally for fuel, timber. Anything made of wood: a staff, club; stocks or wooden blocks with holes in which the feet and sometimes the hands and neck of prisoners were confined; a stake, cross”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Wood...of objects made of wood”* (Bauer, p. 549).

“His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of GOD;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee for an inheritance” (Deuteronomy 21:23).

The word **“redeemed”** speaks of a price that is paid for something. It carries the idea of something being freed through the price which was paid for it. Christ paid a price for man so that man would not suffer the punishment due to him for his sins. What price did Jesus pay for man’s sins? His own blood, for blood is required for forgiveness. Yet the blood of animals was not good enough, nor was the polluted blood of any man, because of his sins, sufficient to take away sins. However, the blood of a perfect man, i.e., one without sin, would pay the price for forgiveness.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your

vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:18-19).

“The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28).

“Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify GOD in your body, and in your spirit, which are GOD's” (1 Corinthians 6:20).

“They sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to GOD by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation” (Revelation 5:9).

What was **“the curse of the law”**? Violation of GOD’s law under the old covenant often brought physical death. Death is a separation, so death will separate one from this present world and all relationships entered into in this life. But the Bible also speaks of separation from GOD because of one’s sins. The curse of the law was death. This curse was visible through the act of hanging the condemned one on wood (see definitions above). This was accomplished in ancient times in a number of ways: on stakes, crosses, hanging, and other means. Generally, the Jews hung one after he had already been put to death and not as a means of putting that one to death. In the case of the Lord, they requested that the Romans put Him to death by crucifixion. For anyone to hang on wood was a symbol of extreme disdain (contempt) to the Jews.

The Spirit reveals that Christ was **“made a curse for us.”** At this point one should remember the prophecy of Isaiah regarding

the suffering Savior.

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6).

The penalty for sin had to be paid, but who would voluntarily pay that penalty? Who would take the punishment for the guilty, when the one to die had not been guilty of the crime for which punishment was due?

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But GOD commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:6-8).

Though He never committed any sin (Hebrews 4:15), Christ voluntarily paid the penalty which man so richly deserved. In His death, He was treated as if He were the vilest of sinners.

This does not indicate that Christ became a sinner in any way, for He did not. He simply paid the price to save fallen man from the destruction he was due. He paid the price so that fallen man could be brought back to His father, brought back home (so to speak) from his exile in the land of sin.

“The Law left man in bondage to sin; he was under the curse of the Law because of his failure to obey perfectly that Law. Hence, he was doomed to the punishment which the Lord meted out to the transgressor. Since the Law left man under the curse of sin, Christ came to redeem us from that curse” (Willis, p. 130).

Calvinists teach that man’s sins were transferred to Jesus. If that were true, then that made Jesus a sinner, vile before GOD. The Bible nowhere teaches such a damnable doctrine but rather emphatically states that, though He was tempted in every way that any other man is tempted, yet He remained sinless

(Heb. 4:15). If one volunteers to pay the penalty for another’s crime, he is not guilty of the crime itself.

One of the things to be considered about the quotation of Deuteronomy 21:23 is that the law they lived under had been given by GOD. Therefore when one disobeyed that law in such a way as to occasion the death penalty, it was a sign of GOD’s disapproval to the nation. What the enemies of Jesus would incorrectly deduce from Jesus’ death upon the cross was that GOD disapproved of Jesus because of the death He died. This may be the very reason why the Jews demanded that Pilate crucify Jesus, thus believing that no one would follow a man who had been crucified and thus found himself under the curse of GOD. Little did they understand the joy that GOD would express in the sacrifice Christ made for man’s sins.

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of GOD” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Another passage often cited by Calvinists to teach the false doctrine of man’s sins being transferred to Christ is Second Corinthians 5:21.

“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of GOD in Him.”

Notice the comments of Woods on this passage:

“There are two possible and plausible views, either of which may be the significance of this passage, both of

them being true from other considerations. (1) Often, in the sacred writings, the word 'sin' is used of the sin-offering. An instance of such is to be seen in Hosea 4:8, where it is said, 'They eat up the sin of my people,' that is, they consume the sin-offerings, the sacrifices - meat-offerings - which were slain for the sins of the people. In this view of the matter, our Lord became our sin-offering; he, the innocent, was the antitype of the offerings of the ancient order, and thus atoned for our sins. Being our sacrifice, he thus became our sin-offering. (Considering this view, which this writer believes is the correct understanding of this passage, is it not interesting that the Holy Spirit stated "Who knew no sin" immediately after saying "made Him to be sin for us"? This was the Spirit's way of showing that Christ was not sin but rather the offering for sin. Such a view coincides with all other Scripture, R.K.) (2) Or what is equally plausible and shown herein before to be true from other premises, the Father, in allowing his beloved Son to go to the cross, permitted him to suffer as if he were guilty. But, he was not guilty; the Father did not charge him with guilt; such charges as were leveled against him by his enemies were false; he was never, in any sense, a sinner; and so to charge him is gross blasphemy" (Woods, p. 340).

It might be added, that anyone today who accuses Jesus of being sinful is guilty of the great sin of blasphemy. The next verse will declare two reasons why Christ became a curse for man.

Gal. 3:14 "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

"that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." (ASV).

What resulted from Christ's offering Himself on the cross? (1) Justification of the Gentiles through faith and (2) the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Now both Jew and Gentile would partake equally of the blessings of Christ, because the Old Law had been taken away and a New Law established which combined Jew and Gentile into one family.

"He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that He might reconcile both unto GOD in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2:14-18).

The word "**faith**" in this verse should be carefully noted. In both the ASV and NKJV the text reads "the faith," which speaks of the system of faith delivered by GOD to mankind, i.e., the New Testament delivered once and for all time to man (Jude 3).

"Through the faith' is what the Greek text says, although not translated that way in the ASV, the Greek being dia tes pisteos. Since the definite article is present this shows that Paul had reference to the 'faith system' of the New Testament" (Music, p. 111). (This author's copy of the ASV has the definite article in it, but the KJV does not.)

It should also be emphasized where the blessings in this verse are to be found. Jew and Gentile are blessed **IN CHRIST** and nowhere else — not under the Law of Moses. The Gentile would receive blessing through Abraham **in Christ**. The Holy Spirit would be received **in Christ**.

By looking at verse two, one learns that the Spirit was received by the hearing of faith. The present text shows that the promise of the Spirit was received by faith. This writer believes that these two things are connected in such a way as to show that the gift of the Spirit (Acts 2:38) is none other than the salvation found in Christ through obedience to His Word. The promise to the Gentiles was justification through the same kind of faith exhibited by Abraham, in the seed of Abraham (Christ). What was it Peter preached on Pentecost — salvation by obedience to Christ.

Gal. 3:15 “Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.”

“Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it hath been confirmed, no one maketh it void, or addeth thereto.” (ASV)

COVENANT — διαθήκη — *“A disposition, arrangement, of any sort, which one wishes to be valid, Gal. 3:15, where under the name of a man's disposition is meant specifically a testament, so far forth as it is a specimen and example of that disposition; esp. the last disposal which one makes of his earthly possessions after his death, a testament or will”* (Thayer, p. 136); *“Testament, covenant. In Class. Gr. it always meant the disposition which a person makes of his property in prospect of death, i.e., his testament, and used either in the sing. or pl...A covenant, but not in the sense that God came to an agreement or compromise with fallen man as if signing a contract. Rather, it involves the declaration of God's unconditional promise to*

make Abraham and his seed the recipients of certain blessings” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Last will and testament (so exclusively in Hellenistic times)”* (Bauer, p. 183).

Paul used an illustration from the common affairs of men to emphasize his point and appeal to the Galatians to accept the truths he was teaching. The example was a will (covenant). Among human beings, when a will was confirmed, no one had a right to add anything to it or to annul any of its requirements or promises. These Jews would not dare try to tamper with a human will, but when it came to GOD's will, they believed they could modify it. Such an attempt to modify a will is illegal and subjects one to criminal prosecution. Since that is true of a human will, is not GOD's will far superior to that of any man? How dare any man then attempt to change the will of GOD in any way.

Now consider the will about which Paul was speaking. GOD had made a promise to Abraham (Genesis 22:18).

“When GOD made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein GOD, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for GOD to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us” (Hebrews 6:13-18).

What was the promise made to Abraham in this will? All the nations of the earth would be

blessed with salvation. This was a promise of a Messiah who brought the atonement through His sacrifice on the cross. It was the promise of a Savior who would put forth a will which demanded obedient faith, not to the Law of Moses, but to a new law. As Paul earlier pointed out, the Law of Moses could not offer justification to anyone, for under it all deserved the penalty of the law because they had not kept it.

The promise to Abraham was given long before the Law of Moses was given and was not fulfilled in that law. The Law of Moses was given as one which led people (schoolmaster) to the law of Christ. The Law of Moses never replaced the promise given to Abraham, nor did it amend that promise in any way. Man may attempt to change GOD's law, but woe to that one who attempts such.

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not GOD. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him GOD speed: For he that biddeth him GOD speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (1 John 9-11).

“I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, GOD shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, GOD shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Revelation 22:18-19).

Gal. 3:16 **“Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, And**

to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.”

“Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his Seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.” (ASV)

“To Abraham and his Seed were the promises made.” The singular is used by the Spirit here to indicate a focus on the One Who would ultimately come. A great deal of emphasis is placed by some on the fact that the word **“seed”** is not necessarily singular in number. Some of those who do so are pre-millennial in their philosophy and do so no doubt to promote their doctrines that, in the end, all Jews will be saved, the thousand year reign will begin and a physical, earthly kingdom will be established. Paul quickly dispelled this view as a possibility by specifying that he was talking about a singular seed and that that Seed was Christ Himself.

The singular nature of the promise points out the exclusive nature of this promise. It was not made, in its entirety, to every Jew. There were aspects of the promise which were three-fold in nature which would apply to all Jews (land promise), but only because they were connected to the one through whom the promise was made. The lineage was specific to one person at a time. The promise made to Abraham was renewed from generation to generation. The covenant was made with Isaac and not Ishmael; it was made with Jacob and not Esau, and so on down through the ages until it was ultimately fulfilled in Christ. It was in Christ that all nations were then able to participate in the blessings (spiritual) afforded by this promised Seed. That was GOD's intent in a Messiah all along, not a physical nation ruled over by the physical descendants of Abraham.

Another interesting point to notice is that the text clearly indicates that the promise was not made simply to Abraham, but also to his **“Seed”** which the passage specifically says was Christ.

Gal. 3:17 “And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of GOD in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.”

“Now this I say: A covenant confirmed beforehand by GOD, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect.” (ASV)

Regarding the confirmation of the covenant to Abraham, one should notice Psalm 105:8-10.

“He hath remembered His covenant for ever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant He made with Abraham, and His oath unto Isaac; And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant.”

This would indicate that the four hundred and thirty years mentioned in this passage began with Jacob and, of course, would have ended when the law was given on Mount Sinai.

Some have had a problem with the number here and the number mentioned by Stephen as being only four hundred years (Acts 7:6). Coffman states that *“Paul used the figure also found in the LXX, and Stephen used a round number”* (Coffman, p. 60). *“It is generally conceded by reputable scholars that Stephen rounded off the figure from 430 to 400”* (Wacaster, p. 40).

“The 400-year prophetic reference in Genesis 15:13 and in Stephen’s speech in Acts 7:6 was given as a round number, whereas the historical statement in Exodus 12:40 was 430 years.

The 430 years can be calculated thus: 1. Abraham was 75 years of age when he was called (Gen. 12:1-2); 2. Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 (25 years later - Gen. 21:5); 3. Jacob was born when Isaac was 60

years old (60 years later - Gen. 25:26); 4. Jacob was 130 when he went into Egypt (130 years later - Gen. 47:9); 5. This is a total of 215 years from the promise first given to Abraham. 6. Add to this figure the 215 years which the Septuagint (Ex. 12:40) gives for the Israelites’ sojourn in Egypt, and the total comes to 430 years, by which the number is completed” (Cates, p. 120).

Wacaster shows in his commentary that the figure of 215 years of sojourn in Egypt is also confirmed by the age of Levi (p. 91). It is also urged that one should look at the alternative arguments for this number as given by Winton in his commentary (p. 48).

The point of this verse is that, if salvation came through the Law of Moses, then the promise to the Gentiles had been voided. If the promise of Christ’s coming was through the Law of Moses, then the Gentile still had no promise in the time of Paul. The Gentiles’ justification came through the promise made to Abraham, and nothing found in the law would give them justification. As someone once said, the law came too late. Concerning this point, the promise given to Abraham is still in effect. Those today who want to find salvation through the Law of Moses (whether partially or totally) are in the same position that these Judaizers (and the Galatians who followed them) were in — **“whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace”** (Galatians 5:4). To be **“fallen from grace”** is to be lost.

Gal. 3:18 “For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but GOD gave it to Abraham by promise.”

“For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no more of promise: but GOD hath granted it to Abraham by promise.” (ASV)

“Paul was trying to get the brethren to see that the Law was not the source of the gospel; that the Law has no

connection with salvation; and that it could not make them heirs of the promise” (Littrell, p. 357).

The inheritance either came from the promise or it came from the Law, but it could not have come from both. Since the Law (perfect obedience to that Law) could not give justification or salvation, it had to have served some other purpose. There had never been two laws which led to the same goal. What then was the purpose of the Law of Moses? Paul would show the purpose of the Law beginning with verse nineteen.

The inheritance promised to Abraham, through whom all nations would be blessed, was salvation in Christ. Such an inheritance is a gift which cannot be earned by keeping a law perfectly, since law cannot be kept perfectly. The gift was promised through Abraham, therefore it cannot be by The Law, but through grace and mercy, as it was with faithful Abraham. Again, that being the case, what was the purpose of The Law?

Gal. 3:19 “Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.”

“What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; and it was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator.” (ASV)

ADDED — προστίθημι — *“To put to. To add, i.e., join to, gather with” (Thayer, p. 549); “To set, add, put, lay unto or with something” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Add, put to” (Bauer, p. 718); “To put to; to add, or to place beside” (Wacaster, p. 92).*

If, as pointed out in the above passages, the Law did not bring justification (salvation), why was the law given? What was its purpose? These are the questions Paul will now answer. (In his writings, Paul often seems to anticipate the questions which he

will be asked and answers them before they can be spoken.)

The law was added to (laid alongside of the promise that had been given directly by GOD to Abraham. Before man could accept a Savior, he had to recognize what sin is, that he is sinful, how sinful he actually is, and how terrible any act of sin is. The law was given to point out what sin was.

“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? GOD forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet” (Romans 7:7).

Milligan points out a few other purposes of the law with which this passage does not deal but which one should recognize.

- “1. The law was to be used by Israel for direction of their civil government.*
- 2. The law was to preserve both the knowledge and practice of true religion, till Christ should come.*
- 3. The law gave the world a suitable religious nomenclature, and ‘a sort of pictorial outline of the Scheme of Redemption, by means of certain types and symbols, rites and ceremonies addressed to their senses” (Milligan, p. 83).*

How long was the law given by GOD through Moses to last? **“Till (until) the seed should come to Whom the promise was made.”** This shows the temporary nature of the Law. It was never designed to last until the end of time, but only until the promised seed came (Christ). The prophets who lived under the Old Law understood the temporary nature of the law under which they lived, as evidenced by Jeremiah (31:31-34) and Isaiah (2:2-4).

This law was **“ordained by angels,”** i.e., it was commanded by/through messengers. Notice the word **“angels”** is plural, which would eliminate Moses as the angel. Though

the account of the giving of the law in Exodus does not clearly indicate the role of heavenly beings (angels), the book of Hebrews does.

“For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward” (Hebrews 2:2).

This passage, in its context, is clearly speaking of the Law of Moses.

But what about Moses? Was he not involved in the giving/receiving of the law? Yes, he was the mediator through whom the law was given. Just here the term **“mediator”** should be defined.

“One who intervenes between two, either in order to make or restore peace and friendship, or to form a compact, or for ratifying a covenant; a medium of communication, arbitrator” (Thayer, p. 401).

In this passage, a major difference is shown between the promise given to Abraham (which spoke of the Christ and would include the law He gave) and the law given to Moses. The promise given to Abraham was given directly to him by GOD, and when it was fulfilled, the new law was given directly to man by GOD Himself. In comparison, the law given to Moses was indirectly given to him. When a ruler has an important announcement to make, he generally gives it himself, whereas lesser matters are handled through his representatives. This is not said to belittle the Law of Moses, but to recognize that the Law of Moses was added to the promise on a temporary basis, for the reasons given above, until the time of the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham.

Gal. 3:20 “Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but GOD is one.”

“Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one.” (ASV)

“A mediator implies the existence of more than one party, of two parties at

least, for him to mediate between; of two parties not at one, but standing on such terms towards each other as make his intervention necessary” (Huxtable, p. 138).

When one considers a mediator and the work he does on a human level, he understands that he presents ideas back and forth between two parties for compromise and eventual acceptance by them. But when one looks at the laws GOD has given to mankind, it is totally one-sided. GOD puts forth His wishes which, if accepted by man, leads man to a covenant relationship with GOD. But man has the choice of accepting those conditions or rejecting what GOD has set forth. Acceptance leads to salvation, whereas rejection leads to destruction.

Considering the above words, there really has never been an acceptable understanding of this verse. Huxtable said there were hundreds of different thoughts on its meaning (p. 138), and McGarvey said there were over three hundred different understandings of its meaning (p. 268). Nevertheless, this writer will put forth with great hesitation the following idea. It would seem that a comparison is being made between Moses and Christ as mediators. When Moses mediated, it was between two parties: GOD and Israel (himself being a man). When Christ mediated, He served in that capacity as GOD and man. In the Christian dispensation, the only mediator is GOD Himself — there is no party between GOD and man, as existed under the Mosaic law.

“Paul here was speaking of Moses as the mediator of the law to all Israel, the idea being either to reconcile or to bear some message from the one to the other. On the other hand, GOD made no use of a mediator in giving the promise, for he is not only the author but also the one who fulfills it. This is to show the clear superiority of the promise over the law” (Rhodes, p.

125).

“Moses stood between Israel and GOD at Sinai, but the promise to Abraham was a single transaction from God to the Patriarch. The implication is that the promise is superior to the law in that it needed no mediator” (Brewer, p. 43).

“In making and fulfilling his promises, God did not use any human mediator. Christ, who is equal with God, served as God’s agent (although this verse says nothing directly about Christ). God and Christ, acting in harmony with each other and with the Holy Spirit, delivered the gospel without the assistance of a human intermediary” (Winton, p. 53).

Gal. 3:21 “Is the law then against the promises of GOD? GOD forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.”

“Is the law then against the promises of GOD? GOD forbid: for if there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been of the law.” (ASV)

“Is the law then against the promises of GOD?” Everything that Paul said before this concerning the law and the promises might lead some to ask if the two ideas were in conflict with one another. Paul’s answer was, “Absolutely not!!!”

“If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” Notice the use of the term **“a law,”** when the term had formerly been **“the law.”** The term **“the law”** referred to the Law of Moses. In using the term **“a law,”** Paul is saying any law, i.e., if there had been any law which could give life. No, life could not come from the adherence to any law, because no one had ever kept any

law with perfection (except of course the Lord). If a man could have kept a law, any law, to perfection, then he would have been declared righteous. The law served a great purpose to point out what sin was and thus show man that he violated law. It taught man how to evaluate his life and learn obedience. But obedience to the law did not bring him righteousness, because he never completely obeyed it.

“Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10).

“As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them” (Galatians 3:10).

The law showed man that he could not live a righteous life through obedience to any law. But the promise given to Abraham showed him a way to obtain righteousness through Another. The promise showed man a coming Savior with a plan of salvation which would come through man’s faith coupled with obedience and forgiveness given by the Savior. These were not two competing systems of salvation. The law was added until GOD’s system of salvation was completed in Christ as promised to Abraham.

How can one be righteous in the sight of GOD? There are only two possibilities. (1) Since sin separates one from GOD (Isaiah 59:1-2), he can never sin, or (2) Having sinned, his sins must be forgiven. Since the former is impossible as testified to above, then the later must be the only way man can be declared righteous by a just GOD.

Gal. 3:22 “But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

“But the Scriptures shut up all things under sin,

that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” (ASV)

CONCLUDED — συγκλείω — *“To shut up together, enclose...to shut up on all sides, shut up completely”* (Thayer, p. 593); *“To shut up, enclose. To shut up or enclose together...Figuratively to include together, to deliver over in the same manner”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Close up together, hem in, enclose...fig. Confine, imprison”* (Bauer, p. 774).

The word **“all”** is important to consider in this passage, because it does not deal with “all Jews” — it deals with all of humanity. Paul has already proven that no man can be justified by law, because no man has ever lived in perfect obedience to any law under which he has been governed. Law points out the impossibility of one’s being justified by simple law-keeping. The Law left all confined as prisoners to sin (see definition of **“concluded”** above.)

If man desires to be called righteous by GOD, he has to obtain that righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ — not law. *“The ‘faith of Jesus Christ’ is the revealed gospel system of salvation. Keep in mind that in this chapter the apostle was drawing a contrast between the law and the gospel, or justification by or through a system of law vs. justification by or through the gospel”* (Wacaster, p. 98).

One should remember that it is not merely faith which will save one, but as the Gospel clearly points out, it is the same kind of faith which Christ had and which caused Him to be obedient to His Father.

“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him” (Hebrews 5:8-9).

“As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead

also” (James 2:26).

“Those who believe in Jesus, trust in Jesus and obey His commands will be saved from their sins” (Sheerer, p. 803).

Gal. 3:23 “But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.”

“But before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.” (ASV)

KEPT — φρουρέω — *“To guard, protect by a military guard, either in order to prevent hostile invasion, or to keep the inhabitants of a besieged city from flight...metaph. under the control of the Mosaic law, that we might not escape from its power”* (Thayer, p. 658); *“A sentinel, guard. In the NT and generally followed by the acc., to watch, guard, keep”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Guard...hold in custody, confine”* (Bauer, p. 867)

SHUT UP — See **“concluded”** definition in verse twenty-two — same word.

REVEALED — • ποκαλύπτω — *“To uncover, lay open what has been veiled or covered up; to disclose, make bare...metaph. to make known, make manifest, disclose, what was before unknown”* (Thayer, p. 62); *“Literally, to remove a veil or covering exposing to open view what was before hidden. To make manifest or reveal a thing previously secret or unknown”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Reveal, disclose, bring to light, pass. be revealed”* (Bauer, p. 92); *“Uncovering, or laying open what has previously been hidden”* (Earle, p. 820).

