



PT Butler

Bible Study Notebooks

Study of Galatians

prepared by P. T. Butler Th.D

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These Bible study notes are provided for your use in the preparation of teaching the holy scriptures. They were meticulously prepared over many years to serve the Kingdom of God and aid in the growth of Christians of any age. Please use them in combination with prayer and diligence to promote the clear and honest declaration of God's word.

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TEACHER'S NOTES

prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

Introduction

Galatians is called The Book of Christian Liberty. It has 6 chapters and 149 verses. Human author was the great apostle to the Gentiles, Paul (Gal. 1:1). It was written about A.D. 57 when Paul was at Ephesus (or, perhaps Macedonia or Corinth). The central theme of the book is: Salvation by grace, not law, and justification by faith. The key verse is Gal. 5:1; the key word is "liberty" the portrait of Christ given in the book is The Divine Deliverer, and the picture of man in the book is, delivered to sonship.

Get out your Bible and look at the map of Paul's missionary journeys (Asia Minor). Many commentators think the cities of Iconium, Lystra, Derbe and Pisidian Antioch were in southern Galatia. Paul, because of some "bodily ailment" (Gal. 4:13-14), initially visited these cities on his first missionary journey (Acts chs. 13-14) and established (mostly Gentile) congregations of Christians (churches) there. Paul established these churches in A. D. 45-48, about 10 years after his conversion on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). He re-visited these brethren as he was setting out on his second missionary journey (ca. A.D. 50) (Acts 16:1-6), and again as he started his third missionary journey (ca. A.D. 54; Acts 18:23). On his third missionary journey, probably while at Ephesus, (in the summer or fall of A.D. 57) some 10 or 12 years after establishing the congregations, he wrote the letter which he saluted simply as *tais ekklesiais tes Galatias*, or "unto the churches of Galatia." Paul intended, no doubt, that it be circulated among the churches.

Galatia, a broad strip of land in Asia Minor, was the home of a people of mixed background with Gauls predominating. These Greek-speaking, highly civilized, Gauls had left what is now Belgium and France in 300 B.C., conquered this territory and settled here, bestowing their name upon the land. Even today travelers are often struck with the "fair hair and blue eyes that mark an affinity between the pastoral tribes of Galatia and the peasantry of western Europe." It was to these people, 300 miles to the east, that Paul loved so dearly to visit them 3 times wrote, from Ephesus "unto the churches of Galatia."

The Celtic temperament is yet today very fickle; and when the dogging Judaizers who hounded Paul's steps came to Galatia declaring the necessity of observing all the Mosaic ceremonies, the Galatians quickly (1:6) embraced their legalistic views. It was this state of affairs which prompted Paul while at Ephesus to pen this epistle himself (6:11) though he usually awaited the services of a secretary. With unusual sternness, Paul proceeds to champion the cause of spiritual liberty for those who were once emancipated by the gospel. He begins without a word of praise or thanksgiving which is most unusual for him. Neither does he request prayer, for how could those who had, for all effects, become "apostate" (see Heb. 6:1-8) by going back to the law of Moses pray effectively for him. Heb. 6:1-8 says it "is impossible to repent" having gone back to the OT law for justification! With

force, fervor, and facts, Paul powerfully presents the doctrine of justification by faith. The Galatian letter is, therefore, the forerunner and epitome of the book of Romans (written a few months later in the winter of A.D. 57-58 when Paul was in Corinth). The theme stated here and expanded in Romans is justification by faith expressed by obedience to the covenant terms of repentance and baptism (immersion in water for the remission of sins, Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:1-11; Gal. 3:26-27). Galatians teaches unequivocally that justification or forgiveness of sins cannot be had by the works of the (of any) law (2:16).

This short epistle has been well called "The Magna Charta of Christian liberty." The inward and spiritual nature of Christian faith is forcefully contrasted to the cold externalism of the other "isms" (1:16; 2:20; 4:6,19). This epistle has done more than any other book of the New Testament for the emancipation of the Christian from the fetters of Judaism, Romanism, ritualism, and every other form of externalism that has ever encroached upon the liberty of the Spirit in the gospel of Christ Jesus our Lord. One might easily guess that this was Martin Luther's favorite epistle, and that it played an important part in the exegetical arguments of the great leaders of the Protestant Reformation.

The epistle closes urging to make practical use in life of the liberty proclaimed: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (5:1) however, no one is to turn this liberty into license; but all Christians are to "walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (5:16). As the saintly scholar, Dr. Fran P. Morris said, "Ours is liberty under law—not liberty to do as we please but as Christ pleases. We are under law to Christ (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21) to fulfill Christ's will."

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GALATIANS 1:1-24

Christ GAVE HIMSELF for our sins (see Gal. 2:20). He had power to lay down his life and power to take it up again (John 10:17-18)—no one took his life from him—he laid it down of his own accord. Christ's death was not an example of heroism—it was primarily a vicarious sacrifice for our sins. It is not by his example that we are saved, but by the atonement he accomplished. He became a “curse” for us (Gal. 3:13; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:3). This nullifies all forms of self-righteousness—anyone saved by the grace of Christ has no room for boasting (1 Cor. 1:18-31). Although Jesus' death was by “the definite plan and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23), still, he gave himself (Matt. 26:53; Jn. 10:18; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 5:8-9; 10:5-10). His death was the will of God and by his own willing surrender to the will of God. His great struggle throughout his ministry (Lk. 12:49-50; Jn. 12:27-28; 26:38-42, etc.) demonstrates that he chose, against his “feelings” and “rationalizations,” to suffer death on a cross as a vicarious substitute for humanity! Paul's great dissertation beginning in 2 Cor. 5:14 points to Christ's willingness as the power of divine love that brings us under the “control” of Christ's commandments—“For the love of Christ controls us because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.”

The Greek word *exeletai*, is translated “deliver” in Gal. 1:4, and could be translated rescue (it is the same word used by the martyr Stephen to speak of the rescue of Israel from Egypt, Acts 7:34)—also used to speak of the rescue of Peter from prison and Herod (Acts 12:11), and of the rescue of Paul from the mob (Acts 23:27). Thus, Jesus rescued every Christian from their “present evil age” (Greek phrase, *ek tou aionos tou enestotos ponerou*, literally, “out from this age, the present evil one”). Paul did not use the Greek word *kosmos* (“world”) here to denote what believers are delivered from because until the end of time believers will be “in the world, but not of the world” (John 17:13-19). He used the Greek word *aionos*, and it means, metaphorically, “age, period, phase, or perspective.” It's the word from which the English word “eon” comes. Christ delivers believers not only from the penalty for sin, but also from a sinful mind-set, a view-point, an attitude, a way of living. Once a person is “in Christ” he is a new creation and he “sees” (views) no one and nothing any more from a human point of view (see 2 Cor. 5:16). Christ rescues us from slavery to unrighteousness and gives us the status of sons and heirs with Christ (Gal. 4:1-11; Rom. 6:12-23). Most sinners will not acknowledge they are slaves when they are sinning. They vow that only when one is doing as he pleases is he free. They object that obeying God means slavery. How would you convince them otherwise? There are only two ways—from experience, and/or from the authoritative declaration of the Bible—and probably, their conviction will ultimately have to come from persuading them of the AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURE (e.g., the 3000 on the Day of Pentecost)!

Paul was astonished that the Galatian Christians had so quickly abandoned the Christian gospel (Greek *metatisthēsthe*, “turned away from, deserted, standing in a different direction”—the word was used in Greek literature outside the Bible to speak of soldiers in the army who revolted or deserted, and of those who changed sides in politics or philosophy). They had “deserted” him (Paul) who had “called them” in the grace of Christ and had “turned to another gospel (not that there is any “gospel” but the “gospel” of Christ). Paul uses the Greek words *en charisti Christou* to say, “in the grace of Christ.” *Charisti* means “beneficence, favor, generosity.” The gospel of Christ is the good news of divine grace! God, through Christ’s graciousness, has offered an undeserving humanity, without penalty and sentence for their sin and rebellion, ETERNAL SALVATION, ETERNAL LIFE! “God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (Rom. 8:3-4). GOD HAS FREED US FROM THE PENALTY AND SENTENCE OF OUR SIN, JUSTIFIED US, SANCTIFIED US (SET US APART AS BELONGING TO HIM), MADE US RIGHTEOUS BEFORE HIM—ALL IN WHAT CHRIST DID FOR US ON THE CROSS AND AT THE EMPTY TOMB (AND CONTINUES TO DO FOR US AS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST). God has given us a gift which Paul calls, “inexpressible”(Greek *anekdiegeto*, “unable to be spoken-out”—this word is used only once in the entire NT and it is in 2 Cor. 9:15). As one Christian philosopher has put it, “The Gospel is not what man must do, but what God has done!” OF COURSE THERE ARE SOME COMMANDMENTS IN THE N. T. WHICH MUST BE OBEYED IN ORDER TO AFFIRM (ATTEST) ONE’S FAITH AND WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT GOD’S “INEXPRESSIBLE” GIFT ON HIS COVENANT TERMS. These “commandments” are not grievous or “burdensome” says the apostle John (1 Jn. 5:3), they are the least we may do, here on earth, to express our love for God! One of the first commandments by which we accept God’s grace on his covenant terms is being immersed in water (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:1-5; Gal. 3:26-27, etc.). No one may expect to be in Christ’s grace without obeying Christ’s (and his apostle’s) “commandments.” The grace of God never “fell” on anyone as if they were caught out in a rain-storm—it has to be wanted and accepted on God’s terms!

