**By Grace Through Faith Plus Nothing**

**Simple Studies in Galatians**

**By**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Galatians has been called The Crucifixion Epistle" and "Paul's Explosive Epistle," and it has been said that "every sentence in it is a thunderbolt."

Martin. Luther said, "This is my Epistle; I am wedded to it," And Godet said that this Epistle was Luther's "pebble from the brook with which, like another David, he went forth to meet the papal giant and smote him in the forehead."

Unquestionably the Epistle to the Galatians was used of God more than any other one thing to bring about the Lutheran Reformation.

Galatia was a Roman province, and included in this province were Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, all of which cities were visited by Paul on his first missionary journey, the record of which is found in the 13th and 14th chapters of The Acts.

In **Acts 13:19** we have the account of the stoning of Paul at Lystra. There is strong evidence that Paul was actually stoned to death and raised from the dead; but whether he was really killed or not, a great miracle was performed. For after he had been stoned and dragged out of the city, supposedly a dead man, and as his disciples stood round about him mourning his death, "he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe" (**Acts 13:l9-20**). It would have been impossible except for the miraculous intervention of God for a man after such a stoning to rise up and walk; and we may add that except for the marvelous grace of God Paul would not have gone straight into the city from which he had just been dragged as a dead man. Previous to the stoning Paul and Barnabas had actually been worshipped by the people of Lystra, and, although the stoning was done by "certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium," the people of Lystra were themselves persuaded to join in the stoning. But it is to be noted that after the stoning he was permitted to remain in Lystra over night without further disturbance. It may be that the people had again become persuaded that there was something supernatural about this strange man.

Galatia was the home of the legend of Baucis and Philemon, according to which the gods Jupiter and Mercury, travelling in disguise, had visited Baucis and Philemon and given them the desire of their hearts. It seems that when Barnabas and Paul came to Lystra and were used of God for the healing of an impotent man, "being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked," the people supposed that Baucis and Philemon had come to Lystra again, and therefore, "they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they

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his proposed journeyings, and so he preached the Gospel to the Galatians instead.

In **II Cor. 12:1-10** Paul evidently refers to (the Lystra experience, which he says was "above fourteen years ago." Second Corinth A.D. 60 and the Lystra experience is dated by Ussher as occurring about A.D. 45 or 46, which would be just "above fourteen years ago." Paul declares that whether he was in the body or out of the body he was unable to tell, and so we ourselves cannot be positive as to whether he died and rose again. But in any event he was caught up into Paradise, which he identifies with the Third Heaven (verses 2, 4), and received such wonderful revelations that, lest he should be exalted above measure here was given him a thorn in the flesh. For this he prayed three times that it might be removed, but his prayer was denied. God said, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul's response to this is wonderful: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."

**WHY THE EPISTLE WAS WRITTEN**

The occasion of the Epistle to the Galatians as that after Paul had gone through the province, preaching the Gospel of the Grace of God, and gathering out some groups of believers which he afterward addressed as "the Churches of Galatia," he was followed by false teachers who went among these Churches of Galatia, preaching a double error:

First, they preached that the way of salvation for a sinner is partly by faith, and partly by good works in obedience to the Law of Moses.

Second, they taught that the way a saved man is kept saved and finally perfected and glorified is by means of his own good works in obedience to that same Law of Moses.

Paul's answer to this double error is found in, this Epistle:

First, he shows here that the way of salvation for a sinner is by grace, through faith, plus nothing. He shows that salvation had been going on for centuries before there was any Law of Moses, and that the way of salvation was then, as it is now, and always must be, through faith alone, apart from Law-works.

Second, he shows that the Law of Moses has no part in keeping a man saved, nor in his final perfecting and glorification. A saved man is kept saved not by anything he may do, but rather by the Holy Spirit of God, who dwells within him.

In other words, it is God who saves us, and it is God who keeps us.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EPISTLE**

It would be impossible to over-emphasize the vital importance of the Epistle" to the Galatians. Someone has said that Judaism was the cradle of Christianity, and Judaism threatened to become its grave. We should never be done thanking God for this wonderful Letter, by which the Gospel was rescue. from extinction and preserved for the salvation and blessing of man.

We cannot be certain as to just when and where the Epistle to the Galatians was written, but it is likely that it was written soon after the arrival at Antioch in Syria of the false teachers from Judea, and the meeting at Jerusalem resulting from their false teaching, as described in the fifteenth chapter of The Acts. These false teachers came to Antioch, saying, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Perhaps these were the same men who had been dogging Paul s footsteps throughout Galatia. There was need of a vigorous handling of such a situation at Antioch, and there was need also for a similarly vigorous handling pf the situation in Galatia. The Gospel of the Grace of God was threatened and there was 'no time to be lost. Dr. Scofield well says that, "The theme of Galatians is the vindication of the Gospel of the Grace of God from any admixture of Law-conditions, which qualify or destroy its character of pure grace."

**THE OUTLINE**

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**PAUL'S APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY**

**(1:1 to 2:14)**

**1. THE APOSTOLIC GREETING (1:1-5)**

**1.** *(Paul, an Apostle, (not* of *men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead)."* (1). It will be noted that in this introduction Paul does not follow his custom of giving thanks, as in his other Epistles to the Churches. How could he give thanks for these Galatians, who were turning from God and lapsing into legalism? Here he begins by referring to his Apostolic authority, which he takes up later and defends most vigorously. Here he declares that his commission as an Apostle did not originate with men, nor did it come to him through any man, but "through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead" (R.V.). He did not derive his Apostleship from those who were Apostles before him, as he later on abundantly proves; but his commission came from the pierced hand of the risen Christ Himself, and from the Father who had raised Him out from among the dead.

**2.** *"And all the brethren which are with me"* (2). We cannot tell exactly who these brethren were, for we do not know certainly where or when the Epistle was written. Some believe it was written at Ephesus, others say that it was written at Corinth; but the point is comparatively unimportant. The fact is that Paul speaks as an Apostle, with the full authority of the Father and the Son, and he writes as he is moved by the Holy Spirit.

**3.** *"Unto the churches* of *Galatia"* (2). These were the groups of believers which Paul had gathered as he preached the Gospel of the Grace of God throughout the Galatian province.

**4.** *"Grace* be to *you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ"* (3). This sounds trite to us who have become accustomed to such language, but think of how it must have sounded to those who had just become Christians, and rescued from raw heathenism and idolatry, as these Galatians had been. It is by the grace of God that peace is made possible, and this peace is built upon the enduring foundation of the shed blood of Christ; for He "made peace through the blood of His Cross." And let it not be overlooked that through the sacrifice of Calvary God has become our Father, and His Son has become our Lord.

**5.** *"Who gave Himself for our sins, that* He *might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:* to *Whom* be *glory for ever and ever. Amen"* (4, 5). It is because the question of our sins has been so thoroughly dealt with, and so righteously disposed of, that grace and peace are our possession; and the object in God's mind through it all is that We might "be delivered from this present evil age. Surely we may therefore join heartily in the doxology here written, and say "to Him be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

**THE APOSTOLIC ANATHEMA (1: 6-9)**

**1.** "I *marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that caned you into the grace of* *Christ"* (6). The Revised Version is better here: "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ." Their removal was not yet complete, and therefore Paul hastens to arrest their progress toward such an end. Paul may be referring to himself as the one who had called them, although of course the real call had come from God Himself, as the Apostle would be the first to acknowledge. In **Mark 6:6** we read that our Lord marveled because of the unbelief of his neighbors in Nazareth, and surely it was a thing to be marveled at.

And here is another thing to be marveled at; it is indeed a strange and unaccountable thing that anyone who has really known the Gospel of the Grace of God should ever turn from it.

**2.** *"Unto another Gospel: which* is *not another"* (6, 7). They were removing from the true Gospel to this other Gospel which is not another. The Gospel is good news, and any other Gospel than the true one could not be really a Gospel at all. Dr. Adam Clarke in his Commentary declares that there were at the time Galatians was written more than seventy spurious Gospels, either adding to or subtracting from the true Apostolic message.

**3***. "But there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel* of *Christ"* (7). Of course this was the work of Satan himself. "An enemy hath done this." Satan has many emissaries in the world, and these all are adversaries of the Gospel of Christ. They "are false Apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ. And no marvel: for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteous­ness; whose end shall be according to their works" (**II Cor. 11:13-15**).

**4***. "But though we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed"* (8). If would be difficult to find anything more dreadful than this in the whole Bible. Satan may indeed transform himself as an Angel of Light, and his ministers may be transformed as ministers of righteousness. But whether it be an Angel from Heaven or any other preacher, even Paul himself, who preaches any other Gospel than that which Paul had already preached to these Galatian Christians, this terrible malediction falls upon him, "let him be accursed!"

*5. "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other* Gospel *unto you than that ye have received, let him* be *ac* *cursed"* (9). This is to lay double emphasis upon the Apostolic anathema which is here pronounced upon all preachers of a false Gospel.

Now let us remind ourselves as to just what false Gospel Paul is here attacking. The false teachers had taught the Galatian believers that they could not be saved by grace through faith alone, but that there must be added the believer's own good works in obedience to the Law of Moses. And, further, that they could not be kept saved except by their own good works in obedience to that same Law of Moses.

When we consider how many preachers today are preaching the Galatian heresy in both of its forms, we may imagine how many preachers there are who fall under this double curse of the Apostle of Christ. Nay, of Christ Himself! For Paul is representing Christ here and is speaking with Christ's authority, and in the power of the Spirit of Christ. Let us make no mistake. It is not Paul that those false preachers have to deal with. They must face the One who sits upon the throne, and they must give to Him an account of these things. An appalling score awaits settlement for those who have muddled the Gospel of Christ and preached something else, either through ignorance, or through a desire to please men. May God save all my readers from such a fate!

**III. THE APOSTLE'S AUTHORITY DECLARED (1: 10-12)**

**1.** *"For* do I *now persuade men, or God? or* do I *seek* to *please men? for* if *I* *yet pleased men, I* *should not* be *the servant* of *Christ"* (10). The Revision reads: "For am I now seeking the favor of men or of God? or am I striving to please men? If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ." And the word for "servant" is "bondservant," or "slave." Paul knew perfectly well that, since Christ was His Lord, he himself was Christ's slave, and he gloried in the fact. I was one of his proudest titles, "the slave of Jesus Christ" (**Rom. 1:1**). A slave has only one person to please, and that is his Lord. He has but one thing to do at a time, and that is his Lord's will, Paul's enemies said that he sought the favor of men, but his reply was, "I am seeking only the favor of my Lord, And if I were striving to please men, and even if I succeeded in pleasing men, while striving so to do I could not be the slave of Christ." This was true for Paul, and it is true for us. Let us get it settled as to who is our Lord. And when we get that settled it will solve many a problem, reducing human life and service to the simplest possible form, where we shall know that there is but one thing to do, and that is to please Him who hath called us into His fellowship and service.

