



GALATIANS

Copyright © 2021 WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL®

25 Lantana Lane, Maxwell, Texas 78656

Email: biblestudy@wvbs.org Phone: (512) 398-5211

Store: www.wvbs.org School: school.wvbs.org

Copyright Guidelines

Copyright © WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL®

WARNING: SINGLE USER product

Use of this material is limited to the registered user,
according to the following conditions.

Print distribution: Any number of printed copies can be made by printing or photocopying, and used for Bible classes, seminars or teaching settings. Copies of a course or multiple courses can be printed. Printed copies cannot be used for resale purposes or mass distribution.

Electronic distribution: No electronic distribution is allowed, either transmitted or hyperlinked, in part or whole. The electronic version of the course notes is limited to the registered user.

Course Notes on USB: The USB version of the Course Notes is limited to the registered user, and may be copied to any device within the registered user's ownership. If the Course Notes are registered to a congregation, then the electronic files may be installed on any computer located on the congregation's property, and be used by any of its members as a resource to study (either in electronic or printed form) while on their premises. However, the copyright does not include making the files available to others through the Internet or other web services.

For any copyright questions, feel free to contact us so we can help.

25 Lantana Lane, Maxwell, Texas 78656

Email: biblestudy@wvbs.org Phone: (512) 398-5211

Website: www.wvbs.org

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY	4
BACKGROUND	5
INTRODUCTION	7
OUTLINE	9
EXPOSITION	10
CHAPTER 1	10
CHAPTER 2	19
CHAPTER 3	26
CHAPTER 4	35
CHAPTER 5	43
CHAPTER 6	54
APPENDICES	61
ARE THERE MODERN-DAY APOSTLES?	62
FAITH AND WORKS.....	70
FALSE BRETHREN.....	74
THE CHURCH IN PURPOSE.....	79
WORKS (SINS) OF THE FLESH.....	83
DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT JUSTIFY SOCIAL DRINKING	116
DID JESUS CREATE AN INTOXICATING BEVERAGE?	121
FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT	125

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

Instructor: Russell Haffner

Biography:

Russell Haffner currently serves as the director of the WVBS Online Bible School. He graduated from the Southwest School of Bible Studies in 1993. He is also an alumnus of Texas A&M University where he majored in Architecture. He has served as a minister of the gospel for over 30 years. He has spoken on various lectureships and has held several gospel meetings. He has also published articles in numerous lectureship books.

Russell and his wife Dee are blessed with three children - Ross, John and Kati. Ross and John are both graduates of the Southwest School of Bible Studies and currently serve as ministers in the Lord's church. Kati is married to Tony Lopez who is also currently serving as a minister in the Lord's church.

Horner.

BACKGROUND

This is a unique epistle (letter) because it was written not to a single congregation, but to a group of congregations in the district of Galatia.

Galatia was located in the region of central Asia Minor (present-day Turkey). There were certain Celtic tribes from Gaul who tried to overrun Greece but were turned back, so they settled in the area of Galatia in about 279 B.C. They were conquered by the Romans in 189 B.C. and in 25 B.C. their self-government was taken away.

Racially, the Galatians (which means "Nobles") were Gauls (or Celts), who had migrated from the north of the Black Sea into Europe. The word "Gauls" or "Galli" means warriors. The main body of these Gauls finally established themselves in northern Spain, France and the British Isles. A branch of them crossed the Dardanelles and settled, during the third century B.C. in central Asia Minor. There were also others who settled in this region including Phrygians, Greeks, Jews and Romans.

Julius Caesar once said, "The infirmity of the Gauls is that they are fickle in their resolves and fond of change, and not to be trusted." It has also been reported that the Gauls were, "susceptible of quick impressions and sudden changes, with a fickleness equal to their courage and enthusiasm, and a constant liability to that disunion which is the fruit of excessive vanity" Paul's letter to the Galatians shows they were indeed easily influenced by others, inconsistent, fond of show and always quarreling. The characteristics of fickleness and fondness for change is noted in Paul's letter (Galatians 1:6; 3:1).

It was the apostle Paul who established the congregations in the district of Galatia on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:13; Acts 14). He revisited them later during his Second Missionary Journey (Acts 16:6; 18:23). The cities mentioned in the New Testament in the Roman province of Galatia included Antioch (Acts 13:14, 21; 16:6, 18:23; 2 Timothy 3:11), Iconium (Acts 13:51, 14:1, 21, 2 Timothy 3:11), Lystra (Acts 14:6, 21, 16:1, 2 Timothy 3:11) and Derbe (Acts 14:6, 20-21, 16:1). The city of Antioch, in Pisidia, was the governing and military center of southern Galatia.

One of the most persistent of religious arguments is that between Legalism and License.

- Legalism teaches that man's good and God's glory requires severe self-discipline, affliction of the body and the slavish performance of ritual ceremonies.
- License (Antinomianism - "against law") holds that man should be totally free to do as he pleases and that any restraints on him are demeaning.

Paul's response is to say that freedom and joy are found in neither Legalism nor License. He taught that the restrictions, rituals and ceremonies of the law of Moses entangles one in a yoke of slavery (Galatians 3:10; 5:1-10). He also explained that unbridled license destroys one morally and denies access to the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21). Real freedom and joy are found in voluntary obedience and submission to the law of Christ. Jesus liberates us from sin and its deadly enslavement. When we bear the fruit of the Spirit in our lives we experience the peace of justification (righteousness), which can never be found in the ways of the world. The letter to the Galatians sets forth the Christian alternative to the false doctrines of Legalism and License.

INTRODUCTION

Writer

We should make it clear that God is the author of this book, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21). The writer whom God used to reveal this epistle was the apostle Paul (Galatians 1:10; 6:11).

Language

This letter was originally written in Koiné Greek. The word "Koiné" means "common." This is a fitting name because it was the common language used by the people in that day.

Date

There is no way of knowing for sure when Galatians was written. If it was written after his visit of Acts 18:23, the date would be about 57-59 A.D. Paul's letter to the Galatians may have been the first letter he wrote which has been preserved for us. Some scholars have even dated it as early as 48 A.D. However, our understanding of the message of Galatians does not depend upon the date it was written.

The Place of Writing

There is no way of knowing for sure from where Galatians was written. The possibilities include Macedonia and Corinth.

Key Verses

Galatians 1:6-9
Galatians 2:20
Galatians 3:27
Galatians 5:19-21
Galatians 5:22-23
Galatians 6:10

Key Word

"gospel" (used 12 times) - Galatians 1:6-9, 11; 2:2, 5, 7, 14; 3:8; 4:13

Key Phrase

"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel" - Galatians 1:6

The Purpose of the Letter

1. The letter was written to overcome the influence of Judaizing teachers. They did not repudiate Christianity completely, but said to the Galatian Christians: "Except you be circumcised after the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1). These bigots taught that Paul's teaching was only part of the gospel and therefore was inadequate. They said his message would not save unless it was perfected by the legal ordinances and rites of the old law (law of Moses).
2. The letter was written to reestablish Paul's apostleship. The Judaizing teachers wanted to destroy Paul's influence. They tried to do this by denying his apostleship. As everyone knew, Paul was a latecomer to the Christian faith. He had not been a companion of Jesus on earth as the original apostles had been. When he first contacted the followers of Jesus, it was as a persecutor, not as a champion.
3. Galatians was not written as an essay in contemporary history. It was a protest against the corruption of the gospel of Christ. The tone of the book is described by some as "warlike" because it shows Paul's displeasure in their disgraceful treatment of the one true gospel.

Galatians Is Related to Romans

The relationship of the law of Moses to the law of Christ is discussed in both Galatians and Romans. Both letters make it clear that justification is by obedience to God through faith in Christ and not by the works of the law of Moses. We find the limitations of the old law discussed in both letters (Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:19).

GALATIANS OUTLINE

- I. Greeting (1:1-5)
 - A. Paul's Apostleship and Greeting (1:1-5)

- II. Paul Defends the One True Gospel and His Apostleship (1:6-2:21)
 - A. Only One True Gospel (1:6-10)
 - B. Paul Called to be an Apostle (1:11-17)
 - C. His Early Days as an Apostle (1:18-24)
 - D. His Defense of the Gospel (2:1-10)
 - E. No Return to the Old Law (2:11-21)

- III. Justification (3:1-4:31)
 - A. Justification by an Obedient Faith (3:1-9)
 - B. The Old Law Brings a Curse (3:10-14)
 - C. The Covenant Confirmed in Christ (3:15-18)
 - D. The Purpose of the Old Law (3:19-25)
 - E. One in Christ Jesus (3:26-29)
 - F. Sons and Heirs Through Christ (4:1-7)
 - G. Falling into False Practices (4:8-20)
 - H. Two Covenants (4:21-31)

- IV. Steadfastness, Faithfulness and Duty (5:1-6:18)
 - A. Christian Liberty (5:1-6)
 - B. Love Fulfills Law (5:7-15)
 - C. Walking in the Spirit (5:16-26)
 - D. Bear and Share Burdens (6:1-5)
 - E. Be Generous and Do Good (6:6-10)
 - F. Glory Only in the Cross (6:11-15)
 - G. Blessings and a Plea (6:16-18)

EXPOSITION

I. Greeting (1:1-5)

A. Paul's Apostleship and Greeting (1:1-5)

1:1 **"Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead)"** - Paul was an apostle "not by means of any man" (1 Corinthians 9:1-2; Galatians 1:11-12). The authority of the one who is commissioned comes from the one who commissioned him. When Paul spoke, wrote or acted as an apostle of Christ he did so with Christ's authority (2 Corinthians 10:8). It was not man, but the risen Christ who made Paul an apostle. Since he was commissioned by Christ, he was accountable to Him for the carrying out of his commission (1 Corinthians 4:1-4).

1. One of the qualifications of an apostle of Christ is he had to be chosen by Christ (Acts 9:15; 26:16).
2. Another qualification of an apostle of Christ is he had to have seen the resurrected Jesus to be able to serve as a witness to His resurrection.

No one can meet these qualifications today! [For additional information concerning qualifications of an apostle please see the appendices - ARE THERE MODERN-DAY APOSTLES?]

We should also not from this verse that the gospel would be meaningless if there had been no resurrection.

1:2 **"and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia"** - For a possible list of these brethren see Acts 20:4; 21:16. These brethren did not have any authority in regards to this letter; they had no part in the writing of it (2 Timothy 6:11). This phrase simply means they joined with the apostle in sending their greetings to the churches.

Notice this letter (epistle) was written not to a single church (congregation), but to a group of churches (congregations) in the district of Galatia. A messenger would travel to deliver the letter to a congregation in the district. That congregation would then make a copy of the letter for their own ongoing edification and study and then send the original letter by messenger to another congregation nearby. The use of the

word "churches" indicates that the letter to the Galatians was a circular letter.

Galatia was a large Roman province in central Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). How many congregations were in the region of Galatia is not known. We must also consider that the boundaries of Galatia changed at different times depending on the ruler in charge. When Paul wrote his letter to the Christians in Galatia, the province was divided into two main regions. The major cities of the northern region were Ancyra, Pessinus and Tavium. The major cities of the south included Antioch (near Pisidia), Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. Paul visited these cities on his first missionary journey. It could be that Paul established congregations in several cities, towns and villages in this area (Acts 18:23; 1 Corinthians 16:1).

1:3

"Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ" - Paul sends both "grace" and "peace" to brethren who were dealing with serious problems. The standard beginning of a Greek letter was "grace" and the standard beginning of a Hebrew letter was "peace."

"Grace" - is God's good will to men. Grace literally means "unmerited favor." It is unearned but not unconditional. It means blessings from God which the sinner does not deserve or merit. Salvation is thus conceived as something given to man, not as a matter of debt, but as an undeserved gift. In short, man cannot achieve heaven by works of merit, but works of obedience are required (Ephesians 2:8-9; James 2:20-26; Titus 2:11-14).

"Peace" - is the state of life for the Christian, which is peace with God. This is not talking about physical peace (Matthew 10:34; Romans 12:18). Spiritual peace is what Christ brought to mankind (Luke 2:14). God's law shows us our sin, accuses our conscience, declares the wrath of God and leaves man in depression and guilt. However, obedience to God's plan of salvation cleanses our sins and places us in Christ (Galatians 3:27) which brings grace and peace to our lives.

1:4

"who gave Himself" - The way of man's salvation cost Jesus His life. He freely gave His life so that man would have a way of

salvation (John 10:18). What an amazing gift! Its value cannot be fully described with the mere words of man (2 Corinthians 9:15).

"for our sins," - The Greek word translated as "sins" in this verse literally means "missing the mark." When we sin we "miss the mark" of righteousness. This implies there is a standard (a target) provided by God. Many in this world do not even know where the target of righteousness is located. It is no wonder they miss it!

"that He might deliver us" - The Greek word translated as "deliver" means literally "to pluck out or to rescue." The gospel (good news of salvation in Christ) is a rescue (emancipation) from a state of bondage to sin (2 Peter 2:19-20). The death of Jesus brought to man the opportunity for forgiveness of sins.

"from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father" - The age that they, and indeed we, live in is consumed by Satan's evil power which is contrasted with the glorious age to come in eternity (Acts 2:40; Romans 2:2; 1 John 5:19).

There are two words in the Greek language for the English word "evil" - KAKOS and PONĒROS.

- The evil (KAKOS) man may be content to wallow as a pig and perish in his own corruption,
- But the evil (PONĒROS) man is not content until he is corrupting others as well as himself. Matthew calls Satan the PONĒROS one (Matthew 13:19).

Christians are called out of the world and are to be separate and distinct from the people in the world: in life, in death, in resurrection, in judgment and in eternity. Christians are in this world, but as strangers in a land occupied by the enemy (Hebrews 11:13; Philippians 3:20).

If you are not a Christian, you are not in the kingdom of Christ; you belong to the kingdom of Satan. Then all the gifts you have, such as wisdom, power, beauty and riches, are nothing but instruments of Satan and you are serving Satan with all your gifts to advance his kingdom, whether you realize it or not.

1:5 **"to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."** - In the very act of Jesus' self-sacrifice, the Father's plan for our salvation was being accomplished. When this is realized, praise from our souls is the only right response.

The word "Amen" started as a Hebrew word (Numbers 5:22), which was transliterated into Greek and then eventually into English. The word comes from a Hebrew root word which means "to build up or support; to be firm or faithful, to trust or believe; to be true or certain." It is also used as an adverb at the beginning of a speech to mean "surely, of a truth, truly" (Matthew 5:18; Mark 3:28; John 3:3). At the conclusion of a sentence, it is used to mean "so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled." When the word is used as an adjective it means "firm or true." Some dictionaries claim that when "Amen" is used at the end of a prayer it means approval of what is being said. However, our approval does not make it true. It is more correct to think of it as "this is true, or may it come to pass, or may it be fulfilled."

II. Paul Defends the One True Gospel and His Apostleship (1:6-2:21)
A. Only One True Gospel (1:6-10)

1:6 **"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel"** - The Greek word translated as "I marvel" (THAUMAZŌ) usually indicates surprise at something repulsive. The phrase "turning away" (METATITHĒMI) literally means "removing yourselves" or "transferring yourselves."

Of course, the way God "called" the Galatians and every other person since the cross is through the gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:14). The gospel must be preached, heard and obeyed (Romans 10:14-15). Each individual is allowed by God to choose either obedience or disobedience to that glorious gospel call (Romans 10:16). Those who obey the gospel and continue to do so will receive the blessings of eternal life (Hebrews 5:9).

Paul was surprised that the Galatians were so soon turning to a different gospel. The "different" gospel was a different or another kind; not the one true gospel. Although Paul was rebuking them he was not rejecting them. He is still

convinced they could understand the foolishness of their actions and return to the truth (Galatians 5:10).

1:7 **"which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ"** - Notice Paul explains that the gospel they turned to was not another. There is only one true gospel (1 Corinthians 4:17). Following the law of Moses was not an optional gospel or way of salvation. The word "trouble" means "to shake up; stir up; agitate or throw into confusion." Evil men misrepresent and twist the meaning of the Scriptures (2 Peter 3:16). They often teach half-truths to make a case for their false views. They desire to pervert the gospel into something else (Acts 2:20; James 4:9). Once the gospel is perverted it will not save. Often the false teacher will pervert or twist Scriptures to the opposite meaning (putting darkness for light). We have no choice of gospels. There is the only one! The only choice is whether we accept it or reject it.

Since there is only one gospel, all church divisions result from perversions of that one gospel. All the religious division in the world is the work of Satan. The conclusion is these troublemakers were teaching a counterfeit gospel.

1:8 **"But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed."** - The Greek word translated as "accursed" (ANATHEMA) carries the meaning of "something yielded up to the wrath of God; or surrendered to the curse of God" (see also 1 Corinthians 16:22) The gospel Paul preached was not the true gospel because he preached it, but because the risen Christ gave it to him to be preached. The message, not the messenger, is what is important! Therefore, anyone teaching a different gospel is to be rejected along with their false gospel (Jude 1:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:13; Philippians 1:27; Hebrews 10:23).

Paul places a curse on anyone who would change what he himself had already preached to them. All men must believe and teach what Paul preached or be under God's curse. Why was God's condemnation of these changes so strong? Because, making a change to the one true gospel results in many false doctrines being preached and as a result many souls being lost.

1:9 **"As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed."** - The "gospel" is the good news of what Jesus has done for sinners. He became our sin bearer and sin offering. The "gospel" is God's power to save (Romans 1:16-17).

A "gospel" sermon is one in which the work of Christ, on behalf of sinners, is boldly proclaimed. It requires preaching Christ and the cross. There is no salvation without the cross.

Paul says, "let him be accursed." This is not a mere wish but an oath from the Father through the Son and through this apostle (cf. Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18). We should never change any part of the gospel. If we do so, we are corrupting the gospel and therefore, we do not have God (2 John 1:9; Revelation 22:18-19).

1:10 **"For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men?"** – The Greek word translated as "persuade" is PEITHŌ which means by analogy "to pacify or conciliate." Paul obviously made the right choice between seeking the favor of God or the favor of men (1 Thessalonians 2:4). He preached all of God's truth regardless of any ill effect it might have on his relationships with others (Acts 20:27).

"For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ" - Men pleasers can never be true and faithful servants of Christ. Trying to please men while still trying to please Christ is inconsistent with truth and incompatible with the gospel. Taking on the name of Christ as Christians means we are purchased by Christ and are obedient followers of Christ. We cannot serve two masters (Matthew 6:24).

B. Paul Called to be an Apostle (1:11-17)

1:11 **"But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man."** - The phrase "I make known to you" comes from the Greek word (GNŌRIZŌ) which means to certify. The message was certified as truth. The phrase not "according to man" means that it is not from man. The message Paul preached was not man's doctrine. He preached the words of Christ.

- 1:12 **"For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ."** - The Greek word which is translated as "revelation" in this verse literally means "uncovering" or "unveiling" which is an announcement from God of what lies beyond human knowledge or reach. These verses (Galatians 1:11-12) give the source of Paul's knowledge concerning the gospel of Christ. He did not receive it from any man or from any group or school of men (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Ephesians 3:2-6).
- 1:13 **"For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it"** - The word "conduct" or "conversation" as some versions have it would be better translated as "behavior" or "manner of life."
- The phrase "beyond measure" is translated literally as "according to excess."
- The Greek word translated as "destroy" would be better translated as "laid waste." This Greek word was used of sacking and utterly destroying a city. Before his conversion Paul had tried to utterly destroy the church (Acts 9:1-2; 22:4).
- 1:14 **"And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers."** - He had defended the traditions of the Pharisees stronger and more consistently than all of these false teachers. If there was a reason to boast about following the old traditions, Paul would have had more cause to glory than any other (Philippians 3:4-7). The phrase "traditions of my fathers" shows that this was not true Judaism but a religion of human traditions which had been added to the law of Moses. Never has mankind been given permission by God to "add to" or "take away" from His word (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Proverbs 30:6; Galatians 1:8-9; Revelation 22:18-19).
- 1:15 **"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,"** - This separation was for God's purposes not physical separation from his mother's womb. Paul was "set apart" or "designated" by God for a specific purpose (cf. Jeremiah 1:5; Isaiah 49:1-6). This is proof again that Paul's apostleship was not from man. Paul was a "called" apostle (Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:1).

NOTICE: There is an increased force in these words: "pleased, separated and called." Each one is showing God as the author of salvation. Paul, as a Pharisee, was not just ignoring God's love as revealed in Christ, he was actively trying to stamp out and destroy that divine love. If anyone was undeserving of divine love it was Paul. And yet, God was pleased to call him and reveal Himself to him.

SPECIAL NOTE: This passage is one of several that shows God had the church in mind throughout all time. The church was not an "afterthought" or "stopgap" measure after Jesus supposedly failed to establish during His time on earth. This error is called "premillennialism." Saying that Jesus failed is blasphemy! [For additional information concerning this please see the appendices - THE CHURCH IN PURPOSE.]

1:16 **"to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood,"** - This verse explains the purpose for which God selected Paul. He was chosen to preach God's Son among the nations of the world. Paul said that he did not confer with "flesh and blood" which indicates that he did not seek counsel or guidance about his duty from others; not even from his own relatives and close friends.

1:17 **"nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus"** - Here Paul shows that he could not have learned the gospel of Christ in any ordinary way. Before his conversion Paul persecuted the church with such zeal that Christians would have been afraid to approach him to try to win him to Christianity. After his conversion he went away to Arabia instead of going up to Jerusalem to learn from those who were appointed as apostles before him.

Paul went to Arabia perhaps to confront himself and think through his current position and his new faith in light of his previous training. He must have spent much time praying to God and working out in his mind his new life. Paul also went to Damascus where he had originally been going to persecute the church. He must have wanted to face those people to show them his new life in Christ. He did not come to the city as a persecutor, but as a preacher.

C. His Early Days as an Apostle (1:18-24)

1:18 **"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days."** - Paul went back to Jerusalem where he was now considered a "traitor" to his Jewish friends.

In Jerusalem he may have passed by the place where Stephen was stoned (Acts 7:59) and he probably faced the brethren he had once persecuted.

Why did he want to see Peter? The idea here is that Paul wanted to gain knowledge of the person Peter, not to gain knowledge from Peter. He was building a relationship with Peter as a fellow apostle.

1:19 **"But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother."** - James the Lord's brother was not one of the twelve, but was a very prominent man in the church at Jerusalem. The term "apostle" is being used by Paul in a broader sense to indicate a messenger sent to preach the gospel. Paul is not discrediting the other apostles, but is stressing the fact that he received his gospel by divine revelation. He was not taught the gospel by the apostles.

1:20 **"Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie"** - Paul confirms everything he has said with an oath (cf. Romans 9:1).

Are oaths sinful? The Bible teaches the sanctity of oaths as an appropriate way to show the oath taker's commitment to telling the truth in view of God and eternity (cf. Numbers 30:2; Romans 1:9; 2 Corinthians 1:23; Galatians 1:20). It should be remembered that God Himself has taken oaths in Bible history. He swore by Himself because no greater authority exists (Genesis 22:16ff; Hebrews 6:13-17; Luke 1:73; Psalm 104:4; Ezekiel 20:42).

It is **perjurers** (also called "false swearers") that are condemned. In Matthew 5:33-37 Jesus was not forbidding all oaths, as it may first appear. In the context we see He was forbidding frivolous oaths and oaths that are made without thought or care (cf. Matthew 23:16-22).

A Christian who is summoned to court today should not feel a pang (pain) of conscience when they are asked to swear an oath to tell the truth. A faithful Christian will tell the truth at all times and in all circumstances. The truth will be told if asked to swear an oath or if not asked to swear an oath. It makes no difference to a true Christian. The truth is what matters, and only when we speak truly is God glorified. Lying comes from the evil one - Satan. He is the father of lies (John 8:44).

1:21 **"Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia."** - Paul went back to Syria and Cilicia where Tarsus is located. He surely faced his hometown friends and relatives. This could not have been easy, but Paul was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16).

1:22 **And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ."** - The phrase "unknown by face" means these brethren had not seen Paul personally. This is not unusual, for he had spent the years following his conversion in Damascus and Arabia. Remember, he was in Jerusalem only fifteen days (verse 18) before he was driven out by persecution.

1:23 **"But they were hearing only, 'He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy.'"** - I am sure it was with great joy that the brethren received the news of Paul's conversion. The phrase "the faith" is used to designate the whole Christian system of salvation (Jude 1:3; Romans 1:17).

SERMON SEED - Four names for the faith of Christ (Acts 13:7-12):

- a) The Word of God (Acts 13:7)
- b) The Faith (Acts 13:8)
- c) The Right Ways of the Lord (Acts 13:10)
- d) The Doctrine of the Lord (Acts 13:12)

1:24 **"And they glorified God in me."** - In the Greek the phrase "they glorified" is imperfect tense which literally means they "kept on glorifying" God. They continued to glorify God as the author and source of what they saw in Paul.

D His Defense of the Gospel (2:1-10)

2:1 **"Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me."** - Paul had shown that the gospel he proclaimed was not based on instruction from the apostles at Jerusalem. He now shows that his message was fully endorsed by them. Therefore, he was not a false apostle, as his enemies claimed. The visit mentioned in this verse was since the visit of Galatians 1:18. Please see Acts 15 for a full account of this meeting in Jerusalem.

A man called Joses was named "Barnabas" (son of encouragement) by the apostles (Acts 4:36). Barnabas was a Levite from the island country of Cyprus. He was an early disciple of Christ. In Acts 9:27, we see that it was Barnabas who introduced the newly-converted Saul (Paul), to the apostles at Jerusalem. Barnabas and Paul embarked together on the first missionary journey recorded in Acts 13:4-14:26.

2:2 **"And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain."** - Paul was instructed by revelation to go to Jerusalem. The phrase "that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles" does not imply that Paul preached one gospel to the Gentiles and a different gospel to the Jews. He always preached the one gospel whenever he preached and wherever he went (Galatians 1:6-9).

The part of the gospel that confused many Jews was the part which taught that the Gentiles were not required to be circumcised to be added to the church (Acts 15:1). If those Jews who had become Christians continued to have this misunderstanding concerning the gospel, it would hamper Paul's work. Paul consulted with the leaders first (Acts 15:4) before addressing all the council so there would be no misunderstandings concerning his work.

2:3 **"Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised."** - Titus being a Greek was a Gentile and according to the Judaizers was required to be baptized to gain salvation. However, Paul's plan was successful evidenced by the fact that Titus was not compelled (persuaded) to be

circumcised. The church at Jerusalem, after hearing the evidence, had once for all demonstrated that circumcision was not essential to Christianity. If Paul would have yielded his position in the case of Titus, it would have set the precedent that circumcision was a salvation requirement for all Gentiles.

Some have wondered why Paul had Timothy circumcised while Titus was not circumcised. Paul circumcised Timothy because he was by birth a Jew. Having Timothy circumcised was not required for his salvation, but would give him the opportunity to have a more effective influence when preaching to the Jews.