There is only one Gospel—ONLY ONE “GOOD NEWS”! THAT IS THE “GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST ALONE!” These Galatians, seduced by the Judaizers, were not denying that Jesus Christ had died on a cross and arisen from the dead. They were saying, with the Judaizers, one must keep the law of Moses along with being a Christian, IN ORDER TO BE SAVED! What they did not seem to realize, was they were in effect saying one must let Moses supplement, or complete, what Christ did on the cross. Actually, such a viewpoint means the believer himself must complete, by his obedience to the law of Moses, what Christ did on the cross—the sinner must add his works to the work of Christ and “finish” Christ’s “unfinished” work of redemption! THAT DOCTRINE MUST ABSOLUTELY NOT BE TOLERATED! We cannot add human merits to the merit of Christ. THE REDEMPTIVE WORK OF CHRIST IS A FINISHED WORK (see Hebrews 9:1-28; 10:1-39, in fact, see the whole books of Hebrews, Galatians, Romans, Ephesians, & Colossians). What Christ did (and is doing as our great high priest) is perfect—forever! IT IS COMPLETE, FINISHED, AND NEEDS NO ADDITIONS OR SUBTRACTIONS! There is not one iota of goodness or

righteousness we can add to what Christ has supplied for us (2 Cor. 5:21). He (Christ) IS our wisdom, righteousness and sanctification and redemption; therefore...Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord (1 Cor. 1:30-31).

The TRUE gospel is to be found exclusively in the New Testament scriptures! People, sincerely or otherwise, may produce all kinds of human schemes (laws, systems, standards or “religions”) imaginable, or make every addition or subtraction to the New Testament gospel they wish, and call it “the gospel,” but only that which is unequivocally declared by the apostolic writings of the New Testament ALONE is the “gospel of Christ.” THERE AIN’T NO OTHER!—NOT EVEN ONE PREACHED BY AN ANGEL (Gal. 1:8-9; 1 Jn. 4:1-6). Paul defines “the gospel” in 1 Corinthians chapter 15:1-58. The true gospel is the “good news” that Jesus died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, was buried, and raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, appeared in his resurrected state to hundreds of eyewitnesses, ascended into heaven, and sent his Holy Spirit back empowering the apostles with the Spirit’s inerrancy to preach the gospel plan of salvation on the Day of Pentecost (Acts chs. 1 & 2) giving them, as he promised, “the keys to the kingdom” as they preached, “Repent and be immersed in water, everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Then, one day, the ascended Christ confronted Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9, 22) and he became the “apostle to the Gentiles, born out of due time.” BUT HE PREACHED THE SAME GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION AS THAT PREACHED BY THE “PILLARS OF THE CHURCH” AT JERUSALEM (Gal. 2). Jude calls the scriptural gospel, “the faith once for all delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). THE SCRIPTURES ALONE ARE SUFFICIENT FOR TEACHING, REPROOF, CORRECTION AND TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, THAT THE MAN OF GOD MAY BE COMPLETE, EQUIPPED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK! (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Paul’s reaction to the false teachers who were “preaching another gospel” should be our reaction! We have apostolic authority to validate such a reaction. Paul’s reaction was to declare them anathema, “accursed.” Before you think that a little too strong, read Acts 20:26-32; then read 2 Peter, chapter 2, and learn what Peter pronounces upon such apostates. Peter says they are “like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and killed...” To anathematize is to pronounce upon someone a “curse” and is more drastic than excommunication. In Corinth, the man committing a “sin of the flesh” (adultery with his father’s wife) was to be “delivered unto Satan for the mortification of the flesh” and then to be received back into the fold if he repented. But the book of Hebrews (Heb. 6:1-8) says those who “preach another gospel” and try to be justified by the law of Moses (or any other law) are people (so long as they seek justification other than by the gracious blood of Christ) who are in a state of “impossibility” as far as repentance goes. GOD WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY ATTEMPT TO REPENT OF SIN OUTSIDE THE GOSPEL OF GOD’S GRACE THROUGH THE VICARIOUS DEATH OF CHRIST ALONE! Hebrew 6:7-8 gives a metaphorical picture of the apostate as like “land which has drunk the rain that often falls upon it...bearing thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed; its end is to be burned.” The church’s greatest troublemakers are not those outside who oppose and ridicule

and persecute, but those “other-gospel-proclaimers” inside who try to change the gospel. In the 1960s McCall’s magazine reported on a survey of 3000 Protestant clergymen. The article stated: “A considerable number rejected altogether the idea of a personal God. God, they said, was the Ground of Being, the Force of Life, the Principle of Love, Ultimate Reality, etc. A majority of the youngest group cannot be said to believe in the Virgin Birth or to regard Jesus as divine in the traditional way in which most Protestants were brought up.” And how about this: “About 2/3 of all Christians accepted Jesus BEFORE age 18. Yet, according to a network news statistic, 85% of youth under 18 have NEVER been inside a church. Josh McDowell estimates that 70% of youth under 18 do not believe absolute truth exists. Put all of this together, along with the fact that our children get their morals from the media, TV, movies and rock stars, and it paints a very dark future for their salvation.” History has shown that once a school or church compromises its position and sells short the fundamental doctrines of the Bible there is no going back to retrieve that which they originally adhered to. Not in one instance has there been an apostate body that returned to fundamentalism!

The Greek word Paul used in Gal. 1:11 is apokalupseos. It is essentially the same word used to entitle the last book of the New Testament, “Revelation.” It means, “to uncover, bare, disclose, divulge.” Revelation from God means God is telling humanity something that humanity HAS NOT BEFORE, NOR CANNOT POSSIBLY DISCOVER between now and the end of time no matter how long that may be nor how “advanced” human beings may become in “discovering” (scientifically, logically, rationally, intuitively, psychologically, philosophically, or any other way). When God reveals something it is that which human beings have never known before nor can ever know unless God tells it! A revelation from God, comes directly from God to some human messenger. Just how God does that is probably beyond human comprehension. We know God does it through the agency of human language. There could be no human ideation (thought) or communication without human language. But, does God do it silently, by putting divinely-inerrant words into the minds of his messengers (prophets and apostles), does he do it through visions, trances, dreams, or does God do it audibly, speaking from heaven, or visibly by writing it on tables of stone? YES! God does it in all those ways. WE DO NOT NEED TO KNOW HOW GOD REVEALS—ALL WE NEED TO KNOW IS THAT HE SAYS HE HAS, AND HE HAS AUTHENTICATED THAT HE DOES SO BY “SIGNS AND WONDERS AND VARIOUS MIRACLES AND BY GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT DISTRIBUTED ACCORDING TO HIS OWN WILL” (Heb. 2:1-4). Paul claimed that the apostles “had the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:12) and that the apostles “imparted this in words” (i.e., human languages) (1 Cor. 2:13). Thus, we have the New Testament, originally written in Greek, passed down to us through the sacrifices of many millions of saints until we have it in English, French, German, Russian, and about 3000 other languages and dialects! The apostle John claimed that the apostles were “of God” and whoever claims to “know God” listens to the apostles—those who are not of God do not listen to the apostles. Listening to the apostles is the touchstone by which anyone who is of a mind to may judge who is of the spirit of truth and who is of the spirit of error (1 Jn. 4:1-6). Paul preached all over the Roman empire. Two-thirds (2/3) of the book of Acts is about his preaching. He wrote half of the NT canon (14 books). Paul must authenticate, therefore, or prove, that his preaching and writing was revealed from God. Everywhere he went he proved his apostolic authority and his revelational message by “the signs of a true apostle” (2 Cor. 12:12). He performed signs and

wonders in Galatia sufficient to establish that his message was revealed from God (Acts 14:1-28). WHAT PAUL SAYS ABOUT THE GOSPEL IS WHAT GOD AND JESUS SAY. WHAT PAUL SAYS IS THE GOSPEL CANNOT DISAGREE WITH ANY OF THE REST OF THE N. T. BECAUSE THE SAME SPIRIT OF GOD REVEALED IT ALL! There is no need for further revelation today. The Bible is God's COMPLETE word for mankind (1 Cor. 13:8-13; 1 Tim. 4:6-16; 2 Tim. 2:1-2; 3:15-17; 4:1-5; Jude 3). In fact, anyone who claims to have further or additional revelations (extra-Biblical) is contradicting God who has said what was written nearly 2000 years ago is sufficient to make the "man of God complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). IF THE MAN OF GOD IS COMPLETE AND EQUIPPED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK by the Scriptures we already have—WHY DO WE NEED FURTHER REVELATION? WE DON'T!!!