**2**. *"But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of* me *is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ"* (11, 12). Here Paul returns to the subject of his introductory words in Chapter 1, verse 1. He now speaks more strongly, declaring that this Gospel is not from any human source, but only by revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Paul did not go to the Apostles at Jerusalem for his message, nor for his Apostolic commission. Paul did not go to a theological seminary and gain his knowledge from the faculty. Paul was not "ordained" by the laying on of human hands. There were three years between his conversion and the beginning of his public ministry, during which he received instructions from the risen Christ. We shall see more of this.

**HIS AUTHORITY DEMONSTRATED (1:13 to 2:5)**

**1.** *"For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of* *God, and wasted it: and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers"* (13, 14). The word "conversation" means "conduct" or "manner of life" (see R. V.). The phrase, "the Jews' religion," occurring twice here, comes from 'the word "Judaism." Upon this Dr. Scofield remarks that "the new Dispensation of Grace having come in, the Mosaic System, if still persisted in, becomes a mere 'Jews' religion' " *(Scofield Reference Bible).*

**2.** *But when* it *pleased God, Who separated* me *from my mother's womb, and called* me *by His grace,* to *reveal His Son in me, that I* *might preach Him among the heathen"* (15, 16). The word "heathen" means "the Gentiles," as the Revisers have rendered it. It took Paul a long time to discover that from his birth he had been dedicated by God Himself to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles.

**3*.*** *"Immediately I* *conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I* *up* to *Jerusalem* to *them which were Apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus"* (16, 17).It is often said that Paul spent the time between his conversion and the beginning of his public ministry in Arabia, and this has been concluded from the language of this passage. But it will be seen that he was not all that time in Arabia. During a part of it at least he was in Damascus. Arabia reached nearly up to Damascus, but does not include Damascus. It was in Damascus, it will be remembered, that Paul, then Saul of Tarsus, had been led into the light by Ananias immediately after Paul's experience on the road to Damascus. This is recorded for us in the 9th chapter of The Acts. He began testifying in Damascus immediately, preaching Christ in the synagogues and declaring Him to be the Son of God. He continued this testimony until his life was threatened, and his friends "took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket" (**Acts 9:25**).

**4.** *"Then after three years I went up* to *Jerusalem* to *see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."* It is difficult to exactly locate this "three years' " interval. It may be identified with the "many days" of **Acts 9:23**. The point is relatively unimportant. What Paul is demonstrating is the fact that he preached the Gospel before seeing the Apostles at Jerusalem at all, and that even when he did see them he did not receive authority from them, his authority having already come from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

**5.** *"But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother"* (19). This was merely a short visit, when the Apostolic company was not even brought together or consulted. Paul saw only Peter and James.

**6.** *"Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not"* (20). Paul is discussing solemn things, and he wants it understood that he is speaking earnestly and truthfully. Compare **Rom. 9:1**.

**7.** *"Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia and was unknown by face unto the Churches of Judea which were in Christ: but they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preaches the faith which once he destroyed. And* *they glorified God in me"* (21-24). It would be interesting to know something about this Syrian and Cilician ministry, but that is beside the point here. Paul is hurriedly reviewing his career as an Apostle, in order to demonstrate the fact that that authority is derived not from men, but from God. And it is good to read that in all that he did he sought no glory from men for himself, but he is glad to record the fact that men glorified God in him.

**8.** *"Then fourteen years after I went up again* to *Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with* me *also"* (2:1). This brings us to the visit of Paul, Barnabas and Titus to Jerusalem, described for us in the 15th chapter of The Acts of the Apostles. The issue had been raised by false teachers, probably claiming to represent "the Mother Church" in Jerusalem, and declaring that the disciples at Antioch in Syria were not saved at all, because they had not yet submitted themselves to the Law of Moses. It would be well for the reader to turn now to the 15th chapter of the Acts and read it carefully and thoroughly, in order to become familiar with the very important matters that were discussed in the Jerusalem meeting.

**9.** *And* I *went up by revelation"* (2:2). This doubtless means that he went up according to the revealed will of God. This was his program, and it is the normal program for every Christian.

**10***. "And communicated unto them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately* to *them which were* of *reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain"* (2). Paul recognized the situation as a difficult and serious one. There was danger that the progress of the Gospel should be hindered by this conflict with Judaism, and he sought the co-operation rather than the opposition of his fellow Apostles.

**11.** *"But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled* to be *circumcised: and that because* of *false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privately* to *spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth* of *the Gospel might continue with you"* (3-5). The Revised Version is clearer here. It reads: "But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised," etc. In other circumstances and under other conditions Paul had taken Timothy and circumcised him, on the principle of being all things to all men that by any means he might save some (**Acts 16:3**; **I Cor. 9:22**); but when it was insisted upon that Titus must be circumcised as a condition of fellowship, Paul refused to submit. He stood his ground in order that the truth of the Gospel might continue with us. We have much reason to thank God for his action in such a crisis.

**V. HIS AUTHORITY ACKNOWLEDGED (Gal. 2: 6-10)**

**1.** *"But* of *these who seemed* to be *some­what, (whatsoever they were,* it *makes no matter* to me: God *accepts no man's person:) for they who seemed* to be *somewhat in conference added nothing* to me" (6). Here again Paul is insisting that the Apostles in Jerusalem had no real authority over him. He was glad to consult with them, and glad to have them agree with him if possible, but 'they "added nothing," either to his authority or to his message.

**2***. "But contrariwise, when they saw that the Gospel of the Uncircumcision was com­mitted unto* me, *as the Gospel* of *the Circumcision was unto Peter; (for he that wrought effectually in Peter* to *the Apostleship* of *the Circumcision, the same was mighty in* me *toward the Gentiles:) and when James,* Ce*phas, and John, who seemed to* be *pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto* me, *they gave* to me *and Barnabas the right hands* of *fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward* to *do"* (7-10). Thus Paul's authority was recognized and acknowledged. Again let me urge the reader to carefully study the 15th chapter of The Acts to get all the details of this Jerusalem meeting. In that meeting it was settled, so far as anything can be settled by the Word of God, that the Christian is not under the Law of Moses. It is neither his means of life nor his rule of life. But it was also emphasized in that meeting that the Christian should be careful, in the exercise of his liberty, to avoid, if possible, stumbling his weak brethren (compare **Rom. 14:1** to **15:3**; **I Cor. 8: 1-13**).

**VI. HIS AUTHORITY EXERCISED (Gal. 2:11-14).**

**1.** *"But when Peter was* come to *Antioch, I withstood him* to *the face, because he was* to be *blamed"* (11). Peter had made a splendid address in the meeting at Jerusalem, endorsing Paul's position that the Christian believer is not under Law (**Acts 15:7-11**). But when he came to visit Paul at Antioch he took a different attitude, for which he truly "was to be blamed."

**2.** *"For before that certain came from* James, *he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and* sep*arated himself, fearing them which were* of *the Circumcision"* (12). This action of Peter is hard to explain. But, after all, Peter was a man of like passions with us, and though men today worship him as the first "Pope" and his so-called successors as the "Vicegerents of Christ," he, in this instance at least, showed that he was far from infallible.

**3.** *((And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation"* (13). So Paul was left alone, as he so often was left alone, in his stand for "the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free" (**Gal. 5:1**). And he did not fail here, as he had not failed in Jerusalem.

**4.** *"But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according* to *the truth* of *the Gospel*, *I* *said unto Peter before them all,* if *thou, being a Jew, lives after the manner* of *Gentiles, and not as* do *the Jews, why compel thou the Gentiles* to *live as* do *the Jews?"* (14). It is impossible to know just where Paul's remarks addressed directly to Peter come to their end, for we do not have the aid of quotation marks. It may be that he went on speaking with him throughout the rest of the chapter. Or it may be that he stopped speaking with him just here at the end of the 14th verse, and then goes on with the next verses in addressing himself directly to the Galatians.

Dr. Scofield in summing up the matter, be­ginning with verse 10 of chapter 1, says: "The demonstration is as follows: (1) The Galatians know Paul, that he is no seeker after popularity (vs. 10). (2) He puts his known character back of the assertion that his Gospel of Grace was a revelation from God (vss. 11, 12). (3) As for the Judaizers, Paul himself had been a foremost Jew, and had for­saken Judaism for something better (vss. 13-14). (4) He had preached grace years before he saw any of the other Apostles (vss. 15-24). (5) When he did meet the other Apostles they

I had nothing to add to his revelations (**Gal. 2:1-6**). (6) The other Apostles fully recognized Paul's Apostleship (**Gal. 2:7-10**). (7) If the legalizers pleaded Peter's authority, the answer was that he himself had claimed none when "rebuked (**Gal. 2:11-14**)" *(Scofield Reference Bible).*

**JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH WITHOUT LAW·WORKS (2:15 to 3:14)**

**I. JEWS AND GENTILES ON THE SAME FOOTING (2:15-21)**

**1.** *"We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners* Clf *the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works* of *the law, but by the faith* of *Jesus Christ, even we have* believed *in Jesus Christ, that we might* be *justified by the faith* of *Christ, and not by the works* of *the Law: for by the works* of *the Law shall* r *no flesh* be *justified"* (15, 16).It is not a question of justification for the Gentiles any more than it is a question of justification for the Jews. For Jews and Gentiles alike justification before God\* is by grace, through faith, plus nothing.

\*There is a difference between justification "before God" (**Rom. 4:2**), which is by faith alone and which saves the believer, and justification "before men" (**Jas. 2:14-26**), which is by works and which gives the believer a testimony among men.

**2.** *"But if, while we seek* to be *justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister* of *sin?"* (17). It had been the custom among Jews to speak of Gentiles as "Sinners of the Gentiles." The question raised here might have been raised by Peter or by an imaginary objector; as if he would say, “If we Jews, turning from Judaism, seek to be justified by faith in Christ alone, and apart from the works of the Law, will not that put us in the same class as the sinners of the Gentiles? And if so, then does not that make Christ the minister of sin? Is it not Christ who makes us sinners?"

**3***. "God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself transgressor"* (17, 18), In effect, Paul's reply is this: “It is not Christ who makes us sinners, but on the contrary, it is we ourselves; for, if after seeking justification by Christ we turn again to the Law, as if we were still unjustified sinners seeking to be justified by Law-works, we are sure to transgress the Law, and therefore we make ourselves sinners."

**4.** *"For I through the Law am dead* to *the Law, that* I *might live unto God"* (19). The Revised Version translates: "For I through the Law died unto the Law, that I might live unto God." Paul is now speaking of what transpired on Calvary and not of something in his own Christian experience. Notice the next verse.

**5** "I *am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I* *live; yet not I*, *but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of* *the Son of* God, who lov*ed" me, and gave Himself for me"* (20). Here again we have a correction by the Revisers, who translate the verse: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me: and. that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." The ': Law, which demanded death as the righteous penalty for sin, executed its sentence upon Paul in the person of his Substitute on the Cross of Calvary. In the reckoning of God, Paul in Christ was put to death by crucifixion. Christ on the Cross died as our Representative. He was the "propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (**I John 2:2**). And now "we thus reckon, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that .they who live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him Who for their sakes died and rose again" (**II Cor. 5:14-15,** R.V.).