In looking at the contrasts offered in this book, the word **“faith”** in this verse refers to the Gospel, the system which GOD has given for man’s salvation. The apostle has been hammering the idea that the Law of Moses could not save, the same as the message of

the book of Hebrews. What can save man from his sins? There is only one answer to that question.

“I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of GOD unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16).

It is the Gospel of Christ which, when believed by man, has the power to give one salvation. It should be pointed out that this Gospel demands that what one believes must be applied in obedient faith in order to have salvation.

“By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for His name” (Romans 1:5).

If an apostle must be obedient and taught that all people must be obedient to the faith, then that includes every person, no matter when he lived after the cross. Paul clearly shows that the “faith only” doctrines of men are nothing but false hopes which lead to destruction.

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting GOD, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To GOD only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever” (Romans 16:25-27).

The idea of “**kept under the law**” is the idea of being imprisoned or restrained. How were people restrained under the Law of Moses? It set strict boundaries for actions which, when violated, meant death. The Law acted as a restraint which reminded man of what sin and its consequences were, while at the same time causing him to recognize the

need of a Savior and keep his mind focused on GOD. When Christ came, those who had been confined under the Law of Moses were set free through their faith in the Gospel.

Gal. 3:24 “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

“So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” (ASV)

SCHOOLMASTER — παιδαγωγός — “A tutor, i.e., a guide and guardian of boys. Among the Greeks and Romans the name was applied to trustworthy slaves who were charged with the duty of supervising the life and morals of boys belonging to the better class. The boys were not allowed to so much as step out of the house without them before arriving at the age of manhood” (Thayer, p. 472); “A leader...Originally referred to the slave who conducted the boys from home to the school” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Attendant (slave), custodian, guide, lit. ‘boy-leader,’ the man, usu. a slave, whose duty it was to conduct the boy or youth to and from school and to superintend his conduct gener.; he was not a ‘teacher’” (Bauer, p. 603); “Etymologically, the *paidagogos* is one who shows the way to a child, thus one who teaches a child how to behave. Until the age of six or seven, the Greek child was cared for almost exclusively by its mother. At that age, it was not allowed to go out alone but was entrusted to a *paidagogos* who went with it on its walks and took it to school, keeping it away from possible accidents or dangers, carrying its bags, watching over its outward bearing and behavior, and seeing that it completed its daily program of lessons, games, and various duties. Usually *paidagogoi* were slaves, foreigners or invalids incapable of performing other work. Brutal and often drunk, they were not sparing with blows, and when the children — in whom they inspired fear — became adolescents, they saw their oversight as a

form of tyranny” (Spicq, Vol. 3, p. 1).

In making the comparison of the law to a tutor (schoolmaster), the apostle was showing how the Law *“guided, disciplined and led the Jews to Jesus Christ the Saviour”* (Crouch, p. 38). One should carefully notice the definitions of the word **“schoolmaster”** given above. In comparing the law to the **“schoolmaster,”** there are several important considerations to be made. The job of the schoolmaster was to care for the child and protect him. The Law of Moses acted as a protector for the Jews, in that it guarded them from the perversions of the world which would destroy their souls. It was the responsibility of the schoolmaster to discipline the child in order to keep him in line. The law acted as a disciplinarian to keep the Jews in line, teaching them how to behave in the presence of their Father. The schoolmaster led the child to the source of instruction, the actual teacher who was to finish his education. The law pointed the Jews to the Christ, Who would bring all things to completion. At the age of maturity, the child was no longer under the schoolmaster but was freed from his constant observation and guidance. When Christ came and gave the Gospel, He gave man freedom from that old law.

“The design of the law, like that of the ‘little boy leader’ was to lead Israel to the Christ, keeping the nation safe from corruption while at the same time impressing upon them the inability of the law to fulfill the Abrahamic promise” (Wacaster, p. 100).

It is only in Christ that one may be justified. What is **“faith”** here? Is it the faith which a believer exercises, or is it the faith which is the Gospel (the system of faith)? In the context, and considering the next verse, it is the system of faith — the Gospel. When one considers all of this information, it is clear that Paul is still guiding his readers to recognize the replacement of one system for another — replacing the Law of Moses with the Gospel of

Christ.

Gal. 3:25 “But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”

“But now faith that is come, we are no longer under a tutor.” (ASV)

This writer likes the way JFB’s commentary of this verse is worded and the beautiful picture comparison it makes. It is offered here for one’s consideration.

“But now that faith (which makes the man full-grown) is come,’ &c. Moses the lawgiver cannot bring us into the heavenly Canaan, though he can bring us to the border. At that point he is superceded by the true Joshua, who leads the spiritual Israel into their inheritance. The law leads us to Christ; there its office ceases” (JFB, p. 385).

Once the Lord was nailed to the cross, the old law passed out of existence, and it has had no authority over anyone since that time.

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross” (Colossians 2:14).

Those who try to find justification under the law find, instead, condemnation.

“Whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:4).

Once the state of maturity is reached (The Gospel of Christ), then the schoolmaster (Law of Moses) is no longer needed.

In the original, the text does not read **“that faith is come.”** It reads, “that the faith is come,” since the Greek reads τ-ς πιστεωϛ — “the faith.” To reflect the accurate meaning of this passage, it could be read like this: “But after that the Gospel is come, we are no longer under the Law of Moses.” The question arises as to why so many of the translations leave the word “the” out of this passage, which would then make the word

“faith” refer to one’s personal faith. There is only one conclusion that this writer can think of, and that is the Calvinistic approach which places one’s salvation only upon the shoulders of one’s own personal faith — the “faith only” doctrine. The honest student which has no preconceived ideas regarding this passage will absolutely have no problem understanding that Paul was making a comparison in the context between the Gospel and the Law of Moses and that salvation (justification) comes through the Gospel of Christ and not the Law of Moses.

“The reason that we do not offer animal sacrifices, have a separate priesthood, tithe, observe the Sabbath day, use mechanical instruments of music in worship, observe the dietary laws, observe the annual and monthly feast days, and obey any other things commanded by the law of Moses is because the Law is no longer binding. That includes all of the Law. Whether one arbitrarily divides the Law into ceremonial, moral, and national laws or simply distinguishes the Ten Commandments from the rest of the Law, all of the Law has been abrogated. Whatever requirements are placed upon men are found in the New Testament, the gospel of Jesus Christ or the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21). Jesus is our Lawgiver today (James 4:12)” (Willis, p. 165).

Gal. 3:26 “For ye are all the children of GOD by faith in Christ Jesus.”

“For ye are all sons of GOD, through faith, in Christ Jesus.” (ASV)

If one is no longer under the tutor, then he has reached a state of maturity. Being no longer under the tutor (Old Law), one is in Christ, recognized as an heir of GOD. What makes one a Son of GOD? His relationship of faith in Christ. Circumcision did not put one into this freed relationship; the faith delivered

by Christ and believed by man puts one into this relationship.

“Faith, announcing justification from sin, is like a messenger of the father’s announcing maturity and liberty to the son so long under the care of a tutor. From the time of this announcement the son ceases to be a minor, shut off from the father, and becomes the companion of the Father” (McGarvey, p. 270).

A good rendering of this verse was done by Macknight: “For ye are all the sons of God through the faith published by Christ Jesus” (Macknight, p. 101).

Gal. 3:27 “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.” (ASV)

BAPTIZED — βαπτίζω — “To dip repeatedly, to immerge, submerge (of vessels sunk)” (Thayer, p. 94); “Immerse, submerge for a religious purpose, to overwhelm, saturate, baptize” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

The phrase “**For as many of you**” draws a line between those who are children of GOD and those who are not. When faith acts through obedience, then that person puts on Christ in baptism and is thus a child of GOD. Baptism is the final act which puts man into Christ, assuming that he believes, repents of his sins and confesses Christ as the Son of GOD. The attempts of writers to get rid of the importance and necessity which baptism plays in one’s salvation in order to promote “faith only” doctrines is often both amazing and amusing — yet extremely sad. Yet, nowhere else in the Bible is anything, including faith, said to put one into Christ — except baptism.

Weir gives eight reasons why one should be baptized. These are offered here for the student’s consideration.

“1. *Baptism into Christ saves us* (1 Pet. 3:21; Mark 16:16).

2. *Baptism into Christ washes away one's sins (Acts 22:16).*
3. *Baptism into Christ is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).*
4. *Baptism into Christ enables one to be redeemed through the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14).*
5. *Baptism into Christ is essential to become a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17).*
6. *Baptism into Christ is necessary before one can have a new life (Rom. 6:3-4).*
7. *Baptism into Christ makes it possible for one to go to heaven (John 3:3-5).*
8. *Baptism into Christ allows the Lord to add a person to the one body, the church (Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22)"*(Weir, p. 137).

One might add that since all spiritual blessings are **"in Christ,"** and since it is baptism which places one into Christ, then one who has not been baptized for the remission of his sins has NO SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS.

"Blessed be the GOD and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

One should also consider the phrase **"put on Christ."** The word **"put on"** comes from ἵνδύω, which means *"to put on, clothe with a garment"* (Thayer, p. 214). Zodhiates states that the word means, *"To put on as a garment, to cause to get into a garment, to clothe, dress"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). In the figurative sense in which it is used in this text, it means *"to become so possessed of the mind of Christ as in thought, feeling, and action to resemble him and, as it were, reproduce the life he lived"* (Thayer, p. 214).

Winton provides the following accurate chart for our consideration.

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

They had not **"put on Christ"** by obeying the Law of Moses, they had put Him on through faith, which led them to be baptized into Him.

Gal. 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

"There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus." (ASV)

"Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that GOD is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him" (Acts 10:34-35).

"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons" (Colossians 3:23-25).

There are no social distinctions regarding the saved. It did not, nor does not, matter if one were a Jew or Greek; both were saved by the same terms. There was not one way for the Jew to be saved and another way for the Gentile to be saved. They were saved by the

same faith which obeys, just as was Abraham. It did not, nor does not, matter if one were a male or a female; both were saved by the same terms. There was not one way for the male to be saved and another way for the female to be saved. They were saved by the same faith which obeys, just as was Abraham. It did not, nor does not, matter if one were a master or a slave; both were saved by the same terms. There was not one way for the master to be saved and another way for the slave to be saved. They were saved by the same faith which obeys, just as was Abraham. Consider the following prayer as to the mindset of a Jew, which is found in the Jewish Book of Prayer:

*“O Lord, Ruler of the Universe,
I thank thee that thou didst not
make me a Gentile
or a slave
or a woman.”*

This simple prayer follows the line of thinking presented by Paul in this passage, where he shows that such distinction does not exist in Christ.

The Judaizers were attempting to draw a line between people based on nationality. Paul clearly showed that, in the spiritual realm, there are no distinctions based on nationality, social standing or sex. That does not mean that there are not different roles which GOD has assigned each one. In the time in which Paul lived, it did not mean that, if a master and his slave both became Christians that the master/slave relationship was broken. Nor does what he says here mean that once one becomes a Christian, he loses his sexual identity. If such existed in these areas mentioned by Paul, then every prisoner who became a Christian would have to be released from prison, for **“neither is there bond nor free.”** To ignore other passages of Scripture and rely upon this one to claim that a woman can do anything a man can do in the worship assembly, or hold any position in the church which a man can, is

simply dishonest.

“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church” (1 Corinthians 14:34-35).

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

In Christ all are saved in the same way and therefore ought to act as if they are one. What does this say about racial distinctions which are often made? Do we think that GOD smiles on white and black churches because either whites or blacks desire to be only around their own color? One should remember that in Heaven there will be no sexual, social or national distinctions; and such should not be considered in the church — all are brethren in Christ who have believed, repented, confessed Christ, and

been buried in baptism for the remission of their sins.

Gal. 3:29 “**And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**”

“And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.” (ASV)

When it is considered that the promise made to Abraham, that one would come of his seed who would bless all nations (give salvation to), then if one is in Christ he is of the seed of Abraham — a direct lineage is established.

Since one is Abraham's seed, then he is also an heir of the promise given with regard to the salvation offered through his seed and ultimately of the eternal reward given in Heaven to the faithful of all ages.

“If children, then heirs; heirs of GOD, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together”
(Romans 8:17).

Galatians — Chapter Four

Gal. 4:1-2 “**Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.**”

“But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a bondservant though he is lord of all; but is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed of the father.” (ASV)

This is a continuation of the thoughts of Galatians 3:23-24. The word “**child**” refers to an infant, and as used in this context refers to a minor who has not yet reached an age when he can control the estate. This can be compared to a child whose parents have died and left him a million dollars. This money is kept in trust by a guardian until the child can

be trained and prepared for the responsibilities of handling aright those funds.

Paul spoke at a time when slaves were prominent in families and says that, as long as the child was a minor, that child was in the same relationship to his father as was the slave. He could not control his destiny, nor did he have the ability to command or use the materials which would eventually all be his. As the child was instructed and brought to maturity, he would eventually receive the inheritance.

The point being made by Paul is that, under the Law of Moses, the people had been prepared for the time when they would be given freedom under Christ, a time when they would inherit the blessings promised to Abraham. That time had come. Why would anyone want to return to a position of servitude after he had been freed from that servitude? As Paul pointed out in verse four, there was a time of maturity appointed by the Father.

Gal. 4:3 “**Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:**”

“So we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world:” (ASV)

ELEMENTS — στοιχεῖον — “*Any first thing, from which the others belonging to some series or composite whole take their rise; an element, first principle*” (Thayer, p. 588); “*The basic parts, rudiments, elements, or components of something*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “*Elements of learning, fundamental principles*” (Bauer, p. 768).

There is much discussion as to who the “**we**” are in this verse. Does it speak only of the Jews, or does it include the Gentiles? It would seem to this writer that it primarily refers to the Jews, since this epistle has been dealing consistently with the contrasts between the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ (and showing the superiority of the

latter).

Again, the time of the Law is spoken of as a childhood, the relationship of a minor under tutors and governors. In that relationship, one is in the same relationship as a slave; he is not free because he has not reached a position of maturity. Instead he is under the **“elements of the world.”** The word **“elements”** is used in this passage to discuss foundational matters, i.e., the Law of Moses served as rudimentary elements which led to a state of maturity. Consider this example: If one considers algebra to be the end result of mathematics, then the rudiments which would be built upon and refined would begin with numbers themselves. Gradually the student learns to apply those numbers in addition and subtraction, until eventually he is taught to apply all mathematical principles to achieve the goal of efficiency in algebra. Just so, the Law of Moses guided man toward a mature system of religion — Christianity.

“Paul represents the Jewish system as an elementary religion of childhood, full of external rites and ceremonies, pointing beyond themselves to an age of manhood in Christ” (Lipscomb, p. 238).

“As a growing minor child, kept under instructors and managers until of age, so Israel was kept in subjection to the law, tied to many burdensome rites and observances, by which, as elementary principles, they were taught and brought to maturity by their Father. God kept the family through which the seed was to come under the elementary principles of the law, to guide and qualify them to receive the greater principles, liberty, honors and joy of Christ” (Crouch, p. 42).

Gal. 4:4 “But when the fulness of the time was come, GOD sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law,”

“but when the fulness of the time came, GOD sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,” (ASV)

FULLNESS — πλήρωμα — *“That which is (or has been) filled...Of time, that portion of time by which a longer antecedent period is completed; hence completeness, fullness, of time”* (Thayer, p. 518); *“To make full, fill, fill up...Fulfillment, full end, completion”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“The state of being full, fullness of time”* (Bauer, p. 672); *“The sense of ‘fulness’ indicates that which contains a full measure, something abundant and ample, or vast...‘fulfillment’”* (Renn, p. 383).

“The fulness of time.” Why did GOD wait so long to send His Son into the world to save man from his sins? Why did He not send Him immediately after the fall of Adam and Eve? If He had sent Him then, man would not have the knowledge necessary to fully appreciate the sacrifice GOD made for him. It took time for man to learn the terrible consequences of his sins. It took man time to understand that he could not save himself and that he could not keep any law perfectly. Thus he had the need of a Savior who could keep law perfectly and that could offer the one sacrifice needed for remission of sins. As time passed by, GOD then set in motion events which would make the exact time of His Sons arrival appropriate for His purposes.

In this study some of the events of world history will be noticed which were needed before Christ could come into the world. One should begin this study by noticing the prophecy given to Daniel to reveal the dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

“Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his

feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the GOD of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest

iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the GOD of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:31-44).

This prophecy given to Daniel concerned four world kingdoms which would come into existence before the kingdom of GOD (the church) would be established on the earth. Each of these kingdoms contributed something which was necessary to prepare mankind for the time when it would be right for Christ to come into the world. As one considers these contributions, a word of caution should be considered. There is no way that fallible man can know all of the things that GOD did to prepare for the advent of His Son. What is presented next is based upon probability, since these nations were specifically mentioned by GOD in prophecy as those which must appear before Jesus could come into the world. It is obvious then that they contributed something necessary to His coming.

The first kingdom was the Babylonian kingdom. When studying the work of the apostles, it is evident that they used the Jewish synagogues as a staging point for their efforts. Wherever they went, they seem to have gone first to these synagogues.

"Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures" (Acts 17:1-2).

These synagogues were centers of learning

and community for the Jews. They were places where the people who attended them already believed in the one GOD and had a basic understanding of the terminology used by GOD for His people. But, from where did the synagogues get their origin? They were not given by GOD as places for Jewish worship, for He had given them the tabernacle/temple for their worship. After the Babylonians (under Nebuchadnezzar) destroyed the temple, the Jews were taken into captivity. There their spiritual interest in properly serving GOD was renewed, but they had no place to worship. The synagogues were developed in order to have a place where they could gather, study and worship GOD. This helped them maintain a sense of community during this captivity and kept the knowledge of GOD alive in their hearts.

The second kingdom represented by Nebuchadnezzar's dream was that of the Medes and Persians. This kingdom had laws which were unchangeable, and this concept later became part of the law system of the Roman empire.

“Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not...Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed”
(Daniel 6:8, 15).

Man was being trained to accept the concept of an absolute law. This law gave its citizens basic rights for their protection. So it was that Paul had basic rights which allowed him to spread the Gospel over the Roman Empire. Further, the concept of an unchangeable law prepared the people to later accept the fact that GOD has a law which cannot be changed. Unfortunately, people in 2007 believe they can do anything they want in defiance of

GOD's laws.

The third kingdom represented by Nebuchadnezzar's dream was the Greek empire, as established by Alexander the Great. Because Alexander conquered the world in such a rapid fashion, it has been said that he was like a meteor flashing across the sky. Wherever Alexander went, he brought Greek society with him, but the most important thing he brought was a universal language. By the time of Christ, the Greek language was well-established and used throughout the world. This writer remembers reading somewhere that most people spoke their native language as well as Greek (and any other they might have learned). Further, this was a very precise language, which later became a dead language (which prevented a change in the meaning of words). This is important, because a living language is constantly changing. (Modern Greek is not the same as the Greek spoken in Jesus' day). Thus, it was suited as a means of universal communication; all people through it could be reached with the Gospel.

The fourth kingdom represented by Nebuchadnezzar's dream was the Roman Empire. This is the kingdom which Daniel prophesied would be in power at the time when Messiah would come to this world and establish His kingdom. As noted above, the Romans adapted some of the things which the kingdoms before them had produced and even refined a number of them. Wherever the Romans went, they built roads. These roads were built so that they could quickly dispatch their armies wherever they might be needed. But the side benefit was that its citizens, who were encouraged to travel, could more easily get from one place to another in the empire. This caused commerce to grow, and thus greater contact between cultures existed than had ever been experienced before. These roads provided not only quick access to distant places but also made travel safer than it had ever been before. Paul probably could

not have so readily found a ship traveling to Macedonia if these things had not been in place. Another important aspect which the Roman empire provided at this time was world-wide peace. Someone made the observation, *“What better time for the Prince of Peace to come into the world.”*

“GOD sent forth His Son.” If this phrase said nothing more, it reminds one of the pre-existence of Jesus. He was sent forth from one place (Heaven) to another (the world) with authority invested in Him by His Father. This phrase then is a declaration of the Deity of Jesus.

“Made of a woman.” This shows the other side of Jesus, i.e., His humanity. It hints at the idea that He was born of a virgin. However, the emphasis here is on His humanity because of the redemption He would bring to mankind. It was absolutely necessary that the Son of GOD put on the robes of humanity, because man’s redemption called for the death of the redeemer. Deity cannot die, thus the need for fleshly robes.

“Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me” (Hebrews 10:5).

“Made under the law.” This is a phrase which shows the dispensation of time in which Jesus lived. The Christian age did not come during His lifetime but was begun at the cross (more properly the first Pentecost after His death). This means that He lived subject to (governed by) the Law of Moses, and it was under that Law that He lived to perfection.

“We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).

The importance of His being Made under the law is seen in the next verse.

Gal. 4:5 **“To redeem them that were under**

the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

“that He might redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” (ASV)

REDEEM — ἱξαγοράζω — *“To redeem, i.e., by payment of a price to recover from the power of another, to ransom, buy off”* (Thayer, p. 220); *“To buy out of, redeem from. Used of our redemption by Christ from the curse and yoke of the Law...The word generally means to buy up, to buy all that is anywhere to be bought, and not to allow the suitable moment to pass by unheeded but to make it one’s own”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

“As many as are led by the Spirit of GOD, they are the sons of GOD. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of GOD: And if children, then heirs; heirs of GOD, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together” (Romans 8:14-17).

The Jews needed to be redeemed from the Law of Moses which kept them in bondage. The Gentile needed to be redeemed from the many false religions (religious laws) to which they had been in bondage.

For what purpose was this redemption in Christ provided? So that both Jew and Gentile could leave the bondage they were in and be made the sons of GOD through the process of adoption. GOD chooses all who are willing to faithfully follow Him to be His sons and thus receive an eternal inheritance. If one goes back to the earlier illustration, the redemption which Christ offers is like the freedom obtained by the son when he reached the age to be freed from the bondage of the tutor or governor.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of GOD: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of GOD, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” (1 John 3:1-3).

One thing which should be kept in mind is that, even though Christ may have paid the redemption price, it does not mean that everyone becomes a son of GOD. The price was paid so that man could have redemption, but man can refuse the salvation offered to him. The invitation is for everyone to come to the Savior, but not all will accept His love.