Paul mentions his former hatred for Christianity so that those who had known him only a short time would understand that his conversion to Christ was emphatic and complete. After his conversion he could stay in Jerusalem only TWO WEEKS (Acts 9:30) because of the animosity from non-Christian Jews. As a result of this very short association in Jerusalem after his conversion, he "was still not known by sight to the churches of Christ in Judea" (Gal. 1:22). But on the basis of the testimony of those who had seen Paul converted to Christ, the churches "glorified God because of" him (Gal. 1:24). Think about the conversion of Paul, for a moment: (a) his concept of what salvation consists in had to be diametrically changed—from works of self-righteousness to total trust in the grace of Christ; (b) he had to give up most of his Jewish friends; probably some of his relatives, and suffer their opposition; (c) he had to give up his "station" in life as a Jewish rabbi of the first rank; (d) to preach to Gentiles, he had to rearrange his whole cultural upbringing and accept things and practices that were repugnant to his nature and feelings; (e) he had to struggle daily with the question, "If Christ loves me, why does he allow me to be persecuted so constantly and severely?"; (f) and he had to surrender his entire mind and will to what was told to him by Someone Else (Christ). Only a "gospel of grace" could accomplish such a conversion—another religious system of works of self-righteousness could never have converted Saul of Tarsus into Paul the apostle to the Gentiles! If people are not truly converted, it is not the fault of the Gospel. It is most probably due to the fact that the "gospel of grace" has been perverted into "another gospel"—one of merit by works of self-righteousness. The devil subtly tempts people to exchange salvation by grace to salvation by works—he makes them feel guilty when they can't "keep up with the Joneses" in doing good works. The devil also tempts preachers to put "guilt-trips" on their congregation for not performing as preachers think they ought! People must be "constrained" to be converted "by the love of Christ (2 Cor. 5:14), for it is the grace of God that makes us what we are (1 Cor. 15:10-11)! Saved by grace does not mean people must do nothing. People must respond to God's grace with their own grace. Since God is the Absolute Giver, humans must be gracious toward a God of grace and accept God's grace on God's terms. God, through Christ, has revealed (commanded) specific actions, covenant requirements, within which he dispenses his grace or makes it efficacious. Outside those covenant requirements, God's grace in Christ is not available! Those covenant requirements may be found throughout the New Testament beginning in Acts 2:38 (see also Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:1-5; Gal. 3:26-27; Col. 2:12, etc.).

Paul's authority to preach his message (gospel) to the Gentiles as God's revelation, hinged on whether he received his doctrines "second-handed" from other apostles, or directly, solely, from God and Christ! Paul had to fight the Judaizer's "insubordination" (Titus 1:9-16) all his life, everywhere he went! Had he not been able to authenticate his message as a direct revelation from God, his entire ministry would have failed. There are many modern theologians who would have us believe today that Paul's "gospel" was very much different from that of the other Jewish apostles and that NONE of the "apostles" received their messages by divine inspiration—and their differences prove it! Modern "theologians" try to get us to believe Paul is saying in Galatians 2 that his "gospel" was different than that of the others (Peter, James, John, et al.). THAT IS NOT WHAT PAUL IS SAYING AT ALL! Quite the opposite! Paul is claiming that his gospel IS THE SAME AS THAT PREACHED BY THE "FIRST" (PILLARS) APOSTLES BECAUSE HE HAD RECEIVED IT BY THE INSPIRATION OF THE SAME HOLY SPIRIT AS THEY HAD! The fact that what he preached was the same as the other apostles, having not consulted with them about his message, proved to Paul's constituents (the Gentiles), and should have proved to the Judaizers, that his gospel was from God!

If a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a bigoted zealot, a high-ranking Pharisee, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, and a persecutor of the church of Christ (even unto murder) could be converted to become perhaps Christ's most persecuted but zealous, humble, servant of Christ—there's POWER "far more abundantly than all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20) in the Gospel to which Paul responded and committed his all! The conversion of Saul of Tarsus into Paul the persecuted apostle to the Gentiles is ONE OF THE MOST POWERFULLY CONVINCING EVIDENCES OF THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY AND THE BIBLE THERE IS! Many enemies and critics of the Bible and Christ have, they think, successfully brought doubt about the Gospel narratives—but one thing they are unable to do is cast any kind of historical, archaeological, or literary doubt on the facts surrounding the existence of, and the details of the ministry of the apostle Paul! THAT BEING SO, WHAT PAUL WROTE (ESP. 1 COR. 15) ABOUT JESUS CHRIST'S DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION MUST BE ACCEPTED AS AUTHENTIC BY ANY HONEST-MINDED, TRUTH-SEEKING INDIVIDUAL!

TEACHER'S NOTES

prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

GALATIANS 2:1-21

NO! The Gospel does not need human approval or human domination. The most depressing thing in Paul's life was being plagued in his work for Christ by "false brethren" (Judaizers). When Paul went to Jerusalem, 14 years after his conversion, he went because God told him to go ("by revelation"), NOT because he was answering a summons from the apostles at Jerusalem. He laid his gospel before the Jerusalem apostles, not because he needed their reassurance or approval, but to vindicate it as the same "Gospel" they had already preached (see Acts ch. 2-12 for the "Gospel" Peter and the "pillars of the church" preached—it is the very same "Gospel" that Paul preached, Acts ch. 13-28 and wrote in the Pauline epistles). Paul was not going to allow his ministry to the Gentiles, past and future, rendered fruitless by the Judaizers. Paul went to Jerusalem and conferred with the "pillars" of the church to overthrow the influence of the Judaizers—not to get approval from Peter, James and John. Paul's naming the Jerusalem apostles as "those who were of repute" is not an insult toward Peter, James & John—he is probably satirically quoting what some of the Judaizers had said of the Jerusalem apostles to expose the duplicity of the Judaizers. The Judaizers had undoubtedly claimed priority and superiority for the Jerusalem apostles as "pillars" of the church. None of the Jerusalem apostles claimed this for themselves as may be seen from their writings (Peter, James & John). If Paul's "Gospel" did not need approval from the Jerusalem apostles 2000 years ago, it certainly does not need approval from "higher-critics" of the Bible today!

It was a daring step for Paul to take Titus, an uncircumcised Greek Christian, into the headquarters of the Jerusalem church. But deliberate, drastic, countermeasures must sometimes be taken to resist human theological domination. The Jerusalem church could have interpreted this action as a deliberate provocation to produce a schism in the infant Christianity. It may very well have been deliberate, but Paul did not do it to stir up strife and division. He did it to establish "the truth of the gospel" that all men are saved by the grace of Christ, and not by their keeping of the Mosaic Law. Paul took this drastic action in the face of very strong pressure from "false brethren" who were intruders, who had "wormed their way into the Jerusalem meeting" and had no business there or even in the fellowship of the church at all. They had "gate-crashed" a private meeting of the apostles. They were spies and trouble-makers insisting that Titus be circumcised. Unyielding opposition must always be made against legalism and spiritual bondage. Paul stood firm. He refused to do their bidding. The truth of the gospel was at stake, and he was determined to maintain it at all costs. It was not merely a matter of Jewish or Gentile "customs." It was a matter of fundamental importance—Christian freedom from the Law versus bondage to the Law's penalty and sentence. Titus was a test case. He was an uncircumcised Gentile, but he was a converted Christian. Having believed in Jesus, he had been accepted by God in Christ, and that, Paul said, was enough. Nothing further was necessary for his salvation, as the

council at Jerusalem later confirmed (Acts ch. 15).

Somehow the “false brethren” (probably by intimidation) “wormed” their way into the meeting of Paul and the other apostles at Jerusalem, “secretly” by traitors from within the church. Paul says they were “brought in.” Paul later warned the elders of Ephesus, “...fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them” (Acts 20:29-30). He probably was speaking of the Judaizers and their cohorts from within the church itself (perhaps Gentile “cohorts”). Paul called the Judaizers “dogs” in Phil. 3:2. Satan found his attempts to destroy the church by physical persecution was only increasing the church so he put more emphasis on the tactic of “slipping into” the church (2:4) through Judaizers with a “false gospel” who wished only to “bring (their converts) into bondage” to the Law again so they might “glory” in the fleshliness of their converts to apostasy (Gal. 6:12-16). Yes! Judaism is categorized as APOSTASY in Hebrews 6:1-8 and 10:26-31. LEGALISTS STILL “INFILTRATE” THE CHURCH...SNEAKING IN, OR BEING BROUGHT IN BY THOSE DUPED BY THE FALSE GOSPEL THAT SALVATION IS BY HUMAN WORKS. Salvation through human works is merely an exercise in self-righteousness, which leads inevitably to judgmental arrogance, but condemnation by human conscience (see Rom. 2). Elders and all Christians must be constantly on guard against “legalism” and “legalists” within the church today! Attempting salvation by human effort, ignoring the grace of Christ, is a very subtle tactic of the devil!