We died, according to God's reckoning, at Calvary. But we did not remain dead. God was so thoroughly satisfied with the transaction of Calvary that He raised Christ from the dead, and we who had died in Him were brought to life in Him. We were quickened together with Christ (**Eph. 2:5**). Therefore, 'though we were crucified with Christ, nevertheless we live; yet not we, but Christ lives in us*.* Here we come to the subjective experience of the believer. Objectively, Christ died for us; subjectively, He now lives in us. And the life which we now live in the flesh we live “in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God."

The Law has no place in all this. When Paul died in Christ he met all the righteous requirements of the Law, and was from that time forever delivered from the Law. The Law had put him to death, but the Law did not bring him back to life. The Law was neither his means of life, nor his rule of life. The law was "done away" in Christ (**II Cor. 3:11**).

**6.** "*I* do *not frustrate the grace* f *God: for if righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vane”* (21). We again refer to the revision: "I do not make void the grace of God: for if righteousness is through the Law, then Christ died for naught." In other words, if man could have obeyed a righteous Law, and thus attain unto righteousness on his own merits, there was no need at all for Christ to die. It was because of man's utter' inability to do anything good that Christ's death was necessary in man's behalf. The natural man is unable to know God, or to obey God, or to please God, and therefore he needs a Savior (**Rom. 8:8**, **9**).

The believer's freedom from the Law of Moses is graphically set forth in the third chapter of II Corinthians has shown in the appended diagram:

THE LAW OF GOD THE GOSPEL OF GOD

THROUGH MOSES THROUGH PAUL

1 (verse 3) In tables of stone. 1 (verse 3) In tables of the heart.

2 (verse 6) Of the letter. 2 (verse 6) Of the Spirit.

3 (verse 6) Kills. 3 (verse 6) Gives life.

4 (verse 7) Ministration of death. 4 (verse 8) Ministration of the Spirit.

5 (verse 7) Was glorious. 5 (verse 8) Is rather (That is, more) glorious.

6 (verse 9) Ministration of condemnation. 6 (verse 9) Ministration of righteous-

 7 (verse 11) Done away 7 (verse 11) Remains

The believer is to be transformed into the image of Christ, not by Law-works, but by the Holy Spirit dwelling in him, as set forth in **II Cor. 3:18**: "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed (transfigured) into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit" (R.V.).

Someone may ask, In view of all this, what about the Christian Sabbath? Are we not still required to remember the Sabbath day, "to keep it holy?

The answer is that there is no such thing as the Christian Sabbath known to Scripture.

The widespread notion that the Sabbath was changed by our Lord and His Apostles from Saturday to Sunday is without Scripture foundation.

What happened to the Old Testament Sabbath was that it was "done away" with the rest of the Law of Sinai.

The first day of the week is never called a Sabbath in the Bible. We celebrate it each week as commemorating the resurrection of our Lord and the descent, seven weeks later, of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Both these events occurred "on the morrow after the Sabbath," that is, on the day now called Sunday. But to call it "the Christian Sabbath" is to put the new wine of grace into the old wineskins of Judaism. Let us call it, as John by inspiration called it, "the Lord's day" (**Rev. 1:10**); and let us rejoice in it. The Sabbath was a day of enforced idleness, a day of legal obligation, on which if a man so much as gathered some sticks he must be stoned to death (**Num. 15:32-36**). The Lord's 'day is a day of voluntary worship and service, and ought to be a day of unusual activity for the Christian because of its unusual opportunities for gathering and testimony.

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (**Col. 2:16**, **17**).

**II. SALVATION ALL OF GRACE (3: 1-9)**

**1.** "0 *foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"* (1). Paul is referring here to his own preaching in Galatia, in which preaching, "Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified" (R.V.).

**2.** *"This only would* I *learn of you,* Re*ceived ye the Spirit by the works of the Law,* or *by the hearing of faith?"* (2). The gift of the Holy Spirit comes with the gift of eternal life. When one is born again he receives simultaneously everlasting life and the indwelling of the Spirit of God (**1 Cor. 6:19**; **Rom. 8:8**, **9**). The Apostle here raises the question as to how all this came about. Was it through Law-works or through hearing and believing the Gospel? The question carries its own answer. Nobody was ever saved by being good or trying to be good. N0 body was ever saved by turning over a new leaf and doing the best he could. As it is written in **Romans l1:17,** "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

**3.** *Are ye* so *foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered* so *many things in vain? if* it *be yet in vain"* (3, 4). There are multitudes among God's dear people who having begun in the Spirit are seeking to be made perfect in the flesh. Strange as it may seem, it is still true that the flesh, or the old nature, thereby manifests itself in an effort to attain unto a righteousness on its own merits. Such efforts must always fail, for in the sight of God "all our righteousness’s are as filthy rags" (**Isa. 64:6**).

**4***. "He therefore that ministers* to *you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, does he it by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?"* (5). It is uncertain as to precisely who is referred to here as ministering the Spirit. Of course only God Himself can bestow the gift of the Spirit, but He usually does it through some preacher or messenger, and it may be that the preacher or messenger is here referred to. The point is comparatively unimportant, however, for 'in either event it is done not by Law-works, but by the hearing of the Gospel of Christ and believing it.

**5.** *"Even as Abraham believed God, and it* *was accounted* to *him for righteousness know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham; And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen, through faith, preached before the* Gospel *unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations* be blessed. *So then they which* be *of faith are* blessed *with faithful Abraham"* (6-9). The point here is that Abraham was justified before God by faith, and this was long before there was such a thing as the Law of Moses. The quotation in verse 6 is from **Gen. 15:6**, and that in verse 8 is from **Gen. 12:3**. The meaning of verse 9 might be a little clearer if we translate it: "So then they which believe are blessed with believing Abraham."

**III. DOING OR BELIEVING (10-12)**

**1.** *"For* as *many* as *are* of *the works* of *the Law are under the curse: for* it *is written, Cursed* is *everyone that continues not in all things which are written in the book* of *the Law to do* *them"* (10). The emphasis here is upon the phrase, "all things." If one is to be justified by Law-works, let him know that he must obey the Law perfectly. There can be no breach in his obedience. He must obey all things that are written in the Law, and he must do it all his life. "For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all" (**Jas. 2:10**). Of course, when this is remembered, everyone must agree that salvation through such a method is utterly impossible. How can an imperfect man *keep* the perfect Law of God, and keep it perfectly? Unless salvation is by grace, through faith, plus nothing, there is no salvation for anyone.

**2.** *"But that no man is justified by the Law in the sight* of *God,* it *is evident: for, The just 'shall live by faith"* (11). Paul here goes to **Habakkuk 2:4** for his quotation. Three times this word, "the just shall live by faith," is quoted in the New Testament-here, and in **Romans 10:17**, and again in **Hebrews 10:38**. At first glance it may seem strange to read, "the just shall live by faith;" for the natural way to say it would have been, "the unjust shall live by faith." But the teaching is, that because God has set forth our Lord Jesus Christ as a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, and thereby wrought out justification for all men, therefore the only thing man now needs to do is to believe the Gospel, and he shall live. "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned .... So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One shall the many be made righteous"(**Rom. 5:12**, **18**, **19**, R.V.).

**3***."And the Law is not* of *faith: but, The man that does them shall live in them"* (12). It is a question of doing or believing. The quotation here is from **Lev. 18:5**. If we propose to seek salvation by the Law, then we must do all that the Law requires, and this is impossible, for how can a sinner perfectly a perfect Law? But the Gospel says, not "Do and live," but rather, "Believe and live." After the life through faith comes, then we may do, and we ought to do, all we can to please God. But this is not in order to save ourselves, nor to keep ourselves saved. Let us not be "so foolish."

**IV. THE CURSE REMOVED THAT**

**THE BLESSING MIGHT COME (Gal. 3:13, 14)**

**1.** *"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us:* for it *is written, Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree"* (13). The reference is to **Deut. 21:22**, **23**, which we quote herewith:

"And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shall in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accused of God) that thy land be not defiled, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."

The Jewish method of execution was not by hanging, but by stoning (**Deut. 13:8-11**). But in order to add to the shame of the criminal they hung his body on a tree, and these who were thus hung on a tree were cursed by the law (**Acts 5:30**; **10:39**). But God brought it to pass that the Lord Jesus should die on a tree, that is, the Cross which is symbolic of a tree, in order to fulfil the prophecy of the curse, as well as other prophecies. And the Son of God went the whole way in His self-imposed limitations, becoming "obedient unto death" not only, but "even the death of the Cross" (**Phil. 2:8**). It is to be observed that the Revision changes "being made" to "having become." There was no compulsion about it. His humiliation and suffering were of His own choosing.

Crucifixion was regarded by the Romans as too shameful and disgraceful for a Roman citizen. "The very name," said Cicero, "should be excluded from the thoughts, eyes and ears of a Roman citizen. It is a crime to bind a Roman citizen, but what shall I say about lifting him on a Cross. No word can adequately describe such a nefarious thing."

And the thought of crucifixion was no less abhorrent and shameful in the eyes of the Jews. It is for this reason that the Jews contemptuously refer to Him as "The Hanged One," and they call Christians "Worshippers of the Hanged One." The shame of the Cross is ever a stumbling block to the flesh. Human nature rebels against the thought that it was necessary for the Son of God to die such a disgraceful death in order that men might be saved. To the natural man the word of the Cross must always be foolishness (**I Cor. 1:18**).

But whom did Christ redeem from the curse of the Law, and for whom did He become a curse? "The 'us' is emphatic," says Dean Alford, "and applies solely to the Jews. *They only* were under the curse of verse 10, and they being by Christ redeemed from that curse, the blessing of Abraham (justification by faith), which was always destined by God to flow through the Jews to the Gentiles, was set at liberty thus to flow out to the Gentiles. This is the only view which suits the context. To make 'us' refer to Jews and Gentiles, and refer 'the curse of the Law' to the law of conscience, is to break up the context altogether."

The Gentiles were not under the Law (**Rom. 2:14**). Indeed, the Law was the middle wall of partition, dividing them from the Jews (**Eph. 2:13-18**).