2:4 **"And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage)" -** These "false brethren" were doing damage to the Lord's church - [For additional information concerning this please see the appendices - FALSE BRETHREN.]

The phrase "secretly brought in" comes from a Greek word which literally means "coming in from the side," as if "over the wall" and not through the door, therefore, illegally and insidiously (cf. 2 Peter 2:1; Jude 1:4). The phrase "to spy out" literally means "to spy out with hostile intent" or to "plot against."

2:5 **"to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."** - The phrase not "even for an hour" means that Paul did not yield to the pressure brought by the Judaizing teachers for even a short time. This helps us to understand how important it is that we always stand up for the truth (1 Timothy 3:15; Jude 1:3).

2:6 **"But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me."** - These men were looked upon by many as having important influence because of their previous standing with God. However, their past did not have anything to do with whether they were right or wrong concerning the issue at hand. Paul listened to them because of the influence they had, but was not told anything that he did not already know.

2:7 **"But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter"** - This indicates a distinction in their sphere of activity, not a difference in their message concerning God's plan of salvation for all men.

The Lord sent Paul to teach the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 13:47; 26:17). He was also sent to teach the children of Israel (Acts 9:15), but when the Jews continually rejected the gospel, Paul did most of his work with Gentiles (Acts 13:46).

2:8 **"(for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles)"** - God worked in and through both Peter and Paul in the same manner (Mark 16:20), with the same message and with the same results. The apostolic offices of both Peter and Paul were the work of God. The Judaizers claimed the other apostles were on their side of requiring circumcision for the Gentiles. But Paul shows that, in fact, they were on his side - on the side of truth (the gospel).

2:9 **"and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised."** - The phrase "seemed to be pillars" would be better translated as "who are in reputation as pillars."

There are great men of faith in the Lord's church today who also provide support and defense of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). However, it should be understood that the God-given gospel does not need human validation. It can, and does, stand on its own!

2:10 **"They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do."** - In the Greek the phrase "we should remember" is present active subjunctive which literally means "we should keep on remembering" the poor. In the context this shows there were needy Christians at that time in Jerusalem. To learn more about Paul's actions and teachings concerning the poor please see the following passages: Acts 11:27-30; Romans 15:25-28; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9.

E. No Return to the Old Law (2:11-21)

- 2:11 **"Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed"** - Paul now opens the question as to whether the Jews are still bound to the Mosaic Law. He has just settled the question for the Gentiles. He now addresses the Jews. This argument is designed to show Paul's consistency in doctrine and practice. The phrase, "he was to be blamed" means Peter stood condemned by his actions. The actions of Peter were not consistent with the message of the gospel. We learn from this that although the apostles were inspired to deliver God's word to the people this did not mean it was impossible for them to make mistakes in their personal conduct.
- 2:12 **"for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision."** - Peter should have known better than to separate himself from the Gentiles (Acts 10:28; 11:8-9; 15:7-11). By separating himself from the Gentiles and going back to the old law in this situation Peter was implying that he made a mistake when he gave up the law of Moses to obey Christ.
- 2:13 **"And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy."** - If this issue was not corrected by Paul, the Gentiles would have either been compelled to follow the law of Moses or there would have been a division in the church.
- 2:14 **"But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, 'If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?'"** - The phrase. "were not straight forward" means they walked not uprightly. The Judaizers would have naturally come to Antioch to subvert the Gentiles because Antioch was the largest and most influential congregation composed of Gentile converts. It is here, in reality, where the gospel would prosper or die.

How was Peter forcing the Gentiles into accepting Jewish ways? By changing his living habits back to the Jewish ways, he was telling them they were second class Christians in the kingdom. This implied they could only be first class Christians if they lived as Jews.

The phrase "before them all" is very interesting. Why didn't Paul confront Peter in private? The obvious answer is that Peter was a leader who had caused others to sin in this matter. The rest of the Jews, including Barnabas, were also guilty and needed to hear the truth.

2:15 **"We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,"**

- The "we" in this verse would include Paul, Peter, Barnabas and the rest of the Jews at Antioch. They were Jews by birth and from their infancy were brought up in the Jewish religion (under the law of Moses). The phrase "sinners of the Gentiles" is used to indicate the perception the Jews had of the Gentiles.

The point Paul is making is that since they were Jews (under the law of Moses) who had now left the old law for the new law in Christ it would be completely unreasonable to teach the Gentiles, who never were under the law, to follow the old law.

2:16 **"knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ**

Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified." - No man (whether Jew or Gentile) could be justified or saved by the works of the old law. That system had been "nailed to the cross" (Colossians 2:14), and the observance of the customs of the old law could not be forced upon any person. Justification before God could only be obtained through a working, obedient faith in Christ, and not by the law of Moses.

2:17 **"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not!"**

- If the gospel Paul preached was not sufficient to justify Gentiles without imposition of the law of Moses then Jesus, who abolished the old law by nailing it to the cross, becomes a minister of sin by that very act - by abolishing the justifying element of the old law.

The phrase, "a minister of sin" means a servant and promoter of sin. The Judaizers would accuse Jesus of being the promoter and encourager of sin in that He caused Jews to abandon the law of Moses as a justifying agent. They would say that by doing this He makes the Jews sinners just the same as the Gentiles. Certainly not!

2:18 **"For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor."** - Those "things" are the items that were between Jews and Gentiles - spiritual walls (Ephesians 2:11-22). When Peter lived as a Gentile he tore down the old law, but when he lived as a Jew again (by separating from the Gentiles) he tore down the salvation which came by Christ. Any way you look at this situation, someone who builds up what he formerly tore down acknowledges his fault: explicitly in his former tearing down of his former position or implicitly in his now rebuilding his former position. If his one activity is right, the other must be wrong!

The phrase "I make myself" literally means "to prove; to show; to make known." If Paul rebuilt the things of the old law he would show himself to be a transgressor.

2:19 **"For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God."** - When Paul said he died to the old law, he meant he ceased to have any relationship to it, so that it had no further claim or control over him. The Judaizers said, "Except you live after the law, you are dead to God," but Paul says, "Except you be dead to the Law, you cannot live for God" (cf. 2 Corinthians 3:6; Romans 2:28-29; 7:6).

2:20 **"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."** - This is how Paul died to the old law, by dying with Christ (Romans 6:3-4). Jesus did not die for His own sin (Christ was sinless), but for our sins He died (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24). Paul says, "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." This means it is no longer a self-centered life, but a Christ-centered life. This new life is yielding one's entire life to His will. Jesus giving Himself was proof of His love for us (John 15:13).

2:21 **"I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain."** - The phrase "set aside" means "annul; invalidate; make void." The grace of God stands for the gift of His Son on the cross. The phrase "in vain" means "groundless; without cause." Paul's actions of trusting God, turning from the old law, walking by faith and seeking salvation in Christ did not void the grace of God. Paul was carrying out the very things that were prophesied in the previous ages. The old law itself predicted its own end, stating that it would be replaced by the law of

another prophet (Christ) who was to be raised up from among the Jews (Deuteronomy 18:18-20). If a man could be righteous and obtain justification under the old law, then the mission and death of Christ was meaningless, pointless and useless.

III. Justification (3:1-4:31)

A. Justification by an Obedient Faith (3:1-9)

- 3:1 **"O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?"** - The Galatians were foolish because they had abandoned common sense to be taken in by the teaching of the Judaizers who told them to follow the old law. The word translated as "bewitched" is from the Greek word (BASKAINŌ) which means to be overtaken by a fascination for some false teaching. Christ had been so clearly and forcibly preached to them it was as if He had been crucified in their presence and before their eyes. They had no excuse for not understanding the truth.
- 3:2 **"This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"** - Paul asks them if they had received the Spirit by these works of the old law which the Judaizers were preaching as part of their perverted gospel or did they receive the Spirit by hearing, believing and obeying the one true gospel which Paul preached? When Paul first came to them he demonstrated through the miracles he did that God approved his teaching (Galatians 3:5; see also Mark 16:17, 20; Hebrews 2:4). The Galatians had also seen the miraculous abilities given to those who obeyed the gospel which came through the laying on of the hands of an apostle (cf. Acts 8:18-19).
- 3:3 **"Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?"** - The phrase "by the flesh" is used to describe the ordinances of the law of Moses (circumcision), because of its containing "fleshly ordinances" (Hebrews 9:1, 10). The Galatians had foolishly left the completeness of the system of salvation, certified by the Spirit, in which they had started their Christian life, and had gone backward to the ordinances of the old law which could not make one complete.
- 3:4 **"Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?"** - Paul clings to hope concerning their salvation. We have no biblical or historical record of what persecutions they may have suffered. The implication in the verse is they had remained

steadfast at first in the face of persecutions. However, if they went back to the ordinances of the old law, it would make all of their sufferings in the past vain or useless (cf. Hebrews 10:32-35).

3:5 **"Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"** - The basic question Paul is asking them is, "How does the one who works miracles among you do it?" Is it a result of the works of the old law, or because you have believed and obeyed the gospel?

The idea of "supplies" is complete and abundant supplying of all needs from an inexhaustible source (2 Corinthians 9:10; 2 Peter 1:5). The Greek word for God's working here is the same as in Galatians 2:8 where He worked through Peter and Paul confirming the word (Mark 16:20).

3:6 **"just as Abraham 'believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness'"** - Abraham was accounted righteous because of his faith and obedience long before the law of Moses was enacted. He was not saved by circumcision. In fact, he was accounted as righteous before his circumcision (Genesis 15:6; 17:13). Abraham was accounted as righteous because of his faith and obedience to God (Romans 4:7-11; James 2:21-24).

3:7 **"Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham."** - The Jews regarded it as an honor to be related to Abraham (Matthew 3:9; Luke 19:9; 2 Corinthians 11:22). However, in their zeal to convince the Gentiles to obey the ordinances of the old law, the Judaizers failed to realize that Abraham's greatness was due to his obedient faith. His righteousness had nothing to do with the ordinances of the law of Moses, for he lived six centuries before the law was even given.

The Jews believed they were guaranteed salvation because they were descendants of Abraham.

John who was baptizing in the wilderness of Judea warned, "And do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones" (Matthew 3:9).

In John 8:39 when the Jews said to Jesus, "Abraham is our father." He said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham." Works of obedience.

In Romans 2:28-29 Paul explained, "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God."

3:8 **"And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, 'In you all the nations shall be blessed.'"** - The promise that God had made to Abraham that "all nations" would be blessed through him included the Gentiles (Genesis 22:18). Therefore, God revealed this truth beforehand to Abraham. Every detail was not explained to Abraham, but the fundamental truth that Jesus would bless all nations (and not the Jews only) was foretold to him. The Galatians and even the Judaizers should have understood this truth. The term "faith" in this verse is used to designate the system of salvation which was once for all delivered through Christ (Jude 1:3).

3:9 **"So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham"** - Just as Abraham secured righteousness through an obedient faith, all who follow his example of faith and obedience will be blessed like him.

B. The Old Law Brings a Curse (3:10-14)

3:10 **"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, 'cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them'"** - The old law said "cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them" (Deuteronomy 27:26). Justification comes by an obedient faith, it does not come by the old law. The old law could not be kept perfectly and in this way, it became a curse. The Judaizing teachers were putting the Galatians under a curse instead of a blessing.

3:11

"But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for 'the just shall live by faith.'" - The Judaizers might claim Abraham as a special case, therefore Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4, "the just shall live by his faith" (cf. Matthew 10:22; Luke 21:19; John 8:31; Romans 1:17; Ephesians 2:11-22; Colossians 1:21-23; Hebrews 10:38; 1 John 2:24-26 and Revelation 2:10). Many in the religious world today misread this as, "the just shall live by his faith *only*". However, the word "only" is not written or implied in the text. The faith here is clearly an obedient faith like that of Abraham.

What does "shall live" mean?

1. Enjoying the peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7).
2. Being righteous in God's eyes (Romans 5:1).
3. Having fellowship with God in Christ (John 17:3).
4. Rejoicing with unspeakable joy, full of glory (1 Peter 1:8).
5. Transforming into the image of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

3:12

"Yet the law is not of faith, but 'the man who does them shall live by them.'" - A law system demands complete obedience and does not rest on mercy, grace and faith. Those who kept the old law were required to make sacrifices looking forward by faith to Christ for forgiveness (Hebrews 10:1-4). Forgiveness is by faith, not by the Old Testament system of laws.

This does not mean obedience to law is not required (Galatians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 9:21). Faith in God points a man to obey the things commanded by God, and in doing so he is blessed by God.

3:13

"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree')," - The Greek word translated as "redeemed" means paying the purchase price by which a slave was set free. Those who are trying to save themselves by means of law are enslaved to their own spiritual inability (Romans 7:10-25). The

phrase, "from the curse" literally means "out from under the curse." The phrase "for us" means "over us" (1 John 2:2).

It is written in Deuteronomy 21:22-23, "cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree." The exposure of a corpse on a tree or pole was not to be prolonged past sundown because it was an affront to human decency and to God Himself. Jesus remained immune to the curse of the old law by His perfect obedience to the law, but by being hanged on a tree (the cross) it was impossible for Him to not come under this curse. Christ had endured the curse for everyone by hanging on a tree in order to redeem us.

3:14 **"that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."** - The Jews who obeyed the gospel were delivered from the old law, and like Abraham were to walk by faith. They were placed upon the same level with the Gentiles. Jesus Christ was the promised seed of Abraham in whom all nations would be blessed and thus the Gentiles could become fellow heirs of the blessings of Abraham by entering into Christ (Galatians 3:27-29). The term "we" in this verse refers to the children of Abraham through faith which included both Jews and Gentiles. Christ came to redeem all (Ephesians 2:14-17; Titus 2:11).

C. The Covenant Confirmed in Christ (3:15-18)

3:15 **"Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it."** - Using the term "brethren" softens somewhat the severe tone of this letter. The phrase "in the manner of men" is Paul's way of saying that even in the usual customs of men concerning covenants or legal agreements the rules are followed and are binding. He uses this example to illustrate the certainty of God's covenant with Abraham. The word "confirmed" literally means "ratified."

3:16 **"Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as of many, but as of one, 'and to your seed,' who is Christ."** - God did not promise salvation to Abraham's physical decedents but to true believers, whether Jew or Gentile, and to them alone. He is saying that this great blessing is concentrated in one person, namely, Jesus. It is in Him and Him alone, that all these believing Jews and Gentiles are blessed. It is in

this sense that "seed" is singular and definitely not in the plural (Genesis 22:18).

This verse also gives us information concerning the respect we should have for God's inspired word. The Bible is God's word to mankind. It was written down by men, but God is the actual author. He provided to these men the words that they wrote (2 Peter 1:21). Every letter, word, word form and word placement found in the Bible's original manuscripts was divinely and intentionally written. This is known as verbal plenary inspiration. The word plenary means "complete or full." When used in connection with the inspiration of God's Word, plenary means that all parts of the Bible are equally of divine origin and authoritative.

Galatians 3:16 shows us that every single letter is important. The difference between "seed_s" and "seed" makes a monumental doctrinal point. Everything in the Scriptures is there because that is what God wanted to say to mankind. Every single letter and word, not just the ideas behind the words, was written in the original manuscripts because God wanted it there.

3:17 **"And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect."** - God had given them a written law through Moses (1500 B.C.). This law was given 430 years after He had made the promise to Abraham and, far from having an annulling affect upon the promise, was actually a step toward the fulfillment. The word "confirmed" is used to show that God had probated His will before the Law of Moses was given.

Two things impossible for God to do:

1. Lie (Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18)
2. Break His oath (Hebrews 6:17)

3:18 **"For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise."** - If the inheritance of Abraham's decedents was based on the law of Moses, then it would belong to the people of the old law (the Jews). But if it is based on the promises made to Abraham, generations before the

giving of the law of Moses, then it would belong to all people (Jews and Gentiles). What can we conclude? The blessing intended for all nations (promised to Abraham) was not the product of the old law.

D. The Purpose of the Old Law (3:19-25)

3:19 **"What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator."** - Since, the promise of the blessing for all, through the seed of Abraham, had already been given to the world one might wonder, "Why then was the law of Moses given?" The old law was given to demonstrate to man the dangers of sin, and man's need for a Savior (Romans 7:7-25). The old law was added because of the transgressions of men. Man has always needed rules to follow to direct his behavior (Jeremiah 10:23). However, this addition of the law of Moses was not to be permanent (as the Judaizers were teaching) but was to be in force only until the coming of the Seed (verse 16) who would fulfill the promise made to Abraham.

Although the word "till" is small, it is very important because it shows the old law was temporary. We also notice in this verse that it "was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator" (Deuteronomy 33:2). Stephen told the Jewish Sanhedrin council you, "have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it" (Acts 7:53). God's word also makes it clear that "the word spoken through angels proved steadfast" (Hebrews 2:2).

3:20 **"Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one."** - An agreement founded on law always involves two or more people. God dealt directly with Abraham without a mediator. Therefore, the law given to Moses was inferior to the promise made to Abraham. Our mediator is Christ not Moses:

1. Christ is God and God is one (Hebrews 1:8; Deuteronomy 6:4).
2. The sanctified (Christians) and Christ are one (Hebrews 2:10-11).
3. Therefore, the sanctified (Christians) and God are one (2 Corinthians 5:18; John 17:21-23).

3:21 **"Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law."** - The law of Moses was not against the promises of God for it never claimed to provide (spiritual) life to its followers. It was added to the promises only for the purpose of regulating the behavior of the people in that time, so that they would be ready to accept the "life" promised by the Savior.

3:22 **"But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe."** - The phrase "has confined" literally means "did shut together." This is like being shut up on all sides; being enclosed by a wall, a fence or even in a prison.

The phrase, "confined all under sin" does not mean that God caused them to sin. Their own actions and conduct declared them to be guilty of sin. All had sinned and God just declared what was true concerning their condition. All were sinners, which means all needed divine mercy.

3:23 **"But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed."** - The meaning of this verse is basically the same as verse 19. The word "faith" is used to designate the whole Christian system (Jude 1:3; Romans 1:17), to distinguish it from the law of Moses. The system of faith came with Christ. God dealt with Abraham by the law of faith; but because of transgressions He provided the law of ordinances through Moses. The old law remained in force until Christ came and through Him the law of faith was again restored as the means of justification.

3:24 **"Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith."** - The word "tutor" is a translation of the Greek word PAIDAGŌGOS, which only occurs three times in the New Testament; twice in the present context and once in 1 Corinthians 4:15, where it is translated as "instructors." However, these two English words (tutor, instructors) are really not adequate to describe the full meaning of this Greek term. In *Thayer's Greek Definitions*, by J.H. Thayer we find the following definition:

"a tutor, i.e. a guardian and guide of boys. Among the Greeks and the 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 upper class. The boys were not allowed so much as to step out of the house [*'kept under guard' (vs. 23) - R.H.*] without them before arriving at the age of manhood."

In this verse Paul is equating the law of Moses to this guardian of the child, because it was given care of the children of the promise made to Abraham until the time when the Master (Christ) would come. He would take charge of the pupils and instruct them concerning the curriculum of the faith.

3:25 **"But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor."** - Once they had been brought to the real teacher (Christ), there was no longer a need for the authority of the previous guardian (the old law).

E. One in Christ Jesus (3:26-29)

3:26 **"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus"** - The word "all" includes both Jews and Gentiles. The phrase "through faith" literally would be translated as "by means of the faith." In order to be an heir to God, it was necessary to be a child of His. Paul is teaching that a family relationship is possible for the Galatians (who were Gentiles) only by faith in Christ Jesus. He is showing them that they became sons of God in Christ Jesus by an obedient faith, not by circumcision.

3:27 **"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."** - The force of Paul's argument is that those who had been baptized into Christ had put on Christ, not Moses.

Those who have NOT been baptized into Christ have NOT put on Christ. They have none of the benefits of putting on Christ. They are not Christians and they are not saved. What does Jesus say a person must do in order to gain forgiveness of sins?

1. Jesus said a sinner must have faith, or believe that He is indeed the Christ the Son of God (John 8:24; Mark 16:15-16). However, this is not the only step. Faith alone will not save (James 2:14, 17, 24).
2. Jesus also said a sinner must repentant of sins to have forgiveness (Luke 13:3). The sinner is required

to repent which is composed of sorrow for sin, a change of will, which results in a changed life.

3. Jesus said a sinner is required to confess their faith in Him as the Christ, the Son of God (Matthew 10:32-33).
4. Jesus also said a sinner must be baptized to have forgiveness of sin (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-19).

3:28 **"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."** - The word "there" is used to refer to the position mentioned in the previous verse - in Christ. In Christ there is no distinction made between race, social status or gender as far as their spiritual relationship with the Savior. They are all united equally in one body (group) by their obedience to God's plan for man's salvation.

1. Jew or Greek = nationality or race
2. Slave or free = social status
3. Male or female = gender

3:29 **"And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."** - If the Galatians were in Christ, they were made so by the faith (system of salvation), and by faith they were Abraham's children. Paul's previous statement does not invalidate the importance of Abraham because he was promised a descendant who would be a blessing to all whether Jew or Gentile. Therefore, Paul proves that the blessings of the gospel were not gained by the old law, but by the gospel system of salvation through faith and that gospel was promised equally to all people.

F. Sons and Heirs Through Christ (4:1-7)

4:1 **"Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all,"** - The word "child" describes an infant in that he has not come of age and has not been given his freedom. He is hedged about with restrictions and is no different from a slave in this sense. He is not his own master. The inheritance is legally his but he has no power to spend it.

- 4:2 **"but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father."** - The Greek word (EPITROPOS) translated as "guardians" is a broad term which would include the idea of schoolmasters, teachers or any who had care of a child. A steward was one who had charge of the heir's property.
- 4:3 **"Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world."** - The phrase "when we were children" is used in reference to the time before the gospel was introduced. Paul represents the old law as an elementary system of childhood, filled with rituals and ceremonies, pointing beyond to the age of manhood in Christ. The religious systems of the Old Testament (Patriarchal and Mosaical) were elementary and preparatory for the coming of the gospel of Christ.
- 4:4 **"But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,"** - The "fulness of the time" means the time selected by the Father when the Jews under the Mosaical system and the Gentiles under the Patriarchal system were ready to receive the full benefits of the blessings in Christ.

The Greek word translated as "sent forth" (EXAPOSTELLŌ) which means "sent out" is a form of the same word used for an apostle. Jesus is the Father's apostle (Hebrews 3:1).

Jesus, was "born of a woman" and "born under the law" which means He was brought into this world through the use of a woman (Luke 1:34-35) and He lived and died while the law of Moses was in force. This law ended when Jesus was crucified. The old law (law of Moses) was "nailed to the cross" (Colossians 2:14).

- 4:5 **"to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."** - The Jews were redeemed (freedom was purchased) from the bondage to the old law when Christ brought the gospel into the world.

In this verse Paul makes an interesting change to the illustration he is using. He has already said that the son is no better than a servant while a child (Galatians 4:1). In a sense he was a servant and not yet the son of the head of the house. Therefore, to become the true heir he would need to

be adopted as a son with all the rights and privileges of a legitimate son.

4:6

"And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'" - The phrase "because you are sons" shows us that the sons of God are only given the Spirit of God once they do those things which God requires them to do to become sons (obeying God's plan of salvation).

The Spirit is not given to make one a son of God. The Bible teaches that:

1. God has given mankind the freedom of choice to obey or disobey Him (Genesis 2:16-17; Deuteronomy 11:26-28).
2. God is impartial and is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35; Romans 2:11).
3. God desires that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9).
4. Man's salvation is not dependent on God alone (Joshua 24:15; Romans 6:17).

God has provided the means for salvation by grace through His Son's sacrifice on the cross for the sins of the world. However, man must meet the required conditions to be saved by that grace through faith and obedience (Ephesians 2:4-10; Matthew 7:21; James 2:17-26).

All who are willing to come to Him in obedience can be saved. God loved the world and gave His son for the sins of the world and whosoever will believe and obey Him will have eternal life (John 3:16-17). The blood of Jesus is not limited to a few. It is available for all.

This great gift of the Spirit causes them to address God as their Father. The Greek word translated as "crying" was used to describe a strong, deep, emotional crying out. Strangers and slaves could only cry, "Master," but never, "Father, Father."

4:7 **"Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."** - Christians are full grown sons and daughters of God. They have been given their freedom and the power to use it responsibly. The phrase "heir of God" literally means heir by means of and through God. This refers to God the Father as the author of salvation through Christ.

G. Falling into False Practices (4:8-20)

4:8 **"But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods."** - The phrase "you served" literally means "you served as slaves." This statement seems to be addressed more specifically to the Gentile Christians in the region of Galatia. They had before worshipped idols which are not gods. However, it is true that the Jews were also guilty of this sin in their past when they claimed to believe in God but went after false gods and idolatry (Golden Calf - Exodus 32:1-6, Dagon - 1 Samuel 5:1-5, Milcom - 1 Kings 11:5, Ashtoreth - 1 Kings 11:5, Baal - 1 Kings 18:20-40, Chemosh - 2 Kings 23:13).

4:9 **"But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?"** - The phrase "turn again" is present tense in the Greek which means it would be better translated as, "How is it that you are presently turning again to the weak and beggarly elements?"

The phrase "weak and beggarly elements" refers to the elements of the old law such as circumcision taught by the Judaizers (Colossians 2:20-23; John 19:14; 2 Timothy 2:19). The elements of the old law were "weak" because they had no spiritual power; "beggarly," because they had no spiritual riches like the gospel of Christ. The word "elements" describes those first things that are fundamental and not completely developed.

4:10 **"You observe days and months and seasons and years."** - This refers to those holy days and seasons that were required by the Jews under the law of Moses, but which were no longer valid under the law of Christ for Christians. The Gentiles had never been under these observances. It seems that false religions almost always institute rituals and ceremonies concerning certain days or seasons.

Paul is not condemning the marking of special days as such, but opposes the practice if it is made into a matter of law. The observance of special times, not taught in Christ's law, is often a misguided attempt to gain holiness. The Christian must keep in mind that every day belongs to God (Romans 14:5-6).