Notice please—the “truth of the gospel” takes priority over human feelings and human reputations! Paul never intended to slight the reputation of Peter, James and John, or to hurt their feelings, or the feelings of the “false brethren.” But for him, and for us today, the “truth of the gospel” must always come first, regardless of what that may do to human prestige or feelings. The outcome in this Jerusalem confrontation was complete doctrinal harmony between Paul and the “pillar” apostles. They all acknowledged that they and Paul had been entrusted with the same Gospel—the only difference between them was the different cultural spheres in which they would preach the same Gospel. Even the Old Testament told people not to trust their “feelings” (Num. 15:39; Jer. 17:9-10) over the objective word of God!

There is not “a gospel of circumcision, and one of uncircumcision” as the KJV would make some think—but one and the same gospel to both the circumcision and uncircumcision. So the apostles who preached the gospel of grace to the Jews, gave to Paul and Barnabas (who preached the gospel of grace to the Gentiles) the right hand of fellowship. The apostles of Christ do not contradict one another in the New Testament, for they all speak and write under the inerrancy of the Holy Spirit’s guidance—and God’s Holy Spirit does not contradict himself. There are differences of style, because inerrancy (“inspiration”) under the Holy Spirit did not obliterate individual personalities. Within the apostolic-group there were different emphases and spheres of ministry, because they had different audiences. Paul, here and elsewhere, opposed legalists. James, Peter and John opposed libertines and antinomians. BUT THEY DID NOT CONTRADICT ONE ANOTHER

ON THE ESSENTIAL DOCTRINES AND COMMANDMENTS OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST! There would be a contradiction ONLY if one of Paul's colleagues had written that man is NOT saved by grace or if Paul had written that human beings must do nothing to appropriate God's grace in Christ. NONE OF THEM WROTE THAT! In fact, the "pillar apostles" emphatically wrote of salvation by grace (John 1:14,16,17; Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 1:2,10,13; 2:3; 3:7; 4:10; 5:5,10,12; 2 Pet. 1:2; 3:18; 2 Jn. 3; Rev. 1:4; 22:21). And Paul wrote and practiced the "gospel" that people must "hear the New Testament, confess the name of Christ, repent of their sins, and be immersed in water" in order to appropriate the grace of God in Christ (cf. Acts 9:18; 16:15; 16:33; 18:8; 22:16; Rom. 6:1-11; 10:9-17; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26-27; Col. 2:11-13, etc.) and wrote of the "obedience of faith" (Rom. 1:5; 16:16; 2 Thess. 1:8). THERE IS NO CONTRADICTION—AND NO "OTHER GOSPEL" THAN THE APOSTOLIC ONE! It is extremely important that every Christian get this settled in his/her mind! Being saved by grace alone does not negate the fact that there are Biblical commandments on how that grace may be appropriated, and that human beings must follow (obey) those commandments if they want the grace of God in Christ! OBEYING CHRIST'S (AND THE APOSTLE'S) COMMANDMENTS IS SIMPLY THE ONLY WAY WE CAN EXPRESS OUR LOVE FOR GOD AND CHRIST (John 14:23; 15:10; 1 John 2:24; 3:24; 5:3).

Dissimulation to legalism must be publicly rebuked. THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL IS AT STAKE! Peter and Paul met, after Jerusalem, in Antioch. This is one of the most tense and dramatic episodes in the New Testament (along with Matthew ch. 23). Here, two leading apostles of Christ are face to face in complete, open conflict. Paul rebuked Peter "against or toward the face of him" (Greek text, *kata prosopon auto*)—i.e., PUBLICLY, OPENLY. It was not that Peter denied the gospel of grace in his teaching—but he denied it in his conduct and that is worse! When Peter first arrived in Antioch, he ate continually (Gr. verb *sunesthien* is imperfect meaning an ongoing action) with the Gentiles. BUT Judaizers ("false brethren") came from Jerusalem, pretending to come with the sanction of the apostle James to insist that all who wanted to become Christians must be circumcised and keep the dietary laws of Moses. When they showed up and stirred up the church, Peter "separated himself (Gr. *aphorizen*, literally, "horizoned himself away, or disaligned himself) from the Gentiles, fearing the circumcision party. Peter had been given direct, special revelation from God on this very subject just a few months earlier (see Acts chs. 10-11). And as a result, Peter agreed with God that the Gentiles were saved by the grace of God apart from the law and were to be immersed into Christ! So, why did he ACT this way? Peter's hypocrisy was motivated by FEAR OF MEN (what they would say, what they might do, what they might think). Jesus warned his apostles about fearing men instead of God (Matt. 10:26-39).

The Greek text in 2:13 is *hypokrisei*, "hypocrisy" describing Barnabas's actions, and is translated "dissimulated" in the KJV and "insincerely" in the RSV. The rest of the Christian-Jews in Antioch played the hypocrite so effectively that even good-old-steadfast Barnabas joined in! The fear of men; the seeking the honor of men; has great power to produce hypocrisy! CHRISTIANS MUST BE ON GUARD ABOUT THIS TODAY! It was said of Jesus that he had "care for no man; and did not regard the position of men" (Matt. 22:16). Jesus said that seeking the honor of men keeps hypocrites from believing (Jn. 5:36-44; Matt. 23:4-

12). Paul accused them all of “not being straightforward about the truth” (Gr. orthopodousin, literally, “not walking straight,” i.e., “crooked conduct”)! The conduct of Peter, Barnabas, and the others was not straight with the truth of the Gospel! Some might have counseled Paul here and said (a) be cautious and avoid washing “dirty church linen” in public; (b) forget the matter—it is not that important; (c) don’t hurt anyone’s feelings; (d) let him who is without sin, Paul, cast the first stone; (e) or the famous, “Judge not that ye be not judged.” PAUL DID NOT HESITATE A MOMENT! Peter’s withdrawal from the Gentile believers had caused a public scandal; he had to be opposed in public! This is exactly the kind of open, head-on collision which most church-congregations would seek to avoid at any price today!

Salvation by grace through faith is taught and exemplified in the Old Testament. Abraham was “reckoned, i.e., it was put on his account that he was righteous” because of his obedient faith (Gen. 15:6—see Romans 3:21; 4:1-12; 9:6-18; Job. 14:3; Psa. 130:3; 143:2; Eccl. 7:20; 1 Kings 8:46-51). The gospel is simple. It is not complex, not vague, not enigmatic, not unsubstantiated. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried, and raised again on the third day, according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3-4). In other words, we are justified by grace through faith in him. That needs to be repeatedly proclaimed everywhere by the church today—in the work-place, in the home, at recreation-time, when the church meets, through literature, the air-waves, and Christian conduct. The gospel is what God, in Christ, has done, not what man must do. There is too much of what man must do being preached today. Of course, the gospel believed must produce obedient goodness lived out in our lives, but goodness lived out in our lives is not the gospel! HUMAN GOODNESS JUSTIFIES NO ONE! The 11th chapter of Hebrews, “the Old Testament roll-call of faith” clearly indicates the Jews should have (and some certainly did) known that justification before God was by FAITH and not by works of self-righteousness. Jesus expected the Jews to know that from such prophecies as Isaiah 1:18-20; 53:1-12; 55:1-11; Dan. 9:14-17; Zech. 12:10-14; 13:1-9, etc.). When they didn’t, he called them “foolish men and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had said about” repentance and forgiveness” in his name (Lk. 24:25-26; 24:44-49).

Have you noticed that in only six sentences (Gal. 2:15-21) Paul repeats 4 times the phrase, “not justified by works of the law, but by faith in Christ”?! The law of God is so absolutely perfect and comprehensive, no human being (except One) will keep it! God’s law is “holy and good and spiritual” (Rom. 7:12-14). The fault does not lie with God’s law—but with ourselves! MAN CAN’T EVEN MAKE HIS OWN LAWS AND KEEP THEM! Who has never broken the “speed limit”? Who has never “ran a stop signal or sign”? And Jesus taught that EVIL THOUGHTS are violations of God’s law—who has never held a grudge, never envied a neighbor, never was angry at someone else, never called anyone else a “fool”? THEN, THERE ARE THE SINS OF “OMISSION.” Who has always visited the sick, clothed the hungry, visited the prisoners, been hospitable, told the truth, loved their enemies????? If a person violates ONE OF THE COMMANDMENTS he is guilty of violating the whole law (James 2:10)! Paul wrote that “When the Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves (i.e., human conscience), even though they do not have the law” (Rom. 2:14). And when anyone breaks the “law of human conscience” he

is a sinner condemned by Almighty God until he appropriates the grace God provides through faith and obedience to Christ's commandments. And so they (all human beings, both Jew and Gentile) are without excuse (Rom. 1:20). **BY THE LAW (BY ANY LAW, GOD'S OR MAN'S) SHALL NO FLESH BE JUSTIFIED!**