“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of GOD, even to them that believe on His name” (John 1:12).

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of GOD, they are the sons of GOD” (Romans 8:14).

Gal. 4:6 “And because ye are sons, GOD hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”

“And because ye are sons, GOD sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (ASV)

ABBA — Aramaic word used as a title for GOD. It means *“Father.”*

One of the first things to be noted in this passage is that the word **“spirit”** should not be capitalized as it is in the KJV, ASV, NKJV, and some other versions of the Bible. The context has been discussing the difference between the old law and the new law and the relationship of people under those laws. Under the Old Testament dispensation (Law of Moses), one was in a servant relationship. Under the Law of Christ, an obedient person is in a son relationship. There is quite a difference in the two, since the servant serves from fear, whereas the son serves from love. The word spirit here is equivalent to the second word spirit in John 4:24.

“GOD is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

In both places, the idea revolves around one’s attitude. What was the attitude of Jesus toward His Father? One of extreme love which would address Him in a tender, loving way.

“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15).

Littrell combines the thoughts of Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6 and says we have the following thought: *“We, as children of God, in the spirit of sonship, cry out, Abba, Father”* (Littrell, p. 367).

It should also be noted that there are those who believe that this passage is talking about the Galatians’ having received miraculous ability because they had become sons of GOD. Those who hold this view believe that Paul was using that reception as a proof that they were indeed GOD’s children.

“Abba Father.” *“It is said in the Babylonian Gemara, a Jewish work, that it was not permitted slaves to use the title of Abba in addressing the master of the family to*

which they belonged. If so, then the language which Christians are here represented as using is the language of freemen, and denotes that they are not under the servitude of sin" (Barnes, p. 361). Though the word "**Abba**" means father and appears to refer to an intimate relationship, it is not equivalent to terms in present use like "Daddy," "Dad," and other such terms. The word "**Abba**" carries the same weight as do passages like "**Our Father which art in Heaven...**" (Matthew 6:9, emphasis mine). It should be spoken in reverence and never in the informal "Daddy" or equivalent terms. Those who use such slang terms show a blatant disregard for the sanctity of GOD's name and show little or no respect toward GOD.

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

"So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through GOD." (ASV)

There are several things to consider in this passage. First, it should be noticed that the word "**Wherefore**" signifies a conclusion to what has been had said. Second, notice the implications of the word "**heir.**" It is quickly realized by any rational person that one cannot be an heir without first being a part of the family of the one through whom an inheritance may come. The slave does not receive the inheritance, the child receives the inheritance. Under the picture presented in this context, one was a slave under the Law of Moses. But one becomes a child under the Law of Christ. Why then would anyone desire to go back to a relationship which would eliminate him from receiving the glorious inheritance offered by GOD? Why would anyone want to turn back to that which made him sick (dog turning to his own vomit) or dirty (pig wallowing in the mire). See the principle of this in 2 Peter 2:20-22.

"One who truly believes and follows

Christ is no longer a servant, either to sin or to the law of Moses (Rom. 6:1-14). He is no longer under the dominion of the law or of sin. The death of Jesus has freed him from the dominion of the law (Rom. 7:4-6; Col. 2:14). And his own death to sin, burial and resurrection with Christ make him a servant of righteousness in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:5-18)" (Crouch, p. 44).

Another interesting thing about this inheritance is the relationship one sustains with Abraham. Abraham was an heir through the faith which he manifested, and so it is with the Christian. Thus, Christians are heirs **with** Abraham, not heirs **of** Abraham.

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of GOD: And if children, then heirs; heirs of GOD, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:15-18).

One should again notice that it is only those who are "**in Christ**" who are a part of the family which will receive an inheritance. The only way to get "**in Christ**" is through baptism (Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3). Further, the only way to receive the offered inheritance (crown of life) is through continued faithfulness once one has put on Christ (Revelation 2:10). The opposite of these truths is also true. One who has never, through faith and obedience entered the family of GOD has no hope of receiving an inheritance from GOD. Such a one will receive an inheritance from his father — the Devil. Likewise, the Christian who once

became an heir through faithful obedience but leaves the safety of his Father's house, if he does not return to his Father (as did the prodigal son, Luke 15), will be lost as well.

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

"Howbeit at that time, not knowing GOD, ye were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods:" (ASV)

SERVICE — δουλεύω — *"To be a slave, serve, do service"* (Thayer, p. 157); *"To be in the position of a servant and act accordingly; to be subject and serve in subjection or bondage"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *"Be a slave, be subjected"* (Bauer, p. 205).

When a man does not know GOD or follow GOD, he will have a god of some kind which he serves. This god may be one which has been fashioned from material things which he then bows before. It may be an idea such as false science (evolution), humanism or any other false philosophy. His god may be the satisfaction of his own desires for pleasure, power or any other thing of that nature. Whatever a man's false god is, it requires his time, energy and resources. Using these things for the service of the god he then serves is a waste of them.

Whatever the "man-made" god is which one serves, it does not have the nature of GOD. GOD is all-knowing, all-powerful and has the ability to act. In trips to other nations, this writer has often seen people bow before a statue (even a rock) in prayer and supplication to their god who cannot even move itself from one place to another. In viewing these scenes, the thought has often come as to how one can serve a god which cannot do anything for itself, neither can it hear the petitions of its devotee nor grant his petition. Common sense should then cause one to search for the GOD who can do anything and everything.

"What profiteth the graven image

that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols? Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it. But the LORD is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him" (Habakkuk 2:18-20).

"Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them" (Psalm 115:4-8).

"They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint. The

carpenter stretcheth out his rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god. They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?" (Isaiah 44:9-19).

"We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other GOD but one. For though

there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)" (1 Corinthians 8:4-5).

Gal. 4:9 "But now, after that ye have known GOD, or rather are known of GOD, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"

"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, whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again?" (ASV)

WEAK — • σθενής — *"Weak, infirm, feeble"* (Thayer, p. 80); *"Without strength, powerless"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

BEGGARLY — πτωχός — *"Reduced to beggary, mendicant, asking alms...poor, needy...in a broader sense, destitute of wealth, influence, position, honors; lowly, afflicted"* (Thayer, p. 557); *"To crouch, cower like a beggar. Poor and helpless. As a subst., someone in abject poverty, utter helplessness, complete destitution"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *"Begging, dependent on others for support, but also simply poor...poor, miserable, beggarly, impotent"* (Bauer, p. 728).

Notice two thoughts here: (1) Those to whom Paul wrote had come to know GOD, and (2) GOD had come to know them. There can be a vast difference in the two ideas. The important part of this phrase is **"are known of GOD."** These Galatians had been taught about GOD by Paul, thus they knew GOD. But to be known of GOD is to be considered by Him as being His faithful children.

"The Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Timothy 2:19).

An example of this thought is seen in Matthew 7:21-23. There one notices those who knew the Lord and claimed to be His servants, but because of their iniquities, the Lord said He

did not know them.

“Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:21-23).

The Lord knows those who are His, i.e., those who obey Him.

How could those who had come to know GOD and had become His children (were known by Him) turn back to that which could not bring them freedom, but would rather place them again under bondage? True, it was not idolatry to which they turned, but nevertheless it was bondage, for the Old Law could not bring them freedom from their sins. They had become rich in Christ. By turning to the bondage of any system which cannot give freedom from sin, one becomes extremely poor. When anyone today turns to the Old Testament Law given by Moses to justify his worship practices, he has placed himself in bondage to that Law and loses his freedom in Christ.

Gal. 4:10-11 “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.”

“Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain.” (ASV)

OBSERVE — παρατηρέω — *“To watch assiduously, observe carefully...to observe, i.q. to keep scrupulously; to neglect nothing requisite to the religious observance of”* (Thayer, p. 486); *“To watch closely, observe,*

as the gates of a city); to observe a person insidiously; to observe days scrupulously” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Watch closely, observe carefully”* (Bauer, p. 622).

The days, months, times, and years of this passage obviously refer to the Jews' special times of religious activity, because the context deals with those who were adopting Mosaic observances. One of the dangers in this is that, since these observances were not authorized by GOD, where would they stop? If one is free to observe as a religious obligation any one thing which GOD has not authorized, he is just as free to adopt another and another — there can be no end to the possibilities.

Many have tried to dismiss the words of the apostle here in order to justify the observance of the Sabbath day in the Christian dispensation. An example of this is Albert Barnes who stated:

“It is not a fair interpretation of this to suppose that the apostle refers to the Sabbath, properly so called, for this was a part of the Decalogue; and was observed by the Savior himself, and by the apostles also” (Barnes, p. 364).

It is easy to see the fallacy of his argument when one considers that Christ lived and died under the Law of Moses. Having lived in that time, He was obligated to obey those laws, for if He had not He would have been guilty of sin (Hebrews 4:15). Further, the apostles also lived under that Law, but once the new Law (Christianity) was put into force (Acts 2), the apostles were never again seen to worship on the Sabbath day. It has always been a curiosity of this writer as to why people want to hold on to the observance of the Sabbath, but they do not want to hold on to the daily sacrifices, as well as other observances of the Old Law. Judaism (Law of Moses) and Christianity do not mix, and one who attempts to do such is in rebellion to GOD! Christianity cannot be mixed with any religious or secular system and be pleasing to GOD.

Paul had expended great effort in teaching and converting these brethren (LABOUR — Greek, *“To be worn out, weary, faint”* — Zodiates, CD Rom Version). How could Paul’s labor be in vain? Notice what the Bible says about GOD’s Word.

“So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).

The labor of Paul, or anyone else, is not in vain in the Lord’s service.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

But with regard to the Galatian brethren, if they lost their souls, then all of the labor expended by Paul on their behalf was useless for their soul’s well-being. If they lost their souls, it would be as if Paul had never accomplished anything among them.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Gal. 4:12 **“Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all.”**

“I beseech you, brethren, become as I am, for I also am become as ye are. Ye did me no wrong:” (ASV)

“Brethren” is a term of endearment which Paul uses. He had warm feelings for them because they were Christians. Because of these feelings, he made a tender plea for them to be as he was. To be as he was is a plea found a number of times in his writings.

“Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me” (1 Corinthians 4:16).

“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1).

“Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample” (Philippians 3:17).

“For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you” (2 Thessalonians 3:7).

The question is *“How did Paul want them to be as he was?”* Paul had been extremely attached to the Law of Moses and had obeyed it without question. Yet, when he had learned that it could not save and that a new Law had replaced it, he was willing to leave everything behind him in order to be saved. Paul was calling on them to be like himself in this matter. They had left their paganism behind (maybe some at Galatia had been Jews); they had left these things behind in order to be Christians. Another thought along these lines, as suggested by some, is that he had lived as Gentiles did, without any prejudices toward them, as much as it was possible without compromising his Christianity. He had accepted their customs because he was a Christian and no longer a follower of Jewish customs. This writer believes the former is the case.

“Ye have not injured me at all.” No one could say, *“Paul is writing these things because you mistreated him at some time in the past and now he has found an occasion to pay you back.”* On the contrary, Paul pointed out that, in the past, they had treated him very well. If they were making a charge that he had been injured when they began accepting the teaching of these Judaizers, he was saying that they had not injured him in that.

There is no doubt that he felt great pain because they were endangering their souls, but their actions could not harm his soul and brought no personal animosity on his part. He was pleading with them because they were hurting themselves if they deserted Christianity to go to Judaism. Their souls were in danger.

Gal. 4:13 “Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.”

“but ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you the first time:” (ASV)

INFIRMITY — • σθένεια — “Want of strength, weakness, infirmity” (Thayer, p. 80); “Weakness, sickness. In the NT, this word and related words, *asthenems*, weak, sick, and *asthenéom*, to be sick or weak, are the most common expressions for illness and are used in the comprehensive sense of the whole man. However, it can also refer to a special form of bodily weakness or sickness” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Weakness...of bodily weakness, sickness, disease” (Bauer, p. 115).

“Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Corinthians 12:7-9).

There has always been a great deal of speculation as to what Paul’s problem was. Some have thought it was a disease he

contracted while on his journeys. Others have thought that he might have had some stomach or eye problem. Others have thought his thorn in the flesh might have been his Jewish persecutors. Still others believe it may have been malaria. Whatever the problem he had, the Scriptures are silent as to what it was, and therefore this writer must be as well.

“Paul evidently refers to some physical infirmity, known to the Galatians, which in some way caused him to be there and preach the gospel to them in the first time. Perhaps it was the ‘thorn in the flesh’ mentioned in 2 Corinthians 12:7-9” (Crouch, p. 47).

Whatever the infirmity was, it did not stop Paul from proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. Further, this infirmity did not turn the people away; they listened to him and accepted the Gospel he proclaimed to the saving of their souls. Paul was reminding them that he had preached the Gospel to them in some unfavorable condition and they had received it at his mouth.

Gal. 4:14 “And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of GOD, even as Christ Jesus.”

“and that which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but ye received me as an angel of GOD, even as Christ Jesus.” (ASV)

TEMPTATION — πειρασμός — “An experiment, attempt, trial, proving” (Thayer, p. 498); “Trial, temptation, a putting to the test, spoken of persons only” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Test, trial...temptation, enticement to sin” (Bauer, p. 640).

DESPISED — ἴξουθενέω — “To make of no account, to despise utterly...to treat with contempt” (Thayer, p. 225); “To despise, treat with scorn...By implication, to reject with scorn” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Despise, disdain someone...reject with contempt...treat

with contempt” (Bauer, p. 277).

REJECTED — ἵβῃ — “To spit out...to reject, spurn, loathe” (Thayer, p. 199); “Used metaphorically meaning to loathe, reject” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Spit (out) as a sign of disdain” (244); “The Greek word translated ‘rejected’ is a very strong one and occurs only here in the NT. Literally it means ‘spit out’” (Earle, p. 281).

In studying this verse, one should carefully notice the difference in the rendering of the KJV and the ASV above. This difference is caused by the fact that the early manuscripts differed. This difference is shown in the comments of Wacaster, which are included below for one’s consideration.

“There is considerable variety in the manuscripts on this passage. Some read ‘my temptation,’ while others read ‘your temptation.’ We do not consider the difference of any consequence. The point is that Paul was afflicted with some infirmity but it did not hinder his preaching or their reception of the Gospel. There are two ideas combined in the passage. The first of these is the fact that the Galatians did not despise Paul because of his physical condition. The second idea is that they did not yield to the temptation to reject Paul on the same grounds” (Wacaster, p. 128).

If the trial (temptation) refers to Paul, then it meant that he overcame whatever it was and continued to serve Christ by teaching His Gospel. But in looking at the context, it seems to this writer that the trial was on the part of the Galatians. He had just stated that they had not harmed him in any way (v. 12). Further, there was some kind of “infirmity” which Paul was suffering. This term usually refers to some kind of illness or a physical infirmity. Considering this thought, it should

be remembered that people of all time have thought that if a person were suffering in any way, it meant that GOD was against him, indeed punishing him. Job is a good example of a man who suffered exceedingly, yet his suffering was shown to have nothing to do with any wrong of which he may have been guilty. On one occasion, the disciples of Jesus came across a man born blind and asked Jesus who had sinned to cause him to be blind. Jesus answered that no sin of any kind had caused this man to be born blind (John 9:1-3). Human suffering may or may not be the result of sin — it may simply be an accident.

If this author’s opinion is correct, then it would have been common for people to reject Paul and the message he brought because of the infirmity he had. Yet, they did not reject him. Instead, they treated him as he should have been treated, as a messenger (angel) from GOD. Further, they even thought of him as if He were Christ. The illusion here seems to be that they recognized him as a messenger who brought the good news of salvation. If he had not come to them, they would have remained in their sins. Thus, they thought of Paul as “Christ Jesus” (Messiah Savior). All this shows the high esteem they felt for Paul when he first came to them.

Gal. 4:15 “Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.”

“Where then is that gratulation of yourselves? for I bear you witness, that, if possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me.” (ASV)

Some have thought from this verse that the infirmity from which Paul suffered had

something to do with his eyes. Most probably the reference here is to a proverb which speaks of a very important sacrifice, if not the most valuable thing one had to be sacrificed for another. In other words, they would have done anything for him because of their deep affection for him.

"It is very similar to the present day idiom, 'He would give you the shirt off his back'" (Sheerer, p. 807).

They had once had great happiness in having Paul among them and in hearing the words which he spoke to them. In essence the thought is "What happened to the happiness you once had with me and the Gospel which I teach?" The ASV uses the word "**gratulation,**" which Brewer tells us means "*To greet or welcome with joy*" (Brewer, p. 55). This would indicate that they were no longer willing to welcome him with the warmth they once had for him — no longer willing to make the extreme sacrifice for him which they once would have made.

"What happened to that spirit which not long ago moved you to receive me" (Brewer, p. 56)?

Some have gone to Acts chapter nine, where Saul (Paul) was struck blind, and have coupled it with this verse to claim that Paul's problem was his eyesight. The argument made by some is that he had been blinded by a bright light, and when his sight was restored, it was only partially restored by the Lord. For the Lord not to have given him his complete eyesight back would be against the nature of the Lord. Further, the Bible states that Paul's thorn in the flesh was occasioned by Satan, not the Lord (2 Corinthians 12:7).

Gal. 4:16 "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"

"So then am I become your enemy, by telling you the truth?" (ASV)

ENEMY — ἔχθρος — "*Hated, odious, hateful...actively hostile, hating and opposing another*" (Thayer, p. 265); "*Hostile, inimical*" (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); "*Hostile*" (Bauer, p. 331).

It has always been interesting to this writer that the same truth taught to an individual, which is readily accepted by him and causes him to love the truth giver, will do so until that individual seeks to violate the truth he had formerly accepted. Truth is not relative; it is always the truth. Truth will always cause a division between those who love righteousness and truth and those who hate righteousness and truth.

"Truth should make people friends, not enemies" (Boatman, p. 171).

Why do people so often hate the one who tells them a needed truth? Because that truth causes them pain of conscience.

"There is nothing more difficult than to regard with steady and unwavering affection the man who faithfully tells us the truth at all times, when that truth is painful. Yet he is our best friend" (Barnes, p. 366).

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Proverbs 27:6).

It should be considered that one is truly a friend who is willing to tell the truth, even though he knows that the telling of that truth may cause his friend to become his "former friend."

"Many are those today who once held to the old paths and commended the preaching of great men who are now gone from us, but because they have embraced a perverted gospel, they now reject those same men and the gospel they preached" (Brewer, p. 56).

A question which needs to be asked is “*Who changed — Paul or the Galatians?*” When those who formerly accepted the Gospel of Jesus Christ now accept a perverted Gospel — who changed?

Another thought to consider here is that Paul is showing that he is not saying these things because he has become their enemy. He has no hard feelings toward them. What he feels is anxiety for their souls and their eternal well-being. It is because of his deep love for them that he expresses these truths — not to hurt them in any way. Yes, the things he says may hurt them, but it is the kind of hurt which hopefully will spare them much pain in the future. If a finger becomes infected to the point that it cannot be returned to health and will eventually cause the arm to be infected as well, is not the pain endured by having the finger removed better than letting it infect the arm and losing it? Is not the pain of rebuke for a sinner, who then gives up his sin, worth the temporary pain it causes, rather than the eternal pain of Hell?

Gal. 4:17 “They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.”

“They zealously seek you in no good way; nay, they desire to shut you out, that ye may seek them.” (ASV)

To be zealous is to show “*eagerness and ardent interest in pursuit of something*” (Webster, CD Rom Version). Who was showing this zeal? “**They**” refers to the Judaizers about whom Paul has been speaking. They were eagerly trying to get the Galatians to follow them and their doctrine, so they pursued them with intensity. But their zeal was not for a good cause. Zeal can be used properly for a right and good cause, or it may be directed toward accomplishing that

which is evil (as it was here). Speaking of the Jews on another occasion, Paul stated:

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to GOD for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of GOD, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of GOD’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of GOD” (Romans 10:1-3).

After warning them that the zeal of the Judaizers was misplaced, Paul then attacked the Judaizers’ motive. They went after the Galatians in order to “**exclude you.**” Another rendering of this phrase as found in the margin of many Bibles is “**exclude us.**” Notice the wording of the ASV here: “*they desire to shut you out, that ye may seek them.*” The object of these Judaizers was to exclude the Galatians from the teaching of that which would actually lead them to salvation and turn them to following a corrupted doctrine (1:6-7). If you can get the people to turn against/away from the teacher of truth, then it will not be long until they forget the truth. Whatever else a false teacher did, he must put a barrier between the true teacher and the Galatians so that they would turn to them (Judaizers) for advice and counsel. If the Galatians fell for this, they would end up losing their souls.

Gal. 4:18 “But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.”

“But it is good to be zealously sought in a good matter at all times, and not only when I am present with you.” (ASV)

It is always right to be zealous in that which GOD approves. In fact, a Christian should be very enthusiastic about the faith which he holds, always seeking to use his zeal to accomplish the work which GOD has set before him in order to promote GOD's kingdom and bring honor and glory to Him.

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great GOD and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work” (Titus 2:13 - 3:1; Emphasis mine, RK).

While Paul had been with them, they zealously followed the course he had laid out before them, and he commended them for such action. They had been faithful to the One (the Lord) who had called them through the apostle into His service. But after Paul had left their presence, they seem to have quickly fallen away, following instead these false teachers. Paul now emphasizes that they should continue to be zealous in a good cause (the Gospel, Christianity) whether he was with them or not.

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12).

There may also be the idea here that if they needed to contact him at any time, then they should do so in order to clarify some point or

help them maintain their faithfulness to Christ.

Gal. 4:19 “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,”

“My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you—” (ASV)

FORMED — μορφώω — *“To form: literally, until a mind and life in complete harmony with the mind and life of Christ shall have been formed in you” (Thayer, p. 418); “To form, fashion, originally used of artists who shaped their material into an image. Found only in Gal. 4:19 where the Christian is described as a little child who needs to mature until the very image of Christ be impressed upon his heart” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “To form, shape...take on form, be formed” (Bauer, p. 528); “The word ‘formed’ in the Greek means ‘to give outward expression to one’s inward character’...The Greek word ‘form’ has no idea of physical shape, or of molding some solid substance, or of creating or producing something. It refers to the action of an individual giving outward expression of his true inward nature” (Wuest, p. 74); “The term always refers to the exterior, to that in man which may be seen” (Kittel, p. 746).*

“My little children” is a term of endearment. How is it that Paul could consider the Galatians his children? The answer can be found in First Corinthians 4:15, where speaking of the Corinthians, Paul said, **“For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”**

Paul was their spiritual father, having brought them forth as Christians when he taught them the Gospel, they believed that Gospel, and

then obeyed that Gospel. This is the same idea as the relationship which Paul had with Timothy and Titus.

“Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from GOD our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Timothy 1:2).

“To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from GOD the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour” (Titus 1:4).

The concept of travail used here is of the pain and anxiety through which a woman goes in giving birth to a child. Paul is saying that he had indeed gone through this in originally teaching them and is going through this again. The physical mother hopes and prays that everything will go well in bringing forth a child and that the child will be “perfect” and healthy. Paul would desire that those he taught would be healthy in the Lord.

“Until Christ be formed in you,” as noted above in the word study, reveals that it can be known by one’s actions whether he is a healthy, faithful child of GOD or not. As Crouch well noted:

“When Christ is formed in anyone, evidence of this fact will be manifest in his (a) great faith, (b) eager desire to know and grow in his will, and (c) zeal for truth and righteousness”(Crouch, p. 49).

Jesus stated this principle in the following way:

“Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:20).

Though speaking about being able to identify a false teacher in that passage, the principle applies equally to being able to distinguish a faithful child of GOD from those who are of the

world or who are false teachers.

Gal. 4:20 “I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.”

“but I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my tone; for I am perplexed about you.” (ASV)

DOUBT — •πορέω — *“To be without resources, to be in straits, to be left wanting, to be embarrassed, to be in doubt, not to know which way to turn”* (Thayer, p. 66); *“Figuratively, to doubt, hesitate, be perplexed, not knowing how to proceed, determine, speak or act”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Be at a loss, in doubt, uncertain”* (Bauer, p. 97).

Paul desired to be with them and say whatever had to be said. This is understandable in that when one speaks to another, he can view that person’s response to him in a number of ways: the tone of his voice, facial expressions, body language or any number of things.

No doubt Paul desired to see their response to what he must tell them. Paul also desired to **“change my voice.”** No one in his right mind and who has a right attitude likes to have to rebuke another person. In fact, many are so afraid of doing this that the idea has evolved in American society that one should never rebuke (especially strongly rebuke) anyone for anything. Instead of rebuking them, Paul would have loved to have approached them the same way he did the Philippians.

“I thank my GOD upon every remembrance of you” (Philippians 1:3).

The sad fact is that he could not address them in this way, because they needed to be rebuked for allowing the Judaizers to lead

them astray. They were in grave danger, so Paul had to use words which might jar them into a recognition of their danger and cause them to repent. Paul loved these brethren enough to give them the rebuke they needed — he wanted their souls to be saved!

“I stand in doubt of you.” The word **“doubt”** has been noticed above with a number of variations of its meaning. It was surprising to this writer to notice how many commentators thought that Paul did not know what to say to them or was not sure what they needed to hear. Have they forgotten that Paul was writing by inspiration? Have they no confidence that the Spirit of GOD knew exactly the words which these brethren needed? Notice that another word which can be used to define the word **“doubt”** is the word **“perplexed.”** The word **“perplexed”** is defined by Webster as follows:

“To make unable to grasp something clearly or to think logically and decisively about something ‘her attitude perplexes me’ ‘a perplexing problem’”
(Webster’s CD Rom Version).

Understanding the word **“doubt”** with the meaning of **“perplexed”** (as the ASV quotes it) fits perfectly with how Paul began this letter.

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ”
(Galatians 1:6-7).

This writer cannot count the times he has been perplexed over brethren who had formerly known the truth but have since turned their backs on it. (How often I have had to make the statement, *“I just do not understand.”*) Or how often he has been perplexed over normally logical people who

read something from the Bible and say that they know what it says, *“but that is not what it means,”* or *“GOD surely did not mean for us to understand the verse’s simple meaning.”*

Gal. 4:21 “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law, do ye not hear the Law?”

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law, do ye not hear the Law?” (ASV)

This verse is basically a challenge to those who desire to follow, or be under, the Law. He is asking them to listen to the Law, to pay careful attention to the Law. If they did such, they would quickly realize that the Law had predicted a better Law and lawgiver which they were to follow, and then they would abandon the old Law.

When looking at the context of this book, the Judaizers and those who were listening to them wanted to go back to the Law for justification. But the question has to be, *“What is the Law?”* Does the Law refer only to the ten commandments, as some contend today? Paul described the Law as entailing more than the ten commandments. In fact, he showed that it is more than that Law which was given at Sinai (inclusive of every Law under that system) and takes it back to the promises made to Abraham. Notice that the quotations in this text are from Genesis, before the Law was ever given.

Gal. 4:22 “For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.”

“For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid, and one by the freewoman.” (ASV)

The historical account, which is the basis of the allegory Paul sets forth, begins with Genesis 16:1. The student would do well to

go back and read that account.

Two sons are under consideration in this text. Abraham indeed had more than two sons (Keturah), but these two sons are representative of two systems, one inferior to the other. The sons under consideration are Ishmael, who was born to the slave, Hagar, and Isaac, who was born to the free-woman, Sarah the wife of Abraham.

One of the interesting things to point out here is the Jews' placing so much importance on being of the physical seed of Abraham for justification. On one occasion Jesus told the Jews, **"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"** (John 8:32). Notice that they answered His statement by saying, **"We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free"** (John 8:33)? They thought that being a physical descendant of Abraham was all that was necessary for acceptance by GOD. Paul pointed out that there were two sons of Abraham. They would not claim any significance to being Ishmael's descendant, in fact believing such to be of no importance at all. But the truth is, if the only thing of importance was being a physical descendant of Abraham, then it did not matter from which son one descended. This the Jews would correctly deny; it did matter. Why? Because the promise made by GOD to Abraham was through Sarah and the son she would deliver to him — Isaac, not any other son. Why this designation was important is seen in the next verse. There is something more important than physical ancestry — it is spiritual ancestry.

Gal. 4:23 "But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise."

"Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman is born through promise." (ASV)

As JFB correctly points out, *"The two sons, though sprung from a common father, Abraham, were, notwithstanding, very different"* (JFB, p. 389). Ishmael was born to the slave woman, and thus he himself never really became more than a slave. He did not receive the inheritance, nor was the promise(s) made to him. As time progressed, it was through his seed that GOD's people would be persecuted. His birth was accomplished purely through physical laws of procreation. On the other hand you had Isaac, who was born by promise, with the promises of GOD promised through him. His birth was accomplished through faith, being miraculous in nature.

"Not only was Ishmael born as a consequence of physical act, but also of sinful deliberation on the part of Abraham and Hagar. Unwilling to abide by God's promise, Abraham and Sarah took matters into their own hands, and Abraham, at the consent of Sarah, went in unto Hagar, who in turn conceived Ishmael. This being the case, Ishmael fittingly represents all those who strive to attain salvation by their own cunning devices. Isaac, on the other hand, was born as a result of Abraham's faith, and is a fitting representative of those who, like Abraham, strive for salvation based on their faith in God to keep His promises" (Wacaster, p. 140).

Gal. 4:24 "Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar."

“Which things contain an allegory: for these women are two covenants; one from mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar.” (ASV)

Paul says that the things he spoke about were an allegory. The NKJV uses the word “symbolic.” What is an allegory? Notice the following definitions.

“Signifies a thing that is representative of another” (Boatman, p. 178).

“It is a figurative sentence or discourse, in which the principal object is described by another subject resembling it in its properties and circumstances” (Barnes, p. 370).

“Allegory means a description of one thing under the figure of another, so that the real or intended meaning differs from the obvious sense of the words” (Lipscomb, p. 252).

“An allegory is a story in which the persons of the story and the events of the story have deeper meanings” (Stancliff, p. 67).

“In English, an allegory is a ‘story in which people, things, and happenings have another meaning.’ Hence, the allegory is a form of comparison, and extended metaphor” (Willis, p. 214).

The two women and their respective sons are used representatively to indicate the two covenants (laws) — the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ (Galatians 6:2). In this verse Hagar is dealt with, and she signifies the Law which was given on Mount Sinai. Interestingly, this also shows a time-line which again shows the Law came after the promise made to Abraham to be fulfilled in Christ.

This Law (covenant) **“gendereth to bondage.”** The word **“gendereth”** refers to a birth or one being born. The child born to Hagar was a slave, because the one from whom he was born was a slave. Thus, the imagery is that one belonging to the Law of Moses was in a position of slavery or bondage. Paul had been speaking throughout this letter of the blessing of freedom in Christ, and thus the significance of this verse cannot be missed. If one is under the Law of Moses, he is under bondage.

“The followers of that law were unable to obey its many demands perfectly, and when they failed in one or more particulars, the law pronounced them guilty of sin; it contained no means by which the guilt could be removed” (Winton, p. 72).

Gal. 4:25 “For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.”

“Now this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with her children.” (ASV)

ANSWERETH — συστοιχέω — *“To stand or march in the same row (file) with: so once properly of soldiers; hence to stand over against, be parallel with; trop. to answer to, resemble”* (Thayer, p. 608); *“To advance in order together, as soldiers. Figuratively, to correspond to”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Of soldiers standing in the same line...correspond”* (Bauer, p. 795); *“Be in the same row with. The modern equivalent is ‘corresponds to’”* (Earle, p. 282).

Hagar, the bond woman	Sarah, the free woman
Ishmael, the child after the flesh	Isaac, the child of promise
The Old Covenant	The New Covenant
The Earthly Jerusalem	The Heavenly Jerusalem

Chart by Mike Willis

“**Agar**” refers to Hagar, who had been the slave in the household of Abraham and Sarah. The Law of Moses stood in the same relationship because those who adhered to it were in bondage. As noted already in this study, the Law of Moses did not give spiritual freedom; such freedom came by the Law of Christ. Those who abode in the Law of Moses were the children of Jerusalem, thus the children of Sinai, thus the children of the Law given on that mount — which all corresponded to Hagar the slave.

It should also be pointed out that at the time this was written, not only were those who followed the Law of Moses in bondage to that Law, but they were also in bondage to the Roman government.

“Sarah, from whom Israel sprang, did not represent the law, but the free born children of God in Christ. Hagar, from whom the Ishmaelites sprang, represented the bondage of the law under which the Jews lived from Sinai to Pentecost in Acts two” (Brewer, p. 61).

Gal. 4:26 “But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.”

“But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother.” (ASV)

“But Jerusalem which is above is free.” “**But** (de) is adversative,

contrasting the ‘now Jerusalem’ with the ‘above Jerusalem.’ The contrast is not what we would have expected; we would have expected a now-future or below-above contrast. However, we have a now-above contrast. The ‘above Jerusalem’ identifies the Jerusalem as already existing; indeed, v. 31 identifies the Galatian Christians as her children (children of Sarah) at the present time. Hebrews 12:22-23 describes the heavenly Jerusalem as follows: ‘But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.’ The new Jerusalem refers to the redeemed of the world, the church...“Hagar and ‘the Jerusalem which now is’ is the mother of the Jews; Sarah and ‘the Jerusalem which is above’ is our mother. Even as Sarah was a free woman, so also is ‘Jerusalem which is above’ free. Consequently, those of us who are her children are born free” (Willis, p. 218).

Gal. 4:27 “For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.”

“For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: For more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath the husband.” (ASV)

DESOLATE — ἄρημος — “Solitary, lonely,

desolate, uninhabited...of persons: deserted by others; deprived of the aid and protection of others, esp. of friends, acquaintances, kindred; bereft” (Thayer, p. 249); *“Desolate, deserted, lonely”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Desolate, deserted”*(Bauer, p. 309).

The quotation of this passage is from Isaiah 54:1. As this writer studied this verse and considered the context from which it came, the standard way of looking at the passage simply did not make sense. Paul had been emphasizing the freedom which was found in Christ as compared to servitude under the Law. Therefore, it seems to this writer that this verse must deal in some way with that theme and not with the standard thought of comparisons of Sarah and Hagar. Then this writer ran across the thoughts of Willis on this passage, which seem to this writer to be the best explanation to be offered. His remarks are now offered for consideration.

“The command to rejoice was given to Israel during her desolate condition in exile; it was designed to cheer her up. Though she was compared to one who was barren, the prophet looked forward to the church, when the gospel would be taken to every creature of every nation of the world (Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:18). During this period of the history of God’s people, there will be more faithful to the Lord than there ever had been prior to the captivity. Christians are the children of the Jerusalem which is above who gives birth to children of freedom, not of slavery.

This approach to the passage does not force us to take ‘the desolate’ to mean Sarah and ‘she which hath an husband’ to mean Hagar. To do that distorts the passage quoted from

Isaiah, making it say something that was never intended. The desolate was the condition of Israel in her captivity; the one who had a husband was her condition prior to the captivity. Isaiah had Israel looking to the things that would happen when the Servant of God (Isaiah 52:13) bare the sins of the many and made intercession for the transgressors (Isaiah 53:12). This new spiritual Israel, which would be healed of the disease of sin and would be abundant in number and prosperity, would give occasion for the barren to rejoice”(Willis, p. 220).

Gal. 4:28 “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.”

“Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.” (ASV)

Christians are no less the fulfillment of GOD’s promise than was Isaac. Isaac was a physical promise which would eventually lead to the fulfillment of a spiritual promise. Christians today are the children of GOD, not physically, but through a spiritual process — Christians are the spiritual children of GOD, the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham. This means that the Jew (still following the Law of Moses) today is no more than a physical descendant of Abraham, not of promise, and thus (like Ishmael) excluded from the blessings of being an heir. If the physical descendants of Abraham would be saved today, they must become the spiritual children of GOD just like a Gentile must. Like Abraham, for one to receive the blessings of the Father (justification), he must be a child of faith and not one by the works of the Law (physically). The birth of Isaac confirmed the promise that GOD made to Abraham in both the physical and spiritual realm. To be a child

of promise today, one must listen to and obey THE CHILD of promise — Christ!

Gal. 4:29 “But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.”

“But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so also it is now.” (ASV)

PERSECUTED — διωκω — *“To make to run or flee, put to flight, drive away...to harass, trouble, molest one; to persecute”* (Thayer, p. 153); *“To prosecute, persecute, pursue with repeated acts of enmity”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Hasten, run, press on...persecute...drive away, drive out...run after, pursue”* (Bauer, p. 201).

The one born **“after the flesh”** was Ishmael, and this passage probably refers to the account found in Genesis 21:9.

“And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.”

The word **“mocking”** in that text comes from the Hebrew word, *sahaq*, which is *“A verb meaning to laugh, to make jokes, to mock. It is used as an expression of joy or of humor, but it also can be used to mock or make light of something serious; sometimes in jest”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). The full meaning may not come through from the original word found in Genesis 21:9, because in the Galatians text, Paul called it a persecution (see definitions above). Whatever was done on that occasion was more than boys making fun of one another for it occasioned Sarah to request that Hagar be driven away so that Ishmael would not be **“an heir.”**

The point being made is that the one born after the flesh (Ishmael) had persecuted the one born of the spirit or promise (Isaac). The

worldly persecuted the spiritual. Paul said that nothing had changed over the years, for those who were physically-minded, who placed their trust in physical actions, were still persecuting those who followed the spiritual promises. Non-Christians (and unfaithful Christians) have always persecuted Christians, and it will be so until the end of time.

Specifically, who was it who was troubling the Galatians who had become Christians when Paul wrote this letter? It was the unrighteous Jews who now represented the mind-set of Ishmael when he persecuted Isaac. Paul was trying to get the Galatians to understand that the Judaizers were not their friends, but rather they were their enemies!

Gal. 4:30 “Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.”

“Howbeit what saith the Scripture? Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman.” (ASV)

Who was cast out? Ishmael. Why was he cast out? Because he was not to be the heir. What does the casting out of Ishmael represent? The casting out of the Law of Moses for the Law of promise. Who is thus cast out from receiving the inheritance? Those who follow the Law of Moses (or any humanly-devised law) after the Law of promise was delivered by the Messiah, are to be cast out. What were the Galatians to do with the Judaizers who would not repent of their false teachings? Cast them out (church discipline)! Who declared that the appropriate action to take was to cast them out? GOD did (Genesis 21:12).

“In Paul’s times, and until now, there are still two classes of ‘sons of Abraham;’ and the significant question is, ‘Who is a real son of Abraham?’” (Coffman, p. 85)

“Not as though the word of GOD hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of GOD: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son” (Romans 9:6-9).

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the Law of sin and death. For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, GOD sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh” (Romans 8:1-3).

Gal. 4:31 “So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.”

“Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a handmaid, but of the freewoman.” (ASV)

Simple conclusion and implication given.

Christians are not slaves they are free under their birth by faith.

The Allegory of Hagar and Sarah	
The Law of Moses	The Gospel of Christ
Hagar	Sarah
Bondwoman	Freewoman
Ishmael	Isaac
Natural birth	By promise (Miraculous)
Mt. Sinai	Mt Zion
Earthly Jerusalem	Spiritual Jerusalem
Cast out	Remains
No Inheritance	Inheritance
Persecutor	Persecuted
Bondage	Freedom
Judaism	Christianity
Old Covenant	New Covenant

(Chart by Winton, p. 75)

Galatians Chapter Five

Gal. 5:1 “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

“For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage.” (ASV)

STAND FAST — στήκω — *“To stand firm; trop. to persist, persevere” (Thayer, p. 588); “To stand...meaning to stand firm in faith and duty, to be constant, to persevere” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Stand...stand firm, be*

steadfast" (Bauer, p. 768).

FREE — ἰλευθερώω — *"To make free, set at liberty"* (Thayer, p. 204); *"To make free"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *"Free, set free"* (Bauer, p. 250); *"To set free"* (Renn, p. 416); *"The phrase 'for freedom' has an interesting usage in the papyri. Deissmann explains this in Light from the Ancient East (1927 English edition, p. 322). A slave who wanted to become free could pay the price of his freedom to the temple of his god. Then the owner would bring him there, receive the money from the temple treasury, and turn his slave loose. Thereupon the slave would become the property of the god. 'Against all the world, especially his former master, he is a completely free man'"* (Earle, p. 283).

ENTANGLED — ἰνέχω — *"To have within, to hold in: to be held, be entangled, be held ensnared"* (Thayer, p. 216); *"To hold on, endure...to be held in or by anything, metaphorically meaning to be entangled in"* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *"Be subject to, be loaded down with"* (Bauer, p. 265).

The term "**stand fast**" is most commonly thought of by this writer as a military term. He is reminded of an American Civil War general whose men were fleeing from the battlefield, when one of them looked back and told his fleeing companions that General Jackson was not fleeing but rather standing like a stone wall. This is how he received the name of "Stonewall" Jackson. Paul had been emphasizing the difference between freedom in Christ and the slavery of Judaism. Once they had obtained the freedom which is in Christ, he then urged them to stand fast, never budging from that freedom. Notice other passages which urge Christians to stand fast in Christianity.

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Corinthians 16:13).

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Philippians 1:27).

"Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved" (Philippians 4:1).

"For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 3:8).

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 Thessalonians 2:15).

As can be seen from the above quotations, the theme of standing fast without retreat is a common theme of the apostle Paul. One might also consider the numerous occasions when the word "**stedfast**" is found relating to this concept of remaining firm in the freedom found in Christ.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

"Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." A danger exists when one only equates this phrase with the Law of Moses. Most of these brethren had come out of

paganism and the worship of false gods. The practices demanded by these gods placed their adherents in a position of bondage, just as following the Law of Moses was a bondage. They had been wrapped up (entangled) in these religions but had been set free from their constraints by the freedom found in Christ. Paul was urging them (and us) not to go back to anything which would wrap and twist them up in a bondage which could not save them.

Over the centuries, there have been those who have made this verse to say that Christians do not live under Law. Let it be stated that nothing of the sort is ever taught in the New Testament. There are several considerations which prove that Christians are under law. First, it should be noted that Paul will later state in this letter, **“Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ”** (6:2, emphasis mine, RK). This clearly shows that Paul knew that man was not free to do anything he chose to do without restraint. Further, in First Corinthians 9:21, Paul stated that he was **“under the law to Christ.”** Second, if there were no law to which one is amenable, then there could be no sin, because the Bible says that sin is a transgression of the law.

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4).

If there is no law under which one must live to please GOD, then there is no need for a judgment, because no one can be held accountable for what he does. This is also the fallacy of the “once saved always saved” doctrine (If one is “once saved always saved,” then it does not matter what he does after being saved.).

Gal. 5:2 **“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.”**

“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that, if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing.” (ASV)

In this verse, the apostle is not speaking about the simple act of circumcision. Circumcision in itself could serve a number of purposes, such as making the young man Timothy more productive in his work of teaching GOD’s Word among the Jews (his acceptance by them, Acts 16:3).

It must be remembered that the Judaizers who were troubling the Galatians were trying to get them to go back to the rites of the Law of Moses in order to gain justification. But Salvation cannot be gained by going back to the old Law. Circumcision was held by them to be the primary focus of one’s being obedient to that Law. Paul is condemning the use of circumcision as a religious rite which may gain them any blessing from GOD. His statement is that there is no blessing to be achieved from Christ if they go to the Law of Moses for justification. These two laws were never in existence at the same time, and in fact, the Law of Christ replaced the Law of Moses. Circumcision is thus placed as a part which represents the whole as will clearly be seen in the next verse.

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me” (John 14:6, emphasis mine, RK).

Since one cannot come to the Father except through Christ, then to go back to the Law of Moses for justification is a repudiation of Jesus. Without Christ, spiritually speaking, one has nothing of value! There is nothing to be gained outside of Christ. Without Christ one is lost!

Gal. 6:3 “For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law.”

“Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law.” (ASV)

Paul makes the point that, if a person turned to one point of the Law of Moses for justification, he then incurred an obligation to do every part of the Law. One cannot pick and choose which part of the Law he wishes to do and leave the rest undone. The Judaizers obviously were teaching that one could not be a child of GOD unless he was circumcised, and in doing so this would have made him amenable to the whole Law. This is a point which needs to be emphasized in the present time. There are many who want to pick and chose a part of the Law but will not follow the rest of the Law. For example, those who want to worship on Saturday, based on the Law of Moses, do not stone one who works on the sabbath day, as the Law commanded.

“He is obligated, logically, to keep ‘the whole law,’ whether he contend for circumcision, sabbath keeping or instrumental music in worship. Consistency demands total obedience to all its commandments” (Crouch, p. 58).