- 4:11 **"I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain."** - The phrase, "I am afraid for you" has the idea of, "I am afraid concerning you." The Greek word translated as "labored" carries the idea of laboring to the point of exhaustion. Paul's work (labors) included preaching the gospel to them. He had taught them the importance of obeying Christ and His law as their rule of faith and practice. If the Judaizers were successful in persuading them to obey elements of the law of Moses, it would cause them to be lost and make "vain" the work he had done to bring them the truth.
- 4:12 **"Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you. You have not injured me at all."** - Paul had become like them in the sense that as a Jew he had given up his devotion to the law of Moses in order to become a true follower of Christ (Philippians 3:9). Paul's appeal is that they should not seek to become Jews, but that they might become as he is now - a Christian.
- 4:13 **"You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first."** - This shows he was suffering from some kind of physical ailment and was detained in Galatia. However, while he was there he continued to preach the gospel to them. This "infirmity" is mentioned by Paul on more than one occasion, but never with enough detail to determine exactly what it was (2 Corinthians 12:7-9).
- 4:14 **"And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus."** - Instead of spurning Paul, they received him as an angel (messenger) of God, just as if he were Jesus Himself.
- 4:15 **"What then was the blessing you enjoyed? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me."** - The New American Standard Bible has here, "Where then is that sense of blessing you had?" By their willingness to listen to the teaching of the Judaizers they were demonstrating that their attitude toward Paul had changed. Their

appreciation for what he was doing had once been so great that if it had been possible they would have given him their own eyes.

This verse is used by many as proof that Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7) was the eye condition known as ophthalmia. Although the expression in this verse may be used as a proverb, Paul does not here state it in the normal proverbial form. The phrase "given them to me" may suggest that he needed their healthy eyes. Also, these words are not essential to the proverb.

4:16 **"Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?"** - It is always dangerous to speak the whole truth, for it often pierces to the heart of the hearers causing great pain and discomfort. At times they may strike back out of reflex to their pain. The goal is to always teach the truth in a loving and kind way, but we should understand that no matter how kind we are there will still be those who are offended and see us as an enemy. But, their negative response never justifies preaching without love.

4:17 **"They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them."** - The "they" in this verse refers to the Judaizers. The phrase "they zealously court you" is present tense in the Greek which should be translated as "they are zealously courting you." The Judaizers were zealous to persuade them to put themselves under bondage to the old law and in turn submissive to and dependent on them. Doing this, the Galatians would begin to look upon these Jews as great shepherds and deliverers.

The American Standard Version has an excellent rendering of this verse:

"They zealously seek you in no good way; nay, they desire to shut you out, that ye may seek them."

4:18 **"But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you."** - Paul shows them he had courted them also. However, his courting of them was in a good manner and in the right spirit. It was in connection with the truth of the gospel.

4:19 **"My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you,"** - The phrase "my little children" literally means

"my born ones" (1 Peter 1:22-25). This is the only place Paul uses this phrase. The illustration Paul is using is like that of an expectant mother who is concerned (labor - travail) over the child that is being fashioned within her. Paul uses this to emphasize his concern for the Galatians. He is anxious for the spirit of Christ to be formed in their minds and give birth to the proper devotion to Christ, not Moses.

4:20 **"I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you."** - Paul says, "I have doubts about you" or literally, "I am perplexed by you." Since it seemed that the Galatians were more inclined to listen to him when he was with them, he wished he was with them now. Paul also understood the importance of tone. He was very capable of tenderness (2 Corinthians 2:4; Philippians 3:18; Acts 9:16).

H. Two Covenants (4:21-31)

4:21 **"Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?"** - The Judaizers who claimed to uphold the Old Testament should have known what it taught concerning the purpose and extent of the old law. It was never meant to be permanent.

4:22 **"For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman."** - The two sons of Abraham referred to by Paul here are Ishmael and Isaac. The "bondwoman" was Hagar who was the mother of Ishmael (Genesis 16:15). She was an Egyptian woman who was the handmaid (slave) of Sarah (Genesis 16:1). Sarah who was Abraham's wife (Genesis 20:12) was the mother of Isaac (Genesis 21:5-6).

4:23 **"But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise,"** - The child (Ishmael) was conceived and born according to the natural laws of reproduction (Genesis 16). Sarah was barren and therefore a miracle was required for her to conceive. God used this miracle to fulfill the promise he had made to Abraham that he would have a son by Sarah (Genesis 16:1-2; 21:1-2).

4:24 **"which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar"** - These things are "symbolic" or an "allegory" as some versions translate it. An allegory is defined as "a story, poem or

picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one." Paul is saying that this is true history but it also has a lesson which needed to be applied at a later time.

The phrase "two covenants" refers to the law of Moses and the Gospel. Paul connects Hagar to the law of Moses. The phrase "gives birth to bondage" means to bring forth children who are destined for bondage under the rituals and ceremonies of the old law which was given from Mount Sinai.

- 4:25 **"for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children" -** Paul uses the city of Jerusalem to compare its current situation ("which now is" - still clinging to the law of Moses) with the current state of the Judaizers being in bondage to the law of Moses given from Mount Sinai.
- 4:26 **"but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all."** - "Jerusalem above" is heavenly Jerusalem used to represent the kingdom (church). Remember, the church was first established in Jerusalem (Acts 2:5, 38, 47). Christ's church is the mother of all true Christians. The significance of the city of Jerusalem hearkens back to Abraham when it is said that "he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10, 16). And it is further stated that believers in Christ "have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 3:12; 21:2).
- 4:27 **"For it is written: 'rejoice, O barren, you who do not bear! Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children than she who has a husband.'" -** This is a quote of Isaiah 54:1. Sarah ("the desolate") has more children than Hagar, who only bore children of the flesh. Isaac was the only son whom Sarah ever bore, but he (the child of the promise) was the person through whom the Savior came which produced numerous spiritual children and is still giving birth to spiritual children for God in all the nations of the world (John 3:3-16; 1 Peter 1:22-25).
- 4:28 **"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise." -** Paul is comparing the fact that Isaac was promised to Abraham and Sarah, and from that child of promise came the Seed (Christ) who was to bless all nations by giving them the way of salvation through

the plan of the gospel. Therefore, whoever obeys this plan becomes a child of God. All who obey are "children of promise" because their salvation is a result of the promised Seed that was given to the world. Sonship in Abraham is the subject, but the manner in which one is born to Abraham as his child determines everything (Romans 9:6-9).

4:29 **"But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now."** - The account of this persecution is in Genesis 21:9 when Sarah saw Ishmael "scoffing" (mocking) during the feast for Isaac's weaning. Jewish tradition says that Ishmael shot arrows at Isaac when he was in a field just for the sport of it, but this is not found in the Scriptures. A lesson for us today is sons of the flesh are never at peace with sons of the Spirit.

4:30 **"Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? 'Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.'" -** The phrase, "shall not be heir" literally means "shall by no means inherit." The actions of Sarah proved to be a prediction of the rejection of the old covenant as a religious system for God's people.

1. Son of the bondwoman = Old Testament
2. Son of the freewoman = New Testament

4:31 **"So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free."** - Notice the use of the term "brethren" as a tender close to his argument. All that Paul has said means that the Galatians are not under the bondage imposed by the law of Moses.

IV. Steadfastness, Faithfulness and Duty (5:1-6:18)

A. Christian Liberty (5:1-6)

5:1 **"Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage."** - Paul sums up the allegory and applies it in this verse. Christ died to give us the advantage of having this liberty from the law of Moses (compare John 8:36). The Galatians could not be justified by the law of Moses because it was no longer in effect (Romans 7:4; Ephesians 2:14-16; Colossians 2:13-14). They were under the law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2; James 1:25).

5:2 **"Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing."** - The practice of circumcision was a sign between the Jewish people and God. It was a pledge by the Jews that both they and their offspring would keep the covenant with God obeying the law of Moses. Requiring the Gentiles to be circumcised implied that they would also need to obey the law of Moses. Returning to the elements of the old law was the same as forsaking Christ.

5:3 **"And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law."** - In the original language the phrase "I testify" can also mean, "I protest." Paul is telling them that they must follow the law of Christ without making any additions. It would not be right to add even one element of the old law (circumcision) to the new law of Christ. The old law stands or falls as a whole system. They were not allowed to borrow bits and pieces from the law of Moses.

5:4 **"You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace."** - By being circumcised, in order to be justified by the old law, they were guilty of apostasy. There was no longer any justification for them in the old system. They had left the grace of Christ to be under the condemnation of the law (Hebrews 10:26-27).

Here is another place where the Scriptures teach it is indeed possible to fall from grace. We have so many verses in the Bible that teach Christians can fall from grace (1 Corinthians 9:27; 10:11-12; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Hebrews 2:1-3; 3:12-13; 4:11; 6:6; 1 Peter 1:10; 3:17). We also have examples in the Bible of those who fell from grace and were told to repent lest they perish. This should be enough proof for anyone with a good and honest heart to understand that it is indeed possible for a child of God to lose his or her salvation. The doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy is a false doctrine. It will condemn the souls of thousands who have been tricked into believing that once they are saved they are always saved.

5:5 **"For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."** - The "we" in this verse is used to indicate Christians (Jews and Gentiles). The divine judgment of "righteousness" is the final verdict of forgiveness for the Christian

which will be proclaimed before every eye and ear (Romans 8:24-25; 2 Timothy 4:8).

5:6 **"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love."** - The word "avails" means "to have power; to exert power; to wield power." "Faith working through love" literally means that faith works by the means of love.

There is really no reason for the confusion in the religious world today concerning the issue of faith and works. One extreme says faith only and the other extreme says works only. The Bible is clear that neither extreme is correct. God's word teaches that we are counted as righteous only when faith and works of obedience combine (Galatians 5:6; James 2:18, 22).

B. Love Fulfills Law (5:7-15)

5:7 **"You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?"** - The phrase, "you ran well" refers to the time before the Judaizers entered among them and did their evil work of false teaching. The word "well" means bravely; honorably. The word "hindered" literally means to "cut in front of" or "cut in." Paul is asking who cut in front of or cut in on your Christian race and tried to trip you or turn you to a wrong course?

5:8 **"This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you."** - If this persuasion (being persuaded to be circumcised) does not come from God it ultimately comes from Satan, regardless of who the human agent might be.

5:9 **"A little leaven leavens the whole lump."** - The term "leaven" is used symbolically of evil in the New Testament with only one exception in Matthew 13:33. A few evil people in the congregations in the region of Galatia had brought this wicked teaching. They had caused many to turn away from Christ and turn to the following of the old law. Evil spreads both quickly and thoroughly. It must be stopped as soon as possible before too much damage is done.

5:10 **"I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is."** - The "troubles" the Galatians experienced were the spiritual unrest and confusion in the church concerning the way

of salvation. Notice Paul's strong confidence in them in this verse, as well as his strong condemnation of the Judaizers.

5:11 **"And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased."**
- The binding of circumcision on the Gentiles was the main disagreement between Paul and the Judaizing teachers who were persecuting him.

If Paul had started to teach that the Gentiles needed to be circumcised, the Jews would have stopped persecuting him. His preaching would not have been offensive to them, because, as stated before, the chief reason for offense to the Jews was that Paul preached that the old law had been done away with in Christ.

The Greek word translated as "offense" literally means "a trap; a stumbling-block."

1 Corinthians 1:22-24, "For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

5:12 **"I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!"** - The graphic phrase "cut themselves off" shows that Paul desired that those who troubled the church by teaching the need to be circumcised would "cut themselves off." This means he wanted them to be separated from the church and turned over to Satan (cf. 1 Timothy 1:20).

5:13 **"For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."** - It is now necessary for Paul to show that freedom from the law of Moses does not, by any means, do away with the law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2) and the obligations Christians have concerning moral conduct.

Christian freedom is not to be abused for selfish ends. Liberty can easily be twisted into a license to do as one wishes. When Christ placed a pardon in our hands, He did not give us a license to practice sin. Christian freedom from

condemnation of sin does not authorize throwing off restraint and pursuing one's lusts (Romans 6:5-6). The wise Christian understands that having this freedom means there are no constraints on His devotion and service to Christ. He is limited only by himself and the extent of his love for others.

5:14 **"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"** - Just as directly and unhesitatingly as one loves himself, he must love his neighbor.

No person understanding and participating in Christian freedom can hate his brother. Hating a brother in Christ is a form of murder (1 John 3:15). Love is both the summary and the realization in practice of the entire law of God viewed as a unit (cf. Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39-40; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27, also Matthew 7:21; 19:19; Romans 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 13).

5:15 **"But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!"** - The phrase "bite and devour" is used figuratively to describe how the Galatians were treating each other. Paul, who knew from his own past how loveless, bitter and cruel brethren can sometimes be, issues a very strong warning here (cf. James 4:11).

C. Walking in the Spirit (5:16-26)

5:16 **"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."** - The phrase "in the Spirit" would be better translated as "by the Spirit." God's word, inspired by the Spirit, works in the lives of Christians and is far more powerful than the lust of the flesh. When Christians understand how Satan works to tempt the fleshly desires they will better understand how to defeat him. The Christian who dares to fight against Satan without putting on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:11-18) is blind and foolish, ignorant of both his own limitations and the power of Satan.

5:17 **"For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish."** - The flesh lusting against the inspired teachings of the Spirit (New Testament) is like a tug of war. If one wills to do good, he is opposed by the flesh; if he wills to do evil, he is opposed by the teachings of the Spirit.

The question is, "Which of these two powers shall prevail in our lives?"

Those who are led by the Spirit's inspired word:

1. Are of faith (Galatians 3:9)
2. Belong to Christ (Galatians 3:29)
3. Have been set free (Galatians 4:26, 31; 5:1)
4. Walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16)

Therefore, all true believers are led by the inspired teachings of the Spirit - the Holy Scriptures.

5:18 **"But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law."** - The Holy Spirit was the instrument by which the New Testament was revealed to take the place of the old law of Moses.

Being "led" requires an entire surrender of the Christian's life to the authority of the Spirit-inspired word. Christians are led by the Spirit through the word of truth. The Spirit makes man free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2).

5:19 **"Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,"** - The word "evident" means "open; evident; well known." These things which are sometimes dismissed or minimized in the world are called obvious "works of the flesh" by Scripture.

[FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE FOLLOWING WORKS OF THE FLESH PLEASE SEE THE APPENDICES.]

Adultery - This is defined as voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a person who is not his or her spouse.

Fornication - This is having sexual intercourse with anyone who is not your lawful spouse. Fornication is a broader term that includes all manner of illicit sexual conduct.

Uncleanness - The Greek word translates as "uncleanness" in this verse was originally used to describe the pus of an unclean wound.

It is used here to mean impurity of either mind or body. It is the opposite of pure and makes a man unfit to come before God.

Lewdness - This word is defined as, "unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence." It is a readiness for any illicit pleasure.

5:20

"idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies," -

Idolatry - In *Thayer's Greek Definitions* we find the following: "The worship of false gods, idolatry," and it is, "used of the formal sacrificial feasts had in honor of false gods." Since a feast involves the fleshly appetite it is classed with the works of the flesh.

Sorcery - (Witchcraft) This word comes from the Greek word PHARMAKEIA from which we get the English word pharmacy. The first definition of this Greek word is "the use or administering of drugs." The next definition is, "sorcery, magical arts." Mind-altering drugs are often associated with sorcery.

Hatred - The Greek word here is used to describe the qualities which make enemies, hatred and ill will. This can be used to describe concealed hatred that breaks out openly in conflict.

Contentions - (Variance) This is a quarrel, wrangling or strife. In four of the six times this word is used in the New Testament it is used to describe something taking place within the church.

Jealousies - This is defined as painful feelings, anxious fear and unfounded suspicions aroused in the heart over the success of others. This is an unholy desire to excel over others. Jealousies never allow you to "rejoice with them that rejoice" (Romans 12:15).

It is interesting to note that zeal and jealousy come from the same Greek word, and may be used in a good sense as well. In 2 Corinthians 11:2 Paul told the Christians at Corinth, "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy."

Outbursts of Wrath - This is defined as uncontrolled anger or temper.

Selfish Ambitions - (Strife or Factions) The Greek word here was originally used of those who served in government positions for hire

or for other selfish purposes and in order to gain their ends. It prompts party spirit or factions. This is someone setting himself above the church. This attitude is always seen when members of the church separate instead of coming together in unity which leads to the next work of the flesh.

Dissensions - This is defined as to bring about division and disunion. Sometimes cliques can develop in a congregation often resulting in disharmony and bitterness.

Heresies - This is defined by Thayer as the "act of taking, capture: e.g. storming a city." It is also used for "choosing, choice or that which is chosen." It can describe a "body of men following their own tenets (sect or party)." It is "dissensions arising from diversity of opinions and aims."

Thayer describes its meaning as something that "a man chooses and uses, not because it is right, but because it happens to suit his personal taste."

5:21

"envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." -

Envy - Envy does not just want the things that belong to others. It also feels grief because of someone else's good fortune.

Murders - To be guilty of murder is to unlawfully kill a person. This is obviously a work of the flesh. However, God's word also teaches that one can be guilty of murder in a sense without physically taking a life.

1 John 3:15, "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."

Drunkenness - This is the act of becoming intoxicated. Modern studies have shown that with the very first drink of alcohol one begins to become intoxicated. Recent reports have also shown that damage to the brain occurs even with the smallest amount of alcohol. Christians are always to be sober minded (1 Thessalonians 5:6-8; 1 Peter 5:8).

Drunkenness is often seeking pleasure in intoxication as a solution to life's problems. It seems that this practice had become prevalent among the Galatians.

An alcoholic will often drink himself into unconsciousness only to wake in the morning to find that he is still wretched and miserable (Proverbs 23:29-35). Alcohol offers no solution to life's problems.

Revelries - Revelries are "excessive and boisterous festivities; carousals; taking part in or enjoying something without restraint; acting conspicuously and wantonly; giving reins to one's inclinations, propensities, or passions."

and the like - The phrase "and the like" shows us that it is not only the things mentioned in this passage which should be avoided, but all other things which are similar to those which are mentioned specifically.

When Paul said "the like" he said in essence that we should include in this list other things clearly taught as fleshly in the Scriptures, but not mentioned in these specific verses. Any person of spiritual maturity can recognize the difference between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit (cf. Philippians 1:9-10; 4:8).

The spiritually immature Christian exposes himself by demanding a specific passage condemning practices which the mature Christian knows are contrary to the nature of God's laws.

The last phrase of the verse, "those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" shows us how important it is that we do not succumb to these sinful practices. The habitual committing of these sins is proof that one will not inherit the kingdom of God.

5:22 **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,"** - Paul changes the figure from "works" in verse 19 to "fruit" as the normal result of the Holy Spirit in us.

We should note first that the word "fruit" is a singular word in the Greek text. It might be helpful to compare the fruit of the

Spirit to an orange. The orange is a perfectly matured fruit made up of segments. Each segment could be thought of as representing an attribute as listed in these verses. We cannot pick one or two attributes to cultivate in our Christian lives and expect to produce a perfect fruit. Each attribute, with its own special characteristic, must be cultivated individually and collectively for us to achieve the goal God desires for us.

[FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE FOLLOWING FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT PLEASE SEE THE APPENDICES.]

love - The first attribute the inspired apostle lists is love. This includes both love for God and love for man.

1 John 4:7-8, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love."

Jesus said in Matthew 5:43-45, "You have heard that it was said, 'You Shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

joy - Joy is distinct from happiness. Happiness depends upon circumstances such as good health, good friends, pleasant surroundings, financial security, etc. Happiness and unhappiness can never exist together. Joy and sorrow can - and do! Such as Paul and Silas singing in prison (Acts 16:25). The emotion of joy is at the very core of Christ's teachings.

Jesus said in John 15:11, "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full."

peace - The general meaning of peace is a state of physical harmony between individuals. However, in this verse the word is being used in a more meaningful way. Walking in the Spirit

(according to His inspired instructions) brings peace with God that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7). We only have this spiritual peace in Christ because in Him we gain salvation from our sins. We should not think of this peace as the elimination of all troubles in this life. The peace spoken of in this verse is peace of mind and peace of soul.

longsuffering - Thayer defines the Greek word here as, "patience, forbearance, long-suffering, slowness in avenging wrongs." Someone once said that longsuffering, "is the grace of the man who could revenge himself and who does not, of the man who is slow to wrath." Love prompts a Christian to bear with the mistakes and wrongs of others that are a result of spiritual weaknesses.

kindness - The term kindness is defined as being gentle toward all, and returning good for evil. Kindness can be shown to others without compromising the truth of the Scriptures.

goodness - This is defined as "uprightness of heart and life." Showing goodness to others includes actively seeking their good. This means telling others the truth of God's word even if it is upsetting to them (Acts 2:36-37).

faithfulness - This is defined as trustfulness or fidelity. Those who are faithful are confident that God is working all things together for the good of those who love and trust Him (Romans 8:28). Those who are faithful also demonstrate trustfulness and fidelity in their dealings with others.

5:23 **"gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." -**

gentleness - (Meekness) - This means being submissive to the will of God; teachable and considerate. This is the quality of one who is only angry for the right reasons (righteous indignation) and never angry for the wrong reasons (Ephesians 4:26). One who is gentle will not treat others harshly, even though they might be in the wrong.

self-control - Thayer explains this Greek word to mean, "the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual (fleshly) appetites."

The phrase, "against such there is no law " means that these attributes are pleasing to God. He has no law that will condemn or

interfere with these attributes. Paul may have made this statement concerning "law" because he used much of this letter to teach about the differences between the law of Christ and the law of Moses.

5:24 **"And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."** - "Those who are Christ's" are the same people described by the words "led of the Spirit" (verse 18) and the ones who bear the "fruit of the Spirit" (verse 22). They became His (being led by the Spirit and bearing the fruit of the Spirit) by obeying the gospel which had been given by the inspiration of the Spirit. Some versions translate the Greek word here as affections, but "passions" is closer to the original meaning. The phrase "crucified the flesh" means they had killed or put to death the works of the flesh (Colossians 3:5). The "passions and desires" of the flesh fight against the fruit of the Spirit.

5:25 **"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."** - The Greek word translated as "walk" in this verse is not the same as in verse 16. This Greek word here literally means, "to walk in line; to march in battle order." The phrase "let us also walk in the Spirit" is also present tense in the Greek and would be better translated as "let us keep on walking by the Spirit." The words of the Spirit (inspired Scriptures) creates faith in man and if followed will result in trusting obedience to Christ. [For additional information concerning the work of the Holy Spirit please see the appendices - THE HOLY SPIRIT USES THE INSPIRED WRITTEN WORD.]

5:26 **"Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."** - The Greek word which is translated as "let us not become" is Present, middle, subjunctive. Literally this means "let us stop becoming." Being "conceited" (desirous of vainglory) is having a vain conceit that you possess a rightful claim to honor. The word "provoking" means "calling forth or challenging."

D. Bear and Share Burdens (6:1-5)

6:1 **"Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."** - The word "trespass" means "a falling aside; a slip; a lapse." This wording is not used for a planned or purposed sin. The idea is that a Christian is surprised, or caught unaware, by temptation and falls into sin. Those who are "spiritual" are those are led by the Spirit inspired Scriptures. The word "restore" is a medical term for setting bones or

healing wounds (compare "mending" in Matthew 4:21 and "prepared" in Hebrews 10:5). The stress here is on the cure, not punishment! The phrase "considering yourself" means that before you deal severely with the erring brother, consider your own weaknesses and susceptibility to temptation. Then restore him in view of that fact.

- 6:2 **"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."** - The Greek word translated as "bear" in this verse is present, active, imperative and would be better translated as "keep on bearing."

The phrase "law of Christ" makes it clear that as Christians we are indeed under a law and it must be obeyed in order to please our Lord (see also 1 Corinthians 9:21).

- 6:3 **"For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself."** - There may be some who are so conceited that they see no possibility of ever being overtaken in a fault. Such a man is only deceiving himself. Paul implies by his words that the self-deceived man is far from understanding the truth.

- 6:4 **"But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."** - The Greek word translated as "examine" (DOKIMAZŌ) was used of assaying or proving metals or coins. Notice that Paul also warns that we should not compare ourselves to others. When we find shortcomings of our own, even though they may not be the same as others, we have no right to claim moral or spiritual superiority over them.

- 6:5 **"For each one shall bear his own load."** - The Greek word translated as "load" was used to describe the burden of a soldier's pack. There are things which each one of us must do for ourselves - things for which we have total responsibility. This responsibility cannot be transferred to another. Each person will be judged and held accountable for their decisions and actions. Every person will be rewarded according to his/her own deeds (Jeremiah 17:10; 32:19; Ezekiel 18:20; Matthew 16:27; Romans 2:6; Revelation 2:23; 20:13).

E. Be Generous and Do Good (6:6-10)

- 6:6 **"Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches."** - The Greek word translated as "share" literally means to "hold fellowship with." It would include both giving and receiving financial and material aid (Philippians 4:15). It is also a moral or spiritual participation (Romans 15:27; 1 Timothy 5:22; 2 John 11). It even includes participation in outward conditions (Hebrews 2:14); for example, participation in sufferings (1 Peter 4:13). For more information please compare Luke 10:7; Matthew 10:10; 1 Corinthians 9:14; 1 Timothy 5:17-18.
- 6:7 **"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap."** - The Greek word translated by the phrase "do not be deceived" is present, passive and imperative which literally means "stop being led away." Everyone who disrespects God's word will be held accountable. Each of us will be rewarded according to our own works (Matthew 16:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 22:12).
- 6:8 **"For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."** - No farmer thinks he can sow his field with weeds and as a result harvest wheat. However, when it comes to moral and spiritual matters men seem to think they can ignore the law of sowing and reaping. Man will never produce a spiritual harvest in his life by sowing seeds of fleshly desires. In religious life there are only two kinds of seeds and hence only two kinds of harvest (Matthew 13:37-42). Every person on the earth is sowing one or the other of these seeds and will reap accordingly at the day of judgment.
- 6:9 **"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart."** - This literally means let us not keep on giving in to evil while doing good. The word "good" means "excellent in its nature and characteristics." It is well adapted to its end and carries the idea of "beautiful; precious; admirable."
- In 1 Corinthians 15:58 Paul stated, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."
- 6:10 **"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."** - Christians have a prior claim on the generosity of their brethren, not

only in the same congregation, but in any or every congregation. However, this does not mean that the church is not obligated to help non-Christians as well. Notice the phrase, "let us do good to all." Please consider what Christ said of our obligation to the unbelieving poor:

Matthew 5:44-47, "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?"

Luke 6:30-36, "Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful."

When gathering benevolent funds for the poor in Jerusalem (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2), Paul told the Corinthians that their gifts would be distributed to both saints and all men.

2 Corinthians 9:13, "While, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men."

The Bible is sufficiently clear. The church is to extend assistance to all souls who are in need, giving first preference to fellow Christians. The best way to prepare for Christ's second coming is to use to the fullest every opportunity of rendering service.

F. Glory Only in the Cross (6:11-15)

6:11 **"See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand!"** - Paul would often dictate his epistles to a secretary (amanuensis) who would write it for him and then he would sign the letter to provide proof of its authenticity (Colossians 4:18; 1 Corinthians 16:21; 2 Thessalonians 3:17). Perhaps because of Paul's concern for the brethren in Galatia, he wrote this entire epistle with his own hand.