**2.** *"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith"* (14). "Since the Jews were shut out from blessing by the very Law in which they gloried, Gentiles could not hope to obtain it by putting themselves under that Law. But if to the Jews the blessing was secured by the death of Christ, and in response to faith, then on the same ground, and on the same condition, the blessing would extend to the Gentiles also" *(Hogg and Vine).*

"It is exceedingly blessed," says William Kelly, "to find that, as in II Corinthians 5 it is said that Christ was made sin, so here it is said that 'He is made a curse for us.' In Corinthians Paul is merely putting himself with the believers-he is not drawing a contrast between us and the Jew; consequently the 'we' in Corinthians includes *all,* But here the 'us' means the Jewish part of the believers; for he refers particularly and distinctly to the Gentiles afterwards-'that the blessing of Abraham might come *on the Gentiles* through Jesus Christ.' And then he puts them all together-'that *we* might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.' The 'us' there is emphatic; whereas in verse 14 the word 'we' is not so at all, but is used in a general way of all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles. So that the point is very plain. First, if Jews were concerned, he would say, We equally needed Christ; because we had not continued 'in all-the things that are written in the book of the Law to do them; and Christ came and redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Then, as to you Gentiles you who never had anything to do with the Law, are you seeking to be blessed on the very ground where we can only expect cursing? The Apostle quotes from **Deut. 27**, where we have a very striking disclosure, as has be n well remarked by another. Half of the tribes were to stand upon one mountain to bless, and the other half upon another mountain to curse. But when, immediately after, the provision comes out, only the curses are mentioned, and there is no blessing at all! Why? *'As many as are* of *the* "*works* of *the Law are under the curse.'* God had spoken of the tribes being divided for blessing and cursing; but when you come to the fact, only the curses follow, and not the blessings. \*

\*The blessings of **Deut. 28** are conditioned upon Israel's obedience:-"if thou shall ... do His commandments, ... all these blessings shall come on thee" (vs. 1, 2). But the obedience was lacking (W.L. P*.*)*.*

What a very solemn confirmation of the truth we have been looking at! God did not positively provide for any thus to get the blessing. As sure as they took legal ground, they could only get a curse; and accordingly the curses alone are heard. The Apostle, therefore, triumphantly closes this part of the subject. After coming to the full acknowledgment of the Law's curse because of sin, then through the grace of God can the believer say, 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.'

It is not merely that He has been made accursed for us, but 'a curse.' What could more forcibly convey how fully he identified Himself with that condition as a whole? The consequence is, that those He represented in grace are completely delivered from it; yea, and the blessing, once flowing, bursts far beyond the old channel. So he says, 'As it is written, Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. First of all, God must remove the curse out of the way; and when that was holily done for these believing Jews, the same Cross of Christ overflows with mercy to the Gentiles. Christ had accomplished the work of redemption; and though its primary application was to the Jews, yet surely the efficacy and glory of it could not be hid. The blessing of Abraham comes on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ-'that *we* might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.'"

**THE ABRAHAMIC AND MOSAIC COVENANTS (3:15-25)**

I. **THE FORMER HAD ONLY TWO MEN in VIEW (15, 16)**

**1.** *"Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; though it* be *but a man's covenant, yet if it* be *confirmed, no man disannuls, or adds thereto"* (15). Even a covenant between two men when it has been confirmed, signed and sealed and recorded, is held to be inviolable, and neither party is at liberty to make any change in it. And here we are thinking of a covenant between God and man, and, surely, such a covenant is more important than any covenant could be between man and man. God's covenant with Abraham has been confirmed and He will not set it aside, or make any change in it until its promises are fulfilled.

**2.** *"Now* to *Abraham and his Seed were the promises made.* He *said not, and* to *seeds, as of many; but as of One, And to thy Seed, which is Christ"* (16). Let it be carefully noted here that the covenant referred to was between God on the one hand, and two men on the other. These two men were Abraham and Christ. The language is explicit and emphatic. The covenant was not to Abraham and his natural seed, that is, the children of Israel generally, nor even to his heavenly seed in the Church of God, that is, Christians generally, except as the heavenly seed constitute the body of Christ and are included in Christ. This we shall see at the end of the chapter.

**II. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT Is NOT SET ASIDE BY**

**THE LAW OF** **SINAI (Gal. 3:17, 18)**

**1.** *((And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before* of *God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after cannot disannul, that it* *should make the promise* of *none effect"* (17). Since the Abrahamic covenant was unconditional, and since the promises of God contained therein had not yet been fulfilled, of course it follows that the Abrahamic covenant could not be set aside by the Law of Sinai.

**2*.*** *For* if *the inheritance* be of *the Law, it is no more* of *promise: but God gave it* to *Abraham by promise"* (18). The promises of the Abrahamic covenant were promises based upon pure grace. There was no condition attached to them. The fulfilment of them did not depend upon anything that Abraham or his seed promised to do. On the other hand, the Law made all its promises conditional upon the obedience of Israel to whom it was given. In **Ex. 19:5**, in preparation for the issuance of the Law, God for the first time introduces an "if," saying, "if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all etc. In answer to this the people said" "All that Jehovah has spoken we-will do" (**Ex. 19:8**). This was entirely different from the Abrahamic covenant. Abraham promised nothing, either for himself or for .his Seed. All the promises were made by God Himself, with no conditions attached thereto.

**III GOD'S PURPOSE IN GIVING THE LAW (19-25)**

**1.** *Wherefore then serves. the Law?" (19).* We have seen that the Law could not avail for justification. Why then was it given at all?

**2.** *"It was added"* (19). This adding was; in no way inconsistent with the words of verse 15, "no man adds thereto;" for the addition here is not the adding of new conditions or altering in any way the terms of the Abrahamic covenant. The Law was superimposed for a very definite purpose, and, as we shall also see, for a purely temporary purpose. If was never intended to be a permanent arrangement.

**3.** *"Because* of *transgressions"* (19). The translation is, unfortunate, and it is to be regretted that the Revisers have not corrected it. In the Greek text the words employed mean "for the sake of transgressions." The Law was given to be transgressed. The people were sinners, but since there was no Law they were not transgressors. "Because the Law works wrath: for where no Law is, there is no transgression" (**Rom. 4:15**). "For until the Law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no Law" (**Rom. 5:13**). The people needed to be taught how sinful they were, and how helpless they were to be anything but sinful. The law was issued as an "instruction in righteousness" (**2 Tim. 3:16**). The people were "ignorant of God's righteousness," and they must be enlightened (**Rom. 10:3**). The Law was laid down before them, and therefore their sins from that point became transgressions. To transgress means to step across something, but when there is nothing to step across there can be no transgression. Therefore the Law was added for the sake of transgressions; "the Law entered, that the offence might abound" (**Rom. 5:20**).

**4.** *“Till the* Seed *should come* to *whom the promise was made”* (19). Thus it is seen that the Law was a temporary arrangement. It extended only from Moses to Jesus, for Jesus is the Seed to whom the promise was made, and the Law was to endure only till He should come.

There seems to be a widespread notion that the Law of Sinai was, like God Himself, from everlasting to everlasting; that the Law was issued even before man was created, and that it must continue forever, just as God must continue forever. This is all a mistake. The race had gone on for twenty-five hundred years before the Law of Moses was issued, and then the Law endured only fifteen hundred years until the Lord Jesus came, and since that time sin has been robbed of its dominion over the believer, "for ye are not under the Law, but under grace" (**Rom. 6:14**). The temporary character of the Law will be further demonstrated a little later.

**5***. "And it was ordained by Angels"* (19). The Greek word for "ordained" means "constituted" or "disposed." In **Acts 7:53** Stephen charged that Israel had "received the Law by the disposition of Angels, and" had "not kept it." In **Deut. 33:2** Moses said: "Jehovah came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from mount Paran, and He came from the ten thousands of Holy Ones: at His right hand was a fiery Law for them" (R.V.). According to the Septuagint Version this passage reads: "His angels with Him on His right hand." In **Heb. 2:2** the Law is referred to as "the word spoken by Angels." Someone has suggested that God delegated the Law to angels as something severe and alien to Himself, while He reserved "the promise" toHimself, and dispensed it according to His own goodness, Judgment is indeed "His strange work," for "He delights in mercy" (**Isa. 28:21**; **Micah 7:18**).

**6.** *"In the hand of a mediator"* (19). The mediator was Moses, In **Deut. 5:5** he said, "I stood between Jehovah and you."

**7.** *"Now a mediator* is *not a mediator of one" but God is one"* (20). In the Abrahamic covenant there was only one party making promises or undertaking obligations; that was God alone. Abraham made no. promises, either for himself or for his Seed. The promises were all of God, and therefore there was no need of a mediator. The covenant of Sinai, on the other hand, was a conditional Covenant, God making promises conditioned upon the obedience of the people, and thus, there was need of a mediator between *God* and man. It is true that the Lord Jesus Christ is presented in the New Testament as the one Mediator between God and man (**I Tim. 2:5**), but He is not a Mediator separating two parties to a covenant as Moses did; rather He is One in Whom the two parties, God and man, are united. "The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (**John 1:17**). Here are the two. mediators-Moses, the severing mediator of legal conditions, and Jesus, the uniting mediator of grace" *(*A.R. Fausset*).*

**8.** *"Is the Law then against the promises* of *God? God forbid"* (21). The question raised here is whether the Law, which involves a mediator, is contrary to the promises of God which are without a mediator, and which rest on God alone for their fulfilment. Of course the correct answer to this is, "God forbid."

**9.** *"For* if *there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law"* (21) . . This argument is more fully set forth in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, where he contrasts the righteousness which is of the Law with the righteousness which is of faith (**Rom. 10:5-10**). It is true that the Law promised life to whoever should perfectly obey it. But since there is no one in the world able to perfectly obey it, therefore the Law could not give life, nor could it give righteousness.

**10.** *"But the scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of* *Jesus Christ might* be *given to them that believe"* (22). The Revised Version is better here: "Howbeit the scripture shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Let it be remembered that the Scripture had (not been written in Abraham's time. It began to be written at about the time the Law was given: The first five books were written by the mediator of the Law covenant, and their writing was needed in order to permanently convict men of sin. The words, "shut up," present man as in prison under condemnation-"as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shut up in the prison" (**Isa. 24:22**). How much better to be rejoicing in "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (**Gal. 5:1**)

**11.** *"But: before faith came, we were kept under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards* be *revealed"* (23). Here again we have the words, "shut up." Indeed, the whole verse presents the prison scene again. The Revision reads, "But before faith came, we were kept in ward (that is, in jail) under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Of course the people thus shut up were the people of Israel, to whom the Law was issued; for "we know that what things soever the Law says, it says to them who are under the Law" (**Rom. 3:19**). The Gentiles, on the other hand, are similarly condemned, for though they have not the Law (**Rom. 2:14**), they "are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another" (**Rom. 2:14, 15**).

**12.** *"Wherefore the Law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we night* be *justified by faith"* (24). "Schoolmaster" is an unfortunate translation here, although it comes from the Greek word *pedagogue,* which has come to mean "schoolmaster" with us. Originally the term was applied among the Greeks to a household servant who was put in charge of a child to be his guide, his conductor, his tutor, in early childhood, until he should be turned over into the charge of others. The Law was Israel's conductor unto Christ that they might be justified by faith in Him.

**13.** *"But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster"* (25). The functions of the Law ceased with the coming of Christ.

**CHILDHOOD AND SONSHIP CONTRASTED**

**(Gal. 3:26 to 4:7)**

**1. THE CHRISTIAN'S INHERITANCE IN CHRIST (Gal. 3:26-29)**

**1.** *"For ye are all the children* of God *by faith in Christ Jesus"* (26). Notice here an important correction in the Revised Version, Which reads, "For ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." Paul here begins to draw the contrast between being a child of God in relationship, and a son of God in position. The Old Testament believer was a child of God, but the New Testament believer is not only a child of God; he is also a son of God. It is difficult for us in these days to comprehend the meaning of this contrast. But let· us follow Paul's argument closely, and we shall see that it has great significance. Child­hood is a matter of relationship; we are children of God because we are born again and born of God. But son-ship is a matter of position; we are sons of God positionally because we are "accepted in the Beloved." (**Eph. 1:6**).