The gospel of grace is not inimical to moral responsibility (Gal. 2:17-21). It is a gross misunderstanding of the gospel of grace to think so. Justification is not a legal fiction, in which a man's status is changed, while his character is left untouched. People are justified **IN CHRIST**, in union with his vicarious, atoning death and his justifying resurrection (Rom. 6:1-11). Being "justified **IN** Christ means we are controlled by Christ; we are new creatures (2 Cor. 5:14-21); we see nothing any more from our own (human) point of view—everything for the Christ must be seen through Christ's point of view and that is found **ONLY, EXCLUSIVELY, IN THE BIBLE!** This is precisely what Paul is saying when he says (Gal. 2:20), "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." The death and resurrection of Christ are not only historical events, and they are that—but they are historical events by which, vicariously, through a faith-union with Christ, the believer is in fact dead, crucified, with Christ, and alive forevermore with Christ. Paul is not writing about some specific, or many specific, suffering experiences, or some sacrifices, or some good works he is doing or has done, by which he "crucifies himself" with Christ. He is saying that by faith in Christ, he accepts Christ's "second—ultimate—final" death on the cross as his own "second" death. Paul accepted Christ's vicarious death and believed he died when Jesus died! Paul did not live for himself after that—Paul, the rebel-sinner was dead. But Christ lived in Paul. Paul lived out Christ's life in his daily, fleshly existence. Paul could not suffer enough, sacrifice enough, and do enough good, to atone for his own sins—**NO ONE CAN!**

Anyone who is **IN CHRIST JESUS** (i.e., has entered into covenant relationship with Christ through trusting him and obeying his covenant terms as specified by the New Testament) now lives (a) free of guilt; (b) free from the fear of judgment; (c) free from ignorance about what is good and right for people; (d) free from the dread of mortality and banishment from God; (e) free from a slavish servitude to the flesh; (f) free from Satan's power and deception about sin; (g) free from an absolute law he cannot possibly keep. Anyone in Christ knows the truth and has been set free—and if the Son of God sets you free, you are free indeed! Christ, living in the believer, gives the believer new desires for holiness, for God and for heaven. It is not that a believer cannot sin again; he can (1 Jn. 1:8-10)—there is always the possibility of a saved person becoming an apostate! But the believer with Christ in him does not want to sin. The whole tenor, aim purpose and desire of life has changed. Everything in life has a holy focus, hope, and desire because the believer lives in union with Christ. Everything in life is viewed from and practiced according to the example and teachings of Christ and the apostles!

Anyone who seeks to be justified by law (any law, whether that in the Bible or one he makes himself) makes (a) Christ's death of no purpose; (b) the Christian faith useless; (c)

the grace of God a despicable hoax; (e) himself/herself actually guilty of “crucifying the son of God afresh and holding him up to contempt” (Heb. 6:6); (f) him/her into a hostile enemy of God; (g) himself/herself something on the animal level who ought to eat and drink for tomorrow they die (1 Cor. 15:32) Millions (even billions) of people are trying to win their way to God and heaven by their works. People think it is noble to try to win their way to God by their own goodness. But it is not noble; it is dreadfully ignoble—it is spiritual suicide. Alleged self-righteousness (there is no real self-righteousness, remember Jesus’ words, “No one is good but God alone” Lk. 18:19) denies the nature of God (merciful) and the mission of Jesus Christ (atonement). It refuses to let God be gracious! It is playing the part of the “elder” son in the Parable of the Prodigal (Luke ch. 15). Many today are making up their own “laws” and expect God to agree with them. Liberal theology is an attempt to be justified apart from God’s grace. Some people want to make the New Testament into a law which they think they can keep (especially the Sermon on the Mount) and win their own standing before God’s judgment bar. Then there are the “world’s great religions” which are all not so great when you study them—and they are all based on some form of human merit. Some people make traditions, customs, and opinions into a law for other Christians to obey to be justified before God. “...it behooves all lovers of liberty to watch, with jealous eye, the movements of religious bodies which claim the right to dictate articles of faith, and to repel with promptitude their attempts...” from Memoirs of Alexander Campbell, by Robert Richardso, p. i-515

TEACHER'S NOTES

prepared by Paul T. Butler

GALATIANS 3:1-29

The “gospel preached beforehand to Abraham” (3:8) was THE VERY SAME, FUNDAMENTALLY, AS THAT WHICH CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES HAVE PREACHED TO US. It is “trust and love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” On those two commandments hang all the law and the prophets! The whole of God’s will is encompassed in those two commandments. Of course, one has to find out what the revealed will of God for him/her is at a particular time in God’s scheme of redemption—then do it, trusting and loving God with all their being. For Abraham, trusting and loving God with all his being required numerous instances of action on Abraham’s part (a) leaving his home and his country and family in Ur of Chaldea and become an itinerant wanderer among the Canaanites; (b) expecting the fulfillment of God’s promises to be experienced, not by himself, but by his “seed”; (c) dwelling in harmony, so far as it depended upon him, with those in the territory where he wandered; (d) expecting that his wife Sarah would bear him a male heir when they were both beyond child-bearing age; (e) letting Lot inhabit the “best” land of the valley; (f) going after the “Kings of the East” who had taken his nephew Lot hostage and slaughter them and bring Lot and the loot back and pay a tithe to Melchizedek; (g) accepting God’s awful judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah which included some of his kin-folk; (h) circumcising all the male children of his family as a covenant sign between him and the Lord; (i) finally, and most significantly, taking his only son of promise (his heir, Isaac) up on Mt. Moriah, and preparing to offer him as a slain, burnt offering to the Lord, Jehovah (Gen. Ch. 22)! ABRAHAM TRUSTED AND LOVED GOD WITH ALL HIS BEING—AND GOD ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE DID (Gen. 15:6; 22:12). Abraham’s readiness to do whatever God commanded him, no matter how extreme, to obey God’s “gospel” to him, makes those today who refuse to be immersed in water as one of the conditions of covenant relationship with Christ seem shallow, if not irreverent and irresponsible toward the plain commandments of Christ and the apostles in the New Testament! Abraham is in heaven, isn’t he? (Matt. 8:11; 22:32; Lk. 16:22; Rom. 4:1-16, etc.).

No human being, except Jesus Christ, has ever perfectly kept the Ten Commandments! Jesus plainly taught that there is more to the Ten Commandments than the “letter of the law.” There is the moral, principled, substance or essence of the Decalogue that must be kept (Matt. 5:17-48) along with the “letter of the law. When the substance, or “spirit” of any one of the Ten Commandments is violated, the whole law is violated! Besides the Ten Commandments (Decalogue), there is all that Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-6-7) all he taught in his parables, and what he taught in all his other sermons (John chs. 4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17) that are, in fact, the essence of the Ten Commandments! Now who has ever kept all the Sermon on the Mount and the Parables and John’s gospel?! Who has never gone against his own conscience (Rom. 2:9-31)?

REMEMBER, GOD IS ABSOLUTE! HIS JUDGMENTS ARE NOT RELATIVE TO HUMAN OPINION, REASONING, OR FEELING! That is why there is no “law” by which man may be justified before God!

We must rely on Jesus’s having become a “curse” for us (3:13-14). THE CONCEPT IS STARTLING, SHOCKING, IN FACT REPUGNANT TO HUMAN PRIDE! That someone else could, or would have to, become a substitute for me because I am not good enough myself, strips me naked of all pride in self-righteousness—OR, MAKES ME CONTEMPTUOUS OF THE VERY IDEA! It is my choice as to which moral position I take toward this concept! I will go one way or the other! I cannot be neutral about the most fundamental concept relating to man’s eternal destiny! Human pride cries out, “It is not right, it is not just, it is not fair that someone else should suffer for my crime.” BUT, IT IS THE ONLY WAY JUSTICE COULD BE SERVED IN RELATIONSHIP TO GOD’S ABSOLUTE NATURE (LAW). Any punishment short of absolute punishment upon an absolutely perfect human being would NOT have satisfied DIVINE WRATH AND DIVINE JUSTICE (Rom. 3:21-26). That is the message of Hebrews chs. 5 through 10, but especially Heb. 10:1-39! Jesus claimed to be sinless (John 8:46; 18:23); the apostles testified that Jesus was without sin (1 Pet. 2:22; 2 Cor. 5:21). WE TRUST THE CLAIMS AND TESTIMONIES BECAUSE WE TRUST THE SCRIPTURES! THAT JESUS WAS PERFECTLY SINLESS IS VERIFIED AND AUTHENTICATED BY HIS RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD, as Peter points out in the first gospel sermon on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:22-36. Divine justice on the absolutely perfect human provided absolute mercy for the guilty (Rom. 3:24-26; 2 Cor. 5:21). God’s wrath and judgment upon Jesus for all human sin was complete, perfect, absolute, and needs no repetition (Heb. 9:11-28; 10:1-18). It is done, completely—it cannot be added to by anything humans do—they can only accept it or refuse it. It is accepted by being “in Christ” and the Bible is clear about how we may be “in Christ”—no one with a Bible has to guess about it; all they have to do is read it, believe it, and obey it! It is in the New Testament, especially beginning with Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:38 and continuing through the NT to the end.