Some say the meaning of "large letters" refers to the length of the letter. However, others assume the "large letters" is evidence that Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was defective eyesight (2 Corinthians 12:7). However, we do not have enough evidence from the Scriptures to make a conclusive determination concerning the exact meaning of "large letters" in this verse.

6:12 **"As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ."** - The Judaizers were not at all interested in the welfare of the Galatians but were only concerned about themselves (their honor, their ease and their freedom from persecution). It must be remembered that behind any action of the Judaizers, Satan was seeking to destroy the church.

6:13 **"For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh."** - In this verse Paul equates the Judaizers with the Pharisees (Matthew 23:4, 15; 15:16). We must make sure that we practice what we preach! The gospel preacher, E.M. Zerr noticed in his day (1877-1960):

"These Judaizers were like the Sabbatarians of our day, who make a great ado about the law and pretend that it is still in force. Yet they spend most of their energy in condemning Christians because they do not "keep the sabbath holy." The inconsistency of these modern Judaizers is shown in that they violate the very commandment they pretend to observe. (See Exodus 20:8-11). This forbids working the beasts of service on the sabbath, yet it is not uncommon to see these pretenders drive their horses to the "sabbath school" on Saturday. This puts such false teachers in the same class

with the Judaizers of Paul's day. They did not keep the law, but wished to induce the Christians to accept circumcision, so that they (the Judaizers) could boast about it."

6:14 **"But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."** - The war between God and Satan came to a climax at the cross of Christ where God is revealed at His very best and Satan at his very worst (John 12:31-32). Paul was "crucified" (became dead) to the sinful things of the world because of his devotion to the cross (Romans 6:1-5).

6:15 **"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation."** - Only God, who created us, can recreate us (with our permission) after Satan has corrupted us with sin. The only thing that matters now is that we are a new creation (Romans 6:4; 1 Peter 1:23). For more information concerning this please compare 1 Corinthians 7:19; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 3:28; 5:6; Colossians 3:10-11.

G. Blessings and a Plea (6:16-18)

6:16 **"And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God."** - The phrase "according to this rule" was a reference to a reed or measuring stick, therefore a rule. The "rule" comes from the previous verse, that "neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything." This shows that the old law could not be added to the new law. Peace and mercy are extended only to those who are governed by this rule. As the cross of Christ makes men free from sin they are added to the church (Acts 2:38, 47). The church of Christ is the Israel of God today. His new creation, the new Israel, is created out of men once dead. The Christian is the true spiritual Jew (Romans 2:28-29; 9:6-8; Philippians 3:3).

6:17 **"From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."** - Paul is asking that he might not again be troubled by questions concerning his authority as an apostle of the Lord. The Greek word translated as "marks" literally means "a mark pricked in or branded upon the body." Paul had the marks in his flesh that proved his service as a slave to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:23-28). The use of the word "marks" may be a reference to the practice of marking those slaves who had decided to devote

themselves to a life of submission and service to their masters (Deuteronomy 15:17).

6:18

"Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen." - We should make note that the "grace" was to be with their "spirit." Grace would rest on the souls of the Galatians, not on their physical bodies. This closed the letter by once again showing the difference between flesh and spirit and the insignificance of physical circumcision under the new law.

"Amen." - The word "Amen" started as a Hebrew word (Numbers 5:22), which was transliterated into Greek and then eventually into English. The word comes from a Hebrew root word which means "to build up or support; to be firm or faithful, to trust or believe; to be true or certain." It is also used as an adverb at the beginning of a speech to mean "surely, of a truth, truly" (Matthew 5:18; Mark 3:28; John 3:3). At the conclusion of a sentence, it is used to mean "so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled." When the word is used as an adjective it means "firm or true." Some dictionaries claim that when "Amen" is used at the end of a prayer it means approval of what is being said. However, our approval does not make it true. It is more correct to think of it as "this is true, or may it come to pass, or may it be fulfilled."

FINIS

APPENDICES	61
ARE THERE MODERN-DAY APOSTLES?	62
FAITH AND WORKS.....	70
FALSE BRETHREN.....	74
THE CHURCH IN PURPOSE.....	79
WORKS (SINS) OF THE FLESH.....	83
DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT JUSTIFY SOCIAL DRINKING	116
DID JESUS CREATE AN INTOXICATING BEVERAGE?	121
FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT	125

ARE THERE MODERN-DAY APOSTLES?

By: Dave Miller, Ph.D.

The incredible diversity of viewpoint that exists in religion today is startling and disconcerting. We are witnessing a breakdown of respect for authority in American culture, as well as a tremendous increase in personal opinion and feelings as the standard of authority. Consequently, we now have a veritable smorgasbord of doctrinal variety in religion. Such is the nature of pluralism. One is likely to see anything and everything perpetrated in the name of religion and/or Christianity. The only solution to such a situation is to reaffirm the inspiration and authority of the Bible. The Bible is the only written document on this planet that is the standard of authority in life and in religion (see Miller, 1996, pp. 430-446,462-471).

THE DEFINITION OF AN APOSTLE

Such being the case, we must go to the Bible to determine God's will with regard to modern-day apostles. When we do so, we first learn that the word "apostle" comes from the Greek word *apostolos*, which means "one sent from or forth, a messenger, delegate" (Arndt and Gingrich, 1957, p. 99; Thayer, 1901, p. 68). The term is used in the New Testament in two distinct senses. It can refer to an individual who is sent by other humans to accomplish a particular mission or task. The term is so used to refer, for example, to Barnabas (Acts 14:14). He was an "apostle" in the sense that he accompanied Paul on an evangelistic trip. Jesus is said to be our "Apostle" in the sense that He was sent to atone for our sins (Hebrews 3:1).

The term "apostle" also is used in a second sense—what we might call an **official** sense. That is, "apostle" can refer to individuals who were officially and divinely selected to serve as Jesus' original representatives—"ambassadors" (2 Corinthians 5:20). Jesus handpicked the original twelve apostles (Matthew 10:1-5; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16; 9:1-2). Of these original twelve, Judas betrayed the Lord as predicted by the Old Testament (Psalm 41:9; John 13:18-19; 18:1-5). Instead of repenting, he cinched his apostasy by committing suicide (Matthew 27:3-5; John 17:12). Consequently, a successor to Judas was selected by divine decree (Acts 1:16-26).

Only one other apostle in the official sense is alluded to in the New Testament—Paul. His appointment to apostleship was unique and unparalleled in that he was chosen for a specific first century task (Acts 9:15; 22:14-15; 26:16-18; 1 Corinthians 15:8-9; Galatians 1:11-12,15-16). Christ selected him to introduce the message of Christianity to the Gentile world (Romans 11:13; 15:16; Galatians 2:8; Ephesians 3:8). Paul was careful to document the fact that his apostleship was by divine appointment (e.g., Romans 1:5; 1 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:1,16).

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF AN APOSTLE

When one assembles all the relevant New Testament data, at least three qualifications emerge as prerequisite to one becoming an apostle in the official sense (Hayden, 1894, p. 33, expands these credentials to seven in number). First, an apostle had to have seen the Lord and been an eyewitness of Christ's resurrection (Acts 1:22; 22:14; 1 Corinthians 9:1). Second, an apostle had to be specifically selected by the Lord or the Holy Spirit (Matthew 10:5; Mark 3:13-14; Luke 6:13; Acts 1:26; 9:15; 22:14-15,21; 26:16). Third, an apostle was invested with miraculous power to the extent that he could perform miracles. The power to perform miracles included the capability to confer the ability to work miracles to other individuals through the laying on of his hands (Mark 3:15; 16:17-20; Luke 9:1-2; John 14:12,26; 15:24-27; 16:13; Acts 2:43; 4:29-31,33; 5:12,15-16; 6:6; 8:14-18; 19:6; 2 Timothy 1:6; Romans 1:11; Hebrews 2:3-4). Jesus referred to His bestowal of miraculous capability upon the apostles when He promised they would be "endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

THE WORK OF AN APOSTLE

The apostolic office was unquestionably a temporary office for the early church (though apostolic appointment was for life). Its essential purpose was twofold. First, apostles were commissioned by Jesus to launch the Christian religion (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-48). This purpose was achieved by means of the initial presentation of the Gospel to the whole world (Colossians 1:23), and the establishment of the church of Christ (Acts 2). Second, apostles were largely responsible for making the New Testament available—first in oral form and, more specifically, in written form (1 Corinthians 14:37; Galatians 1:12; Ephesians 3:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 5:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:14; 1 Peter 1:12; 2 Peter 1:12-21; 3:15-16).

These two central tasks are set forth clearly in the New Testament. In Matthew 16, Jesus declared that He would build His church after His resurrection from hades (vs. 18). He then explained that it would be the apostles who would instigate initial entrance into Christ's church (hence the significance of "keys"—vs. 19). This commencement of the Christian religion and the church of Christ would be achieved by means of the apostles "binding" and "loosing" the doctrinal tenets and principles of Christianity that Heaven had previously bound or loosed [the Greek uses the perfect passive and should be translated "will have been bound/loosed in Heaven" as in the NASB (cf. Matthew 18:18-20; John 20:22-23)]. Peter and the apostles articulated the terms of entrance into the kingdom of Christ for the first time on the Pentecost that followed Christ's resurrection (Acts 2:14ff.).

In Ephesians 4, after summarizing Christianity in terms of seven core concepts (vss. 1-6), Paul described the initial sequence of events that recounted the advent of Christianity (vss. 7-16). Paul noted that: (1) after His crucifixion, Jesus descended into the Hadean realm; (2) He then was resurrected; (3) He ascended back to Heaven; (4) upon His ascension, He dispensed gifts; (5) the apostolic office was included in the reception of these miraculous capabilities; (6) the purpose of these

gifts was to equip and edify the church; (7) the preparation provided to the infant church by these gifts was temporary (“till” is an adverb of time connoting **when** the miraculous gifts were to terminate), in that the same preparation soon would be available through the completed revelation, i.e., “the faith.” [By “completed revelation” we do not mean completed **canon**. We mean that all of God’s communication to humanity would have been revealed. See the New Testament discussion contrasting “mystery” with “made known” (Romans 16:25-26; 1 Corinthians 2:7-10; Ephesians 3:1-11). In the meantime, the process of producing copies of the various New Testament documents and circulating them far and wide would have been occurring rapidly and extensively from the very moment of their production by the inspired writers (cf. Colossians 4:16, 1 Timothy 5:18, where Luke 10:7 is already known and classified as “Scripture,” and 2 Peter 3:15-16, where Paul’s epistles are already circulated and recognized as “Scriptures”). Further, the reference to “the faith” in Ephesians 4:13 cannot refer to a time when all people or all Christians will achieve unity in faith. Such a circumstance will never occur. Paul was referring to the time when all people would have access to all of God’s communication to man, thus giving them the potential for attaining spiritual maturity (“a perfect man” vs. “children”). See Miller, 2003].

Once all of the information necessary to the promotion of the Christian religion was revealed to the early church (through oral means made possible by the distribution of the gifts), the church would have the means available to grow and mature in Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13). While prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers [the words “pastors and teachers” share the same article in the Greek, and so should likely be construed to mean “pastor-teachers,” i.e., a single function in which pastors (those selected by the local congregation to serve as elders or shepherds) were endowed with the miraculous ability to teach inspired information not yet made available in written form] were part of this early development of Christianity (Ephesians 4:11), the office of an apostle was the primary means by which Christ accomplished the inauguration of His religion.

The apostles had the sole responsibility of executing the will of the Son of God in founding, organizing, and fully equipping the church of Christ on Earth, that she might fulfill her heaven-borne mission, until Jesus comes again (Hayden, p. 22). That is why Paul could say two chapters earlier that the household of God (i.e., the church) was built on the **foundation** of the apostles and prophets (Ephesians 2:20; cf. 3:5; Revelation 21:14). That is why he informed the Corinthian Christians:

God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? (1 Corinthians 12:28-30).

The apostles are said to be “first” in the significance and criticality of their divinely appointed role. The apostles specifically described their unique role in the early church as entailing giving themselves to “the word of God” and “the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:2,4).

THE DURATION OF AN APOSTLE

Once the church of Christ was established and Christianity was given its initial presentation (cf. Colossians 1:23), the apostolic office **faded from the scene** along with the age of miracles. As an eyewitness of Christ's resurrection, Paul referred to himself in relation to the other apostles as "**last of all**" (1 Corinthians 15:8). Neither apostles nor miraculous gifts was needed any longer. They had served their temporary purpose (Mark 16:20; Acts 4:29-31; 13:12; 14:3; Romans 15:18-19; Hebrews 2:3-4; cf. Exodus 4:30). Miraculous gifts functioned as scaffolding while the church was under initial construction, and were removed once the structure had been completed (1 Corinthians 3:10; 13:11; Ephesians 4:13-14). The book we call the Bible is the totality of God's written revelation to the human race. Consequently, people now have access to **everything they need** (2 Peter 1:3) to enter into a right relationship with God via Christianity and the church of Christ. The apostles "had no official successors. From the nature of their duties, there could be no succession" (Hayden, pp. 20-21). **Apostles, quite simply, are no longer needed!**

NO APOSTLES TODAY

Unfortunately, several groups that claim affiliation with the Christian religion allege to have apostles among them, including Catholicism, Mormonism, and some pentecostal groups. This claim is unbiblical. No person living today can meet the qualifications given in Scripture for being an apostle. No one living today has been an **eyewitness** of Christ's resurrection. Christ has selected no one living today for the apostolic role. No one living today possesses the miraculous capabilities of an apostle. We should not be surprised that people would falsely **claim** to be apostles. Jesus warned that false prophets would come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they would be ravening wolves (Matthew 7:15). Paul described some of his opponents in these words:

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works (2 Corinthians 11:13-15).

Further warning was issued to the Galatian churches: "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). Anyone claiming to be an apostle today who teaches anything **in addition to** the New Testament is clearly not an apostle of Christ!

Peter added his voice on the same subject: "But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction" (2 Peter 2:1). No wonder John admonished:

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1; cf. Matthew 24:11,24). In the Revelation, the church at Ephesus was commended because they “tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars” (Revelation 2:2).

Catholicism maintains that Peter was the supreme bishop, even over the other apostles, and that every pope since Peter is an apostolic successor to Peter. The pope is selected after literally hours and days of deliberation by cardinals in the Vatican. The only apostle in the Bible that was not handpicked by Christ in person was Matthias. Yet he was not selected by mere men deliberating and debating his potential. He was selected by the casting of lots—which was simply another way for Jesus to do the selecting (Acts 1:26; cf. Proverbs 16:33).

It is incredible to think that any human beings living today would presume to appoint apostles. In pinpointing the credentials of an apostle, Luke (Acts 1) made it abundantly evident that to qualify as an apostle a person would have to have **seen** the Lord and been an **eyewitness** of His resurrection. That is why Paul was careful to state: “Am I not an apostle? ...Have I not **seen the Lord**?” (1 Corinthians 9:1, emp. added). In recounting his conversion, he quoted Ananias as having said, “The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and **see the Just One**, and hear the voice of His mouth. For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard” (Acts 22:14-15, emp. added). What alleged modern-day apostle could make such a claim?

The New Testament also makes clear the fact that an essential characteristic of an apostle was that he had been selected by Deity. When Jesus was on Earth, He handpicked the first twelve apostles. After His departure from Earth, the disciples cast lots to select a successor to Judas. Their method allowed no input from mere humans—except in the recognition that two men possessed all the qualifications necessary to be an apostle. Casting lots allowed **God** to do the selecting. Divine control in the selection process by casting lots was common in Old Testament history (see Leviticus 16:8; Numbers 26:55; 33:54; 34:13; Joshua 14:2; 18:6,10; 19:51; cf. Acts 13:19; 1 Samuel 14:42; Nehemiah 10:34; Psalm 16:5). Solomon claimed: “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord” (Proverbs 16:33). Indeed, Peter’s prayer on the occasion shows that the decision already had been made by the Lord before the actual casting of lots: “...show which of these two **You have chosen**” (Acts 1:24, emp. added). The summary statement regarding Matthias—“he was numbered with **the eleven** apostles” (Acts 1:26; cf. Matthew 28:16; Mark 16:14; Luke 24:33)—gives way to a return to the expression “the twelve” (Acts 6:2; cf. Acts 2:14). The text states: “You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen to take part in this ministry and apostleship” (Acts 1:24-25). Paul also was handpicked by Jesus—to be a “chosen vessel” (Acts 9:15). No human being on Earth today can claim he has been personally singled out and chosen by Jesus to be an apostle.

A third proof that no apostles exist on Earth today is the fact that New Testament apostles were empowered by God—not only to perform miracles—but

also to **convey miraculous power to other people** who then could work miracles themselves. This characteristic is demonstrated in detailed fashion in Acts: “Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money” (Acts 8:18). The issue of modern-day apostles may be settled very quickly! To authenticate their claim to be apostles, they must be able both to perform miracles as well as confer miraculous power to others. The apostles of Jesus in the New Testament demonstrated their apostolic status without hesitation. Anyone today who claims to be an apostle should be willing to do the same. No such ability exists today.

ORIGINAL APOSTLES WERE SUFFICIENT

A fascinating passage in the New Testament sheds further light upon this notion of modern-day apostles. That passage is Matthew 19:28. There Jesus informed Peter and the other apostles: “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” A related passage is Luke 22:29-30 which says, “And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as my Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

These verses are Christ’s figurative declarations describing the role of the twelve apostles in the establishment of the church and the dissemination of the gospel proclamation (cf. Bales, 1957, pp. 187-223). The “regeneration” refers to the Christian era, which began at Pentecost, during which time spiritual regeneration became possible through the blood of Christ (Titus 3:5). It is an equivalent expression with the “time of reformation” (Hebrews 9:10). The throne of Christ’s glory refers to His present location at the right hand of God (Acts 2:34-36; Ephesians 1:20; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:13; 8:1; 10:12-13). The “judging” done by the apostles refers to the rule that the apostles exerted while they were on Earth, setting in place the features of New Testament Christianity (Matthew 16:19; John 20:22-23). The “twelve thrones” refers to their complete authority from Christ to implement Christ’s will until the end of time—which they presently do today **through their authoritative writings—found only in the New Testament**. The “twelve tribes” is a figurative way to refer to the church—the spiritual Israel (Galatians 6:16; James 1:1; cf. Romans 2:28-30; Galatians 3:29).

Neither Christ nor the original apostles needs successors or representatives on Earth today. They continue to rule and reign over the kingdom through the work that they achieved in the first century, and that is preserved for all in the New Testament. Christ is **now** on His throne ruling and reigning. The apostles also are on the thrones assigned to them by Christ. To suggest that the apostles have modern-day successors is to discount and discredit the current rule of the apostles. Neither Christ nor the apostles has abdicated their authority or their current rule to any humans on Earth.

Additionally, the fact that Jesus declared that **all twelve apostles** would occupy thrones in the kingdom proves that Peter had no greater authority than the other apostles. The apostles were **equal** in their reception and wielding of the authority delegated to them by Christ. Yet the Catholic Church claims that the immediate successors to Peter were Linus (from A.D. 67 to 79), Cletus (from A.D. 79 to 91) and Clement (from A.D. 91 to 100). They agree that the apostle John would have still been alive throughout this period (see G.C. Brewer's discussion as quoted in Bales, pp. 208-210). The doctrine of the primacy of Peter means that the first three of the alleged successors of Peter would have exercised authority over the still-living apostle John—who had been handpicked by Christ Himself! The very John whom Jesus placed on one of the twelve thrones would have been **under** the authority, knowledge, and power of three popes who had not been selected to be among the original Twelve! (see also Hayden, pp. 22-33). Hayden aptly summarized the New Testament position regarding modern-day apostles:

The thirteen apostles chosen, ordained and endowed by the newly crowned Messiah faithfully and fully executed their commission. When they entered into everlasting rest, the church was established, with all needful ministries to edify, extend and perpetuate it throughout all coming centuries. Then the extraordinary, which was necessary to found a new institution, was succeeded by the ordinary, which is sufficient to teach, regulate and govern the subjects of Christ's kingdom according to the laws that went forth from Jerusalem. The revelation of God was completed. The word of faith is henceforth nigh every believer, even in his mouth and in his heart. The apostolic office ceased, and evangelists and pastors became the permanent teachers and superintendents of the church (pp. 33-34).

REFERENCES

- Arndt, William and F.W. Gingrich (1957), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press).
- Bales, James (1957), *The Kingdom: Prophesied and Established* (Austin, TX: Firm Foundation).
- Hayden, W.L. (1894), *Church Polity* (Kansas City, MO: Old Paths Book Club).
- Miller, Dave (1996), *Piloting the Strait* (Pulaski, TN: Sain Publications).
- Miller, Dave (2003), "Modern-day Miracles, Tongue-Speaking, and Holy Spirit Baptism: A Refutation—Extended Version," [Online], URL: <http://www.apologeticspress.org/articles/2569>.
- Thayer, Joseph H. (1901), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1977 reprint).

<https://apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=11&article=1226>
Copyright © 2003 Apologetics Press, Inc. All rights reserved.

FAITH AND WORKS

- I. Can we be saved by our own works?
 - A. Ephesians 2:8-9 - "For by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast."
 - B. 2 Timothy 1:8-9 - "Saved...not according to our works but according to His own purpose."
 - C. Romans 11:6 - "And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace, otherwise work is no longer work."

- II. In Romans 4:1-25 Paul is correcting a false belief that man could be saved by his own "perfect works." If a man could do a "perfect work" (one's life being that work — completely void of sin), then there would be no need for God's grace.

Paul argues that God would then be indebted to that person due to their perfect life (4:4). Abraham's righteousness was "by faith," not his own "perfect work," or God would have owed Abraham a debt, and no grace would have been necessary.

But we see that grace AND faith were needed to justify him.

- III. We have seen that we are justified by faith as a result of God's grace (unmerited favor).

BUT is it necessary to "obey God in order to receive this grace?"

 - A. 1 Samuel 15:22 - "Then Samuel said: Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams."
 - B. Ecclesiastes 12:13 - "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."
 - C. John 14:15 - "If you love Me, keep my commandments."
 - D. Romans 6:17-18 - "But God be thanked that though you were the servants of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, ye became slaves of righteousness."

It is, therefore, necessary to obey God in order to receive His grace, and to become servants of righteousness!

- IV. Why are we God's servants; what is our purpose?
- A. Ephesians 2:10 - "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, [What kind of works? Our own? No!] which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."
 - B. Notice that these are not our own works, but the works that God Himself prepared for us to do.
 - C. Compare Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:8-9; Romans 11:6; 4:4-5.
- V. What are these works which these verses refer to?
- A. 1 Thessalonians 1:3 - "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love..."
 - B. Hebrews 6:10 - "For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love."
 - 1. God desires all to do the same thing (v. 11).
 - 2. Be not slothful (v. 12).
 - C. Galatians 5:6 - "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love."
 - D. Romans 16:26 - "But now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith."

We can see by these passages that faith is supposed to do something.

- VI. Can we receive the grace of God in vain?
- A. 2 Corinthians 6:1 - "We then as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain."
 - B. In 1 Corinthians 15:10, Paul said he had not received the grace of God in vain — "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me

was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

- C. It should be noted here that the grace of God caused Paul to labor (work), and if he would not have worked, the grace would have been in vain!
- D. Through faith we are justified by works:
 - 1. Done in obedience to God's commandments,
 - 2. Which are a result of His grace.

VII. Other examples of faith which led to works which led to perfect faith.

- A. Noah was led by faith to build an ark (Hebrews 11:7).
 - 1. He and his family would not have been saved by faith alone.
 - 2. Without works they, as well as their faith, would have been dead.
- B. The bronze serpent (Numbers 21:4-9).
 - 1. Israel's belief in what God said led them to obey and to look upon the serpent.
 - 2. They could have believed all day long, but without obeying and looking upon the serpent they were without hope.
- C. The wall of Jericho (Joshua 6:1-21).
 - 1. God's promise was not put into action until some works were done.
 - 2. The people had to walk around the city for seven days until God would work His works.
 - 3. Until that last command was obeyed God would not cause the walls to fall.
- D. Naaman the leper (2 Kings 5:1-19).
 - 1. A work of faith led Naaman to obey the prophet by doing something.

2. He evidently believed he would be healed or he would not have sought the prophet in the first place — but that was not enough!
3. He scoffed at a simple command to go and dip in the Jordan river BUT until that command was obeyed the man continued to be a leper!
4. It is amazing how people today scoff at a simple command like baptism in the same way.
5. Work is a result of God's commands through faith. Nothing more and nothing less is acceptable to God.

CONCLUSION:

WE ARE NOT SAVED BY WORKS (OUR OWN), BUT WE ARE SAVED BY A WORKING OBEDIENT FAITH THAT LEADS TO WORKS WHICH ARE A RESULT OF GOD'S WILL.

- A. Faith in itself is dead.
 1. We must do the will of God, not just be hearers only (Matthew 7:21-23; 25:35-40).
 2. God has shown time and time again that He will not carry out a promise until conditions are met.
 3. That condition is obedience to His word which, when obeyed, are works which He has prepared for us to walk in.
- B. Let us not accept the grace of God in vain by NOT doing the works which He commanded.
 1. In Revelation 2:10 John writes, "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."
 2. This was not a dead faith but was one of action and works, and became their work of faith and labor of love.

THROUGH FAITH WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY WORKS DONE IN OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S COMMANDMENTS, THROUGH WHICH HIS GRACE IS GIVEN!

FALSE BRETHREN

W. S. Boyett

One of the most tragic words in the Greek New Testament is “pseudadelphos.” It is translated as “false brethren” in the two places where it appears (2 Corinthians 11:26, Galatians 2:4). The term is a combination of two words, “pseudees” and “adelphos.” The word “pseudees” appears alone in three places (Acts 6:13; Revelation 2:2, 21:8) and in each place is translated “false” or “liar.” The word “adelphos” appears alone 346 times and is always translated by some form of the word “brother.” Bagster defines the word “pseudadelphos” as: “A false brother, a pretended Christian.” Thayer’s definition is: “A false brother, i.e. one who ostentatiously professes to be a Christian, but is destitute of Christian knowledge and piety.” The word “pseudees” is also combined with such words as “apostolos” - apostle, hence false apostles (2 Corinthians 11:13); “didaskalos” - a teacher - false teachers (2 Peter 2:1); “Martur” - witness - a false witness (Matthew 26:60; 1 Corinthians 15:15); “propheetees” - prophet - a false prophet (Matthew 7:15, 24:24); “Christos” - Christ - false Christs (Matthew 24:24; Mark 13: 22).