**2.** *"For as many* of *you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"* (27). This is not water baptism; no one can be baptized into Christ by water baptism. We may be baptized into the name of Christ by water baptism, but the only way to be baptized into Christ is the way described in **I Cor. 12:12-13**.

"For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit."

Here it is seen that we are all baptized *in* the Spirit and *into* the body of Christ. The Baptizer is the risen Christ Himself (**Matt. 3:11**), and He baptizes the believer in the Holy Spirit and into Himself, making the believer a member of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones (**Eph. 5:30**). This makes Christ and the believer one flesh (**Eph. 5:29-31**). It is necessary to comprehend this truth in order to appreciate Paul's argument here.

**3***. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond* nor *free, there is neithe1' male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus"* (28). The teaching of **I Cor. 12:12-13** is again followed here. Since we are members of the body of Christ God looks upon us as one in Christ. The Revised Version reads: "Ye all are one Man in Christ Jesus."

**4.** *"And* if *ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according* to *the promise"* (29). We have seen that all believers are members of the body of Christ, and that together they constitute one Man in Him. And that one Man is the Man Who together with Abraham was to inherit the promise of the Abrahamic covenant. Therefore since we are in Christ and are members of that one Man, we are Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise. So it is seen that the inheritance is not by the Law, but by promise. It does not come through good works, but only by grace, through faith, plus nothing.

**II. REDEEMED IN THE FULNESS OF THE TIME (Gal. 4:1-7)**

**1.** *"Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differ nothing from a servant, though he be lord* of *all"* (1). The word for "servant" is "bondservant" or "slave. The heir, though he be the owner of a large estate, is unable during his infancy to exercise his heirship or lordship.

**2.** *"But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed* of *the father"* (2). During his early years he must be treated exactly like a slave until he comes to the place where he is able to be trusted as a full grown son.

**3***. "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements* of *the world"* (3). The pronouns refer to the Old Testament Jews. Believing Jews, as we have seen, were children of God in their relationship, for they were born from above and born of God, but they did not yet have the position of sonship. They were in slavery under "the elements of the world." The expression, "the elements of the world," is used here and in **Col. 2:8**, **20** where it is translated "the rudiments of the world," as a designation for the Law of Moses. Law is the only way the world has for preserving order. Human government is based upon the principle of rule by law with penalty for disobedience. This system came from God through the covenant with Noah. But it is a worldly system nevertheless, for the reason given, and when God issued the Law of Moses to Israel He came down to the world's level in issuing the Law, with a penalty for disobedience. Thus the Law of Sinai is called the elements or rudi­ments of the world.

**4.** *"But when the fullness* of *the time was come,* God *sent forth his Son, made* of *a woman, made under the Law"* (4). It is sometimes said that Paul never makes reference to the virgin birth of our Lord. It would be difficult to know what else he could have meant by these words, "made of a woman." He was "the Seed of the woman" in a unique sense, and he was "born of a woman, born under the Law" (R.V.).

**5.** "To *redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons"* (5). It would be better to translate, "that we might receive the place of sons." "Adoption here does not mean the same thing as adoption with us. We now speak of adoption as the act of a man who takes a child not related to him and agrees to rear him as his own son. But that is not the meaning of adoption in the New Testament. The Greek word from which adoption comes is *huiothesia* (son-placing), and it refers to a custom among the Greeks and Romans by which a father when his child came of age inducted him. into the position of son-ship. Until that day he was called a child, but from that day he was called a son, and was proclaimed as the son and heir, the fellow and partner of his father. On that day he was divested of his children's clothing and invested with the *toga virilis,* the clothing of a man. Thus it is that the Lord Jesus Christ came to bestow son-ship, upon the Jew first, and also upon the Gentile, who should believe on Him and receive Him as Savior and Lord. He redeemed the Jews who were under the Law that they might receive the son's place, and he gives this son's place now to all, Jew and Gentile alike, who receive Him and confess Him as their own Savior and Lord.

**6.** *"And because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father"* (6). It is the Holy Spirit indwelling us (**I Cor. 6:19**, **20**), Who enables us to realize our position as sons, and brings us into such a place of intimacy with God that we cry unto Him, "Abba, Father." "Abba" comes to us untranslated from Hebrew through the Greek. It is still a Hebrew word. "Father" comes to us from the Greek, *pater.* The word "father" in Hebrew is *ab,* and the additional syllable *ba* makes it diminutive, and is the equivalent of our English word "papa." Very likely it was the first word that the infant Saul of Tarsus learned to speak. It seems a pity that it was not translated for us into our English, in " which case we should read of the Holy Spirit causing us to cry, "Papa, Father!" Our Lord Himself made use of the same expression in Gethsemane when He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou will" (**Mark 14:36**). And the same Holy Spirit Who wrought in Him in that agonizing moment, helping Him to thrust Himself upon His Father's bosom in utter dependence and trust, would "have us also, 'realizing our dependence and 'trusting utterly in God, to call upon Him in the Spirit of son-ship, crying, "Papa, Father"(**Rom. 8:15**)

**7.** *"Wherefore thou are no more a* ser*vant"* (7). The Revision reads: "So that thou are no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God." How precious it all is! Children of God, sons of God, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, unfading, reserved in heaven for us, while we are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time (**Rom. 8:17**; **I Pet. 1:3-5**),

**LEGALISM PRODUCES SLAVERY**

**(Gal. 4:8 to 5:1)**

1. **WARNING AGAINST FORMALISM AND LEGALISM. (8-11)**

**1.** *"Howbeit then, when ye knew not* God, *ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known* God, or *rather are known* of God, *how turn ye again* to *the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again* to be *in bondage?"* (8, 9). "It is plain he means the Gentiles," says Mr. Kelly. "He does not say, when 'we' knew not God, because the Jews had a certain knowledge of God under the Law; but 'when "ye" knew not God' clearly is about the heathen. 'How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?' Weigh that expression well. There cannot be a more solemn statement as regards the present state of Christendom. What does he mean by saying that these Galatian saints were returning *again* to the weak and beggarly elements, to which they desired *again* to be in bondage? They must have been perfectly shocked. Turning again to idolatry! How could this be? They might say, we are only taking up the principle of the Law: do you call this the weak and beggarly elements? Why, says the Apostle, when you were unconverted, you worshipped false gods-idols; but if you, Christians, go and take up Jewish principles, even these feast-days or other principles of the Law, you are in principle idolaters, turning back again to that idolatry out of which God delivered you. How is this? The reason is plain. It was not that the Law itself could be idolatrous, or that God did not forbear toward the prejudice of those that were Jews. But here were the Gentile believers resorting to these legal elements. Who told them? These things had lost all their meaning, and a Gentile had nothing to do with them; they had their value as a shadow of Christ, before Christ came; but to turn back from Christ risen from the dead, to these mere shadows, was in God's sight going back to idolatry. Whenever professing Christendom takes up the Law, with its external ceremonials and shadows (quite right as all this was under the Law,) and adopts them as Christian worship, it has unconsciously but really fallen into idolatry.

"Supposing a person were to say, I find myself very cold in worshipping God, and I want something to arouse my soul; what more proper than to have a picture of my Savior, that as I look upon Him and the crown of thorns, I may feel more deeply His love, and have my heart's affections more drawn out to Him? *That* is idolatry now, if it would not have been so at any time. But there were certain of these things allowed under the legal system, because of the hardness of their heart; they had sacrifices of beasts and an earthly priesthood; but for a Gentile to turn to these things is going back to idolatry in the sight of God. The Holy Ghost presses this upon these Galatian believers, for the evil was only in the germ. If this be true, what a sin to take part in, to countenance or sanction, in any way, that which is idolatry in God's judgment! The evil is increasing more rapidly. It is not confined now to popery; but the stride which has been made of late years toward Catholic principles is the same thing. If it has any religious element at all, it is an idolatrous one, making use of certain feelings of awe in our fallen nature to make people feel more reverent in worship. That is precisely the thing that is opposed to faith. The essence of our blessing lies in the soul's enjoying Christ by the Word of God-the Holy Ghost giving this enjoyment of Christ apart from everything that acts upon the natural eye or mind. For it is precisely this very abuse that the Apostle here so strongly denounces, and which he calls the weak and beggarly elements. What God prizes in worship would now be generally considered meagre and poor; for it supposes the absence of outward decoration and at excitement, in order that it may be the real power of the Holy Ghost acting among the saints."

**2.** *"Ye observe days, and months, and "times, and years"* (10). They were evidently lapsing into a formal religious system, which always brings a blight wherever it is found among the children of God. It is a dreadful thing to have a name to live and be dead (**Rev. 3:1**).

**3**. “I *am afraid* of *you, lest I* *have bestowed upon you labor in vain"* (11). The Apostle feared that his work was coming to nothing. His fear was not for himself, however, but for them. His heart yearned over them as the heart of a father over his children (**I Thess. 2:11**).

**II. THE DEPARTED BLESSING (12-18)**

**1.** *"Brethren,* I *beseech you,* be *as* I *am; for I* *am as ye are"* (12). The Revision here reads, "I beseech you, brethren, become as I am, for I also am become as ye are." He had forsaken his position as a Jew under the Law and had taken his place with them as a sinner, depending wholly upon the grace of God for salvation; but now they were forsaking their place as under grace, and were turning to his former position as under the Law. They were even "so foolish" (compare **Gal. 3:3**),

**2.**"Ye *have not injured* me *at all"* (12-14).

This passage reads as follows in the Revision:

"Ye did me no wrong: but ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you the first time: and that which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but ye received me as an Angel of God, even as Christ Jesus." Paul is referring to the fact that on account of his injuries resulting from the stoning at Lystra (**Acts 14:19**, **20**; **II Cor. 12:1-10**), he, being thus disabled from going on as he had intended, turned to the Galatians among whom he found himself, and preached the Gospel to them. Thus the Galatians had reason to thank God for Paul's infirmity of the flesh, for it was through that infirmity that they first heard the Gospel. He now reminds them that when he thus first came to them in his weakness they did not mind his infirmity; they did not despise him or reject him on account of his infirmity; but they received him as God's own messenger, even as Christ Jesus Himself.

**3.** *“Where is then the blessedness ye spoke of"* (15). The Revision reads: "Where then is that gratuation of yourselves?" and the Revised margin makes it read: "Where then is that gratulation of yours?" The point is that through their lapse into legalism they had lost their blessing.

**4.** *“For I bear you record, that, if it* *had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them* to *me"* (15). We have already remarked upon these words as indicating that his infirmity in the flesh was an affliction of the eyes, which not only interfered with his vision, but also so altered his facial appearance as to constitute a temptation on the part of his hearers to de­spise him and reject his testimony. The Greek word translated "rejected" in verse 14 is rendered literally in the Revised margin by the words, "spat out," thus indicating that his appearance was repulsive, and that those who looked upon him would be tempted to turn away from him (compare **Isa. 52:13**, **14**; **53:2-4**).