“Paul has demonstrated the foolishness of going to the Old Testament to pick out one commandment as binding upon mankind. The Old Testament is not some kind of religious smorgasbord from which we choose portions to be added to the religion of Christ, arbitrarily laying aside the other parts of the Law of Moses. The man who

accepts one of the statutes of the Law of Moses is morally obligated to accept all of its ceremonial observances, laws of burnt offerings, dietary and civil regulations” (Willis, p. 231).

Gal. 5:4 “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace.”

“Ye are severed from Christ, ye would be justified by the Law; ye are fallen away from grace.” (ASV)

NO EFFECT — καταργέω — *“To render idle, unemployed, inactive, inoperative...to cause to cease, put an end to, do away with, annul, abolish” (Thayer, p. 336); “To render inactive, idle, useless, ineffective” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Make ineffective, powerless, idle...abolish, wipe out, set aside” (Bauer, p. 417).*

FALLEN — ἵκτιπτω — *“To fall out of, to fall down from...metaph. to fall from a thing, to lose it” (Thayer, p. 198); “To fall off or from, to fall...Figuratively, to fall from any state or condition, i.e., to lose one’s part or interest in that state” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Fall off or from. Literally of withered flowers that fall to the ground” (Bauer, p. 243).*

As one writer stated it, this verse shows *“once saved, not always saved”* (Boatman, p. 197). One cannot have the Law of Moses and Christ; it must be one or the other. You cannot mix the two laws; it is one or the other.

Martin Luther once stated, *“Once in grace, always in grace”* (Stancliff, p. 76). Obviously, at least in his mind, the verse in this text did not exist in his Bible, for it clearly contradicts **his** doctrine. In regards to both of the aforementioned false doctrines, the word **“fallen”** means *“to fall out of, to fall down from”* (see definitions above). It is impossible

to fall out of something that one was never in or to fall down from a height which one has never achieved.

“Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12).

Follow False Teachers	Reject False Teachers
Entangled in a yoke of bondage	Be free
Christ of no profit to them	Gain the benefits of Christ’s work
Debtor to keep the whole Law	Released from the whole Law
Severed from Christ	Continue to be joined to Christ
Fallen from grace	Justified by grace

Chart based on comments made by Wacaster, page 155.

“The tenses of this verse are significant. The verb dikaioo (to be justified) is present; the verb ekipto (fallen) is aorist. The person who is seeking to be justified by the Law of Moses is already fallen from grace” (Willis, p. 233).

Since this passage so clearly teaches that one can fall from grace, i.e., be eternally lost after having been saved, how is it that any learned man can advocate a “perseverance of the saints” doctrine? Could the answer be found in the following passage?

“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: Even him, whose coming is after the

working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause GOD shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12, emphasis mine, RK).

When people do not want to believe the truth, they will believe a lie to try to escape that truth — no matter how preposterous that lie may be. This letter was written to Christians, some of which had severed themselves (see ASV) from Christ by leaving His doctrine and going to a doctrine which could not save them.

Gal. 5:5 “For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.”

“For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness.” (ASV)

Rather than looking for justification and righteousness through carnal ordinances (Law of Moses), Christians look for these things through faith. They depend on the promises given by GOD through the Spirit, knowing that GOD will keep His promises.

How is it that Christians **“through the Spirit”** have hope? This all revolves around the work of the Spirit. Jesus told His disciples that the Spirit’s work was revealing GOD’s message to them and reminding them of the words Jesus taught them.

“When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall

hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you” (John 16:13-14).

“The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26).

Not only did the Lord promise the work of the Spirit, but the Scriptures also show that He accomplished the work set before Him.

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which GOD hath prepared for them that love Him. But GOD hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of GOD. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of GOD knoweth no man, but the Spirit of GOD. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of GOD; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of GOD. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of GOD: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians

2:9-14).

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of GOD spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:20-21).

It is through the work of the revealing Spirit that Christians have their faith which produces the hope of eternal salvation — the home with GOD.

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of GOD” (Romans 10:17).

It is through the work of the revealing Spirit that Christians have their hope in righteousness. This may refer to the righteousness (declaration of GOD regarding one's righteousness) that man has on earth or to the eternal righteousness with the Father. This writer believes it is that which is above, the righteousness enjoyed in the eternal home at the end of time, based on the word “wait.”

None of these things came/come through the Law of Moses and the ordinances of that Law.

Gal. 5:6 “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love.” (ASV)

AVAILETH — ἰσχύω — “To be strong in body, to be robust, to be in sound health” (Thayer, p. 309); “To be strong, i.e., to have strength, ability, power, both physical and moral” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Be strong,

powerful. Be in possession of one's powers, be in good health" (Bauer, p. 383).

Paul clearly states that, in Christianity, physical circumcision or the lack of circumcision means absolutely nothing. Under the old Law, the rite of circumcision did not determine whether a person was righteous or not; it was simply a rite which identified those who were the descendants of Abraham. Yet there is a circumcision which every faithful Christian must have — both male and female. There must be a circumcision of the heart, a cutting away of all that is evil. Every system of belief which is not in accordance with GOD's Word is to be cut away.

"He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of GOD" (Romans 2:28-29).

Notice the definitions of "**availeth**" as noted above. What gives a Christian the strength he needs to be faithful to GOD? What allows a Christian to be spiritually healthy? It is not being circumcised or uncircumcised, nor is it the simple performance of any rite. What causes one to be viewed by GOD as being righteous, which gives him the strength he needs to be faithful and thus have a healthy spiritual life, is a "**faith which worketh by love.**"

Faith (belief) is an interesting concept. One may have an intellectual belief in something, which may even cause him to go through the motions of whatever that faith requires. But faith which gives strength and gives one the power to overcome the temptations and trials of this life must be

motivated by love. A mere intellectual faith is easy to walk away from if things get "too rough." A faith which is motivated by love will cause one to remain steadfast and loyally perform every action which that faith requires — no matter what the opposition may be.

Faith which gives one power and makes him healthy is one which, motivated by love, causes him to work (to do something)! This is seen repeatedly in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. The faith commended by GOD in that chapter was always punctuated by that person's doing what GOD told him to do. Notice some other passages which clearly show that action, motivated by love, is required by GOD from His children.

"If ye love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15).

"Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed GOD, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of GOD. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:20-26).

It should be remembered that it is not works of merit which are being discussed in all

of these passages. The only work which could ever provide forgiveness of sins was not done by a mere man, but was done by Jesus when He went to the cross to die for man. His action was something man could not do for himself because of his sins, but the sinless One could offer that perfect sacrifice. Therefore, no matter how many good things a man may do, he never can merit salvation. But that does not take away the necessity of DOING what GOD says to do! One who refuses to do what GOD tells him to do, his motivation being love for GOD, will be eternally lost!

Gal. 5:7 “Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?”

“Ye were running well; who hindered you that ye should not obey the truth?” (ASV)

HINDER — •νακόπτω — *“To beat back, check (as the course of a ship)”* (Thayer, p. 39); *“To beat or drive back, hinder. It is an Olympic expression related to a race, meaning to come across the course in such a manner as to jostle and throw a participant out of the way”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Hinder, restrain”* (Bauer, p. 56); *“The figure is that of a runner in a race who is making good progress until someone cuts into his path”* (Earle, p. 283); *“Drive you back”* (margin of my Bible).

The Christian life is portrayed several times in the Scriptures as a race, with emphasis placed on different aspects of that race.

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain” (1 Corinthians 9:24).

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a

cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1).

“Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain” (Philippians 2:16).

In the past they had obeyed the Gospel and were moving toward their goal of Heaven in a steady manner. This was before these Judaizers (false teachers) came upon the scene.

The question is then asked, **“Who did hinder you?”** As noted in the definitions above, the idea is “Who has interfered and is holding you back from continuing as you once were in faithfulness to GOD?” Paul is striving to get them to stop and think, to examine what has happened to them, and to determine why they are in their present situation.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates” (2 Corinthians 13:5)?

This writer suggests that every Christian do this on a daily basis. One must be constantly alert so that he is not hindered in his pursuit of the finish line (Heaven).

There are many things that a Christian faces in this life which, if allowed to do so, will hinder him in his quest for Heaven. Some of these may be one’s companions (1 Corinthians 15:33), family members (Matthew 10:37), a job (Luke 14:19), possessions (Mark 10:24-25), or as is the case here, a false teacher (Galatians 1:8-9; 2 John 10-11). From this passage it is quickly seen that (1) Christianity is not a one-time act of obedience

and (2) nothing must be allowed to hinder one on this journey. It should be carefully observed that Paul was teaching that not continuing to obey is disobedience to GOD. They began but allowed something to keep them from continuing their initial progress.

“One cannot begin to ‘run well’ and reach heaven at last without continuing to run well by living each moment of each day in obedience to the gospel” (Brewer, p. 71).

Christians need to follow the example of Jesus in continuing to obey the Father.

“If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love” (John 15:10).

“**Keep**” is a continuous action verb — “must keep on keeping.”

Another thought worthy of consideration here is found in Coffman's writings.

“Note, particularly, that it is not said that they had stopped ‘believing in Christ,’ for there is no evidence that such was the case. ‘Faith only’ for them was as impotent as it is today. By their falling into Jewish observances, they were neglecting and had stopped obeying the teachings of Christ” (Coffman, p. 91).

Gal. 5:8 “This persuasion cometh not of Him that calleth you.”

“This persuasion came not of Him that calleth you.” (ASV)

“**This persuasion**” refers to the Law of Moses and the persuasion being used on them to turn them from the Law of Christ to the Law of Moses.

Who is the “Him” that called them?

Various authors have attributed this to either GOD or Paul; but, as one can see, this author believes it is referring to GOD. Regardless of who is being spoken of here, whether it be GOD or Paul, those who are Christians are called by the Gospel.

“We are bound to give thanks alway to GOD for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because GOD hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14).

When the above passage is studied, there are several points which have bearing on this text. (1) GOD chooses through belief of the truth. (2) GOD calls by the Gospel proclaimed by those chosen to proclaim it. (3) Salvation comes through belief and practice of the Gospel.

Paul is continuing to drive a wedge between those who were teaching salvation through the Law of Moses and himself and anyone else who taught only the Law of Christ. Almost every sentence in this letter called for the Galatians (and man today) to make a choice, because they could not follow both laws and be saved. Nor could these laws be mixed into one law, nor could one pick and choose from either of the laws. Only the Law of Christ can lead one to eternal salvation.

Gal. 5:9 “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”

“A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” (ASV)

LEAVEN — ζύμη — “Leaven” (Thayer, p.

273); *“Leaven, fermenting matter...to heat, so-called from heating or fermentation of the mass of dough with which it is mixed”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Yeast, leaven”* (Bauer, p. 340).

Yeast (leaven) is an ingredient of which only a very small amount is needed to affect a large pan of dough. The lesson to be learned here is that a very small amount of error in a congregation can result in the whole congregation's being affected. The error in Galatia may have begun with one false teacher in their midst, who — if he had been silenced at the very beginning — would not have caused the congregation so much trouble. Paul taught the same lesson to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 5:6) regarding their tolerance of the man involved in fornication. When one permits one sin in a congregation to go unchecked and undisciplined, it will not be long until another sin practiced by someone will be ignored. Soon the entire congregation will be filled with people whose individual sins are ignored, and the congregation thus becomes totally corrupt.

The phrase “You are too picky” has often been used by those who would tolerate some sin either in their own lives or in the life of another. But the question should be, “When GOD has spoken, can we be too picky regarding His laws and our eternal well-being?” The answer to this question is found in the book of James.

“Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10).

GOD does not look at one's life and say, *“They faithfully obeyed Me in all the ‘major’ things but not in all the ‘minor’ things, so I will call them faithful.”* GOD does not view sin as major sin and minor sin — to Him sin is sin, and THAT sin, no matter what it is, will keep

the unrepentant out of Heaven. Illustrating this principle from the Old Testament could be the case of Moses, who was told to speak to the rock but instead smote the rock, for which he was banned from entering the promised land. “Little” things are important because they always lead to bigger things, whether those things are good or bad.

“Evil spreads surely and rapidly, and must be opposed in its beginning if it is to be opposed successfully. It is a serious mistake to despise the day of small things whether of good or evil (Zech. 4:11). Just as one plague infected person may bring devastation upon a city, so may one teacher of doctrine subversive of the gospel corrupt a whole community of believers” (Lipscomb, p. 260).

When this writer was young, he saw the effects of a single false teacher. This man came from another state and placed membership with the local congregation. The first mistake made was that the elders did not immediately check this man out, for if they had, they would have learned of his false doctrine from whence he came. This man taught that miracles were still in existence today and that he had the power to perform healing miracles. As time went on, he seemed to know which members he could convince, until finally his error was exposed. But the damage had been done, for in a congregation of formerly about two hundred members, he took away about one-third of them when his false doctrine was exposed. Almost none of those people would have been affected by such if he had come boldly proclaiming his error at the beginning. Like leaven, he quietly and secretively advanced his doctrine until he caused a large number of souls to be lost.

Those who demand tolerance are either consciously or unconsciously giving the green light to damnable error being taught and practiced. No sin, no matter how “small,” can be tolerated without the loss of precious souls. The warning of the apostle Paul must be advanced in every age to **“have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them”** (Ephesians 5:11).

“Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees...Then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees” (Matthew 16:6, 12).

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Romans 16:17-18).

Gal. 5:10 “I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.”

“I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.” (ASV)

MINDED — φρονέω — *“To have understanding, be wise...to feel, to think...to direct one’s mind to a thing, to seek or strive for”* (Thayer, p. 658); *“To think, have a*

mindset, be minded. The activity represented by this word involves the will, affections, and conscience” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Think, form or hold an opinion, judge...set one’s mind on, be intent on”* (Bauer, p. 866).

Optimism — Paul believed these brethren would no longer follow these false teachers after receiving this letter. There needs to be a belief that people will do what is right after they hear the truth. This does not mean that all will, and Paul understood this.

“They have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report” (Romans 10:16)?

Nonetheless, there needs to be a confident expectation that people want to do, and will do, what is right.

Paul also expresses confidence that they would deal appropriately with those who troubled them (stir them up). Those troublemakers would receive a judgment, whether it be by the brethren in that locality or eventually on the day of judgment. Implied is the fact that all who join them in this heresy will also bear the “troubler’s” judgment.

“Whosoever he be” is a phrase which shows that there will be no respect of persons with regard to this judgment. It should be remembered that Paul had earlier called Peter to account for his being a part of those needing condemnation for their false teachings and/or actions (Gal. 2:11). Not even an apostle could escape blame for his wrong teaching or actions.

“As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:9).

Let us return to the phrase **“he that troubleth you.”** Paul clearly proclaims that

the one who is causing trouble is the one who brought the false doctrine. It is not the one who stands upon and defends the Gospel who causes the trouble. One of the tactics often used by false teachers when they are opposed is to claim that those who continue to stand upon the Gospel are causing a division in the Lord's church. This is an attempt to silence their critics, a tactic which should be seen for what it is and be strongly opposed. Unfortunately, many (for the sake of false peace) will give in to this argument. This tactic and attitude can be seen in First Kings chapter eighteen. A study of the situation shows that the land had experienced drought because of the people's sins against GOD. This punishment had been announced by Elijah, GOD's chosen spokesman. When it was time to end the drought, GOD sent His spokesman to give King Ahab the news. Upon seeing Elijah, Ahab said, "**Art thou he that troubleth Israel**" (1 Kings 18:17)? Ahab blamed the one who stood with GOD rather than his own sinful actions. Rather than silencing Elijah, his words brought forth the same kind of reaction that Christians should have when falsely accused by sinful men. Elijah answered Ahab with this rebuke: "**I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim**" (1 Kings 18:18). May Elijah's tribe increase.

Gal. 5:11 "**And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.**"

"But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? then hath the stumbling-block of the cross been done away."
(ASV)

It appears that Paul might have been accused of preaching the necessity of circumcision, possibly based on his having Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3). If it were the case that he had been so falsely accused, it was because they had perverted his actions with Timothy. But, he reasons, if I am a champion of circumcision as a necessity for one's salvation, why do the Jews still persecute me? This would then be another indication that those who troubled them were their enemies.

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18-19).

When considering the Scriptures, it is quickly observed that the Jews (Judaizers) were the primary opponents of the Gospel and its spread in the early years of the church. Why was this so? Because they wanted to hold on to the Law of Moses and its ceremonies.

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Corinthians 1:23).

Why was the cross of Christ a stumblingblock to the Jews? Because His death on that cross did away with all of their beloved ordinances and practices under that Law.

Gal. 5:12 "**I would they were even cut off which trouble you.**"

"I would that they that unsettle you would even go beyond circumcision." (ASV)

CUT OFF — • ΠΟΚΟΠΤΩ — "*To cut off, amputate*" (Thayer, p. 63); "*To cut off,*

amputate”(Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “*Cut off...make a eunuch of, castrate*” (Bauer, p. 93).

Paul wished that these Judaizers who troubled the church were “**cut off.**” As the definitions of the Greek word (shown above) for “**cut off**” show, this word means more than the simple act of circumcision. But for a moment, let us consider that it might mean only circumcision. The act of circumcision cuts off a piece of flesh that is basically worthless and is thus thrown away. If this were the meaning here, Paul would be saying that the Judaizers should be cut off from the Galatians and discarded as being worthless.

As seen above, this word means more than simple circumcision. It means to amputate, castrate, make one a eunuch. The physical act of castration would render that one impotent, that is, unable to reproduce himself through children. It is this writer’s studied opinion that Paul is using this extreme example to show that these Judaizers should be cut off (amputated) from all contact with the brethren so that they could not reproduce themselves in making “Judaizers” of the Galatian brethren. In point of fact, by teaching the necessity of circumcision for salvation, they had indeed castrated themselves, which caused them to be separated from GOD under the Old Law.

“He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD” (Deuteronomy 23:1). (“**cut off**” — Hebrew word *karat*, “*cut out; to cut off a part of the body (e.g., head, hand, foreskin), maim, castrate; to cut down trees, cut down idols; to root out; to eliminate, kill, destroy; to be felled; to be consumed; to be exiled, to be destroyed; to withdraw, be*

withdrawn” — Zodhiates, CD Rom Version.)

Castration is a separation of a member of the body from the body. These Judaizers needed to be separated from the body of Christ because of their false teaching by the Christians of Galatia — withdrawal of fellowship.

“We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (2 Thessalonians 3:6).

Gal. 5:13 “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”

“For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another.” (ASV)

SERVE — δουλεύω — “*To be a slave, serve, do service*” (Thayer, p. 157); “*To be in the position of a servant and act accordingly; to be subject and serve in subjection or bondage*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “*Of relationship be a slave, be subjected...of action or conduct perform the duties of a slave, serve, obey*” (Bauer, p. 205).

The “**liberty**” or freedom Paul spoke about was freedom from the condemnation of the Old Law and sin, which he had formerly addressed. There is freedom from the practice of sin, the guilt of sin, and fear of punishment for one’s sins. No one could measure up to that Law perfectly (except Christ), thus all stood condemned by that Law. But the freedom he speaks of is only maintained as long as the Christian remains faithful to the new law under which he lives.

“We are free from the Mosaic Law, from the guilt of sin, from the practice of sin, from the penalty of sin, from inordinate anxiety, and from the fear of death” (Winton, p. 83).

There are many who look at Paul’s statements about **“liberty”** and *“teach that the grace of God allows men to continue living in sin and will then usher them one day into heaven”* (Brewer, p. 77). This license to sin is not granted by GOD, but rather by those who teach “grace only” or “faith only.” Both of these doctrines teach a “once saved always saved” position which then allows one to do anything he wants to do. Both doctrines lead to eternal damnation, not eternal life.

“What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? GOD forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But GOD be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Romans 6:15-18).

The phrase **“only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another”** is spoken about selfish desires. Christians are not on this earth to please themselves, but rather to minister to the needs of others. Christians must recognize their roles as servants, not a forced obligation, but servants because of the love they have first to GOD, then to brethren, and third for the whole human family.

“Human freedom consists in having the

capacity to choose whose servant or slave one will become. Human freedom itself is not unrestricted. Its nature limits it greatly. A human can chose either to serve God or the devil” (Deaver, p. 192).

Love demands service, and whom one voluntarily serves shows whom one loves. Does one love GOD and fail to keep His commandments?

“For this is the love of GOD, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3).

Does one love Christ and fail to keep His commandments?

“If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:30-31).

Gal. 5:14 **“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”**

“For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” (ASV)

On one occasion Jesus was asked, **“Master, which is the great commandment in the law”** (Matt. 22:36)? Jesus answered that there were two great laws upon which all the rest were subservient:

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt

love the Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:37-40).

In the present text, the apostle says, **“All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”** Is there a contradiction between what the Lord taught and what the apostle taught? Absolutely not. Notice that the Lord said the first commandment of importance, the number one command in all of the law, puts obedience to GOD absolutely first in one’s life. One cannot be in the right relationship with his fellow man (whether Christian or non-Christian) without first being in obedience to GOD. Paul’s statement here presupposes the right relationship with GOD.

“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law” (Romans 13:8-10).

It is interesting to note that the apostle said the law (Law of Christ, Galatians 6:2) is fulfilled in **“one word.”** The word is **“love”** That is the important word in all that Paul said about how to treat one’s fellow man in this

context. It is love which motivates one to obey GOD in all areas of his life, whether one speaks of his relationship to GOD or his fellow man. If either one of those relationships is not what it should be, then both are not what they should be. One cannot love GOD and hate any of his fellow men; nor can one love his fellow man in the strictest sense and hate GOD. Example: The atheist claims to love his fellow man in denying him GOD, but in point of fact he hates his fellow man because he would deny him the blessings of GOD.

What kind of love should we have for both GOD and our fellow man? A sacrificial love, one that would give our very lives for them.

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:34-35).

Regarding the love of one’s fellow man, Willis has the following interesting and pertinent thoughts:

“To show the love toward others which I show toward myself involves an active good-will. An absence of love can be detected by active ill-will toward one’s fellowman. However, love cannot be seen by the mere fact that no active ill-will is shown toward another. Love demands the positive acts of good-will toward others, helping them when they need it, caring for them when they are physically unable to care for themselves, etc., and not only by the mere absence of ill-will” (Willis, p. 249).

Gal. 5:15 “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.”