I know of no place in Paul’s writings where he uses the word “Adelphos” to describe anyone outside the church of the Lord. False brethren then are not without, but within the church. The use of the word “pseudadelphos” in Galatians 2:4 will show this to be true. This passage describes the meeting with the leaders of the church in Jerusalem mentioned in Acts chapter 15. This was a “high level” meeting of the leaders to discuss the question of circumcision. Paul, in addition to being deputed by the church in Antioch to go to Jerusalem, was also directed by the Holy Spirit to go (Galatians 2:2). He took Titus, an uncircumcised Greek, with him. He wisely presented the details of his work among the Gentiles to special leaders of the church, before presenting these facts to the whole group. After presenting the facts to these leaders, no request was made by them that Titus should be circumcised. And this, in view of the fact that false brethren had been secretly introduced into the meeting with the apostles, who obviously complain of Paul not having Titus circumcised.

These false brethren came in “secretly.” They privily sneaked into the “high level” meeting. This type operation is typical of the false. Some of them, while Paul was preaching the gospel in Asia Minor, had gone before the church in Antioch and sowed their seed of false doctrine. When Paul returned to Antioch, he found that these pretenders had the church in an uproar, which resulted in the church sending Paul and chosen men to Jerusalem to consult the apostles about the matter (Acts 15:1ff).

In the Jerusalem meeting the question of circumcision was settled by the authority of the inspired apostles. They sent a letter containing their ruling in the matter to the church in Antioch, and this letter was circulated among the churches of Asia Minor as “the decrees which had been ordained by the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem” (Acts 16:4). However, this did not stop these false brethren. They continued their efforts to spread their erroneous ideas. Paul mentions them frequently in his

epistles. Among the perils he encountered in his work was “false brethren” (2 Corinthians 11:26). If they had been true brethren that were honestly mistaken, they would have ceased their efforts when the apostles ruled on the matter. Being false, their motive was to promote themselves and they went to great lengths to do so. Paul refers to them as preaching Christ of faction (Greek--“eritheia”) in Philippians 1:17. William Barclay, in his New Testament Word Book, p. 39, says concerning the word “eritheia” as used in this passage: “In Philippi it (the word, “eritheia”) had actually become the moving motive of certain preachers. They were eager rather to show their own greatness than the greatness of Christ.” Paul refers to them again in Philippians 2:21, where he says of them: “For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ.” The preacher who is more interested in becoming a brotherhood hero than in “things of Jesus Christ,” is motivated by “eritheia,” which Barclay says is “the wrong kind of ambition.” Like Simon of old, his heart is not right with God. No wonder Paul calls these “false brethren!” The true gospel preacher is totally committed to exalting Christ, and there is no room in his heart for the selfish ambition that strives to exalt himself.

After Paul and those traveling with him had arrived in Antioch on their return from the Jerusalem meeting, there is no more evidence of any disturbance in the Antioch church. The false brethren did not stand up and defend their position. We find no evidence of their being in Antioch after this. When the true disciples in Antioch heard the reading of the “decrees of the apostles” they “rejoiced for the consolation” (Acts 15:30-31). From what is said about the false brethren in Paul’s epistles, especially 2 Corinthians and Galatians, it seems that they followed the typical pattern of all false teachers. The reading of the “decrees of the apostles” to the brethren in Antioch had spoiled all hope they might have had of success there, so they set out across Asia Minor to “creep in secretly” into other congregations. Paul, in the meeting at Jerusalem, gave no place to these false brethren, “no, not for an hour” (Galatians 2:5). Likewise, in his epistles addressed to congregations of Asia Minor and Macedonia and Achaia, he exposed them thoroughly. There is no record of Paul’s having a public encounter with them after the initial encounter with them in Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-2). But in his epistles he never passed up an opportunity to expose their error to everyone who might be deceived by it. Unless those mentioned by name in the epistles to Timothy were among these false brethren, Paul never once called their names. In such a case he did not call their names in any epistle addressed to a congregation. He was exposing principles and tactics and not personalities. No doubt, this example would be a good one to follow today.

Paul refers to these false brethren when he says: “Are we beginning again to commend ourselves? or need we, AS DO SOME, epistles of commendation to you or from you?” (2 Corinthians 3:1). In chapter 5:12 he refers to them again as those who “glory in appearance.” In 2 Corinthians 10:10 he says: “For his letters, THEY SAY are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak, his speech of no account.” They were unable to attack the soundness of his teaching, but had to admit that his epistles were mighty and strong. Like almost all false teachers, they resorted to the unChristian method of attacking the bodily appearance and speech of the apostle. This helps us to

understand better Paul's earlier statement about them as those that "glory in appearance." To them logic and TRUTH were secondary to appearance. These false brethren were using their own polish in appearance and speech, no doubt, in their efforts to appeal to the people and to calumniate Paul. Like Absalom, they were using their appearance to deceive. Absalom would be a popular preacher in our day, for it is said of him: "But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty; from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him" (2 Samuel 14:25). Absalom used his beauty coupled with flattery, to steal the hearts of the people away from his father, David (2 Samuel 15:1-6). This same thing is being done by false brethren today as they strive to steal the hearts of brethren away from the truth.

They said of Paul's speech: "His speech is of no account." "His speech and delivery are utterly contemptible" (Amplified N.T.). Like their counterpart in the church today, these false brethren made rhetoric of more importance than truth. Some months ago, a preacher quoted from N.B. Hardeman in his Sunday sermon. In giving Hardeman credit for the quote, he referred to him as one of the greatest Bible teachers he had ever listened to. The next day one of the members, a highly educated man and leader, entered the preacher's office. Soon after arriving he said to the preacher: "So you are a Hardeman boy." The preacher said: "I suppose you refer to my mention of Hardeman Sunday. Yes, I think he was the greatest Bible teacher I ever sat at the feet of." To which the man replied: "Hardeman never did have anything but a paper degree. He got his degree from Georgia Robertson Christian College, and it never was accredited." Before leaving he reminded the preacher that he had accredited degrees and that he knew the Bible also. The preacher immediately thought of 2 Corinthians 10:10 and understood. A young man asked a professor if he had heard a certain well-known preacher's lecture on the errors of the new translations. The professor replied: "He doesn't have the scholarship to criticize these translations." This well-known preacher had preached and studied the Bible longer than this professor had been on earth. He met in debate many of the best scholars denominationalism ever produced. Yet according to this professor was not qualified to point out errors in a version because he did not have an advance degree in theology. The idea that one is not qualified to speak on a subject unless he has advanced degrees in that field is quite popular among us today. In some circles among us one would be reluctant to state the formula of water unless he had an advanced degree in chemistry. This may help to better understand what Paul meant when he said: "Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth" (1 Corinthians 8:1). Knowledge and learning are wonderful when they increase one's ability without destroying his humility, but when they develop an attitude of snobbery, they are both unbecoming and unchristian. Paul's answer to those intellectual snobs who so criticized him was: "Though I am not a trained orator, yet am I not deficient in knowledge; indeed we made this perfectly plain to you in everything" (2 Corinthians 11:6 - 20th Century N.T.).

These false brethren were careful to claim that their work was on the same level as that of Paul. They even disguised themselves as the apostles of Christ. "And what I do I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claims of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as the apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is not strange if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds" (2 Corinthians 11:12-15 RSV).

These false brethren were the ones that were troubling the churches of Galatia (Galatians 1:6-8). They were causing the Galatian Christians to apostatize from the gospel and turn to "another gospel." The word "another" appears twice in the A.V. here, but it is a translation of two original terms. One points up numerical difference, and the other qualitative difference. Their gospel was another in that they had perverted it and changed its quality from truth to error. Not another as though there were more than one.

Even the antichrist started out as brethren, for John says of them: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they all were not of us" (1 John 2:19). They did not all possess the same spirit as did the apostles; if they had, they would have continued with them. Note the following from Guy N. Woods: "The antecedent of 'they' is the word 'antichrist,' of the preceding verse. The preposition ek, rendered 'out from,' indicates origin from the center: and these were, therefore, formerly among the disciples, and members of the church. They became apostates from the fold by going out. They were not of the disciples, i.e., they did not possess the same spirit of obedience characteristic of the disciples" (Com. on Peter, John and Jude, p. 244). This gives a good picture of what false brethren really are. They are those in the church who do not possess the same "spirit of obedience characteristic of the (true) disciples," and some remain in the church with the hope of "drawing away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30). This passage is addressed to the elders of the church at Ephesus, and Paul warns them that "from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things." This is the "perverted gospel" of Galatians 1:6-8. Paul wished that these troublemakers would cut themselves off from the church (Galatians 5:7-12). Their counterpart in the church today, while not possessing the "same spirit of obedience characteristic of the disciples," rather than "going out from us," are staying in to continue to trouble and corrupt the church. One recently said: "I hope I can live long enough to correct some of the mistake of the old pioneer preachers of the church." The time is come to "try the spirits whether they be of God" (1 John 4:1). Or as the Ephesian church did: "Try them that say they are apostles...and found them false" (Revelation 2:2). This modern counterpart may not have gone to the point of claiming to be apostles, but we wonder if there are not some: like those in Paul's time, who "glory in appearance." Who are motivated by "eritheia" (Philippians 1:16-17), which Barclay calls "the wrong kind of ambition." Who are "eager to show their own greatness rather than the greatness of Christ." Preachers ought to be ambitious to please, not to be brotherhood heroes.

Those who cause “division and offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned” should be marked (Romans 16:17). There is an element among us today that tends to mark everyone who does not go along with their liberal scheme as “anti,” but they cry loudly when they are called liberals. It is a poor rule that does not work both ways. These have branded those who do not go along with “church support of colleges,” “women leading public prayer,” etc. as “antis,” but they do not want their own rule applied to themselves. The time has come in the Lord’s church that we must take the Divine rule “THUS SAITH THE LORD” and distinguish between the true and the erroneous.

THE CHURCH IN PURPOSE

A. The church was in the purpose of God as early as the birth of Paul.

1. “But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother’s womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood...” (Galatians 1:15-16a). From this scripture we learn that God separated Paul from the time of his birth to preach the gospel among the Gentiles. Certainly, God knew that the preaching of the gospel of Christ would result in the establishment of the church in communities where it is preached. To say that God purposed that Paul should preach the gospel, but did not know that such preaching would result in the founding of churches of Christ is unthinkable.
2. The word of God is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11). Preaching the word of God is sowing the seed of the kingdom (Matthew 13:19,23). When the seed of the kingdom is sown in the hearts of people and allowed to have its way, children of the kingdom will be the result (Matthew 13:38). A group of children of the kingdom in any community constitutes the kingdom in that place. And since the kingdom is the church (Matthew 16:18-19), it follows that this group of children of the kingdom produced by the preaching of the gospel, is the church in that community. It was in the purpose of God that Paul should preach Christ among the Gentiles and since this preaching results in the establishment of churches of Christ, it follows that the purpose of God included the establishment of churches of Christ through the preaching of the gospel by Paul. Since he was separated in the mind of God for this work from the time of his birth, we know that the church was in the purpose of God as far back as the birth of Paul.

B. The church was in the purpose of God in the time of Moses.

“I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come; how that the Christ must suffer, and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles” (Acts 26:22-23). Here we learn that the prophets, including Moses, foretold the suffering of Christ on the cross. Paul tells us that Christ purchased the church with his own blood shed on the cross (Acts 20:28). Is it possible that God knew that his Son would suffer on Calvary, but did not know that he would purchase the church with his blood shed in that suffering? John saw the “four living creatures” and the “four and twenty elders” fall down before Christ, the Lamb, and sing his praises, saying, “For thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and

people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth” (Revelation 5:9-10). The people who are purchased with the blood of the Lamb are made to be a kingdom. Did God know in the time of Moses that the Christ would suffer, but did not know that through his suffering men would be purchased and that those so purchased would constitute the kingdom, the church? Such a conclusion is unthinkable. God knew and purposed in the time of Moses that the church should be purchased through the suffering of Christ.

C. The church was in the purpose of God in the time of Abraham.

Paul tells us that there was revealed to him a mystery which was not so clearly made known in other generations, “to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (Ephesians 3:6). The promise here mentioned is the promise made to Abraham that all nations were to be blessed in his seed (Genesis 12:3; 22:18; Ephesians 2:11-22). It is in fulfillment of this promise that we have all gospel blessings (Acts 3: 25-26; Galatians 3:7-9). The one body is the church (1 Corinthians 12:13). When God told Abraham that all nations were to be blessed in his seed, Christ (Galatians 3:16), he meant that the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs with the Jews; they were to be fellow-members of the body, which is the church (Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18); and fellow-partakers with the Jews of all that is included in the promise to Abraham. And all these blessings were to come to the Gentiles through the gospel of Jesus Christ of which Paul was made a minister and a preacher. God could not plan for the Gentiles to be fellow-members of the body which is the church with-out planning the existence of the church. So, we conclude that the church was included in the purpose of God when he made the promise to Abraham.

D. The church was in the purpose of God before the foundation of the world.

The expression “foundation of the world” has been interpreted by some to mean the beginning of the Christian dispensation. But Paul’s use of it in Ephesians 1:4, seems to be a parallel with the expression “eternal purpose” in Ephesians 3:11. Peter speaks of Christ being foreknown before the foundation of the world, but manifested “at the end of the times” for our sake (1 Peter 1:20). The manifestation of Christ refers to his coming in the flesh, which was the period just preceding the Christian dispensation. But Peter speaks of the “foundation of the world” as a time prior to “the end of the times.” Jesus said the blood of all the prophets shed from the foundation of the world would be required of his generation and then added that this includes all the prophets from Abel down to Zachariah (Luke 11:50-51). From his use of the expression we learn that the foundation of the world must extend back as far as Abel, so it must refer to the

creation of the world. Now for the proof that the church has been in the mind of God since before the creation of the world.

1. Paul says that it is God's eternal purpose that the wisdom of God is to be made known to "the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places" through the church (Ephesians 3:11; 1:19-20). So, the church is included in the eternal purpose of God.
2. Paul teaches us that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love (Ephesians 1:4). But in Ephesians 5:25-27, we learn that it is the church for which Jesus gave himself that is to be "holy and without blemish" (cf: Titus 2:14). So, the chosen of Ephesians 1:4, is the church of Ephesians 5:27. And therefore the church was in the purpose of God before the foundation of the world. Paul speaks of this same purpose as including the called (2 Thessalonians 2:14) and the justified (1 Corinthians 6:11) and those who are yet to be glorified (Romans 8:28-30).
3. Peter Says we are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ "who was fore-known indeed before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:20; cf: 2 Timothy 1:9-10). From the context we learn that he was foreknown as a lamb through whose blood we would be redeemed. Is it possible that God could have foreknown that Jesus would suffer as a lamb in sacrifice for the redemption of our souls from sin and yet did not know that the redeemed would constitute the church? Such a conclusion would be false and ridiculous. So, from this we learn that before the creation God knew man would sin, that he would give his Son to suffer for man's sin, and that those redeemed by the blood of Christ would be his kingdom, his church (Revelation 5:9-10). So, the church was included in the purpose of God from before the foundation, creation, of the world. It is not an afterthought with God; it is not something hurriedly arranged to meet an emergency on account of God being unable to accomplish what he had attempted at the time the prophets said he would do it. The church, next to heaven itself, is the climax of all God's gracious purposes to show the exceeding riches of his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

From the Church, by Roy H. Lanier Sr. (Gospel Advocate Company, 1956). Copied with permission from the author.

THE HOLY SPIRIT USES THE INSPIRED WRITTEN WORD

Works	of the Holy Spirit	through the Word
Instructs	Nehemiah 9:30	2 Timothy 3:16-17
Gives Birth	John 3:5	1 Peter 1:23
Quickens	John 6:63	Psalms 119:50
Teaches	John 14:26	John 6:45
Convicts	John 16:8	Titus 1:9
Comforts	Acts 9:31	1 Thessalonians 4:18
Saves	1 Corinthians 6:11	Acts 11:14
Washes	1 Corinthians 6:11	Ephesians 5:26
Sanctifies	1 Peter 1:2	John 17:17
Makes Free	Romans 8:2	John 8:32
Converts	John 16:7-8	Psalms 19:7
Leads	Romans 8:14	Psalms 119:105

WORKS (SINS) OF THE FLESH

Galatians 5:19: "WORKS OF THE FLESH ARE MANIFEST." "Works" is a plural word from ἔργα meaning tasks or employment. Employment is, according to Webster, "that which engages or occupies time or attention." Man's sinful nature tends to make these 17 sins (KJV) his ἔργα or employment. These are our works, not God's. He has no part in them. These sins degrade and corrupt men. These works are "manifest," or made so, by open acts of transgression, glaring and conspicuous to God and man alike. Works of the flesh are confused and conflicting, one lust contending with another for mastery.

Works - sins - things we do. If we show we have these works we show we have Satan as our father. These sins may not be equally manifest, as some are coarse while others are more refined, but God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34) and therefore finds each of the works equally heinous. Those who practice such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God (Ephesians 5:5). Works of the flesh can be classified into four groups:

1. SENSUALITY:

ADULTERY - sexual unfaithful husband or wife.

FORNICATION - not being pure, broader than adultery - voluntary sexual intercourse with anything or anyone who is not your spouse (according to God's law) - foulness.

UNCLEANNES - broader than sexual sins but includes them - dirty, soiled, filthy, not pure, morally evil.

LICENTIOUSNESS (LASCIVIOUSNESS) - actions of or feeling lust; lewd or wanton - no regard for feelings or opinions of others.

2. SPIRITUAL SINS OF FALSE RELIGION:

IDOLATRY - worship of idols - offering divine honor to any coveted object; worship of persons or things.

SORCERY (WITCHCRAFT) - magic power or influence; sorcery, sometimes but not always including the use of drugs.

3. SINS AGAINST OUR FELLOW MAN:

HATRED - a very strong dislike, loathing, aversion, ill will.

CONTENTIONS (VARIANCE) - disagreement, discord, quarrel, confliction.

JEALOUSIES (EMULATIONS) - jealous rivalry, envy, often desire to equal or excel others.

OUTBURSTS OF WRATH (WRATH) - very great anger displayed in actions, resentment, fury.

SELFISH AMBITIONS (STRIFE) - quarreling, fighting.

DISSENSIONS (SEDITIONS) - arousing or stirring discontent, rebellion.

HERESIES - technically it is a belief different from the accepted belief of a church, school or profession. Heretic: a person who holds a belief differing from the accepted belief of his church. Here it is used of anyone not accepting and obeying the writings and instructions in the New Testament.

ENVY (ENVYINGS) - resentment, ill will at another's good fortune because one wishes it had been his; dislike of a person who has what he wants.

MURDERS - unlawful killing with malice aforethought.

4. SINS OF INTEMPERANCE:

DRUNKENNESS - overcome by alcoholic liquor, habitually intemperate.

REVELRIES (REVELINGS) - Noisy good time, merry making, riotous parties, unseemly conduct, carousals, drinking parties, noisy feasts, to drink heavily.

FORNICATION
πορνεία
GALATIANS 5:19

DEFINITION:

Illicit sexual intercourse in general; prostitution, unchastity, immorality, sexual vice including every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse.

This Greek word was derived from another word **πέρνημι** which meant “to sell.” It was used of slaves and meant “harlot for hire.” At that time in history the harlots were usually slaves who had been captured in warfare.

SPIRITUAL APPLICATION:

Even though this word is used in a physical connotation it also had application in spiritual unfaithfulness - specifically in pagan idolatry. Israel had been guilty of this sin many times and several books in the Old Testament use this idea of spiritual adultery from Jehovah in order to call the people back to proper worship. The New Testament is also full of this imagery.

The pagans had mixed their worship ceremonies with sexual activities. Sometimes this was between the priest and priestess but was more commonly practiced between the priesthood (male or female) and the worshipers.

GENERAL APPLICATION:

Fornication is, in the final analysis, sexual favor which is bought and sold. The price may be in some form of money but many times the price is physical security, personal gratification or happiness (temporary or even longer lasting). One thing that is so sad about these relationships is that the person with whom this “love” is gratified is not even considered a person at all. They are a “thing,” a something which can be purchased, something through which personal gratification for lust is satisfied. This person (thing) can then be discarded as a thing and there is no commitment to or respect for the object of lust.

THE HOLY SPIRIT’S CONDEMNATION THROUGH THE APOSTLE PAUL:

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot?

Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "The two," He says, "shall become one flesh." But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Corinthians 6:12-20).

WHAT IS ADULTERY?

What is adultery? That would seem to be about as obvious a question as a person could ask. Virtually everyone knows, whether he has done exhaustive studies or not, that adultery is sexual activity between a married person and someone other than his or her rightful spouse. In recent times, though, a new theory has arisen which has as its core a redefinition of the word “adultery.”

Some are openly alleging that the lexicons, encyclopedias and various language tools of the past several centuries *are all wrong* in their definition of adultery, and that, if we would but re-plow the linguistic field, we would discover that adultery is simply “covenant breaking.” Accordingly, whenever one decides to terminate his marriage vows, and walks out on his mate, he has (by the breach of his vows) committed adultery. He may decide to enter “marriage” with a new companion.

Well, what should this “adulterer” (covenant breaker) do if he desires to be right with God? According to the new view, he simply tells the Lord that he is sorry for having broken the covenant with his former companion, he promises not to be a covenant breaker in the future, but he may continue to maintain the “marital” relationship he has formed with the second spouse.

This novel notion, which has as its design the accommodation of unscriptural divorces and remarriages, is without a shred of evidence, both linguistically and in the overall context of the Bible. Please consider the following.

Adultery Defined

The Greek word for adultery is *moicheia*. Whenever the term is used *literally*, it unquestionably has to do with the illicit sexual conduct of a married person. The ancient classics are filled with examples of such. For example, Lysias (c. 410 B.C.) writes of Euphiletus, an Athenian, who killed Erasthenes, after catching him in bed, committing adultery with his wife. In his defense he contends that the Court of the Areopagus has “expressly stated that whoever takes vengeance on an adulterer [*moichon*] caught in the act with his spouse shall not be convicted of murder” (*Lysias*, 1.30). Xenophon (c. 401 B.C.) describes the adulterer who “enters the woman’s quarters, knowing that by committing adultery [*moicheuonti*] he is in danger of incurring the penalties threatened by the law...” He suggests that this is quite foolish since “there are many remedies to relieve him of his *carnal* desire without risk” (*Memorabilia*, II, 1.5). In the 2nd century A.D., Sextus Empiricus wrote: “Adulterers [*moichous*] are, of course, punished by law with us, but amongst some people intercourse with other men’s wives is indifferent....” (*Pyrrhonism*, III, 209).

The evidence from the OT is equally explicit. Committing adultery (*moicheusetai* - Septuagint) is an act that a man does “with another man’s wife” (Leviticus 20:10). Note the connection with the following passage: “And [*kai*—conjunction] the man that *lieth with* his father’s wife....” Of ancient Jerusalem, God said, “I have seen thine abominations, even thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy fornication, on the hills in the fields” (Jeremiah 13:27). (Note: though “adultery” is here used figuratively of Judah’s apostasy, nevertheless, its sexual associations are clear.) In Ezekiel 16, the Lord characterizes Jerusalem as “a wife that committeth adultery! that taketh strangers instead of her husband!” (v. 32). She had “opened [her] feet to everyone that passed by, and multi-plied [her] fornication” (v. 25). To worldly, idol-worshipping Israel, the prophet said, “Let her put away her fornications from her face, and her adulteries from between her breasts” (Hosea 2:2). The allusion to an immoral sexual embrace is just too plain to miss! Josephus also speaks of one Sylleus who “debauched [*moicheuonta*—seduced to sexual activity] the wives of the Arabians” (*Antiquities*, XVI, IX, 4).

In the NT, Jesus speaks of those who “look upon a woman to lust after her.” He says they have “committed adultery with her” in the heart (Matthew 5:28). Do men lustfully fantasize about “covenant breaking”? (Cf. 2 Peter 2:14). On one occasion the Pharisees brought a woman to Christ (attempting to ensnare him) whom they said had been “taken in adultery, in the very act” (John 8:4). In what act was she apprehended? Covenant breaking (perhaps slamming the front door as she abandoned her marriage!)?

The writer of Hebrews admonishes us to “let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge” (13:4). Exactly how does an adulterer “defile the bed”? Let the Bible answer. Reuben, son of Jacob, defiled his father’s bed (Gen 49:4) when he “lay with Bilhah his father’s concubine” (Genesis 35:22). See also the connection between the “bed” and “adultery” in Revelation 2:22.

Moreover, certain contexts that deal with divorce and remarriage demonstrate that “adultery” cannot be defined as mere covenant breaking. For example, according to the Lord, the man who “divorces his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, *maketh her an adulteress*” (Matthew 5:32). Here is a woman who has not broken covenant with her husband; she is an innocent partner who has been “put away” by her husband. If she contracts a subsequent marriage (cf. Arndt and Gingrich, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 528), she commits adultery. How so if adultery is just “covenant breaking”? The truth is, she is committing adultery by having sexual relations with another man while her original marriage was not dissolved by a scripturally authorized divorce.

Again, in Matthew 19:9 Christ taught that anyone who divorces a companion, except for fornication, and remarries, is committing adultery. The force of the term “committeth adultery” (in the Greek present tense) is “keeps on committing adultery.” If adultery is to be defined as simply the breaking of the original marriage, and one may repent and be forgiven of that without terminating a newly formed relationship, why did

the Lord affirm that the parties of the second relationship “keep on committing adultery”?

The truth of the matter is; therefore, “adultery” is *sexual activity* that is sinful. When one *unscripturally* divorces a mate and “marries” another, each time they engage in sexual congress they are committing adultery and only a cessation of that activity (which is part of repentance) can put them in fellowship with God.

Wayne Jackson
Christian Courier

UNCLEANNES
'akatharsia
GALATIANS 5:19

DEFINITION:

Refuse, garbage, immorality, viciousness (especially in sexual sins), impurity (especially dirty mindedness), vileness, foul desires, base motives, indecency, the practice of every kind of immorality.

OLD TESTAMENT APPLICATION:

Originally it had a physical/spiritual connotation. Uncleanness held to things like an infection and rendered them unserviceable. In the Old Testament it was used of animals (Leviticus 11:1 ff), things (Leviticus 7:21), places (Leviticus 14:40,45), lepers (Leviticus 13:11,46), corpses (Numbers 9:6), etc. People would become unclean by physical contact with an unclean object (Numbers 19:13,22). The person who was unclean could not approach God!

A CLOSER LOOK:

To find out better what the word means we need to know what its opposite means. The original Greek word is made from the word for "clean." This word καθαρός, by adding an "ἀ" at the beginning, took on the very opposite meaning. This was a common practice in the Greek language.

Καθαρός meant that something was absolutely free from any admixture of anything. It would be used of:

Pure water,
Clear sunshine,
Clean and clear wind,
Someone who was free from debt and taxes,
Someone who was free from all guilt,
Genuine, true, pure or unmixed,
Free of any impurity or dirtiness,
Unblemished in any way,
Fit to worship God and
Fit for God's use.

So, we in the New Testament age, must understand this word "uncleanness" to mean someone who:

Is guilty before God,
No longer pure in God's sight,
Defiled with impurity or dirtiness,
Blemished with sin,
Unfit to worship God and
Unfit for God's use.