**5.** *"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"* (16). Every true witness of God knows how easy it is for professed friends to quickly turn to enmity when they are faithfully dealt with. A similar passage is found in **II Cor. 11:7-11** where Paul says: "Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? ... Wherefore? because I love you not? God knows."

**6***. "They zealously affect you, but not well"* (17, 18). Again the Revision is clearer: "They zealously seek you in no good way; nay, they desire to shut you out, that ye may seek them. But it is good to be zealously sought in a good matter at all times, and not only when I am present with you." This, too, is similar to the passage in Corinthians: "But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such are false Apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (**II Cor. 11:12-15**).

**III. LAW AND GRACE CANNOT ABIDE TOGETHER** (**Gal. 4:19 to 5:1**)

1. *"My little children,* of *whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you"* (19). Paul was their father in the Gospel, but here, as in **I Thess. 2**, he likens himself also to a mother. He is again travailing in birth, fearing that they were not yet fully born (compare **I Thess. 2:7-11**).

**2.** *"I* *desire* to *be present with you now, and* to *change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you"* (20). It was so difficult in writing to make them realize how deeply concerned for them he was. He now wished to be present with them and to change his tone, for he was perplexed about them (R.V).

**3.** *"Tell me, ye that desire* to be *under the Law,* do *ye not hear the Law?"* (21). Of course they had not really heard the Law. When the Law was issued at Sinai, the people were removed to a great and guilty distance from God, and "there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled ... And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly" (**Ex. 19:16-18**); "and all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (**Ex. 20:18**, **19**).

How good it is to know that we as believers have nothing to do with mount Sinai! "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel" (**Heb. 12:18-24**).

**4.** *"For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was* of *the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of* *the freewoman was by promise"* (22, 23). There is very important teaching here. For the whole narrative referred to, let the reader study the 16th and 21st chapters of Genesis.

**5.** *"Which things are an allegory"* (24). "The allegory," says Dr. Scofield, "is addressed to justified but immature believers (compare **I Cor. 3:1**, **2**), who, under the influence of legalistic teachers, 'desire to be under the Law,' and has, therefore, no application to a sinner seeking justification. It raises and answers, for the fifth time in this Epistle, the question, is the believer under Law? (**Gal. 2:19-21**; **3:1-3**, **25-26**; **4:6**; **4:9-31**)" *(Scofield Reference Bible).*

**6.** *"For these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai: which genders "to Bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar, if mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem which now* is, *and is in bondage with her children"* (24, 25). "Agar" is the Greek form of Hagar; and Hagar, as we see here, is a type of Mount Sinai, "which genders to bondage." Being a slave, Hagar" could bear only slave children. This has been the law in slave countries everywhere.

In our own United States, before the Civil War of 1861-65, it was the law that every child born in slave territory, if his mother was a slave, was himself a slave, and the property of the mother's owner. The father might be a freeman, but the status of the child was determined by that of the mother, rather .than by that of the father. If the mother was free her child would be free, even though the father was a slave. A slave woman could bear only slave children. Hagar is a type of Sinai and "answers to Jerusalem" which, when Galatians was written, was still going on with the temple ceremonies and considered herself under the Law. Sinai produces only slavery. It is impossible that it should be otherwise. Legalism must always result in bondage. It cannot by any means gender to freedom.

**7.** *But Jerusalem which* is *above* is *free, which* is *the mother* of *us all"* (26). This is the heavenly city, New Jerusalem, which is described in such wonderful language in the 21st chapter of The Revelation in the vision of "the bride, the Lamb's wife."

**8***. "For it* is *written, Rejoice, thou barren that bear not; break forth and cry, thou that travail not: for the desolate has many more children than she which has an husband"* (27). The quotation is from **Isa. 54:1**. The barren woman is a type of the Gentile world which had no husband, but the promise was that she should have more children than Israel which had a husband. This does not mean that Israel is to remain in her estrangement from Jehovah as her husband. She is to be restored: "Fear not; for thou shall not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded; for thou shall not be put to shame: for thou shall forget the shame of thy youth, and shall not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine Husband; Jehovah of Hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called. For Jehovah has called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee" (**Isa. 54:4-7**).

The, judicial blindness which is now-upon Israel is neither complete nor final: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is 'happened to Israel, until the fullness of the "Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved" (**Rom. 11:25**, **26**). Israel is the wife "of Jehovah, now disowned, but yet to be restored. This relationship is not to be confounded with that of the Church to Christ. In the mystery or the divine tri-unity both are true. The New Testament speaks of the Church as a virgin espoused to one Husband, (**II Cor. 11:1**, **2**); which could never be said of an adulterous wife, restored in grace. Israel is, then; to be the restored and for- given wife of Jehovah, the Church, the virgin wife of the Lamb (**John 3:29**; **Rev. 19:6-8**); Israel, Jehovah's earthly wife (**Hos. 2:23**); the Church, the Lamb's heavenly bride (**Rev. 19:7**)" *(Scofield Reference Bible).* Meanwhile until Israel is thus restored the barren woman "has many more children than she which has an husband."

**9.** *"Now we, brethren,* as *Isaac was, are the children* of *promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even* so it *is now"* (28, 29).It was Ishmael who persecuted Isaac (**Gen. 21:9**). Ishmael the slave could not endure Isaac, "the miracle child," and it is even so today. There can be no fellowship between the child of legalism and the child of grace.

**10.** "*Nevertheless what says the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not* be *heir with the son of the freewoman"* (30). This was Sarah's demand, and her demand was approved of God (**Gen. 21:9-13**). There was no room in Abraham's house for slavery and liberty at the same time. So there is no room in the Church of God for legalism and grace. The Church of God makes a tremendous mistake when she seeks to keep house with these two opposing principles in the house at the same time. Either we are under the Law or we are under grace; we cannot be under both at the same time. God has decreed that Sinai the bondwoman, and slavery the bondwoman's progeny, shall be cast out, and that the inheritance shall go, not to the son of the slave woman, but to the son of the freewoman. "For if the inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise" (**Gal. 3:18**).

**11.** *"So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free;'* (31). Let this be settled once and for all, that we are children of God not by Law, but by grace. And when we have got that settled let us listen to the exhortation that follows.

**12.** *"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and* be *not entangled again with the yoke of* *bondage"* (**Gal. 5:1**). This freedom is well worth standing for. The Law, as we have seen, can produce only bondage, condemnation and death. The Gospel presents to us by grace, through faith, plus nothing, the gift of God which is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Let us therefore stand fast in this liberty (compare **Acts 15: 10**; **Col. 2: 8-10**).

There is "no cup of poison so deadly," says Robert C. Chapman, "as that mingled cup of Law and Grace, of works and faith, which is presented to men by false teachers, instead of the Gospel of the Grace of God. Yet, alas, do men gladly receive, and eagerly drink, seeking to satisfy conscience."

**FALLING FROM GRACE**

**(Gal. 5:2-15)**

**1. SALVATION BY WORKS IMPOSSIBLE (2-4)**

**1**. *"Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if* *ye* be *circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing"* (2). Let us see the problem a man faces who starts out to be justified by the Law.

**2***. "For I testify again* to *every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do* *the whole Law"* (3). This is the teaching in **Gal. 3:10**: "For as many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them." If a man starts out to be justified by the Law, then let him remember that he must do all things which are in the Law. There must be no lapse. It will not do for him to try to keep the Law; he must succeed in keeping it; to do the best he can is not enough. He must perfectly obey the Law from the beginning to the end of his life, and if he fails in one point he is guilty of all (**Jas. 2:10**). Of course it is obvious that there is no hope for anyone in that direction.

**3.** *"Christ is become of* *no effect unto you, whosoever of* *you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace"* (4). So there is such a thing, after all, as "falling from grace." But what is the meaning of this expression, "ye are fallen from grace"? Those who deny the doctrine of the believer's eternal security tell us that falling from grace is the same thing as losing one's salvation. They tell us that when a Christian ceases to work he has fallen from grace. This is the only place where the Bible speaks of falling from grace, and here we learn that the moment a believer begins to work in order to keep himself saved he has fallen from grace, and the harder he works with that object in view the further from grace has he fallen. It is possible for a believer to fall from grace, but it is not possible for a believer to fall from God. God saves us and keeps us, and the whole process is by grace, through faith, plus nothing. It is true that a Christian should be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses, that he be not unfruitful (**Titus 3:14**), but that is a very different thing from doing good works in order to be saved or to keep saved. From beginning to end salvation is by grace. "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work" (**Rom. 11:6**).

But what happens to the believer who thus falls from grace and turns to the Law for justification? The answer is in this 4th verse:

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." The Revised Version reads: "Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace." The Greek expression translated in the Authorized Version, "become of no effect," and by the Revised Version, "severed," is rendered in the Reviser's margin by "brought to naught." The same expression is used in **Rom. 7 2**, where the Authorized Version translates it, "loosed," and the Revised Version reads, "discharged" (See also **Rom. 7:6** in both versions). The practical effect of such a loosing or discharging or severing from Christ has to do with the believer's experience. Christ for the time being becomes of no experiential effect. The believer's sense of liberty is lost, and therefore also his joy. Since his salvation is by grace through faith, independent of good works, the believer cannot be severed from Christ or loosed from Christ or discharged from Christ in any other way. His fellowship is interrupted, and his testimony is gone and he must remain out of fellowship and without fruit in his witnessing, until he avails himself of the remedy for sinning Christians provided in **I John 1:9**: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." If he refuses or fails to confess his sins and Ito judge himself, then he may fall under the chastening hand of God, and he may even die *in* his backsliding, as the Corinthian Christians died in large numbers because of their backsliding and their refusal to judge them,'" elves:

"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged, But when we are judged, we are chastened of the" Lord, that we should not be, condemned with the world" (**1 Cor. 11:30-32**).

Here were Christians who died under the chastening hand of God while out of His fellowship, and yet they were not condemned. They were "chastened of the Lord" that "they should not be condemned." Condemnation to a Christian is impossible, though chastening is quite possible, even unto physical death.

**II. FAITH WHICH WORKS (5, 6)**

**1.** "*For we through the Spirit wait for the hope* *of righteousness by faith"* (5). Our hope is in the Holy Spirit of God, and it is by faith.

**2*.*** *"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision'" avails anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which works by love"* (6). Salvation does not come through circumcision, or baptism, or confirmation, or any other outward ceremony; it comes by faith alone. But that faith which saves, though it saves alone, will not abide alone. Faith which saves will do more than save. Just as fire which smokes will burn as well as smoke, so faith which saves will work as well as save. The salvation is through faith without works, but faith which does not work after one is saved is not faith at all and does not even save. Faith which saves is a living faith. It will not only save the believer, but it will energize him and set him to work (**Eph. 2:8-10**; **Jas. 2:17-20**).