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

CONSUME — •ναλίσκω — “*To expend...to consume, use up, destroy*” (Thayer, p. 39); “*To take away, destroy, consume*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “*Consume in the underlying sense of destroy*” (Renn, p. 209).

Paul was either warning them of the possibility of these two groups (Jews and Gentiles, Judaizers and Christians) going to war with one another, or it already existed among them. Either way, when party contentions develop in any group (even the church), it will not be long until the strength of that group is significantly weakened or completely destroyed.

It is interesting to notice the progression of this verse — (1) bite, (2) devour, and (3) consume. As Chrysostom stated, “*Bite, the act of one enraged: devour, of one persevering in malice*” (Quoted by JFB, p. 393). If Christians are not careful, when some conflict comes up (as it inevitably will because all are human beings), they will snap at one another and say hurtful things which will lead to conscious efforts, if not checked, to destroy the other so as to win the conflict. More damage has been done over the years by those who are determined to win the argument (selfishness), even if it destroys their fellow Christian, than can be realized by mortal man. But beware, GOD knows the damage which has been done and who is responsible for such.

But, does this passage indicate that one should be careful that nothing he says may hurt someone’s feelings or cause him anger? Such reasoning would be the destructive philosophy now invading the United States — it is called “political correctness.” Political correctness states that one must avoid at all

costs saying anything which might hurt someone’s feelings — that might indicate that something one advocates or practices may be wrong. Yet, these same people who advocate such do not hesitate in trying to make anyone who disagrees with them feel like he is “lower than a snake’s belly.” Hypocrites! Such would have attacked the Holy Spirit’s inspired apostle Paul for writing this letter to the Galatians and boldly stating the truth in opposition to the false teachers of Judaism.

“A word of caution should here be given. This ‘biting’ and ‘devouring’ should not be confused with a faithful exposure of heresy or heretics. The Gospel makes it plain that it is to be defended (1 Pet. 3:15; Jude 3); and there comes a time when names must be called in order for brethren to be properly warned (2 Tim. 2:16-17; 4:14). Such honorable and necessary efforts do not fall within the category of activity under consideration in verse 15” (Deaver, p. 192).

Gal. 5:16-17 “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would.” (ASV)

FULFILL — τελέω — “*To bring to a close, to finish, to end...to perform, execute, complete, fulfil*” (Thayer, p. 619); “*To make an end or to accomplish, to complete something, not*

merely to end it, but to bring it to perfection or its destined goal, to carry it through” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Bring to an end, finish, complete something”* (Bauer, p. 810); *“Fulfill, complete, finish, accomplish”* (Renn, p. 420).

These verses are leading toward a discussion of the difference between the spirit and flesh (vv. 19-26). From this context, it can clearly be seen that there is a war going on between one’s desire to live according to the dictates of the Spirit of GOD and the selfish desires of the flesh. Man must make a choice between his spiritual and fleshly sides, and whichever of the two he chooses, the other must be subjected to the one chosen to have first place in his life. The fleshly mind desires to place self at the center of one’s universe, whereas his spirit desires to place GOD in His rightful place in the center of His universe.

“There are two distinct elements recognized as existing in man — the spirit and the flesh. The inward or spiritual man and the outward or animal man. The former connects man with God above, the latter with the brute creation below. The question is, which shall rule or control in man” (Lipscomb, p. 264)?

“For I delight in the law of GOD after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members” (Romans 7:22-23).

One should carefully consider the Calvinistic contention that the body can sin, yet the spirit does not sin. Paul clearly shows in these passages and others that the mind is what controls the body. When the body is involved in sin, it is the mind which directs it to

do so. This shows that the will of man is involved in all that he does. It is the will of man which determines whether he will sinfully give in to the temptations of the flesh or whether he will follow the spiritual guidance of GOD given through the inspired revelation. One should carefully note with regard to this that the word **“cannot”** in verse seventeen is not found in any other reliable version of the Bible. A good translation of verse seventeen follows (except for the capitalization of the word “spirit”):

“For the flesh doth desire contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit contrary to the flesh, and these are opposed one to another, that the things that ye may will — these ye may not do” (Young’s Literal Translation).

Another good translation of this passage is by Littrell:

“For flesh lusts against spirit; and spirit against flesh. These are opposed to each other, so you may not do what you please.”

Each person must make a decision as to whether or not he will place spiritual values above physical values.

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve GOD and mammon” (Matthew 6:24).

Gal. 5:18 **“But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the Law.”**

“But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the Law.” (ASV)

The first thing to notice in this verse is **“led by the Spirit.”** This refers to the Holy Spirit.

But how does He lead man? From the beginning of the Scriptures until the end, the affirmation is always that He leads through words. This was true under the Old Law:

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of GOD spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:20-21).

It is also true in the New Testament (the New Law):

Jesus said, **“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come”** (John 16:12-13).

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

Therefore, the Spirit leads man by the Word of GOD, not some mystical feeling or emotional euphoria.

“The leadings of the Spirit are not some “better-felt-than-told” feeling which produces subjective and illogical reasoning in the mind of the Christian” (Wacaster, p. 172).

Man is led by GOD’s Word so far as he is willing to submit himself to it.

Paul has clearly set forth the argument in this book that one either accepts the Gospel

of Christ or the Law of Moses. If he accepts the Law of Moses, then he is under bondage to that Law. Paul clearly showed that one cannot be led by both the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ — it is one or the other. If one is a Christian, then he will be led by the Spirit. Since it is the case that one may only have freedom and forgiveness of his sins as a Christian, why would anyone want to go back to the Law of Moses to seek justification where there is no justification? One might add that, if one allows himself to be led by the Spirit, he cannot be subject to any other religious law either (Humanism, atheism, new age...).

It is this writer’s belief that one should CAREFULLY study the thoughts of McGarvey on this passage, which follow:

“By as much as the Spirit triumphs within us, by that much are we freed from feeling the presence of the law. So long as we have two wills we are sensible of conflict, and so of the restraint of law, but when our nature is merged in the will of the Spirit, so that there is but one will within us, then we lose all consciousness of restraint. We attain to that true rule of liberty which Augustine condenses in the saying: ‘Love God, and do what you please.’ God himself leads the life of perfect righteousness, yet God can never be said to be under law. He knows no law but his own choice, but his choice is ever righteousness because of the perfect holiness of his character. So the Christian should strive to bring his own will into such perfect accord with the will of the Spirit that he does not feel the constraint of law resting upon him” (McGarvey, p. 283).

Gal. 5:19 “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,”

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,” (ASV)

The works of those who are not walking by the Spirit’s instructions are now given, that is, the ungodly man lives this way.

ADULTERY — μοιχεία — Adultery is an act of unfaithfulness where one of the parties is married. Specifically, the unfaithfulness occurs in the realm of fornication — one of any number of sexual activities forbidden by GOD. In the Bible, the word is used in two areas — the physical and the spiritual. Man is primarily aware of its use in the physical realm, where one mate is sexually unfaithful to his/her mate. Adultery in the physical realm is strictly forbidden by GOD’s laws.

“And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery” (Matthew 19:9).

The second area which the Bible calls adultery is spiritual in nature. It is still unfaithfulness, but this time it refers to man’s unfaithfulness to GOD, to whom he is married as a Christian.

“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto GOD” (Romans 7:4).

Since Christians are married to GOD, they owe their fidelity to Him.

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with GOD? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of GOD”

(James 4:4).

These words were spoken to Christians who needed to be warned not to be unfaithful to GOD.

To a Christian, physical adultery is something to be abhorred. Yet Christians do not often consider that any unfaithfulness which they exhibit toward GOD is adultery, too. It is disgusting for a marriage partner to find out that his/her mate has been unfaithful to him/her. How much more disgusting it is for one to be unfaithful to his marriage relationship with his groom — Christ.

FORNICATION — πορνεία — This word speaks of illicit sexual relations in general. It does not necessarily refer to two unmarried people, as it is commonly used in society. In Matthew 19:9, Jesus used the two words (adultery and fornication) interchangeably. Fornication is a broad term used to designate any and all unlawful sexual activities by anyone. Fornication would include such things as adultery, bestiality, sodomy, incest, homosexuality, et cetera. Thus, all adultery is fornication, but not all fornication is adultery.

UNCLEANNES — • καθαρότης — This word may also be used in two ways, yet both signify to be unclean — dirty. First, it may be used to denote outward dirt, such as the little boy who goes outside to play and becomes dirty because he rolled in the mud. Second, it is also used to denote moral or inward uncleanness. Notice some examples of this word being used in this way.

“Wherefore GOD also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their

own bodies between themselves”
(Romans 1:24).

“I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness”
(Romans 6:19).

The word in general speaks of an impure heart.

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see GOD” (Matthew 5:8).

“Uncleanness includes any impure thought, look, word, gestures, dress, etc. Dirty words and dirty actions proceed from dirty minds which defile human souls (Mark 7:20-23)” (Crouch, p. 65).

“Synonyms include vileness, foul desires, base motives, indecency and sexual immorality” (Wacaster, p. 173).

In this context, sandwiched between adultery, fornication and lasciviousness, it probably refers to uncleanness of a sexual nature.

LASCIVIOUSNESS — •σέλγεια —
“Unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence...wanton (acts or manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females, etc.” (Thayer, p. 80). Zodhiates tells one that uncleanness is *“Lasciviousness, license, debauchery, sexual excess, absence of restraint, insatiable desire for pleasure...arrogance, insolence referring to words...wantonness, lustfulness, excessive pleasure...debauchery, perversion in general”*

(Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

The Bible teaches that one’s heart is to be kept **“with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life”** (Proverbs 4:23). The kind of person who practices lasciviousness is the kind of person who does not care what people (or GOD) think of his actions. This person exercises no restraint in doing whatever he desires to do.

Gal. 5:20 **“Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,”**

“idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties,” (ASV)

IDOLATRY — εἰδωλολατρεία — *“The worship of false gods, idolatry”* (Thayer, p. 174). Most commonly when the subject of idolatry is brought up, people think of an object carved out of stone, wood or fashioned from some precious metal. But notice the definition above. While a person may make something and call it a god, the meaning is the worship of a false god. But further, an idea may be a god to someone; it does not have to be something tangible. For instance, the attitude of covetousness is a god to some, especially in America.

“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry”
(Colossians 3:5).

The point is that anything which a person adores more than he does GOD is idolatry. Anything a person places above GOD in any way is his god. It could be music, sports, a hobby, education, a profession, family, et cetera.

“An ‘image’ can be literal, or a

philosophical image, or concept on which the mind has fixed its affections. Our society worships at the image of 'Choice' in permitting women to murder their unborn children under the euphemism, 'abortion.' While the idols have changed from Molech of the Canaanites to Choice in modern society, the rites and results are the same. As parents took their infants and burned them to death in the arms of Molech's image as a sacrifice to him, so modern parents take the unborn and kill them in sacrifice to their idol, Choice" (Brewer, p. 85).

WITCHCRAFT (sorcery) — φαρμακεία — *"The use or the administering of drugs...poisoning...sorcery, magical arts, often found in connection with idolatry and fostered by it" (Thayer, p. 649).* The Greek word here is the one from which we get the word "pharmacy." Its significance seems to center on an altered state of mind due to the use of drugs. This may have been used by sorcerers to fool their clients, but what does it say about those today who use drugs to obtain an altered state for whatever reason? The use of such drugs makes one susceptible to all kinds of falsehood and crimes.

"Pharmakeia (the Greek word from which 'pharmacy' is derived) means 'the use or the administering of drugs.' From that, it came to be used of 'poisoning' because drugs were used to kill people. From that, it was used to mean "sorcery, magical arts, often found in connection with idolatry and fostered by it.' The word is therefore, related to false religion to describe the religious charlatan who used drugs to produce drunkenness, give feelings of euphoria, practice 'black magic,' and

otherwise to pretend that he was someone great" (Willis, p. 259).

HATRED — Hatred is the opposite of love. It is defined by Zodhiates as *"Enmity, hatred, hostility" (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).* Hatred will cause one to try to destroy the object of his hatred. Murder (the premeditated act of killing) is often the result of hatred.

VARIANCE — ἔρις — *"Contention, strife, wrangling" (Thayer, p. 249).* This deals with a contentious attitude toward others. This deals with those who are always looking for a quarrel with someone, people who are hard to get along with (generally because they do not want to get along with others).

"This is seen in church troubles, when men take opposite sides not so much from different convictions, as from personal dislike and the disposition to thwart an opponent" (Shepherd, p. 267).

Strife often leads to violence and must be controlled and eliminated in a Christian life.

EMULATIONS — ζήλος — Thayer shows that this word can be used in both a good or bad sense. *"Zeal, ardor in embracing, pursuing, defending anything...an envious and contentious rivalry, jealousy" (Thayer, p. 271).*

"But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you" (Galatians 4:18).

In the list given in this verse, it is lumped with that which is evil; thus, it refers to *"an envious and contentious rivalry, jealousy."* This kind of person is probably one who enjoys strife between parties, even if he is not involved in it. This is also the kind of person who will abandon truth, if it is not on his side, in order to try to win an argument.

WRATH — θυμός — *"Passion, angry heat, anger forthwith boiling up and soon subsiding*

again, on the other hand, denotes indignation which has arisen gradually and become more settled” (Thayer, p. 293). Zodhiates states that the meaning is “to move impetuously, particularly as the air or wind, a violent motion or passion of the mind. Anger, wrath, indignation” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). This word portrays a rage which builds inside a man and then burst forth against his enemies, whether perceived or real enemies. It is an anger which has probably been nurtured before being released; it does not seem to be an instantaneous anger. Most of the time what is called instant anger (“He just flew into a rage”) is caused by the heart which seeks vengeance for even the slightest causes.

“It means open eruptions of anger which may take the form of furious words, menacing gestures, threats, or violence” (Crouch, p. 66).

“It is the blaze of temper which flares into violent words and deeds” (Dale as quoted by Wacaster, p. 174).

“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city”
(Proverbs 16:32).

STRIFE — ἰριθεία — “A courting distinction, a desire to put one’s self forward, a partisan and factious spirit which does not disdain low arts; partisanship, factiousness” (Thayer, p. 249). “Contention, strife, rivalry. It represents a motive of self-interest, mercenary interest. It also meant canvassing for public office, scheming” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

“This work of the flesh fits one who is self-seeking. It originally was applied to one who was a hired laborer. It

came to be applied to work which was done for pay; later, it was used in reference to one who wants a public office for what he would get from it. The individual with this disposition in the church is one who is self-serving, without regard to the effect his selfish way has on others or the church” (Winton, p. 90).

This is the kind of person who views either his selfish desires or the desires of the party as more important even than truth. This kind of person will cause division in the church without remorse for his actions. False teachers often like to claim that the division created in congregations was not because of their pushing a false doctrine, but it was created by those who held to the truth and opposed their false doctrine. Clearly, division is almost always created by one who is involved in sin and does not want his hand called on it.

SEDITIONS — διχοστασία — The basic idea of this word is simply divisions. This again gets into the realm of parties forming within the church, usually revolving around some strong leader. It is the kind of thing which was going on in the church at Corinth, where men were dividing and claiming to follow Paul, Peter, Apollos and Christ (1 Corinthians 1:12). If this party spirit is not stopped, unity will be destroyed.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10).

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and

offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Romans 16:17-18).

HERESIES — αἵρεσις — *“Act of taking, capture...choosing, choice...that which is chosen, a chosen course of thought and action; hence one’s chosen opinion, tenet...a body of men separating themselves from others and following their own tenets (a sect or party)”* (Thayer, p. 16). This is the idea of those who break up into their own group and exclude all others. Note: they have not excluded all others because they are following the truth and all others are in error. They exclude others based upon their own opinions and beliefs. Years ago in America, this attitude was seen in the church when men’s opinions said that one cup (from which all must drink) must be used in the Lord’s supper. This attitude was also seen when their opinion dictated that a piece of cloth should be put on a woman’s head (I will not call it a veil, because it was not.). Men’s opinions which do not violate GOD’s laws must be allowed to exist side by side without causing a party spirit of division. To bind one’s opinions on another is simply sin in and of itself!

Gal. 5:21 “Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of GOD.”

“envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of GOD.” (ASV)

ENVYINGS — φθόνος — *“Envy, jealousy, pain felt and malignity conceived at the sight of excellence or happiness”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). Envy causes one to see what another has and then to desire it, possibly even to the point of appropriating it illegally. If the thing envied cannot be appropriated, such as the good reputation of another, one might attempt to destroy the thing it cannot have.

“Envy is a feeling of discontent, chagrin, pain and ill will because of another’s advantage, success, happiness, or excellence...Envy is the daughter of pride, and the mother of hatred, vengeance and murder in embryo and essence” (Crouch, p. 66).

“A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones” (Proverbs 14:30).

MURDERS — φόνος — *“Murder, slaughter”* (Thayer, p. 657). There is a difference between “killing” and “murder.” One may kill someone and it be an accident. For example, someone walks out in front of your car and dies after you hit him. Murder is a deliberate act of planning and looking for the opportunity of killing someone.

DRUNKENNESS — μέθη — Simply, it is intoxication. *“Drunkenness is the condition of mind brought about by the use of alcohol or other chemicals that distort reality”* (Stancliff, p. 86).

“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise” (Proverbs 20:1).

A good picture of the evil effects of alcoholic consumption is seen in Proverbs 23:30-35.

“They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it

is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.”

A side note should be observed here. Many say that alcoholism is a sickness, but the inspired writer says that the drunkard was not sick. Yet, he was sick – SIN SICK.

Another consideration should be made here, as the word is defined as “intoxication.” Webster defines the word “intoxication” as “*an abnormal state that is essentially a poisoning*” (Webster, CD Rom Version). When people drink alcoholic beverages or use other drugs to please themselves, they are poisoning themselves.

REVELLINGS — κάμος — “*Feasts and drinking parties that are protracted till late at night and indulge in revelry*” (Thayer, p. 367). “*A feasting, used in the pl. only in the NT meaning riotous conduct (Rom. 13:13); revellings; festivities in honor of several gods, especially Bacchus, the god of wine, hence feastings and drunkenness with impurity and obscenity of the grossest kind. Therefore, it always presupposes a festive company and drunken revelers*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). This word presents a picture of a complete lack of restraint on the part of those generally in a party atmosphere.

AND SUCH LIKE (or things like these) — The first thing this phrase shows is that the

former list is a partial list of those things which men practice which are contrary to the instructions given by the Spirit – thus contrary to a Christian’s life. When one considers these sins, he will see certain principles which he may apply to other areas and thus be able to determine if things which may not at first seem sinful in reality are sinful.

Paul next shows that those who are involved in sins of the flesh will not go to Heaven. These are blunt words, a blunt warning of the future consequences for those who involve themselves in the sins of the flesh.

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

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law.” (ASV)

The fruit of the Spirit refers to what following the directions of the Spirit will produce in one’s life. The first thing listed is “**love.**” Love is the essential element for those who would obey GOD. Jesus said the first and great commandment is to love GOD with every ounce of our being (Luke 10:27). The reason that love is first on this list is because if one truly loves GOD, then all of his actions will be designed to try to please GOD (and that includes his actions toward his fellow man).

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of GOD: and every one that loveth Him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of GOD, when we love GOD, and keep His commandments. For

this is the love of GOD, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of GOD overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:1-4).

JOY — χαρά — *“Joy, rejoicing, gladness”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). Joy should characterize a Christian because of the many blessings he has in Christ, especially the blessing of salvation. These blessings bring on and nurture feelings of joy and happiness. Christians have a GOD who cares for them and Who furnishes them with all they need for happiness in this life and in the one to come.

PEACE — The word **“peace”** is used in the Scriptures to designate several kinds of peace. (1) A state of national tranquility between nations, lack of war. (2) Peace between individuals; lack of strife. (3) A sense of security, safety and prosperity. (4) Peace brought by the Christ by a system which leads to peace. (5) The state enjoyed by a soul which is assured of salvation through Jesus — thus peace with GOD. This last comes through justification through Christ. This peace does not exempt Christians from the troubles so often prevalent in this world, but rather deals with peace of the soul and conscience through obedience to GOD.

LONGSUFFERING — μακροθυμία — *“Patience, endurance, constancy, steadfastness, perseverance...patience, forbearance, longsuffering, slowness in avenging wrongs”* (Thayer, p. 387). *“Forbearance, long-suffering, self-restraint before proceeding to action. The quality of a person who is able to avenge himself yet refrains from doing so”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). This quality is the opposite of a short-tempered person. This kind of person is

not easily angered and, when angered, holds it in check to be sure his attitude and actions are right. This is not a spirit of compromise, for where doctrine is concerned (and right behavior which is dictated by GOD), man has no option but to act in obedience. This is the disposition which allows Christians under trial to endure the trial and move forward in a godly manner.

“It is the quality of spirit which is able to endure situations and persons without losing its temper and expressing itself in passionate anger. It is that patient endurance before taking action, especially an act of passionate anger. With reference to persons, makrothumia enables us to bear injuries without retaliating in revengeful acts” (Willis, p. 268).

GENTLENESS — χρηστότης — *“Moral goodness, integrity...benignity, kindness”* (Thayer, p. 672). *“Benignity, kindness, usefulness”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). This is the idea of kindness shown to another. We often think of this word with regard to doing something nice for someone else. Consider,; would this not also include kindly rebuking one who is in sin because of his need for forgiveness? Was it unkind of Jesus to walk into the temple, rebuking those who made merchandise of His Father’s house and cleansing the temple of this foul stench (Matt. 21)?

GOODNESS — •γαθωσύνη — *“Uprightness of heart and life”* (Thayer, p. 3). *“Active goodness”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version). *“Goodness, uprightnes”* (Bauer, p. 3).

“Goodness is a life molded by God’s standard of morality...Goodness is being benevolent” (Elkins, p. 208).

“Without a divine standard, there would be no goodness...The standard of goodness is God’s word...goodness includes benevolence” (Winton, p. 95).

“Genuine goodness is the constant desire to abstain from every form of evil and do good to the souls and bodies of people to the very best of our ability” (Crouch, p. 78).

FAITH — ΠΙΣΤΙΣ — *“Conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the N.T. of a conviction or belief respecting man’s relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and conjoined with it”* (Thayer, p. 512). *“Faith. Subjectively meaning firm persuasion, conviction, belief in the truth, veracity, reality or faithfulness (though rare). Objectively meaning that which is believed, doctrine, the received articles of faith”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).