GENERAL APPLICATION:

Three ideas come forward in this word:

First, the soul is soiled and dirty,

Second, there is repulsiveness about this individual to the person who is trying to do right and go to heaven and

Third, the soul who is unclean is separated from God.

LICENTIOUSNESS

ἄσέλγεια

GALATIANS 5:19

SYNONYMS:

Appalling,
Base,
Brash,
Brazen,
Caprice,
Carnal,
Course,
Crude,
Debauchery,
Disgraceful,
Excess,
Filthy conduct,
Filthy words,
Immodest,
Incivility,
Indecent bodily movements,
Indecent conduct,
Indiscreet,
Indulgence,
Insolence,
Lasciviousness,
Lawlessness,
Lecherous,
Lewd,
Libidinous,

Lurid,
Lustfulness,
Obscene,
Offensive,
Outrageousness,
Petulance,
Promiscuous,
Rash,
Ribald,
Rude,
Sensuality,
Sexual excess,
Shamelessness,
Smutty,
Unabashed,
Unbecoming,
Unblushing,
Unbridled lust,
Unchaste handling of
anyone,
Uncouth,
Voluptuousness,
Vulgar and
Wantonness.

USE IN SCRIPTURE:

Mark 7:20-23 - *And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness (ἄσέλγεια), an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All of these come from within and defile a man."*

Romans 13:13 - *Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in licentiousness (ἀσελγείαις) and lewdness, not in strife and envy.*

2 Corinthians 12:20-21 - *For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults; and lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and licentiousness (ἀσελγεία) which they have practiced.*

Ephesians 4:17-19 - *This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to licentiousness (ἀσελγεία), to work all uncleanness with greediness.*

1 Peter 4:3 - *For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles - when we walked in licentiousness (ἀσελγεία), lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.*

2 Peter 2:2 - *And many will follow their destructive ways (ἀσελγεία), because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.*

2 Peter 2:7 - *And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemning them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed with the filthy (ἀσελγεία) conduct of the wicked.*

2 Peter 2:18 - *For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through licentiousness (ἀσελγείαις), the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.*

Jude 4 - *For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness (ἀσελγείαν) and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

WHO IS LICENTIOUS?

This person does not care what God or man thinks about his actions. He, or she, has digressed to the point where they no longer try to hide their sinful activities.

This person has:

No self-discipline - He will do whatever it takes to give himself personal pleasure.

No respect for the rights of others - His personal pleasure comes before that of anyone else.

No shame - What he used to do in private he now does openly, having little or no feelings of guilt or shame.

Readiness - to indulge in any pleasure or sin.

The person who has gone deeply into this sin can no longer endure the pain of discipline, can no longer repent and is lost forever.

95
IDOLATRY
ειδωλολατρεία
GALATIANS 5:20

MEANING:

Idol worship,
Image worship,
Worship of a false god,
Worship of a made image (as a god) and
Excessive love or veneration for anything (Webster).

This is a compound Greek word from εἶδωλον (idol) and λατρεία (worship).

GENERAL:

Essentially this sin is to worship, in any degree, that which is made rather than the Maker.

This can include devotion, veneration, love or worship of:

Any carved image of any god,
Any carved image of God,
Any icon of any god or God,
Any status symbol,
Any person or
Any thing (real or imagined).

SCRIPTURAL USE:

A Greek form of this word is used 32 times in the New Testament which shows that this was a prevalent practice among early Christians and is condemned by Jehovah.

In the Old Testament God says, *you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God* (Exodus 34:14), and *The Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God* (Deuteronomy 4:24).

The first two commandments in the ten commandments deal with the worship of God and other gods:

You shall have no other gods before Me.

You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments (Deuteronomy 5:7-10).

This idea of God's jealousy is clearly seen in the Hebrew writer's admonition to Christians who were about to fall from the truth - *For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:30-31).*

CONCLUSION:

Anything or any person that sits on the throne of your heart is usurping God's rightful place and you are an idolater. This includes all of the things of the world as well as your husband or wife, your children, your parents or even you yourself.

Every person on earth must search their soul and ask, "Who sits on the throne of my heart, am I an idolater?"

97
SORCERY
φαρμακεία
GALATIANS 5:20

DEFINITION (IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS):

Magic,
Magic arts,
Mixer of poisons,
Magician,
Poison,
Poisoner,
Magic potion,
Charm,
Witchcraft,
Medicine,
Remedy and
Drugs.

USES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES:

Exodus 22:18 - *You shall not permit a sorceress (φαρμακούς - LXX) to live.*

1 Samuel 15:23a - *For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (οιώνισπά or divination - LXX).*

USES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES:

It is interesting to note that all references to this particular sin other than here in Galatians are in the book of Revelation. This would indicate that the sin had started early but became more prominent at the close of the first century.

Revelation 9:20-21 - *But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries [φαρμακεία (margin - drugs)] or their sexual immorality or their thefts.*

Revelation 18:23-24 (The Fall of Babylon) - *“And the light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore. And the voice of the bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for*

by your sorcery (φαρμακεία) all the nations were deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and all who were slain on the earth.”

Revelation 21:7-8 - *“He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers (φαρμακεύς), idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone which is the second death.”*

Revelation 22:14-15 - *Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates to the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers (φαρμακοὶ) and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.*

OBSERVATIONS:

As we look at the meanings of this word we can see the word had a good origin in the use of medication for healing but soon these medications became a means to commit evil. The obvious use of drugs for magical arts was also apparent so the word came to mean all sorts of evil connected with witchcrafts, drug use, etc.

Also notice how close the word is associated with idolatry, not only in Galatians but in the other verses.

The use of doctor-prescribed medication is not prohibited, but the use of anything which will cause us to lose our sense of reason and move away from God is sin. This would include anything in this process whether or not drugs were used.

**ENEMIES IN THE FLESH
HATRED and CONTENTIONS
ἔχθρα and ἔρις
GALATIANS 5:20**

INTRODUCTION: Works of the flesh are deadly enemies of the Spirit (Galatians 5:17-18).

- A. To live in the flesh is the exact opposite of being a faithful Christian (Romans 8:7-13; 7:5; 8:5; Galatians 5:24).
- B. To live in the flesh is to be ruled by sin (Satan) (Romans 7:23).
- C. To live in the flesh is to be God's enemy (Romans 8:7-8).

TEXT: Galatians 5:19-21.

I. The hidden sin - hatred (enmity).

- A. Hatred is the state of our hearts and the attitude of our minds toward others:

Luke 23:12 - *That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for before that day they had been at enmity (ἔχθρα) with each other.*

Ephesians 2:14-16 - *For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of division between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity (ἔχθραν), that is, the law of the commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity (ἔχθραν).*

- B. Satan is identified as the one who hates men - *The enemy (ἔχθρὸς) who sowed them is the devil* (Mt 13:39).
- C. Hatred is the opposite of love (ἀγάπη).
 - 1. Love seeks the eternal good of others while hatred seeks to do them harm.
 - 2. Love holds out its hand to others in love and fellowship while hatred builds barriers.

II. The visible sin - contentions (variance, strife).

- A. The outgrowth and expression of hatred in our lives is contentions.
- B. It is characteristic of a non-Christian.

Romans 1:28-32 - *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife (ἔριδος), deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.*

- C. It is the characteristic of a perverted gospel.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 - *If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife (ἔρις), reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.*

- D. To put on Christ is to put away strife (contentions).

Romans 13:13-14 - *Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in licentiousness and lewdness, not in strife (ἔριδι) and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

III. The results of these sins.

- A. To the church - Division.

1 Corinthians 1:11 - *For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household that there are contentions [ἔριδες (margin - quarrels)] among you.*

- B. To the soul - Damnation.

Galatians 5:21c - *Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

CONCLUSION: Jesus said, *He who is not with Me is against Me* (Matthew 12:30).

Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity (ἔχθρα) with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy (ἐχθρὸς) of God (James 4:4b).

JEALOUSIES and ENVY
ζήλος and φθόνος
GALATIANS 5:20-21

DEFINITIONS:

Jealousies (emulations).

Noun:

1. Zeal,
ardor in embracing,
pursuing and
defending anything.
2. An envious and continuous rivalry, and
jealousy.

Verb:

1. To burn with zeal, and
to be heated (or to boil) with envy, hatred, anger.
2. To desire earnestly, pursue,
to strive after.

Also:

1. One burning with zeal, and
a zealot.
2. Most eagerly desirous of a thing,
zealous for a thing and
to envy.

Envy (envyings).

Noun:

1. Envy.
2. Jealousy.

Verb:

1. To envy.
2. To be jealous, and to begrudge.

HOW THE GREEKS USED THESE WORDS:

Plato: **Jealousy** has been regarded as a stage on the way to **envyings**.

Jealousy is the **envy** that casts grudging looks but **envyings** are the **envies** that have arrived at hostile deeds.

Aristotle: **Jealousy** is not sorry that the other person possesses a fine thing; it is only sorrow that it itself does not possess it.

Envy is not fired with any noble ambition. It is simply embittered at the sight of someone else possessing what he does not have and would do its utmost, not to possess the thing, but to prevent the other person from possessing it.

Xenophon: It (**envy**) is a kind of pain, not at a friend's misfortune nor at an enemy's good fortune. The **envious** are those who are annoyed at their friend's successes.

Plutarch: Love for a person cannot be really active unless there is some **jealousy (emulation)** in it.

Envy is annoyed by prosperity, it attacks the good and those who are growing in virtue and repute.

Euripides: **Envy** is the greatest disease among men.

Plutarch (In Aristides): Aristides was called the Just. He was on trial, and a man came to him, not knowing who he was, and asked Aristides to write his vote for his own (Aristides) banishment, because he could not write it himself. "What harm has Aristides done you?" Aristides asked. "I am tired of hearing him called the Just," was the man's reply. This man had no ambition to be great like Aristides, it was simply his embittered resentment that anyone could be great, that is **envy**.

THOUGHTS:

Zeal can be good when it inspires one to do good.

Envy is always bad, it is an ugly word.

Maybe there is no better test than to see one's reaction to the greatness and success of someone else. If it moves them to **zeal** which is a noble ambition it is the work of the Spirit, but, if it moves them to bitter and envious resentment, it is the work of the flesh.

[Teaching Note - It is not advisable to complete a lesson without lots of biblical references to illustrate your points. This lesson was intended to show that there are other sources for good background information.]

105
OUTBURSTS OF WRATH
θυμός
GALATIANS 5:20

DEFINITIONS:

Noun: Passion,
Anger,
Rage,
Wrath,
Temper,
Fury and
Ill-feelings.

Verb: To make angry, and
To become angry.

Adj: Hot tempered,
Irascible (a disposition to be incensed at the slightest provocation),
Choleric (excitable, unreasonableness, impatient and an irritable frame of
mind),
Splenetic (a temperament given to moroseness and sullenness),
Testy (moved by small irritations),
Touchy (over-sensitiveness),
Cross (difficult to please because one is out of sorts),
Cranky (difficult to please because of fixed notions),
Irate (enraged) and
Ireful (fully incensed).

CHARACTERISTICS:

The characteristic feature of wrath is that it is very violent, but also very brief. Wrath is not a long held and cherished anger but a blaze of temper which flares into violent words and deeds and just as quickly burns itself out.

It can describe a quality without which no good character can flourish.

But it can also describe a quality that is a wrecker of personal relationships and the destruction of fellowship.

This word has an almost limitless potential for good and for evil.

GOOD - of God (Revelation 14:10; 19:15; 16:19; 14:19; 15:1; 16:1).

BAD - of Satan (Revelation 12:12).

It is said that wrath can be:

Divine	-	God
Human	-	Man
Devilish	-	Satan
Beastly	-	Rage of animals
Noble	-	Righteous
Destructive	-	Unrighteous

WHAT OTHERS HAVE WRITTEN ABOUT WRATH:

Aristotle: Wrathful actions cannot be due to malice aforethought if it is a fit of passion. Wrath is a great quality, but it needs a strong leash.

Plato: No soul can stand for the right without wrath but murder can also be a result. To be kept in its place it must be disciplined and chastised. Wrath means a raging and boiling of the soul.

Ammonius: Wrath is temporary and momentary not long lasting nor the cherishing of the memory of evil.

OBSERVATIONS:

A person who has fits of wrath is seldom aware of the way in which he wounds others and produces a situation in which fellowship becomes very difficult. Because he blazes and forgets he thinks that others should be equally able to forget the pain he has inflicted.

Jesus gives a very clear warning, *But I say unto you that whoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, "Raca!" shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, "You fool!" shall be in danger of hell fire (Matthew 5:22).*

Also consider, *"Be angry, and do not sin:" do not let the sun go down on your wrath nor give place to the devil (Ephesians 4:26).*

Anger which is selfish, which comes from pride and undue sensitiveness to our own feelings, is always wrong.

Anger which is cleared, cleansed of self, can be a weapon in the hands of our righteous God.

SELFISH AMBITIONS

' ἐριθεία

GALATIANS 5:20**DEFINITIONS:**

Self-seeking,
 Strife,
 Selfish ambition,
 Quarrels,
 Discord,
 Contention,
 Disputes,
 Wranglings,
 Factions,
 Rivalry,
 Intrigues,
 Divided loyalties,
 Conflict,
 Dissension,
 Variance,
 Clashes,
 Disagreements,
 Dissonance,
 Plots,
 Conspiracy,
 Cabal (an intrigue that is also a conspiracy) and
 Machination (contriving annoyances, injuries or evils).

USE IN SCRIPTURE:

Romans 2:5-9 - *But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of the righteous judgment of God, who "will render to each one according to his deeds:" eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking (ἐριθείας) and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness - indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Greek first and also to the Greek.*

2 Corinthians 12:20 - *For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions (ἐριθεία), backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults...*

Philippians 1:16 - *The former preach Christ from selfish ambition (ἐριθείας), not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains.*

Philippians 2:3 - *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition (ἐριθείαν) or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*

James 3:14-16 - *But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking (ἐριθείαν) in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking (ἐριθεία) exist, confusion and every evil [Lit: worthless, good for nothing] thing will be there.*

COMMENTS:

This word describes the person who does anything just so he can receive personal gain.

This person is one who seeks to gratify his own personal ambition, his desire for power, or the exaltation of a party or group in competition with other groups and not for the good of all concerned (Philippians 1:15-16).

Strife is bad enough in the work place or in our world around us, but when it invades the church it is more than tragic!

109
DISSENSIONS
διχοστασία
GALATIANS 5:20

DEFINITIONS:

Arguments,
Betrayals,
Conflict,
Confrontations,
Contention,
Disagreement,
Disharmony,
Disloyalty,
Disputes,
Divisions,
Factions,
Falseness,
Friction,
Insurrection,
Party spirit,
Quarrels,
Rebellion,
Sedition,
Strife,
Struggles,
Subversion,
Treachery,
Treason and
Those who cause trouble.

USE IN SCRIPTURE:

Romans 16:17 - *Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions (διχοστασίας) and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.*

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 - *And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions (διχοστασίαι) among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?*

COMMENTS:

The word in Greek literally means “to stand apart.” This is the opposite of unity. There is no harmony in the congregation where this is present. The unity of the Spirit is gone, as is the bond of peace.

The division will spread to all parts of the life of the church. It can start as a difference in biblical interpretation, in racial division, in social divisions or even personality clashes.

A word of caution is due here. It is imperative that one must stand for truth, but when you are standing all by yourself or there are only a few who feel as you do, you must think through your position thoroughly. If then you are convinced you hold the biblical position, stand firm. My caution is for you to make absolutely sure you are holding God’s position and not the position of some man or group of men.

111
HERESIES
αἵρεσις
GALATIANS 5:20

DEFINITIONS:

Apostasy,
Denial,
Desertion,
Disapproval,
Disloyal,
Dissent,
Erroneous,
Factions,
False teaching,
Forsaking,
Fraudulent,
Incorrect,
Infidelity,
Party spirit,
Refusal,
Rejection,
Renunciation,
Sect,
Schism,
Spurious,
Spurning,
Traitorous,
Treachorous,
Unconformity,
Unfaithful and
Wrong.

CAUTION:

This word strictly means a teaching, including a person or a group of persons who hold that teaching, which is different from the teaching of the particular body of which they are a part.

USES IN SCRIPTURE:

Acts 5:17 - *Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect [αἵρεσις] of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation.*

Acts 15:5 - *But some of the sect (αἰρέσεως) of the Pharisees, who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Cf: 26:5.*

Acts 24:5 - *"For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect (αἰρέσεως) of the Nazarenes.*

Acts 24:14 - *"But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect (αἵρεσιν), so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets." Cf: 28:22.*

1 Corinthians 11:19 - *For there must also be factions (αἰρέσεις) among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.*

2 Peter 2:1 - *But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies (αἰρέσεις), even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring themselves swift destruction.*

COMMENTS:

It is obvious from the use of this word in the scriptures that it can be used either in a good or a bad sense. But the passage we have under consideration here in Galatians allows only the bad connotation. It is a work of the flesh, not of the Spirit.

In the Greek language the synonym for αἵρεσις is σχίσμα (schisma). We get our English word "schism" from this word σχίσμα. So, even in English the words are almost twins.

Who then, today, is a heretic? Or, what is heresy? The answer is simple, almost too simple! Any teaching that does not match exactly and accurately what the New Testament teaches is heresy. And the one who believes and teaches that different doctrine is a heretic.

113
MURDERS
φόνος
GALATIANS 5:21

DEFINITIONS:

Kill,
Murder,
Slay and
Slaughter.

The word is used 28 times in its various forms in the New Testament.

USE IN SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 15:18-20 - *“But these things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders (φόνοι), adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man...”* Cf: Mark 7:21.

Mark 15:7 - *And there was one named Barabbas, was chained with his fellow insurrectionists; they had committed murder (φόνον) in the insurrection.*

Acts 9:1 - *Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder (φόνου) against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest.*

Hebrews 11:37 - *They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain (φόνω) with the sword...*

Also compare - Matthew 5:21; 19:18; 22:7; 23:31,35; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; 23:19,25; Acts 3:14; 7:52; 28:4; Romans 1:29; 13:9; James 2:11 (2); 4:2; 5:6; 1 Peter 4:15; Revelation 9:21.

THE RESULT:

Revelation 21:8 - *But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*

Revelation 22:14-15 - *Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates of the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.*

114
DRUNKENNESS
μέθη
GALATIANS 5:21

DEFINITIONS:

Alcoholism,
Binges,
Dipsomaniac,
Drinking bouts,
Drunkard,
Drunkenness,
Hard drinking,
Inebriated,
Intoxicated and
Sprees.

USE IN SCRIPTURE:

Admonitions:

Ephesians 5:18 - *And do not be drunk (μεθύσκεσθε) with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.*

1 Thessalonians 5:6-8 - *Therefore let us not sleep, as the others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk (μεθυσκόμενοι) are drunk (μεθύουσιν) at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.*

Results of drunkenness:

1 Corinthians 5:11 - *But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard (μέθυσος), or an extortioner - not even to eat with such a person.*

1 Corinthians 6:10 - *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards (μέθυστοι), nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.*

Additional New Testament passages to consider:

Matthew 24:49; Luke 12:45; John 2:10; Acts 2:15; 1 Corinthians 11:21;
Revelation 17:2,6.

CONCLUSION:

Do not be involved in anything which could lead to using alcoholic beverages.
Avoid even the appearance of "social drinking."

DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT JUSTIFY SOCIAL DRINKING?

By: Wayne Jackson

According to an article published in the *Reader's Digest* some years back [6-70], more than 85 million Americans drink alcoholic beverages. About 79 percent of all men and 69 percent of all women imbibe booze. Approximately one out of eighteen is classified as an outright "alcoholic" [that's more than 4,800,000]. Another 4 to 5 million are "heavy drinkers" with serious personal and work-related problems, and about 75 million Americans are considered simply "social drinkers."

Many of these social drinkers are respected, church-going pillars of the community who feel that there is absolutely nothing wrong with a moderate drinking of intoxicants. Frequently, they will even appeal to the Bible for support of their practice.

One of the passages cited in support of the moderate use of spirited drinks is that of the Lord's miracle in Cana where He turned water into "wine" (John 2:1-11). It is argued that since Christ provided "wine" for that occasion, then certainly the temperate use of wine (or other intoxicants) could not be sinful.

The fallacy of such a contention is that it takes a *modern* usage of the word wine and thrusts it into an ancient context. When we use the term "wine" we ordinarily think of an alcoholic drink, but that says nothing about how the word was used in the first century.

The common term for wine in the Greek New Testament is *oinos*. The word is *generic* and it can, therefore, have reference to wine that is able to effect intoxication, or it may denote simply fruit juice that is non-fermented. In the final analysis, the context in which the word is found will be the determining factor in seeing its significance. Let us note some examples.

In the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, it is said that Noah "drank of the wine [*oinos*], and was drunk" (Genesis 9:21). Again, Lot's daughters "made their father drink wine [*oinos*]" and in his drunkenness he was oblivious of the sin that he committed with them (Genesis 19:33-35). In the New Testament, the Christian is admonished to "be not drunk with wine [*oinos*], wherein is riot" (Ephesians 5:18). Revelation 17:2 speaks of those who were "drunken with the wine" of the harlot's fornication.

On the other hand, the Scripture also uses *oinos* of non-intoxicants. For instance, the "first-offering of the wine [*oinos*]" (Numbers 18:12) was the fresh juice that resulted from "the outflow of thy presses" (Exodus 22:29). In speaking of the punishment that would be visited upon Moab, Isaiah declares that "no treader shall tread out wine [*oinos*]"

in the presses” (Isaiah 16:10). Joel speaks of the presses that “shall overflow with wine [*oinos*] and oil” (2:24).

The Jewish historian Josephus, in relating the story of Joseph, says that Pharaoh’s cupbearer in his dream “saw three clusters of grapes hanging upon three branches of a vine, large already, and ripe for gathering; and that he squeezed them into a cup which the king held in his hand; and when he had strained the *wine*, he gave it to the king to drink” (*Antiquities* II, V, 1).

In Matthew 9:17 Jesus said that men do not put “new wine [*oinos*] into old wine-skins: else the skins burst, and the wine is spilled.” The point of the Lord’s illustration was this: old wine-skins are stiff and brittle if new wine is introduced into these containers, *when it subsequently ferments*, the skins will tear and the wine will be lost! (Cf. A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, 1, p. 73.)

Since it is clear, therefore, that the term wine in the Bible may either be employed of fermented beverages or of sweet juices, it is plain that contextual indications must decide the meaning of the term in a given setting. Now here is a question that demands a reasonable answer. *Where is the contextual evidence in John 2:1-11 that even remotely suggests that the Son of God provided between 120 and 180 gallons of alcoholic beverage for the wedding feast of Cana?*

The truth of the matter is, the context indicates that the wine that the Lord made was not fermented. For example, by the time that Christ performed this remarkable miracle, the guests had already consumed the host’s entire supply, and the steward of the feast anticipated the possibility that the guests would be able to discern the qualitative difference between that which the Lord had made and that which had already been served. Most people who have “drunk freely” (2:10) hardly know where they *are*, to say nothing of other matters requiring keener discernment!

It is sometimes claimed, however, that the ancients knew nothing of our modern methods of preservation. Accordingly, in the climate of Palestine, the vintage would ferment quickly so that virtually all available wine for general consumption would contain alcoholic content. Such an assumption, though, does not square with the evidence of history. A couple of observations need to be made.

First, it simply is not true that methods of preservation were unknown in antique times. *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary* notes that “there were means of keeping wine sweet all year round” (III p. 1648). In the *Dictionary of the Bible*, which was edited by William Smith, a writer observes: “Sometimes it [wine] was preserved in its unfermented state, and drunk as must...” (111, p. 1774). Again, “It is very likely that new wine was preserved in the state of must by placing it in jars or bottles, and then burying it in the earth” (*Ibid.*, 1776).

Cato [234-149 B.C.] in his *De Agri Cultura* CXX has given this method for preserving grape juice: "If you wish to have must [grape juice] all year, put grape juice in an amphora and seal the cork with pitch: sink it in a fishpond. After 30 days take it out. It will be grape juice for a whole year" (cf. *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, p. 895). Another writer declares: "An amphora was taken and coated with pitch within and without; it was filled with *mustum lixivium*, i.e. the juice before the grapes had been fully trodden, and corked so as to be perfectly air-tight. It was then immersed in a tank of cold fresh water, or buried in wet sand, and allowed to remain for six weeks or two months. The contents, after this process, were found to remain unchanged for a year..." (from *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, edited by W. Smith and quoted in H. B. Hackett's *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, 1879, p. 45).

Prof. R. C. Foster had this interesting comment: "That the ancients knew the art of hermetically sealing up fluids is seen clearly from the incident of the anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany. The precious ointment was sealed up in the container. The moment the container was broken, the pungent odor spread through all the house (John 12:3). A Greek wine ship of the second century B.C. found by divers off the southern coast of France several years ago contained a great number of wine flasks that had been sealed so tight that after more than 2,000 years the sea water had not seeped into them" (*Studies in the Life of Christ*, 1971, p. 1220).

Secondly, another factor needs to be taken into consideration in this matter. Even the intoxicating wines of the biblical period *were not nearly comparable in strength to the wines of our day*. The alcoholic content of ancient wine was considerably lower than that of modern wine. Prof. R. Laird Harris says: "All the wine [in ancient times] was light wine, i.e., not fortified with extra alcohol. Concentrated alcohol was only known in the Middle Ages when the Arabs invented distillation ('alcohol' is an Arabic word) so what is now called liquor or strong drink (i.e. whiskey, gin, etc.) and the twenty per cent fortified wines were unknown in Bible times" (*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 1980, I, p. 376.) Further, even these light wines were weakened by the adding of water in order to destroy their inebriating effects. A passage in one of the apocryphal books says: "For as it is hurtful to drink wine, and so, too, on the other hand, water, alone, but as wine mingled with water is pleasant, and maketh the enjoyment delightful..." (2 *Maccabees* XV:89). Alfred Edersheim quotes rabbinical authorities to the effect that wine was mixed with two to three parts water (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, II, p. 208). And so, even those wines containing fermentation in the first century would have to be consumed in enormous quantities before drunkenness would result.

Albert Barnes has a good discussion relating to this point. "The common wine of Judea was the pure juice of the grape, without any mixture of alcohol, and was harmless. It was the common drink of the people, and did not tend to produce intoxication. *Our* wines are a *mixture* of the juice of the grape and of brandy, and often of infusions of various substances to give it colour and taste, and the appearance of

wine. Those wines are little less injurious than brandy, and the habit of drinking them should be classed with the drinking of all other liquid fires.