Human beings “live and die” by oaths! We take an oath every time we sign a contract to pay the bank back the money they loaned us to buy a house, a car, etc. We take oaths in courts of law. We take an oath before man and God when we get married! People expect us to honor and fulfill those oaths! If most of us didn’t, we couldn’t have a safe society in which to live. Can you imagine a society based on lies and deceit? God made a NEW will and TESTAMENT “in the fulness of time” (Gal. 4:4ff) when Jesus Christ came to earth. God’s NEW will stipulated that all human beings might have eternal life through faith and obedience to Jesus Christ’s “gospel” rather than the condemnation they deserved under law (Gal. 3:15-18). God’s will for mankind was made as a “testament of promise” to Abraham and God swore with an oath on his own divine name to Abraham. When human beings swear oaths and make wills, by human law they are considered immutable—cannot be changed except by the “testator”. How much more immutable is the will of God Almighty?! GOD’S PLEDGED WILL FOR SALVATION BY THE GOSPEL IS “SWORN” TO BY GOD

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST—his birth, life, death, and resurrection (see Heb. 6:13-20, especially, 6:17 which should read: So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed himself with an an oath.” YES! THAT’S RIGHT! GOD “INTERPOSED HIMSELF ON THE CROSS AND AT THE RESURRECTION AS HIS OATH TO MANKIND THAT HIS PROMISE OF SALVATION BY THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST WAS AUTHENTIC, CREDIBLE, AND WOULD COME TO PASS! Compare Heb. 6:17 with 2 Cor. 1:20----“All the promises of God find their Amen (“so be it”) in Jesus Christ!”

It was always God’s will to bless mankind through the seed (Greek spermati, “offspring”) of Abraham. Take special notice of the fact that the word spermati is singular in person. The Greek word spermasin, is used in the very same verse here (Gal. 3:16) and translated “offsprings referring to many” because spermasin is the plural person THE POINT IS THIS: Paul is saying that God intended to bless all humankind in ONE SEED or OFFSPRING of Abraham—Jesus Christ. That means God intended to bless ALL, both Jews and Gentiles, through Jesus Christ—not though the whole Jewish nation. Most modern Jews (who believe anything at all about God and the Old Testament) consider the law of Moses (the Torah) to be the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham: I quote: “...the Jews are the chosen people of God and...it is precisely to obey His commandments—all of them—that God chose them and they in turn, chose Him.” In Living Jewish, by Michael Asheri, 1978, pub. Everest House, NY, p. 27; “...the descendants of Abraham, the Jews, were...chosen by God to...follow his commands...the second choosing...was the true test...when God had given Moses the Torah...the people all said as one: ‘All that the Lord has said, we will do and obey.’” *ibid*, p. 194; “...the Jewish view of Jesus—We know he lived and have a vague idea of what he preached but there it ends. The widespread idea that the Jews, while rejecting Jesus’ claim to divinity, consider him a great teacher and moral figure is completely false. We do not accept his claims and we are oblivious to his teachings; we are simply not interested in him nor in what he had to say...” *ibid* p. 224; “...Since there is almost no common ground between Christianity and Judaism, despite widespread misconceptions to the contrary, any discussion of religion with Gentiles is likely to be a waste of time and Jews are advised to abstain...” *ibid*, p. 225; “...If we follow the Torah’s guidelines, we are justified in calling ourselves superior....Israel is and will always remain the beloved of God, even when their conduct leaves much to be desired...” *ibid*. p. 225. There you have it—what most good Jews think about their standing with God compared to what they think of Christian’s standing with God! THAT DOESN’T JIBE WITH GALATIANS & ROMANS & HEBREWS & COLOSSIANS & 1 THESSALONIANS & 2 THESSALONIANS, ETC., ETC.

The law had an essential part to play in making God’s promises operative! The law was not to bestow salvation, but to convince human beings of their need of salvation by the promise of grace! Where there is no law, people do not acknowledge sin (Rom. 4:15; 5:13; 7:7-25)—they make up all kinds of rationalizations and “feelings” that they are not sinners, not “bad” ones, anyway! So God gave his law and made it impossible for anyone who acknowledged his law to deny their sin (Rom. 3:20; 5:20; 7:7-8). For 490 years God was preparing a family, then a nation, to accept his law as their personal and corporate

“constitution” for life. THEY DID. But they didn’t keep it! They, in fact, renounced it and “lost” it. It is the law of God that turns our excuses, mistakes, human-nature, problems, euphemisms, “feelings,” and rationalizations into transgressions against Almighty God! The law was so absolute it had to be delivered through intermediaries (angels and Moses). The gospel of grace came through God in the flesh—the Son of God (John 1:14-18). Martin Luther, precipitator of the Protestant Reformation (ca. A.D. 1511) wrote: “The principal point...of the law...is to make men not better but worse; that is to say, it shows them their sin, that by the knowledge thereof they may be humbled, terrified, bruised and broken, and by this means may be drive to seek grace, and so to come to that blessed Seed.” John Stott writes: “And the law must still be allowed to do its God-given duty today. One of the great faults of the contemporary church is the tendency to soft-pedal sin and judgment. Like false prophets we ‘heal the wound of God’s people lightly” (Jer. 6:14; 8:11). Dietrich Bonhoeffer said: “It is only when one submits to the law that one can speak of grace...I don’t think it is Christian to want to get to the New Testament too soon and too directly. We must never bypass the law and come straight to the gospel. To do so is to contradict the plan of God in biblical history....Is this not why the gospel is unappreciated today? Some ignore it, others ridicule it. So in our modern evangelism we cast our pearls (the costliest pearl being the gospel) before swine. People cannot see the beauty of the pearl, because they have no conception of the filth of the pig-sty.”

NO! The law is not against grace. In fact, the law itself was an act of grace from God toward a “chosen” people. God did not choose the Hebrews (Israelites) because they were “good” (read Romans chapters 9, 10,11)—his choice was by sovereign grace. NO ONE IS “GOOD” BUT GOD ALONE (Mat. 19:17; Mk. 10:17)! Of course, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were “better” than their heathen neighbors, but they were far from perfect! The same is true of the Israelites from the day Moses went up on Mt. Sinai to receive the “law.” The Pharisees of Jesus’ day and the Judaizers of Paul’s day did not understand the purpose of the law. They were the ones who set the law against the promise. They said: “Keep the law and you will be justified.” But the law was never for justification. No such law has ever been given or invented. And the fact is, nobody has ever kept the law of God perfectly except Jesus Christ. Human beings break the laws of God every day. The law cannot justify. But the law is NOT AGAINST THE PROMISE....THE “PROMISE” WAS MADE TO THE PATRIARCHS (ESP. ABRAHAM) THAT JUSTIFICATION (RIGHTEOUSNESS) IS “RECKONED” THROUGH FAITH IN THE “SEED—SINGULAR” GOD WOULD PROVIDE IN HIS OWN GOD TIME (Gen. 15:6; see Rom. chs. 4 & 9. The law which came 490 years later did not annul the promise! There is harmony in God’s plan of salvation when we see that sinners inherit the promise because they cannot keep the law, and their inability to keep it makes the promise desirable—indeed, makes the promise indispensable! The law was intended to drive men to cry with the former Jewish rabbi, then apostle, Paul, “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” and find the answer with Paul —“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

The law of God imprisons those who break it. The Greek word in Gal. 3:23 is ephrouroumetha sugkleiomenoi, literally translated, “shut up under guard, imprisoned,

incarcerated, locked-up.” Those who violate God’s law are de facto arraigned, tried, found guilty (judged), and sentenced to eternal banishment from God’s presence (in hell). Their guilt is not only evident to God, it is evident to themselves—though many of them will not admit it openly. Secretly, in their consciences, they have to admit it (Rom. 2:12-16). **NO ONE ESCAPES HIS CONSCIENCE** (except by the grace of God in Christ, believed, accepted and obeyed, 1 Pet. 3:21-22). Without the conscience-cleansing covenant relationship in Christ, every human being is a prisoner to his/her own conscience! This is not only Biblical theology—it is human experience! Human beings are going to all lengths, all forms of escapism, to salve their guilty consciences, but there is only one “balm in Gilead” and that is the vicarious death of Jesus Christ and its atoning efficacy appropriated through faith and obedience to the gospel. I believe the “torments” of the rich man who died and went to Hades (Lk. 16) are “torments” of a guilty conscience along with “torments” of lost opportunities to trust and love God with all his being. Such “torment” for all eternity seems to me unbearable!

Sinful humanity needs to be disciplined severely by the law of God before it will grow up and accept the freedom offered in Christ. So the law was God’s paidagogos, pedagogue (or “tutor, disciplinarian”) to teach mankind its desperate need of a perfect, human, vicarious atonement. Paul uses the metaphor of a “pedagogue or tutor” from the Greek and Hebrew culture of his day. The ancient “tutor or pedagogue” was not at all like a modern school teacher. The ancient “tutor” was a strict disciplinarian. The “tutor” was harsh to the point of cruelty, and is usually depicted in ancient drawings with a rod or cane in his hand. He was much like the old-time “school-masters” of England and early America. Those who could not recite their lessons or gave wrong answers were usually struck with the rod to remind them to learn their lessons! That is the nature of God’s law. It is unforgiving! It strikes harsh blows to the conscience as Paul describes it in Romans 7. The law of God was intended to be a constant, hurting, oppressive reminder of human-kind’s need for relief, for grace, for forgiveness. But there is a message in God’s law that he would make grace available! So there was even grace within the law itself! **BUT IF WE WOULD BRING OTHERS TO FREEDOM IN CHRIST, WE MUST FIRST PUT THEM IN PRISON TO THE LAW...UNDER THE OPPRESSION OF THE “TUTOR” AND THE HARSH TUTELAGE OF THE REVEALED LAW OF ALMIGHTY GOD!** The classic example of this is Jesus’ dealing with the rich, young, ruler (Matt. 19, Lk. 18).