“Fidelity is a synonym, and some translations have the word ‘loyalty.’ One is ‘faithful’ if he is dependable, trustworthy, and loyal to his word, and the word of God. Inherent in ‘faithfulness’ is the fulfilling of one’s obligations in every walk of life” (Wacaster, p. 178).

“This passage is discussing human virtues that are the fruit of the Spirit. The meaning ‘fidelity, faithfulness, i.e. the character of one who can be relied on’ is what is intended in this verse. This is the virtue of the man whose word can be relied on, whose loyalty

can be depended upon. This is the virtue of an unswerving fidelity to Jesus Christ” (Willis, p. 270).

MEEKNESS — πρ’ ότης — *“Gentleness, mildness, meekness”* (Thayer, p. 535). *“Meekness, mildness, forbearance”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5).

In modern society, the word meekness is commonly used to describe someone who is spineless. That is not the meaning of meekness in the Bible. The word **“meekness”** describes a nature which does not automatically retaliate wronged but in matters of right versus wrong, will always stand for right and continue to push for right no matter what the opposition. The two greatest examples of meekness found in the Bible are Moses and Christ. Both meekly took the personal attacks rendered against them, yet they stood strong and courageously, not backing down against the evil all around them. Meekness can be defined as strength under control.

“Meekness is wholehearted reception of divine revelation, wise self-denial, and divinely directed will-power” (Crouch, p. 81).

“Aristotle defined ‘praotes’ as the mean between excessive anger and excessive angerlessness, the quality of the man who is always angry at the right time and never at the wrong time. What throws most light on its meaning is that the adjective ‘praus’ is used of an animal that has been tamed and brought under control” (Quoted by Wacaster from Barclay, p. 179).

TEMPERANCE — ἡγκράτεια — *“Self-control, (the virtue of one who masters his*

desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites” (Thayer, p. 166). “*Continence, temperance, self-control*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Corinthians 9:27).

“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me” (Luke 9:23).

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto GOD, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto GOD” (Romans 6:12-13).

This word describes a self-control which is exercised in every area of one’s life. It cannot be limited to one particular area; rather, it includes every aspect of one’s actions and thoughts. It should also be considered that this would include things in which it is perfectly all right for a Christian to participate. It is good and acceptable to eat, but if eating is not controlled, it will lead to gluttony. Recreation is a much-needed commodity for the total well-being of a person both physically and mentally, but if such dominates one’s life, he will lose sight of things like the study of GOD’s Word as being far more important.

The apostle then says, **“against such there is no law.”** When the fruits of the Spirit are practiced by man, there is no law which condemns his actions. The Law of Moses had

nothing to condemn in one who, as a Christian, practiced the fruits of the Spirit.

Gal. 5:24 “And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”

“And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.” (ASV)

AFFECTIONS — πάθημα — “*That which one suffers or has suffered...externally, a suffering, misfortune, calamity, evil, affliction...of an inward state, an affection, passion*”(Thayer, p. 472); “*Suffering, affliction*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “*That which is suffered or endured, suffering, misfortune...passion*” (Bauer, p. 602).

LUSTS — ἰπιθυμία — “*Desire, craving, longing*” (Thayer, p. 238); “*Strong desire, longing, lust*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version).

Those who belong to Christ are Christians. Is it enough for a Christian to stop sinning? If so, where does a crucifixion come into play in the Christian’s life? Crucifixion is symbolic of a death — one cannot have a crucifixion without a death. If a person obeys Christ and stops sinning, but does not get rid of the desire in his heart for whatever sin one may discuss, then that sin will often torment him and probably lead him to commit that sin again. When a person becomes a Christian, he must put the evil desires which formerly controlled him under lock and key. Then he must work on eliminating any desire for them, and eventually his former desires will disgust him.

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Romans 6:6).

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Corinthians 9:27).

Gal. 5:25 “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

“If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk.” (ASV)

Coupled with the context, this passage is basically saying “Let one practice what he proclaims — practice what you preach.”

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of GOD. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in GOD” (Colossians 3:1-3).

Much is said by the religious world regarding the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in one, or being in the Spirit. It is often forgotten that this relationship works both ways. If one is a Christian, then the Father is in him and he is in the Father. If one is a Christian, then the Son is in him and he is in the Son. If one is a Christian, then the Spirit is in him and he is in the Spirit. If one is a Christian, then the Word of GOD is in him and he is in the Word of GOD.

“(1) 1 Cor. 3:16; Phil. 2:13; 1 John 4:11-16; 1 Thess. 1:1. These passages clearly point out that Christians are in God, and God is in them.

(2) 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 8:10; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17. These passages say Christians are in Christ, and Christ is in them.

(3) 1 Cor. 3:16; Rom. 8:11; Gal. 4:6; Rev. 1:10; Gal. 5:16; and 5:25. These passages clearly teach that the Holy Spirit is in the Christian, and that Christians are in the Spirit.

(4) Phil. 2:5; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:16 all point to the undeniable truth that we are to have the mind of Christ, and that the word of God dwells in us” (Wacaster, p. 181).

The way a professing Christian lives proves whether or not he truly follows the pathway set down by the Spirit.

Gal. 5:26 “Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

“Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another.” (ASV)

VAIN GLORY — κενόδοξος — “*Glorying without reason, conceited, vain-glorious, eager for empty glory*” (Thayer, p. 343); “*It denotes a person who is void of real worth but who wants to be admired by others*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “*Vanity, conceit, excessive ambition*” (Bauer, p. 427).

PROVOKING — προκαλέω — “*To call forth...to call forth to one’s self, esp. to challenge to a combat or contest with one; hence to provoke, to irritate*” (Thayer, p. 540); “*Used in the mid. to refer to calling before oneself, i.e., to challenge, provoke, irritate*” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “*Provoke, challenge*” (Bauer, p. 707).

“Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up” (1 Corinthians 13:4).

“Let nothing be done through strife

or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves” (Philippians 2:3).

Christians must carefully consider their lives so that all they say and do brings glory to GOD. Such an attitude and life will not allow one to think of himself as being better than another. Where all view themselves on the same plain of being a sinner in need of GOD’s saving grace, there will be no conflict (inciting to battle) and, therefore, no envy one of another.

“Vain glory probably exhibited itself in the churches in Galatia as men boasted in being circumcised, not eating meals sacrificed to idols, fasting, keeping themselves ceremonially pure, etc. There were no reasons for men to boast in such things: these things could not save a man or make him acceptable in God’s sight. The other side probably boasted in their freedom to do things which Jews were forbidden to practice” (Willis, p. 274).

Galatians Chapter Six

Gal. 6:1 “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”

“Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” (ASV)

FAULT — παράπτωμα — *“A fall or near something; but nowhere found in this sense. A lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness; a sin, misdeed”* (Thayer, p. 485); *“Fault, lapse, error, mistake, wrongdoing”*

(Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“False step, transgression, sin”* (Bauer, p. 621); *“A false step, a blunder, a misdeed, trespass”* (Earle, p. 285).

RESTORE — καταρτίζω — *“To mend (what has been broken or rent), to repair...to fit out, equip, put in order, arrange, adjust...ethically, to strengthen, perfect, complete, make one what he ought to be”* (Thayer, p. 2680); *“The fundamental meaning is to put a thing in its appropriate condition, to establish, set up, equip, arrange, prepare, mend”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Put in order, restore – restore to its former condition, put to rights something...put into proper condition, complete, make complete something”* (Bauer, p. 417); *“Mend, repair”* (Earle, p. 285).

“Brethren” — members of the family of GOD, whether male or female, thus sustaining the family relationship of brethren. Only a family member can restore a fallen member to his rightful place of faithfulness in the family of GOD. Those outside of the family of GOD belong to the Devil and as such would seek to keep one outside of the family, not restore him to his former relationship of faithfulness.

“If a man be overtaken in a fault.” It was interesting for this writer to read the following words on this passage from a man who believes in the impossibility of apostasy (once saved always saved):

“It is the case which the apostle supposes might happen. Christians were not perfect; and it was possible that they who were true Christians might be surprised by temptation, and fall into sin” (Barnes, p. 390).

Since it is sin which separates one from GOD (Isaiah 59:1-2), if one falls into sin, he is separated from GOD (apostasy) and needs to be restored to the position of salvation which

he formerly enjoyed. The apostle clearly said that a Christian can be overtaken in a fault (trespass, sin), and if he is, the effort must be made to restore him. If it is impossible for one to be separated from GOD once he has become a Christian (as the once-saved-always-saved crowd asserts), then there is no need to make the effort of restoring such a one. Remember that the apostle was speaking to brethren. Brethren cannot restore non-brethren to themselves.

The word “**overtaken**” signifies an act which is not planned. This speaks of a sin which overcomes him through weakness, one in which he does not knowingly, purposefully engage. As Barnes correctly wrote;

“Christians do not commit sin deliberately, and as a part of the plan of life; but they may be surprised by sudden temptation, or urged on by impetuous or head strong passion, as David and Peter were” (Barnes, p. 390).

Christians are those who strive not to sin, those who are busy fighting sin in their lives.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of GOD, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of GOD, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And

your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of GOD: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Ephesians 6:10-18).

Those busily engaged in fighting sin do not intentionally commit sin, but they can be overcome by sin. If and when they are, they need to be restored.

“All have sinned, and come short of the glory of GOD” (Romans 3:23).

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8).

Who is to do the restoring? **“Ye which are spiritual.”** Notice that he did not say the preacher is to do this, neither did he say it is the elders’ responsibility. Nor does the text say that those who are perfect, who have no sin, are to do this. The responsibility to restore the erring belongs to all Christians who love the Lord and His body, the church. Those who are spiritual are those who are governed by the Spirit of GOD.

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh...If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16, 25).

The spiritual are those who allow themselves to be guided by the Word of GOD, those who truly strive to obey His Word.

One of the excuses often used to avoid the responsibility of restoring the erring is *“I am*

not without sin, so I cannot approach a fallen brother.” While it would be very important that those trying to recover another not be guilty of committing the exact sin (one may have earlier committed the same sin and repented of it), it does not mean that only sinless people may restore the guilty. It does take a spiritually-minded person to do so. What does it take to be a spiritually minded person? Spirituality which pleases GOD is only reached by diligent study of GOD’s Word coupled with much prayer and obedience to that Word.

When studying the word “**restore**,” it is quickly seen that it refers to putting something back in its proper place. To restore one thus refers to washing that sow which returned to wallowing in the mire to the clean position it once held (2 Peter 2:22). It is bringing one from the sin he has presently entangled himself in to living for Christ, as he had once been engaged.

“To restore is to win from evil, or induce him to return from the wrong, repent of the sin, confess it, and pray to God to forgive it” (Lipscomb, p. 276).

What if the erring Christian refuses to be restored? Jesus answered that in Matthew 18:15-18. There the responsibility of restoring one who has sinned is upon the individual who tries to accomplish the correction. If the fallen one will not listen to the Christian who approaches him, then witnesses are to be involved. If he will not listen to them, then the church is to be involved, and finally, if he still refuses to repent, fellowship is to be withdrawn from him. But one might say, “He did not sin against me, so I have no obligation to restore my erring brother.” Brother, he did sin against you! To sin against the Lord is to sin against His people, and the reverse order is also true (Acts 9:5).

“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (2 Thessalonians 3:6).

Christians must remember that if one in sin is not recovered, he may drift so far into sin that it will become impossible to restore him (Hebrews 6:4-6). This makes it imperative to approach a fallen brother as quickly as possible while it may still be possible to restore him. How might each one of us respond to the Lord on the day of judgment if He looked upon us and said that a brother/sister would have been restored if you had spoken to him/her in a timely manner about his/her sin(s)?

To restore the erring Christian *“is as much a command as the Great Commission, or the obligation on the part of the alien sinner to be baptized into Christ. We are neglectful of this responsibility when we (1) ignore a brother’s sin, (2) make light of his sin, (3) excuse his sin, (4) or think that in some way it will go away or ‘take care of itself’”* (Wacaster, p. 190).

How is the restoration of a fallen brother to be attempted? It is to be done **“in the spirit of meekness.”** Paul asked the Corinthians, **“Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness”** (1 Corinthians 4:21)? In asking this question, three things are obvious: (1) Paul would prefer to come to them in a spirit of meekness, (2) human nature shows that everyone would prefer that the one approaching him would come in a spirit of meekness, and (3) how one is approached depends on his attitude. Who would want someone to come to him initially

(when he needs correction) in a harsh and angry countenance or with an overbearing attitude? So why would one approach another in that way?

“Not with anger; not with a lordly and overbearing mind; not with a love of finding others in fault, and with a desire for inflicting the discipline of the church; not with a harsh and unforgiving temper, but with love, and gentleness, and humility, and patience, and with a readiness to forgive when wrong has been done” (Barnes, p. 391).

Why should one approach his erring brethren in a spirit of meekness? **“Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”** One should recognize the potential he has of falling into some sin, being overtaken in a fault. The fallen brother may be brought back to a correct relationship with GOD today and be needed tomorrow to help the one who helped him become stronger in the faith or even help restore him if he falls. Sin is deceitful, and the very best of men will be seduced by it and need correction. What this calls for is self-examination as one approaches his fallen brother.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves” (2 Corinthians 13:5).

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Corinthians 9:27).

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12).

Just as the fallen brother's faith was tested and he was enticed to sin, so also will every

Christian's faith be tested.

“Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren” (James 1:14-16).

Gal. 6:2 “Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ.”

“Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ.” (ASV)

What burdens are being spoken of here? While it is true that burdens such as grief over the death of a loved one, some great sickness, or injury are burdens which weigh one down, these are not (in this author's opinion) the intent of this passage. Christians should help their fellow man in these areas by doing what they can to ease those kinds of burdens. The context in which this passage is found indicates that Paul was talking about the burdens associated with one's sins. There are two areas of responsibility involved in bearing these burdens, and Paul dealt with both. (1) Responsibility of a Christian to be not only his brother's keeper but his helper as well. (2) Responsibility of the individual to help himself, as will be discussed in verse five. All need help from time to time to overcome weaknesses, sins, and discouragements. Each Christian has a responsibility to help his brother get through the tough times. But let it be stated that this obligation does not mean that one totally bears the burden of the other, as verse five shows a personal responsibility. The idea seems to be that when the burdens one faces in life overflow his capacity to handle them, that is when Christians must step in and

relieve some of that burden.

“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves” (Romans 15:1, emphasis mine, R.K.).

“We exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men” (1 Thessalonians 5:14, emphasis mine, R.K.).

“I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35, emphasis mine, R.K.).

“Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed” (Hebrews 12:12-13).

The **“Law of Christ.”** So many have tried to advocate that there is no law in Christianity. This writer finds such an assertion to be more than ignorance; instead, it is a deliberate attempt to change GOD’s will for man in such a way as to ultimately allow one to do whatever he chooses to do. The Bible clearly shows that sin is a transgression of law. Therefore, if there is no law which clearly defines what is right and what is wrong, there can be no sin.

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4).

“Where no law is, there is no transgression” (Romans 4:15).

“Sin is not imputed when there is no law” (Romans 5:13).

“To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to GOD, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law” (1 Corinthians 9:21).

Those who wish there was no law simply wish there was no such thing as sin, thus, no accountability to anyone. It has always interested this writer that those who declare that there is no law in Christianity appeal to the one who declares most clearly in the Scriptures that law exists for a Christian — the apostle Paul.

In this epistle, Paul has clearly made a distinction as to which law Christians are not under — the Law of Moses. He also made it clear that just because one is not under the Law of Moses does not mean he is without law — the Law of Christ.

“The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the Law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2).

How may one bear the burdens of another, how can he restore another without obedience to the instructions found in GOD’s Word, which the Son and the Spirit delivered to mankind — the Law of Christ?

Gal. 6:3 “For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.”

“For if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.” (ASV)

“This warning against self-deception is evidently aimed at the man who regards himself so superior to ‘sinners’ he cannot fall, so good he cannot be led astray, or so strong he will never need the sympathetic understanding and help of his ‘spiritual’ brethren” (Crouch, p. 94).

The kind of person this passage speaks about is the one who considers himself better than others. He is like the Pharisee who looked down on the publican in Luke 18:10-14. Why did that Pharisee look down on the publican? Because he was comparing himself to the general concept of what kind of person a publican was. In other words, he was comparing himself to other men, and if a man looks hard enough, he can always find someone “worse” than himself. Men often fail to see themselves as they really are. When man compares himself to the true standard, the absolute standard of Deity, he will quickly see himself in the correct light. Every man needs the mercy and grace of GOD to gain salvation and is, therefore, in a very real sense no better than any other human being.

How does all of this relate to the present context? The man who thinks more highly of himself than he ought may be tempted to treat the one who needs to be restored with contempt or may even refuse to help him, because he views the other as beneath his efforts. If either of these be the case, then this person needs the spiritual one to help him. But if such were the case, and the spiritual one tried to help him, he would probably shower indignation upon the one who tried to help him.

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall”
(Proverbs 16:18).

Gal. 6:4 “But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”

“But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbor.” (ASV)

PROVE — δοκιμάζω — *“To test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing be genuine or not). As metals”* (Thayer, p. 154); *“To try, prove, discern, distinguish, approve. It has the notion of proving a thing whether it is worthy or not”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Put to the test, examine...prove by testing”* (Bauer, p. 202).

When man gives himself a careful and honest evaluation, there will be no room for puffing himself up. If one would spend more time examining himself, there would be less chance of his thinking more highly of himself than he should.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves”
(1 Corinthians 13:5).

A Christian’s sense of joy and peace is not found in another. It is found in purifying his conscience through obedience to GOD and in knowing that GOD approves of him. This leads one to appreciate the hope of Heaven. The Christian then will compare his thoughts and life with what GOD says his life should be like. Where corrections are needed, he will diligently strive to correct his life. In those areas where his life meets GOD’s standard, he can rejoice. In the end, it will not be what any other human being thinks of him; all that matters is what GOD thinks of him.

The absolute standard with which one should compare himself is the Lord Jesus Christ. How humbling such an honest comparison will be.

“One does not test a thing by itself, but by an objective standard. A man’s

work in God's service must meet the standard of God's word. Only then, can one 'approve' his own work. Christians do not measure themselves by themselves" (Brewer, p. 108).

"We dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Corinthians 10:12).

All men need to see themselves as GOD sees them. Only then can one allow his life to be molded as GOD would have it. When one allows himself to be molded by GOD's Word, that one will not be concerned with how others evaluate him.

"This verse does not teach self-exaltation. It does not sanction placing trust in our own strength. It does show us that, after examining ourselves by God's word and finding that we are what God wants, we are to be happy in our standing with God" (Winton, p. 110).

Gal. 6:5 "For every man shall bear his own burden."

"For each man shall bear his own burden."
(ASV)

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12).

On the day of final judgment, each individual will stand before GOD alone, answering for what he has done and not for what anyone else has done. There is no bell-curve at the judgment, only an absolute standard by which everyone either passes or

fails.

Verse two showed a responsibility in helping others to bear their burdens. This verse shows one's responsibility for himself. Man must do all that he can to help himself in meeting GOD's approval, and each man, as stated above, is ultimately responsible for himself. *"No one can shoulder our responsibility for us"* (Boatman, p. 257).

"It is clear to all that no man can discharge the 'obligations' of another. He can help others in the trials and hardships of life, but each man is individually responsible to God" (Zerr, p. 91).

"Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to GOD. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to GOD" (Romans 14:10-12).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

This verse points out personal responsibility. Crouch makes an interesting and true observation about personal responsibility:

"Many refuse the personal responsibilities of life and become spiritual parasites. When they fail or sin, they charge it to heredity or environment: they blame the situation,

circumstances, or some other person for the fix they are in (Luke 15:28-30; 22:54-62)...One does not become strong while another carries his load. The blessing and joy of increased strength and worthy achievement are reserved for him who carries his own load. Let us therefore be willing to assume those burdens rightfully ours, help those who need our help, and trust God fully for His share” (Crouch, p. 95).

Gal. 6:6 “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.”

“But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.” (ASV)

COMMUNICATE — κοινωνέω — *“To come into communion or fellowship, to become a sharer, be made a partner...to enter into fellowship, join one’s self as an associate, make one’s self a sharer or partner: so to make another’s necessities one’s own as to relieve them” (Thayer, p. 352); “Share, have a share...give or contribute a share” (Bauer, p. 438); “Koinoneo refers to sharing in the spiritual blessings of the Gentiles (Rom. 15:27); sharing in material blessings (Gal. 6:6); and sharing in the sufferings of Christ (1 Pet. 4:13)” (Renn, p. 890).*

The word “**communicate**” in this passage does not mean what it commonly means in today’s society. Today, the word signifies the spreading of ideas between two or more people, referring more to conversation. As noticed above, originally this word dealt with the sharing of something with another. This perfectly fits the context here, where the apostle talked of sharing burdens with one another. The teacher has shared his

knowledge of GOD’s Word, and those to whom he shared that knowledge should share their physical blessings with him. There are a number of passages which teach the same principle.

“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine” (1 Timothy 5:17).

“If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:11-14).

It should be noted from the above passage that this was not the command of a preacher so that he could make a living from the brethren. This was a command of the Lord that those who preach should be provided with the physical necessities of life.

“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for GOD loveth a cheerful giver. And GOD is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:7-8).

“There should be no question that not only is it right to support one in the preaching of the Gospel, but it would be a violation of the Gospel, as sin, not to do so” (Pledger, p. 224).

*“He who **communicates** support to his preacher or teacher has fellowship with him in the good work he does to that extent”* (Crouch, p. 98).

The same thing would be true of elders who are financially aided as well as missionaries.

In considering the idea of fellowship in connection with the word “**communicate**,” it should be noted that joint actions are taking place. The teacher gives of his knowledge, and the student receives a blessing. In gratitude, the student gives of his physical blessings, and the teacher receives a blessing.

Gal. 6:7-8 “Be not deceived; GOD is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

“Be not deceived; GOD is not mocked: for whatsoever 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.” (ASV)

MOCKED — μικτηρίζω — *“To turn up the nose or sneer at; to mock, deride”* (Thayer, p. 419); *“To turn up one’s nose in scorn and hence to mock, deride”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Turn up the nose at, treat with contempt”* (Bauer, p. 529); *“Draw up the nostrils in contempt”* (JFB, p. 395).

CORRUPTION — φθορά — *“Corruption, destruction, perishing”* (Thayer, p. 652); *“Spoiling, corruption, destruction, ruin, decay, generally a fraying or wasting away”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Ruin, destruction, dissolution, deterioration, corruption”* (Bauer, p. 858).