“The following table will show the danger of drinking the wines that are in common use:

Brandy has fifty-three parts and 39 hundredths in a hundred of alcohol, or.....	53.39%
Rum.....	53.68%
Whisky, Scotch.....	54.32%
Holland Gin.....	51.60%
Port Wine, highest kind.....	25.83%
Port Wine, lowest kind.....	21.40%
Madeira, highest.....	29.42%
Madeira, lowest.....	19.34%
Lisbon.....	18.94%
Malaga.....	17.26%
Red Champagne.....	11.30%
White Champagne.....	12.80%
Currant Wine.....	20.25%

“It follows that a man who drinks two glasses of most of the wines used has taken as much alcohol as if he had taken one glass of brandy or whisky, and why should he not as well drink the alcohol in the brandy as in the wine?” (*Notes on the New Testament*, John 2:11).

Most Bible students are aware that the NT condemns “drunkenness,” but some feel that one may moderately drink without being drunk. An important question then is this: *exactly at what point does alcohol begin to affect the brain?* In the *Reader’s Digest* article cited earlier [6-70], it is argued that “evidence indicates that there is no guarantee of a ‘safe’ level of drinking, no absolute threshold below which alcohol fails to damage or destroy groups of cells in the brain and other vital organs.” In a pamphlet distributed by the American Automobile Association, it is contended: “The effects of alcohol begin with the first drink... The first effects are impairment of judgment and reason and weakening of self-control and normal inhibitions” (*Sportsmanlike Driving*, 5th Ed.). In an article entitled, “What Alcohol Does To The Brain,” published some years ago in *Listen Magazine*, it was stressed that the frontal lobe of the brain, the reason and self-control center, is affected by as little as .01 - .10 percent alcohol, which is comparable to about half a shot of whiskey.

Moreover, the New Testament, by its employment of various terms, seems to imply that drunkenness is *progressive* and hence, a matter of *degree*. For example, *methuo* “signifies to be drunk with wine,” while a related verb, *methusko*, means “to grow drunk (an inceptive verb, marking the process of the state expressed” by *methuo*. The noun *methe* suggests “habitual intoxication” (W. E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, I, pp. 341,342).

In 1 Peter 4:3, three terms are used to depict stages of drunkenness or conditions associated therewith. The apostle states that prior to their conversion some saints had “walked in ...winebibbings, revelings, carousings...” (ASV). “Winebibbings” (*oinophlugiais*) is a drunkenness that “marks a step in advance of *methe*” R. C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, LXI). “Revelings” (*komois*) denotes the conduct that is “concomitant and consequence of drunkenness” (Vine, 111, 293), and “carousings” (*potois*) is a “drinking bout, the banquet, the symposium, *not of necessity excessive...*, but giving opportunity for excess” (Trench, LXI - emp. WJ).

There is much more that could be written on this subject. We would conclude, however, by suggesting that surely the spiritually motivated child of God will want to totally abstain from intoxicating beverages.

Please consider the following anonymous poem simply titled “Bar.” WJ

The name of each saloon's a bar,
 The fittest of its names by far.
 A bar to heaven, a door to hell,
 Whoever named it, named it well.
 A bar to manliness and wealth,
 A door to want and broken health;
 A bar to honor, pride, and fame,
 A door to sin and grief and shame;
 A bar to hope, a bar to prayer,
 A door to darkness and despair.
 A bar to honored, useful life,
 A door to brawling, senseless strife;
 A bar to all that's true and brave,
 A door to every drunkard's grave;
 A bar to joys that home imparts,
 A door to tears and aching hearts;
 A bar to heaven, a door to hell,
 Whoever named it named it well.

Christian Courier
 Vol. XVIII No. 8
 December 1982

DID JESUS CREATE AN INTOXICATING BEVERAGE?

The burden of proving that Jesus did make intoxicating wine is with those who make the accusations. They are the ones who say the wine was intoxicating. John does not say so! It is a prejudiced and unscholarly determination that says the Greek word οἶνος (the word used here) must always mean intoxicating wine wherever the word is used. In fact, New Testament and classical usage show that the word may mean a number of things. Thayer shows that οἶνος is even used of the vine itself (cf: Rev 6:6) rather than the juice. In Classical Greek, usage may be cited to show οἶνος designating the grape itself, the juice still within the grape, the fresh pressed juice, and intoxicating drinks. A corresponding word in the Hebrew language is *yayin*. When Hebrew scholars translated the Hebrew Old Testament into the Greek language (known as the *Septuagint*), they used the Greek word οἶνος to express the meaning of their word *yayin*. The word οἶνος is used in the Septuagint as a generic term for wine - fresh, cooked, fermented and juices alike. (Cf: Numbers 6:4; Judges 13:4 where “wine” is used for the grape itself.)

Aristotle, Pliny and Nicander speak of οἶνος that does not intoxicate. Classical writings could be cited to show that the ancients knew of five ways of keeping grape juice from fermentation, and they called such preserved juice οἶνος. No one should use this instance to justify drinking today unless he can prove absolutely that the wine Jesus made is *just like* the wine they propose to drink! (*The Gospel of John*, Vol. 1, Paul T. Butler, p. 69).

STRONG DRINK: There was nothing in the Bible times which corresponds to the intoxicating drinks of today. Natural fermentation produces a maximum of only about fourteen per cent content of alcohol, since a higher alcohol content kills the yeast cells which produce it. To obtain a higher percentage of alcohol, freezing or distillation must be used, processes not known in ancient times for beverage making. Actually, beer and wine in ancient Palestine contained not over five percent or eight percent alcohol because of the limitations of the natural sugar content in grape-juice and the malt that was used. This constitutes the strong drink of the Biblein the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures), the Greek word οἶνος is used to translate both *tirosh* and *yayin*, *tirosh* being grape-juice and *yayin* wine. Thus, the word “wine” can mean either grape-juice or wine, depending on the content (Ephesians 5:18 - “wine” and Revelation 19:15 - “grape-juice”). (*Archaeology and Bible History*, by Joseph P. Free, p. 352.)

“THE BEST WINE” - “Among the Orientals and Romans, such an idea was not attached to ‘wine’ as a universal conception. On the contrary, their ‘best wines’ were not fermented at all. The ordinary drink of the Romans, learned writers tell us, was juice of the grape, *which they mixed with water, both hot and cold* – and sometimes with spices. Fermented wine was rare in early Roman times;... Fresh grape-juice was called

mustum, and to make it keep without fermentation *it was boiled until it became thick*, like our *treacle*, or *molasses*, and in that state was named *defrutum*, that is 'made from fruit,' and stored away in large jars for future use, to be eaten spread upon bread, as we do butter or treacle, or mixed and stirred up in water, as we do sugar in tea, to make a drink, as stated above. The Greek scientist, Aristotle, says that by keeping for a time in skins or jars, it became thick as butter and had to be cut out by spoons. The Roman writer, Pliny, records that when the grape-juice was boiled down to *one third of its bulk*, to secure the finest flavor, that is, to be made into the 'best wine,' - it was called *sopa*, from which word comes our vocables, '*sapid*,' well-flavored, and '*savory*,' delicious to taste. To give variety of flavor, herbs and spices were often boiled in the juice during its preparation. Such was the 'best wine' of the Ancients, the sweetest and nicest flavored to the taste, – not as we imagine and mean, the most intoxicating, when we speak of 'best wine.'" (Bible Textbook Series, *Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus*, D. DeWelt, pages 312-313).

123
REVELRIES
κῶμος
GALATIANS 5:21

DEFINITIONS:

Carousing,
Dancing,
Disorderly conduct,
Drinking,
Orgies,
Revelings,
Revelry,
Rioting,
Riotous feasting and
Sprees.

USES IN SCRIPTURE:

Romans 13:13-14 - *Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry (κῶμοις) and in drunkenness, not in licentiousness and lewdness, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

1 Peter 4:1-3 - *Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles - when we walked in licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries (κῶμοις), drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.*

These two passages, plus our text in Galatians, are the only places this word is used in the Greek New Testament.

OBSERVATIONS:

Notice that in all three places this word is used it is used right next to the word "drunkenness." There is an obvious connection between them. Drunkenness can, on occasion, be committed in private. But the person who indulges (regardless of how much) wants company in his or her drinking. Watch the commercials for alcoholic beverages and they will show you that it is great fun and it is to be

enjoyed with others. This is where our word “revelries” takes over. The drinking has taken on a party atmosphere and the carousings begin.

When this word was penned by Peter and Paul it also carried the idea of sexual excess and was often used in idolatrous worship activities. It is obvious that those who practice such things will not go to heaven. And those who would want to associate with those who do, and use just a “little” alcohol and party just a “little” are in a position to lose their souls also if they do not repent.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Not our fruit, but fruit of the Holy Spirit in us. If we show we have this fruit, we show we have the Holy Spirit.

“Fruit” is a singular word. Compare this fruit with an orange, the orange being a perfectly matured fruit made up of segments, each segment representing a grace as listed in this scripture. We cannot pick one or two graces to cultivate in our Christian lives and expect to produce a perfect fruit. Each grace, with its own special characteristic, must be cultivated individually and collectively for us to achieve the goal God desires for us.

We as Christians should desire these graces for ourselves. These graces grow from God dwelling in us, love being our ultimate concern, for God is love -1 John 4:8. The fruit of the Spirit is not mentioned as being manifest. These graces are spiritual qualities, and not so conspicuous as works. An edible, perfect (mature) fruit is the ultimate result of organic unity. Christian love is the fruit of spiritual unity between God and man, man and man, man and self.

FOUR GROUPS OF FRUIT

1. **LOVE** - The Christian grace that works out the whole law.
2. **JOY and PEACE** - Joy is a strong feeling of pleasure, happiness, a joyful heart. Peace is the normal state of the Christian.
3. **THE GRACES WHICH RELATE TO OTHERS**

LONGSUFFERING - enduring pain, trouble, injury long and patiently. Colossians 3:12, “put on therefore, as the elect of God - humbleness of mind - meekness - longsuffering.

KINDNESS (GENTLENESS) - handling others’ problems with kindness.

GOODNESS - state of being good, excellence, virtue, kindness, friendliness, excellence in character.

FAITHFULNESS (FAITH) - fidelity, faithfulness to a trust or vow, steadfast faithfulness - loyalty - strictness in performing responsibilities.

GENTLENESS (MEEKNESS) - not easily angered - mild, patient disposition, merciful, compassionate, mild, gentle.

4. THE LAST FRUIT LOOKS TO ONE'S SELF

No overindulgence - moderation in actions, habits, speech.

TEMPERANCE (SELF-CONTROL) - abstinence from injurious foods and drinks, control of one's actions, feelings, also control of the temper, the tongue, the desire's passion for money and power.

127
LOVE
ἄγάπη
GALATIANS 5:22

I. DEFINITIONS.

- A. A deliberate decision of the mind, a bringing of the will under control so that those who are unlovable and those whom we do not like become the objects of our love and service.
- B. It is the love of rational preference, rather than of emotion, showing itself by action.
- C. It has been called “unconquerable benevolence, invincible good will.”
- D. Ἔρως versus Ἀγάπη.
 - 1. Ἔρως: loving something for its worth only, and the desire to possess and enjoy that object.
 - a. This was normally used for love between the sexes and always involved the sexual act.
 - b. By the time the New Testament was written this word had become a synonym for “lust” and is not used in the New Testament.
 - 2. Ἀγάπη: self-giving and has its source in God’s sacrificial love for man.
 - a. This love loves every person whether or not we feel they “deserve” to be loved - *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us* (Rom 5:8).
 - b. This love must be pursued (1 Corinthians 14:1). It comes only with much prayer and discipline.

II. SUPPLY LOVE.

- A. 2 Peter 1:5-7 says to *supply (add) love*.
- B. Love is *added*: If Peter had ended his list of attributes with *brotherly love* we could isolate our *love* and it would become a selfish, narrow, exclusive sentiment (Matthew 5:46).

III. MEANINGS OF LOVE.

- A. You can obey rules without love, but your actions are without any value - 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. But nobody can love and ignore the rules!
- B. Another definition of love (Matthew 5:43-48).
- C. "Love God" and "keep His commandments" are synonymous.
 - 1. Love God = keep His commandments (1 John 5:1-3).
 - a. Exodus 20:6,
 - b. Deuteronomy 5:10,
 - c. Deuteronomy 7:9,
 - d. Deuteronomy 11:1,
 - e. Daniel 9:10 and
 - f. Nehemiah 1:5.
 - 2. To serve Him = to walk in His ways = to love Him.
 - a. Deuteronomy 10:12 and
 - b. Isaiah 56:5-6.
 - 3. Jesus said, *If you love Me, keep My commandments* (John 14:15).
 - a. In the original Greek language this was a 3rd class conditional sentence.
 - 1) This means that Jesus was speaking of the New Testament era and the conclusion of His statement was sure.
 - 2) In this type of sentence, the "if" should be translated "since."
 - b. Literal translation: *Since you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*

- D. We talk about “falling in love,” but we might do better to speak of “growing in love.” Falling is one of the few human postures in which one has absolutely no control over himself.
- E. The Bible condemns actions not motivated by love...but the one who fails to do the obligations imposed by God does not love! (John 14:15; James 2:18).

IV. LOVE OF BRETHREN.

- A. Duty to a brother or sister! (Galatians 6:1-2).
- B. Am I your enemy? (Galatians 4:16).
 - 1. This love seeks the highest good of each individual with the eternal destiny of his soul kept in mind.
 - 2. This being so, there are times when we will have to resist someone’s actions or teaching. We may have to do what seems to be very hard to that person, even to the point of bringing the discipline of the church to bear on him.

V. SELF-LOVE.

- A. Biblical self-love:
 - 1. Leviticus 19:18,
 - 2. Matthew 19:19 and
 - 3. Mark 12:31.
- B. Biblical self-love does not equal pride or egotism!
- C. How do we treat (think of) our strengths and abilities? As God’s gifts?
- D. How do we treat (think of) our shortcomings and weaknesses? Not with pity but seeking God’s help to overcome them.
- E. Biblical self-love will motivate each of us to prepare our soul for its eternal destiny. We will see our true worth to Christ!

VI. JESUS AND LOVE.

- A. Jesus intensely hates sin and just as intensely loves that same sinner.
- B. Jesus took no pleasure or joy in evil, only pain and sorrow.
- C. Jesus, the perfect lover of all mankind!
 - 1. Matthew 20:28,
 - 2. Galatians 2:20,
 - 3. Ephesians 3:19,
 - 4. Ephesians 5:2,
 - 5. Ephesians 5:25,
 - 6. Hebrews 2:9 and
 - 7. Revelation 1:5.

VII. MY RESPONSE TO LOVE.

- A. Man responds to God's love with love (1 John 4:11,19-21). This love is an obedient love, not a sentimental feeling.
- B. If I love God, if I love myself and you are lost:
 - 1. I am filled with compassion for you.
 - 2. I will seek you.
 - 3. I must tell you!

131
JOY
χαρά
GALATIANS 5:22

Only in detailed study can we truly learn what a book of joy the New Testament is. Joy is at the very core of Christ's teachings - John 14:28. The word χαίρω means "to rejoice" and is used 72 times. Χαρά means "joy" and is found 60 times. Related words - cheer, glad, happy, etc. - are used in abundance. Conversely, "sorrow" is found 17 times, "sad" only 3 times, and "unhappy" does not appear at all. God does not want His children to be anything but happy!

Joy is:

- A. An important part of the nine-fold fruit of the Spirit - Galatians 5:22.
- B. Imparted by God to believers:
 - 1. Ecclesiastes 2:26,
 - 2. Nehemiah 12:43,
 - 3. John 15:11,
 - 4. Romans 14:17; 15:13,
 - 5. 1 Thessalonians 1:6 and
 - 6. Galatians 5:24.
- C. The flesh with its works is robbed of its supremacy and man is restored to his divine nature - love, joy, peace - and seeking those things which are above (Colossians 3:1).

Fruit Christ's Children	Works Satan's Children
Lovers of Light	(1) Lovers of darkness
Walk in the Spirit	(2) Walk in the flesh
Children of God	(3) Children of this world
Doers of the law	(4) Refusers of the law
Heirs of the kingdom of Heaven	(5) Heirs of damnation

- D. Joy is distinct from happiness. Happiness depends upon circumstances such as good health, good friends, pleasant surroundings, financial security, etc.

Happiness and unhappiness can never exist together. Joy and sorrow can - and do!

1. Compare Isaiah 53:3 with Hebrews 12:2 - "He was a man of sorrows... who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross." Jesus was certainly not happy with the situation He must face. He prayed, "If possible let this cup pass from me" (Mt 26:39). But He knew an underlying joy only communication with God can give, no matter how desperate the situation.
2. Paul certainly was not happy in the situation he found himself, but could be joyful, assured God knows the ultimate outcome. He alone can see the conclusion of our labors (Acts 16:23-33).
3. Martha certainly was not happy over her brother's death, but she was joyful in spirit, knowing "he shall rise again" (John 11:24).

Happiness can be compared to a sudden storm - temporary and fleeting. It comes to us in "bursts of pleasure" or "moments of delight." We must savor these "small pleasures" or we will miss much of life - and of God. We must be faithful over those few things in order to be made ruler over many (Matthew 25:21).

Joy can be compared to a continuously flowing stream, the source of which is Jesus. One cannot seek joy, but when we tap the reservoir (Christ), and draw from His well, joy will be free and continuous. Paul's writings are never melancholy even when he describes painful situations and miserable conditions. His letters are filled with triumphant rejoicing! Joy transcends trouble, leaps walls of circumstances, and abides through death. It is "everlasting," "ever abiding," and "ever enduring."

The seed of joy is sown by the Spirit. We recognize the source of joy by keeping our spirits receptive to His voice in the scriptures and keeping our perspective by remembering we are sons of God. By doing this joy will grow in our lives until we know the thrill of not just snatching moments of joy, but the continuous and flooding river welling up and spilling over from our lives.

There is nothing I can give you which you have not, but there is much that while I cannot give you, you can take.

The gloom of the world is but a shadow; behind it, yet within reach, is joy.

Take joy!

WHERE CAN I FIND JOY?

If a man reads the New Testament he will certainly hear the call, "Rejoice!" And that rejoicing will not be dependent upon outward circumstances.

Through the ages men have sought joy in many places. They have sought it in a beautiful wife, in wealth, health, power and fame. But there always seems to be a catch. Beautiful women grow old, riches make themselves wings and fly away, honors may fail, and health may be lost.

Perhaps we have been looking for joy in the wrong places. Consider the testimony of Isaiah 61:10, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord." What if joy is found in the Lord? Would that explain why you have not found it? Mary, the mother of Jesus, said, "My spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour." And the apostle Paul comes along with his admonition, "Rejoice in the Lord always."

Joy is a beautiful emotion. It means "to spin round with pleasurable emotion." But this joy doesn't come about through over pursuit. (Some of the unhappiest people are those who all of their lives have sought after happiness. Let a man say, I will be happy; I am determined at every cost to lead a happy life; the chances are he will be miserable.) It is when we do **not** seek happiness that we find it, for happiness is a by-product.

Joy is to be found in the Lord, and it comes through believing (trust). That's why fathers have far more anxious faces than their little children. Children trust!

Trust God. He is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that you ask or think. The apostle Paul prays, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope" (Romans 15: 13).

JOHN GIPSON
Little Rock, Arkansas
Keynoter, July 12, 1984

134
PEACE
εἰρήνη
GALATIANS 5:22

I. DEFINITIONS OF PEACE.

A. Webster.

1. A pact or agreement to end hostilities.
2. A state of tranquility.
3. Freedom from civil disturbance or war.
4. Public order or security provided by law.
5. Harmony in personal relations.
6. Mutual concord.
7. Freedom from fears.

B. Hendricksen.

1. A natural result of the exercise of love.
 - a. Psalm 119:165 - *love thy law.*
 - b. Psalm 29:11 - *his people.*
 - c. Psalm 37:11 - *the meek.*
 - d. Psalm 85:8 - *His people (love of).*
2. A serenity of the hearts of those who have been justified by faith (Rom 5:1). Those enjoying this peace yearn to share it with others. Thus, the peace-possessors become the peacemakers (Matthew 5:9).

C. Pulpit Commentary - Serenity of the soul, arising from the consciousness of being brought home to the favor of God and to obedience to His will (Romans 14:17; 15:13).

II. SOURCE AND MEANINGS OF SHALOM (OT) AND EIRENE (NT).

A. Shalom (Hebrew).

1. A word used in greetings and farewells. It means soundness of body, health, prosperity, well-being in relationship to both man and God. It does not express the wish that man's life be free from trouble, but carries a positive hope and prayer that he may enjoy all good blessings from God.
 - a. Genesis 29:6 - *And he said unto them, Is he well?* Original meaning: *Is there peace to him?*
 - b. Genesis 43:27 - *And he asked them of their welfare.* Original meaning: *And he asked them of their peace.*
 - c. 2 Samuel 7:11 - *David asked how Joab did.* Original meaning: *of the peace of Joab.* Also, *how the war prospered.* Original meaning: *the peace (or welfare) of the war.*

B. Eirene (Greek).

1. A translation from the Hebrew, meaning all that shalom means and more! Christ had come with a message (gospel) of salvation and of peace.
 - a. Luke 2:14 - *preaching...peace by Jesus Christ.*
 - b. Romans 5:1 - *peace with God.*
 - c. Ephesians 2:14 - *our peace.*
 - d. Romans 14:17 - *kingdom...is peace.*
2. Peace to be cherished and followed.
 - a. Mark 9:50 - *be at peace one with another.*
 - b. 2 Corinthians 13:11 - *Live in peace.*
3. God is the God of peace - author and giver of all peace.
 - a. Romans 15:33 - *the God of peace be with you all.*
 - b. Romans 16:20 - *the God of peace shall bruise Satan.*

- c. 2 Thessalonians 3:16 - *Lord of peace...give you peace...by all means.*
- 4. Peace is a common wish - salutations or farewells.
 - a. 2 Corinthians 1:2 - *...and peace from God our father.*
 - b. Matthew 10:13 - *...let your peace come upon it.*
 - c. John 20:19 - *...peace be unto you.*
 - d. Luke 7:50 - *...go in peace.*
 - 5. The peace Christ brings is that of Spirit.
 - a. Matthew 10:34 - *Think not that I come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace, but a sword.*

This is not contradictory. The *sending of a sword* - an instrument of death was to produce hostility and war. God's word is *sharper than a two-edged sword* (Hebrews 4:12), and will judge us (John 12:48). Human hostilities arise where ever the word (sword) is presented between those who accept the gospel and those who do not. This is the result of man's wickedness, not Christ's message.

III. PEACE IN NOT AN ORDINARY OR COMMON FRUIT. IT IS VERY RARE.

There are two influences which can cast out peace; ungodliness and Satan's presence.

- A. We are often guilty of ungodliness. Why is it, in the face of God's promises, *I will never leave thee*, and *I am with you always*, that as far as we are concerned, He is absent from so much of our lives? There is an anxiety that divides our lives, hindering our energies and our activities as Christians. Is anxiety sent from God? **NO!** *Take no thought of the morrow* (Matthew 6:34) - *Cast your cares upon Him* (1 Peter 5:7). We so often let go of God's hand and try to walk alone. We know God created and rules, but so often we do not believe He can take care of petty trifles which cloud our lives. We use the realm of the possible, which was given for man to hope, only to fear it. We are dragged down by weight of depression because we have taken our eyes off the one who desires to cheer us and resolve our fears. This must be altered if the Spirit of peace can grow within us. We must secure the abiding presence of God in all circumstances!

- B. Presence of Satan = temptation. Satan desires to rule our thoughts. He bribes our senses with grand imaginings or past iniquities. He will use any method to produce an evil thought from our hearts. This done, evil spreads rapidly and our senses are ever on the alert for mutiny. There is no reason why this should disturb our peace, for we know that everyone is tempted - even our Lord was tempted - and that temptation in itself is not sin, but the matter from which sin is produced (James 1:13-15). Actually, temptation can be a blessing! It calls us to watchfulness and drives us to prayer. Peace can come in the very midst of temptation.

IV. HOW PEACE IS SEEN IN CHRISTIANS.

- A. In disposition and temperament - calm and happy, if not bright and cheerful.
- B. In circumstances - when prosperity goes, the peace of God remains.
- C. In temptations (Philippians 4:7).
- D. In spirituality of our minds (Romans 8:4-5).

V. WHERE PEACE IS SEEN.

- A. Marriage and home.
1. 1 Corinthians 7:15,
 2. Proverbs 17:1,
 3. Proverbs 15:17 and
 4. Ephesians 5:22, 25.
- B. Between parent and child.
1. Ephesians 6:4,
 2. Ephesians 6:1,
 3. Psalm 20:11 and
 4. Proverbs 22:6.

C. Between races and nations.

1. Ephesians 2:14-17,
2. Isaiah 2:4,
3. Romans 12:18 and
4. Luke 1:79.

D. In the church.

1. Ephesians 4:3,
2. Colossians 3:15,
3. Psalms 133:1 and
4. 1 Corinthians 14:33.

E. Between man - fellowman.

1. Hebrews 12:4,
2. 2 Peter 3:14,
3. Romans 12:18 and
4. 1 Thessalonians 5:13.

F. Between God and man.

1. Romans 5:1,
2. Proverbs 16:7,
3. Psalms 25:12-13,
4. Psalms 37:4 and
5. Luke 2:14. This passage has been misinterpreted through the years and in the King James Version reads:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

However, the New King James Version shows the correct translation as a footnote and should read:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace toward men of goodwill.

Compare this with Matthew 5:9:

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.

- VI. Christ had no earthly treasures to bequeath to man, but did make a last will and testament, *Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you* (John 14:27). Man cannot create peace. God gives it. Man cannot achieve peace, but can accept it. When we desire whole heartedly, seek with our entire minds, strain every faculty to find and keep peace, God opens his hand and gives abundantly.

LONGSUFFERING

μακροθυμία

Patience (ὑπομονή) - **Perseverance** (προσκαρτέρησις)**GALATIANS 5:22**

- I. **What longsuffering is not.**
- II. **What longsuffering is.**
- III. **Key to longsuffering.**
- IV. **What about tribulations?**
- V. **Example of Jesus.**

I. WHAT LONGSUFFERING IS NOT.**A. Apathy or indifference.**

1. Lack of feeling or emotion.
2. Lack of interest or concern.

B. Borrowing trouble. “Go ahead persecute me, I’m a Christian.”**C. Bearing up under punishment, etc.** - because of our own wrongdoing.

For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently (ὑπομένω)? But when you do good and suffer for it, if you take it patiently (ὑπομένω), this is commendable before God (1 Peter 2:20).

II. WHAT LONGSUFFERING IS.**A. Lexicon:**

Verb: to be long-spirited, longsuffering, forbearing; Passive: to be patient, slow to anger.