Freedom, the promise of grace, is available **ONLY IN CHRIST** (Gal. 3:26-27). Salvation by grace through faith does not contradict obedience. Some have held that if a person is saved by grace through faith, then obedience in baptism is not necessary to salvation. They hold that baptism (immersion in water) is a “work” whereby those who do it are trying to earn their salvation. Nothing could be further from the truth of the Scriptures! Peter told the 3000 on the Day of Pentecost to “repent and be baptized for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). Paul was baptized to “Wash away” his sins (Acts 22:16). Yet both apostles insisted that we are saved by grace (Acts 15:11; Eph. 2:8). They saw no conflict between being saved by grace and being “obedient to the faith or the gospel” (see Rom. 1:5; 16:26; 2 Thess. 1:8, etc.). It is true that we can do nothing to earn salvation. It is false that we do

nothing in reference to salvation. One significant result of an understanding of the Biblical doctrine of the grace of God is that it places obedience in its proper perspective. Obedience ceases to be a work of merit and becomes what God intended it to be—a response of faith. Good works are a natural result of grace. We are saved by grace, through faith, for good works (Eph. 2:5-8). Jesus died for us that he might “purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:11-14). Good works can never earn salvation; but there is something radically wrong if salvation does not produce good works. All the “good works” from a Biblical viewpoint are not feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting the ill—repenting and being baptized are “good works.” As a matter of fact, BELIEVING in Jesus is a “WORK” Jesus urged people to do—please read John 6:29. Good works, i.e., “bearing fruit,” is evidence that we are in Christ (John 15:4-5). And Paul makes it clear in Gal. 3:26-27, as well as in Rom. 6:1-6; Col. 2:12-13, “...as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ...” That means those not “baptized into Christ” have not put on Christ! The only hope for salvation both now and in eternity is to be in and remain in Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; Col. 1:17). Being obedient to Christ, living a faithful and fruitful life in his revealed will, helps us remain in him who can save us (2 Tim. 4:8; 2 Pet. 1:10-11). Peter says plainly, “baptism saves us” (1 Pet. 3:21). Without being baptized no one can expect God to give him grace unto salvation. Being in Christ requires faith, repentance and immersion in water. These are inseparable! The New Testament never questions the necessity of immersion in water—it was demanded by Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20) and practiced by all Christians in the first century!

In Christ we are all “one person.” In Christ we belong not only to God (as his adopted sons) but to each other as brothers and sisters. And we belong to each other in such a way as to render of no consequence the things which normally distinguish us, namely, race, rank and gender. Distinguishment and almost always discrimination occurred in Paul’s day according to gender (as well as race and rank, of course). Paul does not mean here, of course, that racial, social and gender distinctions are actually obliterated in this present world. Christians are not literally, physically, color-blind or culturally-integrated. They do not ignore a person’s gender—treating a woman as if she were a man or a man as if he were a woman. Christians do not ignore that all human beings have different physical appearances and different cultural habits. When Christians believe, with Paul here, that Christ has abolished these distinctions, they don’t mean that such differences do not exist—THEY MEAN SUCH DISTINCTIONS DO NOT MATTER. SUCH DISTINCTIONS ARE STILL THERE, BUT THEY NO LONGER CREATE ANY BARRIERS TO FELLOWSHIP (i.e., partnership and participation in the grace and salvation that is in Christ Jesus). By the grace of God Christians will resist the temptation to despise, patronize, or be partial toward one another, for we know ourselves to be “all one person in Christ Jesus.

Whoever is in Christ, belongs to Abraham as an heir of the promise God made to him. Christians take their place in the noble historical succession of faith. No longer do Christians feel themselves to be orphans and strays, without any significance in history, or bits of useless flotsam drifting on the tide of time. Instead, they find their place in the unfolding redemptive purposes of God. This speaks with powerful relevance to the world

today. This generation is busy developing a philosophy of meaninglessness. It is fashionable (in literature, music and art) to say one believes life has no meaning, no purpose. But the promise of God, in Christ, makes us able to “find ourselves.” The unattached become attached. People find their place in society, in history, and in eternity, when they are in Christ. There is a 3 dimensional attachment for the human being who is in Christ: (a) it is an attachment of height—we are reconciled to the transcendent, absolute, heavenly Father; (b) it is an attachment of breadth—we are united to all other believers throughout the world; (c) it is an attachment in length—we join the long, long line of believers throughout the whole course of time and eternity. SO BEING IN CHRIST PUTS THE HUMAN BEING WHERE HE BELONGS. IT RELATES HIM TO GOD, TO NOW AND TO HISTORY. “YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE! “Everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin, but if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.” Christian, whether you “feel” like it nor not, IT IS A FACT. In Christ you are freed from sin, from the law’s sentence and penalty, and from yourself! God’s grace has emancipated you from the slavery of SELF to serve Christ, by serving others with a glad and thankful spirit. That, in turn, brings JOY and SATISFACTION to your soul!

TEACHER'S NOTES

prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

GALATIANS 4:1-31

Will Durant, in his book, *Caesar and Christ*, 1944 & 1972, Simon & Schuster, pp. 56-58 states that in the Roman society “the power of the father was nearly absolute, as if the family had been organized as a unit of an army always at war. He alone of the family had any rights before the law...he alone could buy, hold, or seel property, or make contracts...Over his children he had the power of life, death, and sale into slavery. All that the son acquired became legally his father’s property; nor could he marry without his father’s consent...Over his slaves he had unlimited authority. These, his wife and children, were *mancipia* to him—literally, ‘taken in hand’; and no matter what their age or status, they remained in his power until he chose to emancipate them—to let them ‘out of hand.’ These rights of the *paterfamilias* were checked to some degree by custom, public opinion, the clan council, and praetorian law....they were harsher in the letter than in practice; the most extreme of them were seldom used, the rest seldom abused....The father and the mother, their house and land and property, their children, their married sons, their grandchildren by these sons, their daughters-in-law, their slaves and clients—all these constituted the Roman *familia*: not so much a family as a household; not a kinship group but an assembly of owned persons and things subject to the oldest male ascendant.” Thus, the “heir, while a child, is not better than a slave.” The child, in his minority may look forward to the day he will eventually come into possession of his father’s legacy, but until the child comes into his majority (becomes the eldest male-son in the household), he is no better than a slave! The child is put under “guardians” (“tutors”) and trustees who act as the controllers of his person and his anticipated property. These “guardians” were hired by the father to order the son around, direct and discipline him, (cruelly, sometimes). The son is, for all practical purposes, under bondage and restraint to his pedagogue (tutor) he will remain in this bondage until he is declared the heir! This seems to be a practice among not only the Romans, but the ancient Hebrews and Greeks as well. It was always an occasion for great excitement and celebration when a son came into his majority (inherited his father’s legacy). He was then set free from his guardians and trustees. Just so, unbelievers, slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe, when they become Christians, are set free from the “guardianship” of the law and adopted as sons. All who are not in Christ are slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe. These “elemental spirits” are the “guardians and trustees” holding unbelievers (children) in bondage until they become Christians (sons). The Father has their legacy for them in promise, but they may have it only when they become sons! People who never become “sons” of God through Christ will remain in bondage, under the condemnation of the law, forever!

“Elemental spirits of the universe” is a translation of the Greek phrase, *stoicheia tou kosmou*. It literally means “first things of, beginning in a row of other things, of the cosmos.” It is a word used in the New Testament for: (a) the substance of the material world (2 Pet.

3:10-12); (b) inadequate philosophies of the Gentile cults and Jewish mythology (Col. 2:8-19); (c) the rudimentary principles of religion, either Jewish or Gentile (Col. 2:20-23); and (d) the elementary principles (the “ABC’s” as it were) of the Old Testament (Heb. 5:12—6:1). Paul is probably referring to “all of the above” when he says the “elemental things” which are “weak and beggarly elements.” None of these are evil, per se (in and of themselves). But as we have pointed out before, Satan can take good things (even the law of Moses) and twist them to his own evil purposes in order to enslave human beings. Just as during a child’s “minority” his guardian may ill-treat and even tyrannize him in ways which his father never intended, so the devil has exploited God’s good things (creation, the word of God, philosophy) in order to tyrannize people in ways God never intended. God intended all these things to reveal sin and drive men to Christ; Satan uses it to reveal sin and drive men to despair. **ALL WHO ARE NOT CHRISTIANS, WHO DO NOT HAVE THE FINAL TRUTH OF GOD IN JESUS CHRIST AND THE APOSTOLIC WORD, ARE ENSLAVED TO THE LIMITATIONS AND JUDGMENTS OF THESE “ELEMENTAL SPIRITS OF THE UNIVERSE.”** Paul wrote in Romans 1 and 2 that all humankind, Gentiles and Jews, have a PART of God’s revelation, but it is just enough for the devil to use to seduce them into sin and thus bring God’s to judgment and condemnation upon them!