One of the definitions of the word “**deceive**” which Webster gives is *“to cause to accept as true or valid what is false or invalid”* (Webster’s Dictionary, CD Rom Version). Man has the ability, and uses it greatly, to cause himself to believe something to be true (either about himself or another) which is false. This may indeed be the greatest weapon that Satan has against man. He deceived Eve into believing that GOD did not really mean what He said. He deceived Ananias and Sapphira into believing that GOD would not know that they had lied. He deceived David into believing that GOD did not know what he had done with Bathsheba and to Urias. The list could go on and on of Biblical characters who were deceived into believing a lie.

But one should notice that Paul said, “**Be not deceived.**” This implies that it is possible, and so it is, that man can fight against being deceived and ultimately win the battle against deception.

“Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of GOD upon the children of disobedience” (Ephesians 5:6).

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” (2 Thessalonians 2:3).

“Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous” (1 John 3:7).

GOD cannot be treated lightly and with contempt. Man often acts, and therefore believes, that he can thumb his nose at GOD’s decrees; but in the end, he will answer for every transgression against Him. He may deceive himself into believing that GOD does not mean what He says, but all that He says will come to pass. In this passage, the particular emphasis is on man’s thinking that he can live anyway he chooses and that he will escape the consequences of his actions — but that is not possible. That man will pay dearly for such an attitude by facing eternal destruction.

The illustration used by Paul here is agricultural: the laws of sowing and reaping. One may deceive himself into believing that the corn seed which he plants is a watermelon seed, but when harvest time comes, he will reap corn — not watermelons. The same is true in the spiritual realm. If one sows to the fleshly appetites (**“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like”** — Galatians 5:19-21), he will not reap everlasting life with the Father, but everlasting life with the Devil. If one sows to the spirit (**“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law”** — Galatians 5:22-23), he will reap an eternal reward with GOD. One cannot sow to the flesh and reap a heavenly reward.

“God’s laws say what they say, and

mean what they mean, regardless of what one thinks they say or mean...His laws may be ignored, disobeyed, scoffed at, disbelieved, or reviled, but man cannot alter them...A man reaps what he sows, regardless of what he thinks he will reap” (Brewer, p. 111).

Another thought to consider with regard to sowing seed is that the seed produces a crop greater than the seed which was sown. One corn seed can turn into hundreds of corn seeds. Likewise, one dandelion seed can turn into hundreds of dandelions. This lesson should be considered when considering the eternal consequences of whichever seed one sows — flesh or Spirit.

It should also be observed as to where this warning is found — it is between two passages which discuss the use of material things for the benefit of others (vv. 6, 9-10). How one uses his “money” determines how he sows and what he will reap in eternity.

Gal. 6:9 “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

“And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” (ASV)

WEARY — 66"6XT — *“To be utterly spiritless, to be wearied out, exhausted”* (Thayer, p. 195); *“To turn out to be a coward, to lose one’s courage. In the NT, generally, to be fainthearted, to faint or despond in view of trial, difficulty”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Lose heart”* (Bauer, p. 240); *“Be weary in the sense of ‘grow tired,’ or ‘lose heart’ (i.e., give up all hope of accomplishing one’s goal or maintaining one’s faith)”* (Renn, p. 1036).

FAINT — ἰκλύω — *“To dissolve; metaph. to weaken, relax, exhaust...to have one’s*

strength relaxed, to be enfeebled through exhaustion, to grow weak, grow weary, be tired out (Thayer, p. 197); *“To loose out of, set free from. Used in the pass. or mid. eklúomai, to be weary, exhausted, to faint”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Become weary or slack, give out”* (Bauer, p. 243).

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh”
(James 5:7-8).

The basic principle of this verse is to **“keep on keeping on”** — do not give up. The word **“weary”** carries the idea of becoming exhausted in one’s work, losing courage, giving up (see definitions above). The apostle had just spoken of sowing, and (in the spiritual realm as well as the physical) this can become extremely tiring. Why does the farmer, even when he becomes weary, continue to work the fields and plant the seed? It is because, in his mind’s eye, he envisions the harvest day. If it were not for the anticipation of that harvest, he would grow weary and stop his efforts. This same truth is found in the spiritual realm. The one who refuses to give up, keeps on sowing the Word of GOD and involving himself in good deeds, even though he may not see a harvest in this life, will continue sowing until the day he dies. Why? Because of the anticipated reward that GOD, who cannot lie, has promised to those who do not give up.

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life”
(Revelation 2:10).

“Ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved” (Matthew 10:22).

It is so easy for the Christian worker to become discouraged and give up. This can be caused by many things. When one looks around and sees that others who profess Christ are not living as they should, it is disheartening and causes discouragement. When no visible results are seen due to his efforts in the Lord’s cause, it can be discouraging. This writer was once asked how preachers keep from becoming discouraged and giving up when so often their time and effort are put into studying and teaching, and yet so few results of that labor are seen. This writer’s answer was simple: one cannot rely upon rewards from men; he must look forward to the reward promised by the Father. One’s eye should constantly be focused on the reward of Heaven and GOD’s praise, not the physical rewards which pass with time. We are to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).

“In due season” refers to everlasting life. When will this time be? Only GOD knows the answer to that question. Just as the farmer patiently waits for the proper time of harvest, Christians must learn to be patient, doing all that they can in building their faith and remaining faithful, and leave the rest up to GOD.

Speaking of the judgment day, Jesus said, **“Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only”**
(Matthew 24:36).

This writer is reminded of a cartoon he once saw. The picture showed a crane who was attempting to swallow a frog. But the frog in his mouth had gotten his “hands” free and

was holding on to the crane's neck so that he could not swallow him. The caption said, "Never, never, never give up." So it is with a Christian, for GOD has made the promise that he will reap at the right time, as long as he does not quit trying. The difficulties, trials, temptations of this life cannot keep Christians who refuse to give up from reaping their reward.

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

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith." (ASV)

ESPECIALLY — *μάλιστα* — "*Especiallly, chiefly, most of all, above all*" (Thayer, p. 387); "*Mostly, especiallly*" (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); "*Most of all, above all, especiallly, particularlly, (very) greatlly*" (Bauer, p. 489).

The great example for this passage is, of course, the Lord, who spent His life on earth doing good (Acts 10:38).

There are many things which one should consider when looking at the word "**opportunity**." Opportunity is defined as "*a favorable juncture of circumstances*" (Webster, CD Rom Version). Considering that definition, one comes to the conclusion that "Opportunity plus ability equals responsibility." Considering the above definition and statement, there are several things to consider. An opportunity may arise, but a person does not have the ability to take advantage of the opportunity; therefore, he has no responsibility. An ability may be possessed, but no opportunity presents itself to take advantage of that ability; therefore, no responsibility exists. But where an ability

exists for helping another, and when an opportunity presents itself, one must respond to that opportunity with the proper help.

Does one who has ability have a responsibility to look for opportunity to help another? Some do not do what they can to help others, though they have the ability to help, by stating that they had no opportunity. The truth is that they had blinders on to the needs around them, because they did not look for those opportunities.

Christians are to "**do good unto all**" ("men" is not found in the original). Is this limited in scope, or does it include both physical and spiritual needs? It would include whatever the need is. If a man needs food to survive and one can provide it for him, is that not doing good? Jesus clearly showed in Matthew chapter twenty-five that taking care of the physical needs of others is a condition for one's having eternal salvation. On the other hand, the church is not some kind of "soup kitchen," obligated to provide for everyone even if they can as worldly social activists advocate. Some simply allow their feelings to dictate their actions, when GOD has given clear instructions in these matters

"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10).

Neither is the church obligated to help those who make their living sponging off of the benevolent hearts of Christians. To encourage those who will not work or who sponge off of others is sinful on the part of the giver.

Further, what better good could a Christian do toward his fellow man than to provide the means whereby that man can obtain eternal salvation? Therefore the obligation to do good toward all men involves both the

physical and spiritual aspects of his life.

Toward whom is this good to be done? Toward all men, but **“especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”** What does this mean? Those of a man’s family are to be considered for help first. Consider this example: A man’s children need food, and a needy person outside of his family needs food, but the man only has enough funds to provide food for one or the other. For whom does he buy the food? Speaking of a man’s obligations to his own flesh and blood, the Bible says, **“If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel”** (1 Timothy 5:8). If a choice must be made, a man must provide for those of his own family first, or else he sins. The church is the family of GOD (Eph. 2:19). As members of that family, the obligation to provide either physical or spiritual needs belongs to them first. **BUT**, let a clear warning be sounded. That obligation is not to be used as an excuse not to help those who are not members of the church. The obligation in this passage is to do good to **ALL** where the opportunity presents itself. If one has the ability to provide for both, he must provide for both.

There have been those over the years who have tried to make this passage either an individual responsibility or the responsibility of the congregation, but not both. Both parties have erred. Does THE CHURCH not exist in a community where there is only one Christian in that community? A Christian is the church, and the responsibility to do good to all men rests not only on the individual but also upon the whole body. Sometimes an individual may not be able to meet the need of someone. This would especially be true regarding some physical needs, but the congregation can pool its resources and meet the needs. Should the

opportunity to do good to ALL be ignored under such circumstances when the individual cannot meet a legitimate need? Certainly not, as such would be un-Christian behavior. Should the church be involved in providing funds to some secular organization to provide the needs of the poor? All honor and glory must go to the Lord for all good which is done by Christians, and such is not accomplished when the church donates its money to these organizations. What should be done when a need arises? The church should directly handle the situation if it has the ability to provide the needed assistance — whether that be an individual Christian or a group of Christians (congregation). If the church does not have the ability to meet a given need, but can provide part of the assistance, let them do what they can directly so that the Lord gets the credit rather than the Red Cross, United Way, Hurricane Relief Fund, or any other secular benevolent society (It is just as wrong for the church to provide funds to any denominational group as it is to a secular organization.). Can two or more congregations put their resources together to provide a need? If two Christians can do such in a legitimate effort, then so can two congregations!

Too often those who argue these points of “individual versus congregation” are looking for a way not to do anything.

“It is right for the church or an individual Christian to bestow a favor upon those of the world, but where the opportunities are limited, preference must be given to members of the church” (Zerr, p. 92).

Gal. 6:11 “Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.”

“See with how large letters I write unto you with mine own hand.” (ASV)

There are two basic theories as to what the phrase “**large a letter**” means. (1) That he wrote in large letters because of defective eyesight or (2) he wrote a large letter as one would write to a friend he has not contacted for a long time. Whichever the case may be, or any other possibility of meaning, the words “**I have written**” signify past tense, thus referring to the whole letter. This is unusual, because Paul appears to have written most of his letters by dictating them and then briefly closed the letters with his own hands. Some believe that he wrote the whole letter in his own handwriting to show how deep his concern was for the Galatians and the danger they faced. Others think it was done because of the importance and urgency of his message.

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

“As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.” (ASV)

The apostle, speaking by inspiration, attacks the attitude and motive of the Judaizing teachers. The first thing he showed was that they were trying to get the Gentile Christians to be circumcised for show. They wanted to be seen by the Jews as conforming (and getting the Gentiles to conform) to the external rites and customs of Judaism.

The second reason he showed for their actions was that they were trying to avoid persecution. It is clearly seen in the Scriptures that the first opposition to and persecution of Christians came not from pagans, but rather from Jews. They viewed Christianity as a corruption of Judaism and

were determined to stamp it out, because it demanded that Christians no longer follow the laws and rites of Judaism. These Judaizers appear to be trying to affect a compromise — blend the two religions together to make a new one. They tried to please both sides at the same time — fence straddlers.

Compromise is impossible when it comes to GOD’s Word. Once even the smallest amount of error is mixed with truth and upheld as doctrine, then you no longer have the truth. Many today are trying to be like the Judaizers of which Paul wrote, trying to avoid persecution by the world and the denominations by compromising the truth. Too many today are afraid of being called straight-laced, narrow-minded or bigoted. They are more afraid of human beings than they are the GOD of Heaven. To willing to follow the dictates of men and turn their backs on GOD and His law. The spirit of compromise that leads to destruction is alive and well today, even among members of the body of Christ (erring members).

“Their conduct has found many imitators in men who make godliness a way of gain, whose religious course is dictated by considerations of worldly self-interest. A little persecution, or social pressure, is enough to turn them out of the way. They cast off their allegiance to Christ as they change their clothes to suit the fashion. Business patronage, professional advancement, a tempting family alliance, the entrance into some select and envied circle — such are the things for which loyalty to Christ are bartered, for which men put their souls and children in great peril” (Lipscomb, p. 285).

Persecution would be suffered “**for the**

cross of Christ.” It should be remembered that Paul was talking about Jews who would persecute them because of the cross. In another place Paul wrote, **“We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness”** (1 Corinthians 1:23). Why was the cross a stumblingblock to the Jews? Because it did not fit their preconceived ideas of what their Messiah and His kingdom would be (and certainly their Messiah could not be put to death by the Romans, and in such a humiliating way).

Gal. 6:13 “For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.”

“For not even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.” (ASV)

Paul might as well have used the word “hypocrite” to describe these men, for his description of them here is nothing less than a hypocrite. They tried to place a burden on these Gentile Christians which they were not willing to bear themselves. If they were going to require the circumcision found in the Law of Moses, then they were required to obey all of that law (as Paul had already shown in chapter five and verse three). Notice that they had zeroed in on one aspect of the law which they demanded be kept, but then they refused to keep the rest. Today, Sabbatarians do the same thing by insisting that men must keep the sabbath, but they do not obey the laws of the sabbath as given by GOD. Bold statement? No. Ask those who advocate that the sabbath day of worship be kept if they sacrificed their lambs as required by the sabbath law on Saturdays. Ask them if they

did any work (including cooking of meals) or required someone else to work in order to accommodate them (restaurant) on the sabbath day contrary to the Law of Moses. Have they traveled to Jerusalem to keep the major feast days as commanded by the Law of Moses? Much less breaking all of the other laws found in the Old Testament, on which they rely to demand that the sabbath day worship be kept.

Why did these Judaizers want the Galatians to be circumcised? So that they could glory in their flesh, the outward man. They wanted them to do this for their own personal gain. They were not interested in the Galatians’ souls. They wanted to be able to brag about how many of the Gentiles they had been able to convince to accept, in essence, the Jews’ religion.

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

“But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” (ASV)

The word “**glory**” in this verse signifies a boasting. The Judaizers had obviously been boasting about how many of the Galatians they had been able to persuade to be circumcised. They had probably been guilty of bragging in other areas with regard to the Law of Moses as well. Paul showed that he had nothing of which to boast as far as human achievements were concerned. The only thing he could boast in was the cross where Jesus had died so that he could have salvation. He recognized that he could not have attained salvation by any and all achievements he might have had — he had to

rely upon the sacrifice of Jesus for that.

By human standards, if Paul had chosen to boast, he would have been far greater than any of these men. Notice what the Spirit told him to write about himself in Philippians 3:4-11.

“Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of GOD by faith: That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.”

Add to those attainments those which he had achieved as a Christian. He had been chosen by the Lord to be the apostle to the Gentiles and had traveled farther and suffered more than most for his loyalty to Christ. It is

conceivable that he may have established more congregations of the Lord's people than anyone else, and he was chosen by the Spirit to write more of the books of the New Testament than all the rest combined. Paul considered none of these things to be important.

About what did Paul boast? Not his own attainments, but what Someone else attained. At one time, Paul despised the thought of the very thing in which he now gloried — the cross and the One Who died upon it. For Paul and all Christians, there are a number of reasons why glory is found in the cross. (1) Because he loves the One who suffered and died there. (2) Because of the character, holiness, and innocence of the one who died there. (3) Because of the reconciliation between man and GOD made possible by His death. (4) Because of the pardon extended through the blood He shed there. (5) Because of the separation the cross gives between man and the world in which he lives (The cross stood between Paul and the world.).

Compare the thing in which a Christian can boast (and why) with the things of which the world boasts. The world boasts in wealth, strength, beauty, physical accomplishments, education, et cetera. At best, these things are fleeting and cannot be taken with one to Heaven, because, quite frankly, they are not what is important!

“By whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” Used symbolically, a crucifixion states that something has been put to death. It shows that there is no more interest in whatever has been crucified to that person as there had once been or could have been. It might be asked, what is the **“world”** of which Paul speaks in this passage? He is not speaking of the physical world upon which one lives, for

- in and of itself - it is good (Genesis 1:31). He is talking about people and those things which, from a physical standpoint, are marks of achievement and (one might also add), when made the focus of their achievements, will only lead to their eternal destruction.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of GOD abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).

It was not a physical cross upon which Paul died. What Christ did on His cross caused Paul to treat all the things which the world holds more dear as if they were dead, and mentally they were dead to him. Human glorying has its place only in those who look away from Christ and the cross upon which He died.

Gal. 6:15 “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”

“For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” (ASV)

The term **“circumcision”** is used as a synonym for Jew (under the law of Moses), and the term **“uncircumcision”** is used as a synonym for Gentile. The basic argument is, that it does not matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile with regard to the blessings of GOD. It does not matter if you had or did not have this physical operation performed upon you. The only thing that matters is whether or not you have become a new creature. How does

one become a new creature?

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto GOD. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto GOD through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:3-11).

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of GOD. Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be

born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:3-6).

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love” (Galatians 5:6).

Obedience to the Law of Christ is what will save one, not obedience to the Law of Moses. It does not matter who or what the person is; if he wishes to be acceptable to GOD, he must listen to GOD's instructions, believe them, repent of his sins, confess his faith in Christ, have his sins washed away in baptism, and be faithful to GOD for the rest of his life.

It is no wonder that the Jews hated Paul so much. This former defender of their faith, who now declared that the old form of religion was no longer valid and held no blessing from GOD for anyone, was their enemy.

Gal. 6:16 “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of GOD.”

“And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of GOD.” (ASV)

RULE — κανών — *“A definitely bounded or fixed space within the limits of which one's power or influence is confined; the province assigned one; one's sphere of activity...any rule or standard, a principle or law of investigating, judging, living, acting”* (Thayer,

p. 324); *“Anything straight used in examining other things, as the tongue or needle of a balance, a plumb line in building. In the NT, a rule of conduct or behavior”* (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); *“Rule, standard...sphere of action or influence, province, limits”* (Bauer, p. 403).

What **“rule”** is being spoken of in this passage? Looking at the context, it is those who live according to the Law of Christ (v. 2), who crucify themselves to the world (v. 14). In looking at the definitions of the word **“rule,”** it is quickly realized that he was talking about **A** standard which is set and does not change. It is a standard by which one can determine if he is the Israel of GOD, a Christian, a child of GOD.

What benefit is obtained by those who follow the Law of Christ? Peace, which probably refers to the peace one has with GOD when he knows that his sins have been forgiven and that GOD will hold those sins against him no more. It is peace in the knowledge that one does not have to fear the consequences of those old sins. Mercy is another benefit for those who follow the Law of Christ and signifies the compassion one can find in a forgiving GOD.

Who is **“the Israel of GOD?”** This term refers to those who walk (live) according to the commands of the Law of Christ. It refers to those who are in Christ through obedience to His law. In short, the Israel of GOD is not made up of physical descendants of Abraham who walk after the flesh and its ordinances, but of Christians who follow the Spirit.

“He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and

not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of GOD” (Romans 2:28-29).

Notice the following passages which also affirm the same truth.

“He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all” (Romans 4:12-16).

“Not as though the word of GOD hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children:

but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of GOD: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed” (Romans 9:6-8).

“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship GOD in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Philippians 3:1-3).

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

“Henceforth, let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus.” (ASV)

MARK — στίγμα — *“A mark pricked in or branded upon the body. Acc. to ancient oriental usage, slaves and soldiers bore the name or stamp of their master or commander branded or pricked (cut) into their bodies to indicate what master or general they belonged to, and there were even some devotees who stamped themselves in this way with the token of the gods” (Thayer, p. 588); “A mark, brand, as pricked into or burnt upon the body, such as the marks with which slaves and sometimes prisoners were branded” (Zodhiates, CD Rom Version); “Mark, brand” (Bauer, p. 768).*

There is no doubt that Paul saw many troubles and troublers in his lifetime. In this

context, he was probably dealing with those who would question his being a true disciple and apostle of Jesus Christ. This is borne out in his statement, “**I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus.**” When looking at the above definitions of the word “**mark,**” it is learned that the word referred to a brand which showed ownership. Thus, the first remarks of this verse must deal with those who questioned his allegiance. These brands were made to identify one as to whom he belonged, and Paul voluntarily and proudly proclaimed that he belonged to Christ. What “**marks**” would identify him as a slave of Christ?

“(I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches” (2 Corinthians 11:23-28).

No doubt the beatings, stonings and other hardships he had endured because he served Christ were evident on his body. These would

have been marks which would not be there if he had not faithfully served Christ.

Gal. 6:18 “Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.”

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.” (ASV)

The word “**grace**” refers to favor and is a word often found in Paul’s writings to brethren. He desired GOD’s grace be upon their spirit. The spirit of man is that inner part of man, housed in the physical body. It is interesting that, in this letter which dealt so much with the difference between the spiritual and physical aspects of the two religions, he would end this letter with a wish for the inner man.

If this writer’s count is accurate, the exact phrase “**Lord Jesus Christ**” is found eighty-four times in the New Testament, plus a number of variations of this phrase. This makes the phrase quite important for Christians to consider, as did Sheerer, who wrote:

*“Jesus is **Lord** meaning he is divine and owns Christians. **Jesus** means he is the Savior of mankind. **Christ** means Jesus is God’s anointed one to fulfill God’s great purpose of redemption”* (Sheerer, p. 815).

In the Greek text, the word “**brethren**” follows the word “**spirit,**” making it the last word in this sentence. There seems to be special significance to this. The entire letter has been written as an urgent need because of the apostasy which endangered them. The letter has been full of rebuke. Yet, Paul ends this letter with the word “**brethren.**” It would seem that this is one last appeal to them to recognize the difference between himself and the Judaizers. They did not care for the Galatians as did Paul. He was telling them of his deep care for them, as well as his hope

that they would heed this letter and be brethren in the deepest sense.

“Amen” — So be it; let it be so. *“It was a custom. Which passed from the synagogues into the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or had offered up a solemn prayer to God, the others in the assembly responded, Amen, thus making the substance of what was uttered their own”* (Lipscomb, p. 290).

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