Noun: forbearance, longsuffering; Subjective: patience, endurance.

Adverb: patiently.

B. Characteristic of God.

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering (makrothumeō) toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet 3:9).

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and account that the longsuffering (μακροθυμίαν) of our Lord is salvation - as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you (2 Pet 3:14-15).

Who formerly were disobedient, when once the longsuffering (μακροθυμία) of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water (1 Pet 3:20).

And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long (makrothumeō) with them? (Lk 18:7).

Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering (μακροθυμίας), not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom 2:4).

What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering (μακροθυμία) the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction (Rom 9:22).

C. Determination of the will.

Patience (longsuffering) implies suffering, enduring or waiting, as a determination of the will and not simply under necessity (*ISBE*, Vol. 4, pg 2263).

D. Longsuffering is active.

The concept of the courageous endurance which manfully defies evil. It has an active content. It includes active and energetic resistance to hostile power, though no assertion of the success of this resistance (Kittel, Vol. 4, pp. 581-2).

E. Steadfast waiting.

Endurance, perseverance, a holding out, enduring affliction, a bearing up under, steadfastness, constancy, and a patient, steadfast waiting for (James M. Tolle).

F. Longsuffering strengthens.

Patience (longsuffering) strengthens the spirit, sweetens the temper, stifles anger, extinguishes envy, subdues pride, bridles the tongue, restrains the hand, and tramples upon temptations (Horne).

G. A fortress.

A root of all the goods, mother of piety, fruit that never withers, a fortress that is never taken, a harbor that knows no storms, and the queen of virtues, the foundation of right actions, peace in war, calm in tempest, security in plots (Chrysostom).

H. Emphasized by God.

Μακροθυμία is used 25 times in the New Testament. Its synonym, patience, is used 32 times with 7 of them in the book of Revelation.

I. Sound doctrine.

Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering (μακροθυμία) and teaching (2 Timothy 4:2).

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient (makrothumeō) with all (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience (hupomonē) (Titus 2:1-2).

J. Description of Love.

Love suffers long (makrothumeō) and is kind... (1 Corinthians 13:4).

K. Fruit of the Holy Spirit.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering... - (μακροθυμία) (Galatians 5:22).

L. Brings forth fruit - (Parable of the Sower/Good Seed).

But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience (hupomonē) (Luke 8:15).

M. Commanded.

Therefore, be patient (μακροθυμήσατε), brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently (makrothumeō) for it until it receives the early and latter rains. You also be patient (μακροθυμήσατε). Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience (μακροθυμίας) (James 5:7-10).

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering: (μακροθυμίαν) bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-3).

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; (μακροθυμίαν) bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even so as Christ forgave you, so you also must do (Colossians 3:12-13).

N. Rewarded.

And so, after he had patiently endured (μακροθυήσας), he obtained the promise (Hebrews 6:15 - Abraham).

O. A secure soul.

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience (μακροθυμίας) inherit the promises (Hebrews 6:11-12).

In your patience (hupomonē) possess your souls (Luke 21:19). The destruction of Jerusalem was their proving ground.

III. KEY TO LONGSUFFERING.

- A. The main element in longsuffering is our submission to God!**
- B. Akin to self-control.**

1. Only those who have self-control are able to endure patiently the trials of life.
2. Self-control is holding back while patience is holding on.

C. Relatives of longsuffering.

1. **Faith** - *We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience (hupomonē) and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure (2 Thessalonians 1:3-4).*
2. **Hope** - *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience (hupomonē) of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3).*

Longsuffering is the road on which hopes travels.

3. **Comfort** - *For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience (hupomonē) and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope (Romans 15:4).*
4. **Joy** - *Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience (ὑπομονήν) and longsuffering (μακροθυμίαν) with joy (Colossians 1:11).*
5. **Patience** - Longsuffering expresses patience in respect to persons, while patience expresses itself in respect to things or events (Trent).
6. **Like-mindedness** - *Now the God of patience (hupomonē) and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 15:5-6).*
7. **Well doing.** In verse 6 perseverance (hupomonē) is listed as one of the graces we must add to our lives - *For if these things are yours and abound, you will neither be barren (not idle) nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:8).*

The Christian is not responsible for the results of his work in trying to reach souls, but only for the work itself (1 Corinthians 3:6).

8. **Glory** - *Eternal life to those who by patient continuance (ὑπομονήν) in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality (Romans 2:7).*
9. **Prayer** - *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance (προσκαρτερήσει) and supplication for all the saints (Ephesians 6:18). (This is the only place this word appears in the New Testament.)*
10. **Salvation** - *For you have need of endurance (hupomonē), so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul (Hebrews 10:36-39).*

D. Many relatives in one passage.

2 Corinthians 6:1-2 - *We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says: 'In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

2 Corinthians 6:3-5 - *We give no offence in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed (blemished). But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience (hupomonē), in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings;*

2 Corinthians 6:6-11 - *By purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering (μακροθυμία), by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report, as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open.*

IV. What about tribulations?

A. Negative.

The Christian who does not have self-control will not have the moral courage to persevere when sorrow, pain, temptation and tribulation actually come upon him.

B. Positive.

Patience is not passive. On the contrary, it is active. It is concentrated strength.

C. Paul's example.

But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, (μακροθυμίαν) love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra - what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:10-12).

D. Glory in tribulation.

And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance (ὑπομονήν); and perseverance (ὑπομονή), character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us (Romans 5:3-5).

E. The final victory.

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world (John 16:33).

V. Example of Jesus.**A. Look to Jesus.**

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured (ὑπέμεινεν) the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:2).

B. Patience described.

Here is the patience (ὑπομονή) of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).

- C. The main element.** The main element in longsuffering is our submission to the word of God.
- D. A minority.** Those who are longsuffering will always find themselves in the minority, but what exalted ones they walk with!

148
KINDNESS
χρηστότης
GALATIANS 5:22

- I. Χρηστότης - goodness, uprightness, kindness, generosity, from χρηστός which means useful, worthy, suitable, good, pleasant, kindly, easy, reputable, loving, benevolent.
- II. In scripture “kindness” does not refer to manners or breeding, as are the meanings found in Webster, but to nature or disposition. An evil-dispositioned man, because of his nature, is bent toward evil while a man with a good disposition, as regards to moral structure, leans toward the good.
- III. Christian kindness is a beautiful thing, and its beauty stems from this fact: we want to treat others in the way God treats us (Matthew 7:12).
- IV. The Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius, used χρηστότης to describe God. Pagan philosophers sang the praises of virtue of kindness; and the other philosophers taught that it is kindness which makes a man kin to God. “We know a coin and to whom it belongs by the imprint on it; we know a man belongs to God when he has on him the imprint of gentleness.” (Epictetus, Gk philosopher - AD 50-130.)
- V. Over and over the psalmist sings of God’s gentleness or kindness (Psalm 31:21; 36:7; 51:1; 69:16; 117:2 and many others).
- VI. God’s kindness is expressed in several ways:
 - A. In nature:
 1. Psalm 85:12 - *Yes, the Lord will give what is good; and our land will yield its increase.*
 2. Psalm 65:11 - *You crown the year with Your goodness, and Your paths drip with abundance.*
 3. Psalm 104:28 - *What You give them they gather in; You open Your hand, they are filled with good.*
 4. God expresses kindness in the bounty of nature.
 - B. In events of history:
 1. Psalm 145:7 - *They shall utter the memory of Your great goodness, and shall sing of Your righteousness.*

2. Psalm 52:9 - *I will praise You forever because You have done it; and in the presence of Your saints I will wait on Your name for it is good.*

C. In God's judgments and statutes:

1. Psalm 119:39 - *Turn away my reproach which I dread, for Your judgments are good.*
2. Nehemiah 9:13 - *You came down also on Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them just ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments.*

If the statutes and judgments of God were simply morally good, we would have nothing left except fear in our failure to keep them. But God's laws are kind; therein lies our hope.

D. In our Lord's instructions:

1. Psalm 119:68 - *You are good, and do good; teach me Your statutes.*
2. Psalm 25:8 - *Good and upright is the Lord; therefore He teaches sinners in the way.*

God's teachings are good and upright, because He is good and upright.

E. In man's afflictions:

1. Nahum 1:7 - *The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust Him.*
2. Psalm 68:10 - *Your congregation dwelt in it; You O God, provided from Your goodness for the poor.*
3. Psalm 34:8 - *Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him.*
4. Psalm 31:19 - *Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who trust in You in the presence of the sons of men!*

F. In the New Testament, kindness of God is learned.

1. Romans 2:4 - *Or do you despise the riches of His goodness (χρηστότητος) forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness (χρηστὸν) of God leads you to repentance?*
2. Ephesians 2:7 - *...that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness (χρηστότητι) toward us in Christ Jesus.*
3. Titus 3:4 - *...when the kindness (χρηστότης) and the love of God our Savior toward men appeared.*

G. God's kindness is universal.

1. Luke 6:35 - *"But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Highest. For He is kind (χρηστός) to the unthankful and evil."*
2. His kindness has saving power (Titus 3:4).
3. It is kindness that does not take into consideration past sins and strengthens for the future.

Christ's coming is the Father's supreme act of kindness.

VII. GOD MAKE ME KIND

God, make me kind, whatever task is set me.
 This, more than all, is what I ask to be.
 Give me enough humanity to let me bring to the world
 what it has brought to me.
 Let all the hardnesses from my heart be driven.
 Take every tho't of malice from my mind.
 Teach me the way to give as I am given.
 God, make me kind. God, make me kind.
 God, show me how to make my life worth living.
 Open my eyes that I may always see how others are
 forbearing and forgiving.
 God, make me kind as they have been to me.
 Help me to leave the bitter word unspoken.
 Let me return the friendliness I find.
 Grant me the strength to keep this rule unbroken.
 God, make me kind. God, make me kind.

By Desmond Carter

151
GOODNESS
'ἀγαθωσύνη
GALATIANS 5:22

- I. What is “goodness”?
- A. Webster: virtue, excellence.
 - B. Virtue is moral practice or action, uprightness, morality, manly strength or courage, chastity.
 - C. Excellence is exalted merit.
 - D. Goodness is a noun. The adjective “good” is used in many and various ways:
 - 1. Possessing attractive qualities.
 - 2. Stout-hearted.
 - 3. Kind, friendly.
 - 4. Well behaved.
 - 5. Pleasant, agreeable.
 - 6. Adapted to a useful end, beneficial.
 - 7. Proper, becoming.
 - 8. Pious, devout.
 - 9. Of a reliable character.
 - 10. Valid, adequate.
 - 11. Actual, honest, sincere.
 - 12. Admirable, honorable, untainted.
 - 13. In unquestionable standing.
 - 14. Sound, reliable.
 - 15. Fit, serviceable.

E. The Greek word used in the New Testament for goodness is ἀγαθωσύνη, and is used three times. It means uprightness, generosity and goodness. As in English, the adjective is used in many and various ways. Ἄγαθός, the Greek word for “good,” is used to denote or describe:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. | A tree | Matthew 7:17. |
| 2. | A gift | Matthew 7:11. |
| 3. | A man | Matthew 12:35. |
| 4. | A slave | Matthew 25:21. |
| 5. | A teacher (Jesus) | Mark 10:17. |
| 6. | Fertile ground | Luke 8:8. |
| 7. | Man’s conscience | Acts 23:1. |
| 8. | The will of God | Romans 12:2. |
| 9. | Words and deeds | Ephesians 2:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:17. |

F. The Greek ἀγαθός and our English word “good” are so varied in meanings, they can and do describe anything that is excellent in any sphere.

II. When kindness or gentleness is compared to ἀγαθωσύνη (goodness), we see kindness is a quality of heart and emotion, while goodness denotes quality of conduct and action. Ἄγαθωσύνη includes sterner qualities by which doing good to others is not necessarily by gentle means. In Matthew 21:12-13 and 23:13-29, Jesus displays ἀγαθωσύνη as He drives out the money changers from the temple and utters threats and condemnations to the scribes and Pharisees. A kindly activity in their behalf! But with the penitent sinner who anointed His feet (Luke 7:37-50), He uses kindness or χρηστότης.

III. Think of the many ways we use the word “good.”

- A. A good man (woman).
- B. A good book (movie).
- C. A good Christian.

- D. A good time.
 - E. A good nap (bath).
 - F. A good meal.
 - G. To feel good.
 - H. A good vacation.
 - I. A good lesson.
 - J. A good way off.
 - K. A good idea.
 - L. A good buy.
 - M. A good day.
 - N. Good friends.
 - O. A good visit.
 - P. My own good.
 - Q. A good look.
- IV. In English, as in Greek, it is the adjective, not the noun, that is most often used (100 times in the New Testament).
- V. Conclusion:
- A. Think of someone whom you respect and esteem. List some qualities of goodness he or she possesses.
 - B. Do you possess goodness? List some qualities you possess.
 - C. Cite at least three Bible characters whose good influence is still remembered. List their qualities of goodness.
 - D. From your answers to the above questions, how many are spiritual and how many are physical?
 - E. In the final analysis, which are more important to your salvation?

154
FAITHFULNESS
ΠΙΣΤΙΣ
GALATIANS 5:22

I. DEFINITION:

- A. It is a disposition to always fulfill covenants, trusts and promises (1 Corinthians 1:9; 10:13).
- B. It is the quality of steadfastness in affection, allegiance, reliability and trustworthiness. The one who has this attribute is one in whom we can completely rely and one whom we can totally accept without reservation.
 - 1. Affection (Matthew 22:36-38).
 - 2. Allegiance (Revelation 2:13).
 - 3. Reliability (Revelation 2:10).
 - 4. Trustworthiness (1 Corinthians 16:1-4).

II. FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

- A. Absolute attribute (1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:11-13).
- B. Keeps His promises - If God does not keep His promises He is no longer holy (Deuteronomy 7:9; Hebrews 10:23; Joshua 21:43; 23:14; 1 Kings 8:23-25,56; 4:21; Nehemiah 9:8).
 - 1. Unfaithful were scattered (Deuteronomy 28).
 - 2. Land promise was kept (Joshua 21:43-45).
 - 3. To save the faithful (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).
 - a. The only obligation God has to save us is to Himself. He says that He will save us if we obey. This obligation is to Himself because He is faithful and for no other reason.
 - b. God's omnipotence is involved in His being faithful. His omnipotence is optional in its exercise. God did not have to create anything and now He may annihilate it all if He wishes. It is only when He has bound Himself with a promise, such as salvation by faith in Christ, does His action

cease to be optional. It is not possible to say that God may or may not keep His promises in any way He pleases.

- C. Care of our souls:
1. To correct - Job 5:17-19.
 2. Keeping us from temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 4:16; 2 Peter 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:3).
 3. Delivering His servants (Psalm 89:20-26; 1 Peter 4:19).
 4. In establishing (2 Thessalonians 3:3; 1 Cor 1:8-9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).
 5. In chastening (Psalm 119:75; Hebrews 12:6).
 6. In forgiving (1 John 1:9).
 7. In answering prayer (Psalm 143:1).
- D. God's faithfulness insures a supply for all our real wants (needs) (Philippians 4:19; 2 Corinthians 9:10-11; Psalm 84:11; 91:4; Matthew 6:33; 1 Corinthians 2:9 - spiritual).
1. Here, in this world:
 - a. Need for food, and
 - b. Desire for rest and sleep.
 2. Hereafter:
 - a. Peace,
 - b. Love and
 - c. Rest from trouble.
- E. God's faithfulness guaranteed by His:
1. Omnipotence (Psalm 146:6).

2. Omniscience - man should plan things "according to God's will" (James 4:15). But God's omniscience frees Him from the necessity of saying, "If I can" or "If God wills."
3. Immutability (Malachi 3:6; Job 23:13-14).
4. Holiness (Psalm 89:35).
5. Mercy:
 - a. Mercy invites - truth receives the sinner (Psalm 119:49).
 - b. Mercy makes promises - truth stands ready to fulfill (1 Chronicles 17:23; Psalm 108:4-5).
6. Solemn oath (Genesis 22:16; Hebrews 6:13-19).

III. FAITHFULNESS OF CHRISTIANS.

- A. In marriage (Matthew 19:3-9).
- B. In stewardship (1 Corinthians 4:2).
- C. In work (3 John 5).
- D. In speech (Proverbs 14:5; James 5:12).
- E. In proclaiming God (Psalm 40:10-11).
- F. In everyday life (Revelation 17:14).

IV. LESSONS FOR US TODAY:

- A. Learn the unreasonableness and sinfulness of unbelief (faithlessness) (1 John 5:10).
- B. We honor God for His faithfulness only by a suitable confidence in and obedience to Him. In our faithfulness, are we willing to sacrifice tomorrow's food and shelter and trust in His promises?
- C. Learn to follow God's example in being faithful to our commitments (Deuteronomy 7:9-11):
 1. In Business,

2. Home and
3. Church.

GENTLENESS - MEEKNESS

πραΰτης

GALATIANS 5:23**I. MEANING OF GENTLENESS (MEEKNESS)****A. What meekness is NOT:**

1. Milquetoast:

Numbers 12:3 - *Now the man Moses was very humble (πραῦς - LXX), more than all men who were on the face of the earth.*

Matthew 11:29 - *Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle (πραῦς) and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

2. Pride and arrogance (Isaiah 25:11-12; 26:5).

When we have meekness, we will treat all men with perfect courtesy, we will rebuke without enmity, we will argue without intolerance, we will face the truth without resentment, we will be angry and sin not. We are gentle, but we are not weak!

3. Submission to the will of men. Gentleness is being God-controlled, not being under other's control. It is not even self-control, which is fanaticism, if it is not also God-controlled.

B. What meekness IS:

1. Strength under control.

Those who are gentle or meek have the ability to bear insults and reproaches with moderation. They do not move to revenge themselves. They are not angered easily but are free from bitterness and contentiousness. They have peace, tranquility and a stability which comes to those who seek to please God.

2. Stability.

The gentle ones have the ability to soothe and calm others as well as themselves.

3. Help to others.

When one has this attribute, he is able to gently teach others in the way they should go even when the teaching will be very hard on what they have already come to believe and practice.

II. WHAT GOES WITH GENTLENESS (MEEKNESS)?

A. Love:

1 Corinthians 4:21 - *What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness (πραΰτητος)?*

B. Being peaceable:

Titus 3:2 - *To speak evil to no one, to be peaceable, gentle (forbearing), showing all humility (πραΰτητα) to all men.*

C. Correction:

Galatians 6:1 - *Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness (πραΰτητος), considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*

2 Timothy 2:25 - *In humility (πραΰτητι) correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth.*

D. Longsuffering:

Ephesians 4:1-3 - *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness (πραΰτητος), with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

E. Humility:

Colossians 3:12-13 - *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness (πραΰτητα), longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another, even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*

F. Quiet spirit:

1 Peter 3:3-4 - *Do not let your beauty be that outward adorning of arranging the hair, of wearing gold, or putting on of fine apparel; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible ornament of a gentle (πραέος) and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*

G. Defending the faith:

1 Peter 3:15 - *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness (πραΰτητος) and fear.*

III. THE RESULTS OF GENTLENESS (MEEKNESS)

A. Wisdom:

Psalm 25:9 - *The humble He guides in justice, and the humble He teaches His ways.*

James 3:13 - *Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness (πραΰτητι) of wisdom.*

B. Conquest:

Matthew 5:5 - *Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.*

C. Salvation:

Psalm 149:4 - *For the Lord takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation.*

James 1:21 - *Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness (πραΰτητι) the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.*

Gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:23). It bears repeating: when we have gentleness (meekness) we will treat all men with perfect courtesy, we will rebuke without enmity, we will argue without intolerance, we will face the truth without resentment, we will be angry and sin not. We are gentle, but we are not weak!

FOREVER BEAUTIFUL

He will beautify the humble with salvation - Psalm 149:4.

Meekness! Vice or virtue? Most of us are not quite sure. We normally pay our compliments to the self-confident and aggressive, those who will stand up for their rights and take a back seat to no one. After all, self-assertion seems to be a cardinal rule for success in our society. And meekness? That sounds like sissy stuff. At best, it is a petticoat virtue.

But look at Moses! "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Numbers 12:3). But no one has ever called him a Mr. Milquetoast. He wasn't the sort of man to walk around with his head bowed in bashfulness or timidity. At the age of 40 he had such fiery passions that he killed an Egyptian. At 80 he made his appearance before Pharaoh and demanded that the king release his slaves. And until he was 120 years of age Moses exercised strong leadership over 600,000 men, not counting women and children. His meekness was compatible with great strength. With passions controlled, he became a bold leader of men and a humble follower of God.

Strength at its strongest is power held in restraint. Look at our Lord. He possessed amazing power, and yet could say, "I am meek and lowly in heart." At the very beginning of the ministry of Jesus, in the wilderness temptation, He settled certain points about the use of that power. Even His death was a sign of strength rather than weakness, he said, "I lay down my life...no man taketh it from me." Had our Lord so desired, He could have called legions of angels to His side to defy His crucifiers. But this potent power was held in check, submissive to the will of God.

We admire strength. But strength is not necessarily the possession of the self-willed creature who demands what he wants when he wants it. The mark of giant-hood is on the man whose powers are under control.

What do the meek get? The psalmist answers that God "will beautify the meek with salvation." These humble, submissive souls have found the magic ingredient to be forever beautiful.

JOHN GIPSON
Little Rock, AR
KEYNOTER
April 2, 1981

SELF-CONTROL, TEMPERANCE
ἐγκράτεια
GALATIANS 5:23

- I. DEFINITION AND NEED OF SELF-CONTROL
- II. USE OF SELF-CONTROL
- III. PERILS OF SELF-CONTROL
- IV. HOW TO HAVE SELF-CONTROL
- V. COMPLETENESS OF SELF-CONTROL

I. DEFINITION AND NEED OF SELF-CONTROL

- A. The power of lordship which one has either over oneself or over something (Kittel, Vol. 2, pg. 339).

Greek idea: The entire person being perfected in which both body and mind are self-controlled.

Difference in Greek idea and Christian: The Greek is centered in man while the Christian is centered in God (Christ).

- B. The disciplined mind and the disciplined body are but parts of a self-controlled character.
- C. *Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls* (Proverbs 25:28).
- D. We have given lip service to God while bowing down to self-indulgence.

Too often the mind serves only the purpose of devising excuses for what the heart wants to do.

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any (1 Corinthians 6:12). Also: *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful; all things are lawful for me, but all things do not edify* (1 Corinthians 10:23).

And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now

as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you" (Acts 24:24-25).

E. *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 cf Romans 12:1-2).*

F. Self-control is what Christians need the most and want the least.

What misery it is when we discover there is no divorce from self, and that we must live out our lives with a person who does not have self-control!

G. Elders: *But hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled (Titus 1:8).*

H. Those who are not self-controlled do not know or understand true spiritual values. They will not sacrifice their worldly goods for freedom to worship, to think, to speak, but will quickly sell their freedom to worship, to think, to speak for worldly goods!

I. Many ambitions are not beyond our capacity but beyond our self-control.

II. USE OF SELF-CONTROL

A. *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).*

B. Our problem is not in knowing what to do, but in the actual use of self-control in our daily living.

Habitual rebellion is for the weaklings, not the strong. Neither self-control nor intelligence is needed when you shout, "No one can tell me what to do!"

Disciplined character belongs to the person who achieves balance by bringing all his faculties and powers under control. There are order, consistency and purpose in his life. As a result, he has poise and grace. He does not panic nor does he indulge in maudlin self-pity when tossed by

crosscurrents. He rises courageously, even heroically, to meet life and conquer it. He resolutely faces his duty. He is governed by a sense of responsibility. He has inward resources and personal reserves which are the wonder of weaker souls. He brings adversity under tribute, and compels it to serve him. When adversity becomes too overwhelming and blows fall which he cannot parry, he bows to them, but is not broken by them. His spirit still soars.

- C. Self-control of the mind: *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things that we have heard, lest we drift away* (drift out and sink as leaking vessels) (Hebrews 2:1).
- D. We must bring our whole being into subjection including:
 - Actions,
 - Appetites,
 - Emotions,
 - Speech and
 - Priorities.
- E. Without self-control, even kindheartedness becomes sentimental weakness.
- F. Our bodies are good servants but poor masters!
- G. When life is shortened by any self-indulgence (i.e. gluttony) what will we say on judgment day to a defrauded Master?

III. PERILS OF SELF-CONTROL

- A. Self-control, when not guided by scripture, is pure fanaticism.
- B. No amount of self-control will make a sinful heart holy. It will curb some sins and eliminate committing others, but it cannot create a clean heart. Only faith and obedience can do that.
- C. Self-control even in knowledge: *Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies* (1 Corinthians 8:1).

- D. Self-control makes one superior in accomplishments - beware not to feel superior.
- E. The discipline of the Pharisees was too rigid. They were betrayed by their very own virtue of self-control.
- F. Self-control's enemies:
 - Poor habits,
 - Peer pressure,
 - Procrastination,
 - Plain laziness,
 - Excuses (versus reasons),
 - Doubt and
 - Fear.

IV. HOW TO HAVE SELF CONTROL

- A. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).*
- B. Christ controlled: *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me (Galatians 2:20).*
- C. How much control by Christ? Mental as well as physical!
 - Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).*
 - Abstain from every form of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).*
- D. Christlikeness is the goal in life, not happiness.
- E. "God never required anything of man without providing the means to achieve it!" R.H. Lanier Sr.

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened (Matthew 7:7-8).

V. COMPLETENESS OF SELF-CONTROL

- A. The finest display of self-control is not a spectacular achievement, but the permanent change in the way we live.

He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city (Proverbs 16:32).

- B. The difference between the self-controlled and the non-self-controlled is the pause between the temptation and the act.

A lack of self-control can stand between us and heaven.

- C. The decision to have self-control must be so powerful and final that it is called a crucifixion!

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires (Galatians 5:24).

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live (Romans 8:13).

- D. Spiritual surgery.

And if your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell (Matthew 5:29).

Friendship with those of the opposite sex outside your marriage relationship:

Friendship can become affection, affection love, love lust, and the progress be a shock to both. The rugged advice of Jesus to pluck out the offending eye, or cut off the hand or foot is never more appropriate than in this kind of situation. Souls, homes, happiness, influence - all will be saved only by drastic, even ruthless, action. The feelings must not be spared! No quarter must be given! Here again Christians must tolerate not the least vestige of the philosophy of impotence: 'I can't help it.' Emotions may not immediately obey the will, but actions must. In due course, by the

grace of God, emotions will follow the lead of disciplined adjustment, strong purpose and decisive stand.

E. Will we give all to obtain self-control?

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field (Matthew 13:44).

F. You have no right to be mediocre if you are capable of something better!

G. If your goal is worthy, and it is, sacrifice is no burden but welcome!