**III. THE WARNING AGAINST JUDAIZING TEACHERS REPEATED**

**(7-12)**

**1.** "Ye *did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"* (7). They had begun in the Spirit, and now they were trying to be made perfect by the flesh. An enemy had done this.

**2.** *"This persuasion comes not* of *him that calls you"* (8). They had not been turned aside by God, who had called them unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord (**1 Cor. 1:9**).

**3.** *"A little leaven leavens the whole lump"* (9). Here the Apostle obviously refers to the parable of the leaven in **Matt. 13:33**. It is a strange thing that so many Bible readers have concluded that leaven is a symbol of the Gospel, which is to be mixed in the world until the whole world is saved, and thus the whole lump leavened, There is no ground in Scripture for this conclusion. We gi e herewith Dr. Scofield's summary of the doctrine of leaven in the *Scofield Reference Bible:* "(1) Leaven, as a symbolic or typical substance, is always mentioned in the Old Testament in an evil sense (**Gen. 19:3**, references), (2) The use of the word in the New Testament explains its symbolic meaning. It is 'malice and wickedness,' as contrasted with 'sincerity and truth' (**I Cor. 5:6-8**).It is evil doctrine (**Matt. 16:12**) in its "'threefold form of Pharisaism, Sadduceeism, and Herodianism (**Matt. 16:6**; **Mark 8:15**). The leaven of the Pharisees was externalism in religion (**Matt. 23:14**, **16**, **23-28**); of the Sadducees, skepticism as to the supernatural and as to the Scriptures (**Matt. 22:23**, **29**); of the Herodian’s, worldliness-a Herod party amongst the Jews (**Matt. 22:16-21**; **Mark 3:6**). (3) The use of the word in **Matt. 13:33** is congruous with its universal meaning." Paul uses twice this expression, "a little leaven leavens the whole lump." Here in Galatians "leaven" refers to false doctrine, the doctrine of legalism as mingled with grace. In **I Cor. 5:6** it is immorality in personal life and this tolerated by the Corinthian church. These things are dangerous. It is as if Paul wrote: "Your seducers are few, but yet enough to corrupt you all," or "Circumcision is a small part of the Law, but yet its observance is sufficient to place you altogether under the legal yoke" *(Conybeare and Howson).*

**4.** ((I *have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will* be *none otherwise minded: but he that troubles you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he* be" (10). And his judgment, "whosoever he be," let it be remembered, is the double anathema of **Gal. 1:8**, **9**. Their "end shall be according to their works" (**II Cor. 11:15**).

**5.** *((And* I, *brethren, of* *I* *yet preach circumcision, why* do I *yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of* *the Cross ceased"* (11). Paul's enemies accused him of preaching circumcision among the Jews, and preaching against it amongst the Gentiles. Their accusation may have been based upon the fact that he circumcised Timothy, and himself continued certain Jewish observances (**Acts 20:6**; **21:24**). In these things Paul was actuated by the principle laid down in **I Cor. 9:19-23**.

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain more. And unto the Jews I became as 'a Jew, that I might gain the Jews: to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that I' might gain them that are under the Law; to them that are without Law, as without Law, (being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ. that I might gain them that are without Law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I 'might by all means save some. And this I do for the Gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you."

 Paul indeed circumcised Timothy that Timothy might be more useful in reaching the circumcised. But when Paul visited Jerusalem, in the visit recorded in **Acts 15**, and when it was demanded that Titus who was, a Gentile should be circumcised as a condition of fellowship, Paul refused in order -that the "truth of the Gospel might continue with you" (**Gal. 2:5**).

The expression, "then is the offence of the Cross ceased," is eloquent. The Revision 'reads, "then hath the stumbling-block of the cross been done away" (compare **I Cor. 1:23**).

**6.** "*I would they were even cut off which trouble you"* (12). The Revision here reads, "I would that they who unsettle you would even go beyond circumcision." Another translation reads, "I could wish that these agitators who disturb your quiet would execute upon themselves not only circumcision, but excision also."

**IV. A PLEA AGAINST PARTY DIVISION (13-15).**

**1.** *"For, brethren, ye have been* caned *un*to *liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion* to *the flesh, but by love serve one another"* (13). The language is exceedingly strong. Conybeare and Howson translate it: "For you, brethren, have been called to freedom; only make not your freedom a vantage-ground for the flesh, but rather enslave yourselves one to another by the bondage of love." This is the principle set forth in **Romans 14:1** to **15:3**, and again in **I Cor. 8:1-13**.

It should never be forgotten that Christian liberty is on a far higher plane than Jewish Law. A truly regenerate man walking in the fellowship which is "with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ" (**I John 1:3**, **4**), will never think of his freedom from law as leaving him without obligation to live a holy, righteous and goodly life. He is indeed free from the Law, but the love of Christ constrains him, and he is ambitious in all things to be well pleasing to God, living no longer unto himself but unto Him who died for him and rose again (**II Cor. 5:9-15**). "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" or "Shall we continue in sin, because we are not under the Law but under grace? God forbid!" (**Rom. 6:1**, **15**).

**2.** *"For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself"* (14). This is an epitome of the second table of the Law, concerning one's duty toward his fellowmen (**Lev. 19:18**; **Matt. 22:34-40**).

**3**. *"But* if *ye bite and devour one another,* ... *take heed that ye be* *not consumed one of another"* (15). This is often the result of factional disturbances and party divisions. Whichever side wins, they both lose, and thus they are consumed one of another, so that nothing is left in the way of testimony for the truth of God.

**A Holy LIFE IS PRODUCED BY THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT**

**(Gal. 5:16-26)**

1. **THE SECRET OF POWER IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE (16-18)**

**1.** *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit1' and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh"* (16). "The lust of the flesh" is simply any kind of selfish desire. The great problem in the Christian life is how to avoid living selfishly, and getting victory over selfish desires. The answer is found here. We are to "walk in the Spirit," or rather, "by the Spirit" (R.V.). And if we walk by the Holy Spirit, if we yield ourselves to Him, if we present our bodies to Him, and give Him the right of way in our lives, He will give us triumph over our selfish desires.

It is important for us to understand the teaching of the Scriptures, touching the individual Christian's relation to the Holy Spirit: (1) Every saved person during the present Dispensation of Grace is born of the Spirit, and thus becomes a child of God (**John 3:3-8**; **James 1:18**; **I Peter 1:22** to **2:3**).

**(1)** Every such child of God, at the moment of his new birth, is baptized in the Holy Spirit and into Christ, and thus becomes a member of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones **(I Cor. 12:12**, **13**, R.V.; **Rom. 6:3**; **Gal. 3:27**; **Eph. 4:4**; **5**: **30**). This is the only baptism of the Holy Spirit known to Scripture. The Lord Jesus Himself is the Baptizer (**Matt. 3:11**, R.V.; **Acts 1:5**, R.V.).

**(2)** Every such child of God, at the moment of his new birth, receives the Holy Spirit, as the unction or anointing, and as such the Holy Spirit is his infallible teacher, ever guarding him from the danger of apostasy (**1 John 2:18-27**).

**(3)** Every such child of God, at the moment of his new birth, is sealed by (or, *in)* the Holy Spirit, and is thus made secure unto the Day of Redemption at our Lord's return (**II Cor. 1:21**, **22**; **Eph. 1:13**, **14**; **4:30**).

**(4)** Every such child of God, at the moment of his new birth, receives the Holy Spirit as an indwelling presence, and as such He abides continually (**1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19**, **20**).

**(5)** Every such child of God may be, and he ought to be, filled with the Spirit; and when he is thus filled he will be walking by the Spirit and not fulfilling the lust of the flesh (**Eph. 5:18-21**; **Rom. 8:8-11**; **12:1**, **2**).

**2.** *"For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one* to *the other: so that ye cannot* do *the things that ye would"* (17). The flesh, which means the old nature in us, desires one thing, and the Holy Spirit desires another thing for us. These contend against each other within, and this struggle tends to hinder us from doing what we naturally desire. The Holy Spirit will give us the victory if we give Him the right of way. The word "cannot" is not quite correct. It is better as the Revision gives it, "these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would."

**3.** *"But if ye be led* of *the Spirit, ye are not under the Law"* (18). It has been suggested that the 17th verse is a summarizing of the description of the struggle between the two I’s in **Rom. 7:7-25**, and that the 18th verse summarizes the Christian's deliverance from that struggle as described in **Rom. 8:1-14**. But the great thing to be remembered is, that we cannot be led of the Spirit and at the same time be under the Law.

**II. THE WORKS OF THE FLESH (19-21)**

**1.** *"Now the works* of *the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, reveling, and such like" (19-*21). These are the evil things which come from within and defile the man (compare **Mark 7:20-23**).

***2.*** *"Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which* do *such things shall not inherit the kingdom of* *God"* (21 b). That the Apostle is referring to unregenerate men rather than to backslidden believers is evident from its parallel passage in **I Cor. 6:9-11**: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." All believers, that is to say, all who are born again, are washed, sanctified and justified, and the things enumerated in **Gal. 5** as the works of the flesh are not characteristic in their lives. They may fall into these things and lose their fellowship and their joy. For such, as we have already seen, the way back into fellowship is through confession (**I John 1:9**). But while their state may vary, and does vary, yet the believer's standing remains the same all the time. He is accepted in the beloved, he has been made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, he is a member of the body of Christ, he is a member of the bride of Christ; and therefore he will reign with Christ on the earth (**Rev. 5:9**, **10**).

**III. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT (22-24)**

**1.** *"But the fruit of the Spirit' is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance"* (22, 23a). For "gentleness," read "kindness," for "faith" read "faithfulness," and for "temperance" 'read "self-control," with the Revised Version.

Let it be observed that these good things are fruit, and not works. None of them can be brought about through one's efforts. No matter how much we may "try to do good and be good," we must always fail. We cannot love by trying to love, nor can we produce, by trying, either joy or peace. We cannot do these things, for they cannot be *done.* They can be produced only by the indwelling Holy Spirit, and only in such measure as the believer yields to Him, that He may not be hindered in His purpose to bring forth His own fruit.

The word "self-control," substituted by the Revisers for "temperance," may be misunderstood. It does not mean control of self by self, which is impossible. It means rather control of self by the Holy Spirit Himself: it is, along with the other graces, "the fruit of the Spirit."

**2.** *“Against such there is no Law”* (23b). How could there be? For the Law itself commanded love; how, then, could it be "against such"? "Christian character," says Dr. Scofield, "is not mere moral or legal correctness, but the possession and manifestation of nine graces: love, joy, peace-character *as* an inward state; longsuffering, gentleness, goodness-character in expression toward man; faith, meekness, temperance-character in expression toward God. Taken together they present a moral portrait of Christ, and may be taken as the Apostle's explanation of **Gal. 2:20**, 'Not I, but Christ,' and as a definition of 'fruit' in **John 15:1-8**. This character is possible because of the believer's vital union to Christ (**John 15:5**; **I Cor. 12:12**, **13**), and is wholly the fruit of the Spirit in those believers who are yielded to Him (**Gal. 5:22**, **23***)" (Scofield Reference Bible)*

**3.** *"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts"* (24). The Revision reads "passions and lusts." "That is to say," says F. W. Grant, "they have accepted the Cross of Christ as that which is for them the judgment of it all and their separation from it. How perfect, in fact, is the judgment of self which the Cross truly apprehended gives! It is not merely the judgment of this or that about us, but the complete removal of the man in the flesh, in order that Christ may fill all the scene for us. The knowledge of the new man is 'Christ is all and in all.' Thus it is not a process, as he puts it here: it is a thing accomplished. We may have to learn by degrees what it means. The light grows brighter upon the path as we walk in it, and we discern more clearly, no doubt, that which suits God. Thus there is growth in apprehension as to detail, but as to principle the thing is done at the start. It is Christ, not self, that we have put on, and it is that which suits Him that we follow. As it is put in Colossians, we are to do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, that is to say, as representing Him upon earth; and that means assuredly that from the start the flesh is crucified for us. The Cross stands at the beginning of the Christian path" *(Numerical Bible).*

**WALKING BY THE SPIRIT**

**(5: 25 to 6: 10)**

**EXHORTATION TO UNITY (5: 25, 26).**

**1.** *"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit"* (25). Here again the Revision changes the preposition, reading, “If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk." Since the Spirit of God indwells us, as He indwells every regenerated person (**I Cor. 6: 19**; **Rom. 8:9**), let us yield ourselves to Him and give Him the right of way in our lives.

**2.** "Let *us not be desirous* of *vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another"* (26). The Galatians were in danger of quarreling among themselves, disputing about the Law; therefore the need of this exhortation. And the danger was not confined to the Galatians; there is still the same need among Christians.

**II. How TO TREAT A SINNING BROTHER (6:1)**

**1.** *"Brethren,* if *a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one."* This is a case of a born-again person falling into sin and thereby losing his fellowship with God. He is to be restored- The word for "restore" is used of the setting of a broken limb in the body. Let it be remembered that the sinning brother is a fellow member with us of the body of Christ, "of his flesh, and of his bones" (**Eph. 5:30**). This is work demanding care and tenderness, though it may also involve severity in discipline. The faithful surgeon is often obliged to inflict suffering upon his patient, but he will do this only that there may be ultimate restoration to health and strength. So this work of restoring a sinning brother is for those only "that are spiritual." Let none others attempt it.

**2***. In the spirit* of *meekness."* Meekness has just been named as a fruit of the Spirit; thus again we are reminded that the work of washing the defiled feet of a sinning brother is a work for them only "that are spiritual."

**3***. "Considering thyself, lest thou also* be *tempted."* The work of cleansing the walk of a fellow believer has its dangers; it is a risky business. So, "of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (**Jude 22**, **23**).

**III. How TO TREAT A BURDENED BROTHER (2-5)**

**1.** *"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Law* of *Christ"* (2). Here is a Law for those who desire a Law (compare **Rom. 15:1-3**).

**2.** *"For if a man think himself to be something, when he* is *nothing, he deceives him*self" (3). There is no place in the Christian life for self-conceit. It is good to know that in Christ there dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and that we are complete in Him (**Col. 2:9**, **10**), but let it never be forgotten that in us, (that is, in our flesh), dwells no good thing (**Rom. 7:18**).

**3.** *"But let every man prove* his *own work, and then* shall *he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear* his *own burden"* (4, 5). The second Greek word for "burden" is different from the first; the Revisers translate it "load" in their marginal reference. The point here is that, though we are obligated to bear each other's burdens, this does not excuse any brother from doing all he can to bear his own load.

**IV. How TO TREAT A TEACHING BROTHER (6-10)**

**1.** "Let *him that* is *taught in the word communicate unto him that teaches in all good things"* (6). "Communicate" means to share. The command-and let it be noted that it is a command-is addressed to those who receive help from teachers of the Word of God! The teachers share with them their spiritual things, and the hearers are to minister unto the teachers, sharing with them their carnal things (**Rom. 1: 27**). Paul wrote to the Corinthians, saying "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? ... Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which I preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel" (**I Cor. 9:11-14**).

**2.** "Be *not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he "also reap"* (7, 8). Here is the law of sowing and reaping, recognized everywhere in agriculture. It works as inevitably in the realm of spiritual things also. "For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the "Spirit reap life everlasting." Mind, he is here "discussing the matter of giving. He who gives of his money, of his time, of his energy, investing these things in the cultivation of worldly and fleshly interests, is sure to reap corruption; and he who invests his money, his time, his energy, in the cultivation of spiritual and heavenly interests, is sure to reap a heavenly harvest in life more abundant. '(**John 10:10**). "But this I say, He which sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work; ... being enriched in everything to all bountifulness" (**II Cor. 9:6-11**).

**3.** *"And let us not* be *weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not"* (9). And the final reaping, remember, will be when our Lord shall return. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth, and has long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draws nigh" (**James 5:7**, **8**; compare **Mark 4:26-29**).

**4.** *"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do* *good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith"* (10). This is a summing up of the law of Christ mentioned in the second verse of this sixth chapter; and it is also a demonstration of what it means to walk by the Spirit; for as the Spirit produces in the believer His own fruit - love, joy, peace, etc., - the believer will be found doing good unto all men, especially to his fellow believers.

**THE CONCLUSION**

**(6:11-18)**

**I. GLORYING IN THE FLESH (11-13)**

**1.** "Ye *see how large a letter* I *have written unto you with mine own hand"* (11). Literally, it reads, "Ye see with how large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand." On this, Dr. Scofield remarks: "The Apostle was, it appears from many considera­tions, afflicted with ophthalmia, a common disease in the East, to the point almost of total blindness **(Gal. 4:13-15)**. Ordinarily, therefore, he dictated his letters. But now, having no amanuensis at hand, but urged by the spiritual danger of his dear Galatians, he writes, we cannot know with what pain and difficulty, with his own hand, in the 'large letters' his darkened vision compelled him to use" *(Scofield Reference Bible).*

**2.**"As *many as desire* to *make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be* *circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross* of *Christ"* (12). Their chief desire was to "make a fair shew in the flesh;" and in this they were like the "scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," denounced by our Lord: "for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so, ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (**Matt. 23:27**, **28**).

**3***. "For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but* desire to *have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh"* (13). They sought many followers, in order that they might be recognized as great leaders. It is a common form of sin, this desire to build up a reputation for leadership, this getting for one's self a great name as the head of a faction, a party, an institution, a sect, a denomination even, "that they may glory in your flesh."

**II. GLORYING IN THE CROSS (14, 15)**

**1.** *"But* God *forbid that* I *should glory, save in the Cross of our* Lord *Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"* (14). The Cross was the end of the world for the believer. There he died unto it, and there it died unto him. In God's reckoning, the believer was there, in Christ, and there he was crucified with Christ (**Gal. 2: 20**).

**2.** *"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision but a new creature"* (creation)(15). Read it in Revision vision, using the marginal rendering for the final word: "For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation." Circumcision here stands for formalism, for that which is merely external in the realm of "religion,"-"having a form of godliness" without the "power thereof" (**II Tim. 3:5**). Not only does it avail nothing, but it is nothing. "New creation" is the thing, and the only thing, which "avails anything" or is anything. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus" (**Eph. 2:10**); "if any man be in Christ, there is a new creation" **II Cor. 5:17**).

**III. THE BELIEVER'S RULE OF LIFE (16)**

**1.** *"And as many as walk according* to *this rule."* The rule has just been stated in verse 15, the believer's perfect rule of life-new creation in Christ Jesus. Not circumcision, nor lack of it; not Law keeping; not the works of the flesh; not religious forms; none of these, but new creation in Christ Jesus. The believer has been born again, created anew in Christ Jesus, and now he is worshiping God in the Spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and has no confidence in the flesh.

Does this mean that the Christian ought not to do good works? God forbid! For the faith that has saved him is a living faith, a "faith which works by love" (**Gal. 5:6**). We have been "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (**Eph. 2:10**). But these good works are not Law, works, nor are they performed in order to e us, for we are already saved; nor are they performed in order to keep us saved, for are now members of the body of Christ, of his flesh and of his bones" (**Eph. 5:30**), and are resting in Him Who "keeps all His bones; not one of them is broken" (**Psa. 34:20**; **John 19:26**).

"I dare not work, may soul to save;

That work my Lord hath done;

But I will work like any slave

For love of God's dear Son."

**2.** *"Peace* be *on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of* God." The Israel of God consists of the natural seed of Abraham who are also spiritual. "For they are not Israel which are of Israel" (**Rom. 9:6**); am "he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (**Rom. 2:28**, **29**). See also **John 8:37-44**.

**IV. THE BRAND-MARKS OF SLAVERY (17)**

**1.** *"From henceforth let no man trouble me."* He had defended his right to speak as an Apostle, and now he had ample and ocular proof of it.

***2.*** *"For I* *bear in my body the marks of the* Lord *Jesus."* The word for "marks" is *stigmata,* and refers to the marks branded on slaves to indicate their owners. Paul's body bore the mark of circumcision, but this he had abandoned as of no value. Now he points to scars received in the good fight of faith, in contrast to the mark of circumcision in the Judaizing teachers and their followers. He knows his Owner, and is proud to be branded as His slave. He speaks not lightly when he calls Him Lord.

**V. THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION (18)**

**1.** *"Brethren."* This word comes last instead of first in the Revision. It is an important word, for it indicates those for whom the benediction is intended. It is in our day the universal custom to "pronounce the benediction" upon all present, whatever their attitude toward our Lord may be. But this is not according to Scripture, for all the benedictions of Scripture are for God's people alone. When we read, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all," as in **II Cor. 13:14**, the "you all" can apply only to the Church addressed. The Word of God has no blessing for those who reject the Gospel, treading underfoot the Son of God, making His blood an unholy thing and doing despite unto the Spirit of Grace (**Heb. 10 28-31**). Grace is for "all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ "in sincerity" (**Eph. 6:24**), but for the enemies of the Cross of Christ it is written, “If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed; our Lord cometh" (**Cor. 16:24**).

**2.** *"The grace* of *the Lord Jesus Christ* be *with your spirit. Amen"* (18). "Grace" is the key-word of this Epistle. Salvation by grace, through faith, plus nothing, is its theme; and 'grace will be multiplied to its readers precisely in the measure in which they believe it and walk in the light of it.

Isaac Watts must have been thinking of Galatians when he wrote his great hymn (see especially **6:14**):

"When I survey the wondrous Cross,

On which the Prince of Glory died,

My richest gain I count but loss,

And pour contempt on all my pride. "

"Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,

Save in the Cross of Christ my God.

All the vain things that charm me most

 I sacrifice them to His blood."

"See, from His head, His hands, His feet,

Sorrow and love flow mingled down.

Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,

Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

"His dying crimson, like a robe,

Spreads o'er His body on the tree.

Then I am dead to all the globe,

And all the world is dead to me. "

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,

That were an off'ring far too small.

Love so amazing, so divine,

Demands my soul, my life, my all."