All people are “sons” of God by creation. But all people as sons of God through creation have forfeited their “sonship” by sinning against their Father’s will. They have “taken their inheritance and gone into a far country” (Lk. 15 and the Parable of the Prodigal Son). They are, metaphorically, “sons of the slave-woman, Hagar” who have been cast out and disinherited from the promise. However, God provided a Way for the disinherited to become heirs (i.e., “sons”). God provided a way for them to repent and regain the promise of eternal life. The “Way” is by having the redemption provided by God’s Perfect Son, Jesus Christ. Once we are redeemed by believing in Jesus, repenting of our rebellion, and being immersed in the watery grave of baptism to come forth to a new life, we have the Spirit of his Son dwelling in our hearts (Gal. 4:6). The words “Abba!” “Father!” represent a loving, intimate, redundancy. “Abba” means “father” in Aramaic, or more closely, “Pa, Pa!” Someone has translated it, “Dearest Father.” While the rest of the world may call God “Father,” only those with the Spirit of Jesus Christ in them may call him “Dearest Father” and expect to receive the inheritance the Father has prepared for them. All others will be so rebellious toward and begrudging of the Father’s mercy toward those in Christ, they will be “left out” of the great “rejoicing” in the Father’s house (like the “elder son” of the Parable of the Prodigal, Lk. 15).

C. S. Lewis said in his book, *Eternal Weight of Glory*, “I read in a periodical...that the fundamental thing is how we think of God...it is not! How God thinks of us is...infinitely more important...it is written that we shall stand before him, shall appear, shall be inspected. The promise of glory is the promise, almost incredible and only possible by the work of Christ, that some of us, that any of us who really chooses, shall actually survive that examination, shall find approval, shall please God. To please God...to be a real ingredient in the divine happiness...to be loved by God, not merely pitied, but delighted in as an artist delights in his work or a father in a son—it seems impossible, a weight or burden of glory which our thoughts can hardly sustain. But so it is!” **OUR BEING KNOWN BY GOD**

(ACKNOWLEDGED AS HIS “SONS” AND HEIRS”) IS THE WAY IT IS POSSIBLE FOR US TO KNOW GOD! You see, we did not “know” (i.e., “love”) God first---he first “knew” (loved) us 1 Jn. 4:19. No human can realize, conceive of, “know” the satisfaction of intimate relationship to God until that person has been acknowledged by God as being his “son.” God acknowledges any person as “son” who believes and obeys Jesus Christ (as the Holy Spirit has defined belief and obedience in the New Testament) unto the atonement for his sins. We will “know” or realize “sonship” to God and cry “Dearest Father” when the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit, that we are heirs of God (see Rom. 8:15-17). The Holy Spirit bears witness to sonship in the New Testament scriptures, nowhere else! If you wish to know what it means to be “known” by God and to “know” God, read 1 John. There are at least 30 times where the word “know” or “known” is defined in that epistle. The Lord Jesus said a great deal about the kind of people God does not “know” (Matt. 7:23; 25:41ff; 2 Tim. 2:19; John 5:37-46; 8:19,27,42,44,47). Many Christians have never realized the satisfaction (blessedness) of their freedom in Christ because they have never accepted the New Testament witness as to what constitutes being known by God. Too many are like these Galatians, expecting God to acknowledge them on the basis of law-keeping rather than by grace through faith! GOD ACKNOWLEDGES NO ONE ON THE BASIS OF LAW. HE CONDEMNNS AND BANISHES EVERY PERSON WHO SEEKS TO BE JUSTIFIED BY LAW (Gal. 2:16; 4:30; 5:4). God is satisfied with, and acknowledges as “sons” all who trust in Jesus! And no one can cry, “Abba!” “Father!” until God is satisfied with that person.

The Galatians were initially satisfied with Paul’s ministry of the truth and his personal love for them. He “put himself in their place” and identified with them—in their culture, in their trials and persecutions, and in their needs for the grace of Christ and growth in Christ. Some people tend to think of Paul as all “head” and no “heart”—a scholar with massive intellectual powers, but unfeeling toward others. NOT SO! In this section we read of Paul appealing to the Galatians with deep feeling and immense tenderness. First, he calls them brethren (4:12); then he calls them “his little children” (4:19); he likens himself to their “mother who is in labor over them” (4:11,19). Second, he tells them, “...I also have become as you are...” (4:12) (see 1 Cor. 9:20-22). This is a principle of far-reaching importance for Christian evangelism. In seeking to win other people for Christ, our goal is to make them like us, while the means to that end is to make ourselves like they are! That doesn’t mean we have to compromise the truth of God’s word. Christians need to empathize with people—try to think as they think, feel as they feel, see their viewpoint, understand “where they’re coming from.” Christians may have to tolerate some cultural and personal traits they don’t particularly like in order to “become as they are.” Think how difficult it was for an ex-Jewish rabbi to go into Gentile places and touch Gentile things and eat with Gentiles, and probably sleep alongside them—just to win them to Christ! IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT!

Paul became as they were—they received him as an “angel” (messenger) from God, speaking with God’s authority, but then they turned on him as if he were any enemy. Because he told them the truth! (See Jn. 8:44). The authority of the apostolic word does not cease when it begins to teach unpopular truths! We cannot be selective in our reading or doing the apostolic word. All of it is God’s word whether we happen to like it or not! We

must not make the Bible, and those who preach and teach it, our enemies because they are telling us the truth! If we do, we fall right into the trap the Jews fell into when they hated Jesus without a cause----THE ONLY CAUSE THEY HATED HE FOR WAS, HE TOLD THEM THE TRUTH! TRUTH IS NOT PLEASANT TO THOSE WHO ARE REBELLING AGAINST IT! That is the case whether it be Biblical truth or God's truth in nature! It goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden! I have made enemies for preaching the truth (and I know many others who have also). SO BE IT! WE ARE IN GOOD COMPANY----REMEMBER, JESUS SAID WHEN IT HAPPENS, "REJOICE AND BE EXCEEDINGLY GLAD FOR SO PERSECUTED THEY THE PROPHETS BEFORE YOU!--and Jesus and the apostles--and millions of Christians before you!

The Greek word in this text is morphothe. It is the same word from which we get "metamorphosis, morphology," etc. Another derivative of the word, summorphous, is used in Rom. 8:29 to tell us that God determined at creation that he wanted all human beings to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Morphe means "form, structure, shape." Christ formed in you is your hope of glory! (Col. 1:27). Without Christ being formed in us THERE IS NO HOPE OF GLORY--ONLY A FEARFUL DREAD OF SHAME AND TORMENT! Christ being "formed" in us does not happen all at once. There is no instant spiritual maturation! (2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:1-2). It is slow and often painful--both physically (persecution, adversity, trial, testing) and psychologically (self-denial, death to worldliness, change of mind and viewpoint). It may involve spiritual (psychological) surgery, amputation, hunger trial, work, struggle, warfare, mourning--actually, crucifixion of self! BUT, OH! THE REWARD--CHRIST LIVING IN YOU AND OUT OF YOU FOR GOD'S GLORY AND THE LOVE OF HURTING MANKIND. Just read about Jesus--wouldn't you like to BE LIKE HIM?! How does this take place? It is a "transformation" accomplished through te anakainosei tou noos, "the renewal of the mind" (Rom. 12:2). It is done when we "put on the new nature which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (Col. 2:10). "Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day" (2 Cor. 4:16). When we "behold the glory of the Lord" we "are being changed (metamorphoumetha-- there's that word again!) into his likeness from one degree of glory to another..." (2 Cor. 3:18). Of course, it is possible to behold some of the glory of the Lord in his creation (Rom. 1:18ff), BUT IN (2 COR. 3:18) PAUL IS TALKING EXCLUSIVELY OF BEHOLDING JESUS CHRIST IN THE WRITTEN WORD. ONE OF THE EVIDENCES (THE FIRST EVIDENCE IS, OF COURSE, GOD'S SAYING SO IN HIS WORD) OF HAVING "CHRIST FORMED IN YOU" IS THE "FORMATION" INTO HIS IMAGE (HIS "IMAGE" AS FOUND ONLY IN THE SCRIPTURES) THAT TAKES PLACE IN YOU!

First, it is most interesting that Paul refers to the book of Genesis and the experience of Abraham (who was God's "chosen" long before Moses) as "the law." Many Jews have always regarded the entire Old Testament (including the prophets and the books of poetry) as, "the law, or the Torah" (see Lk. 24:44). Jesus often quoted from the various divisions (Pentateuch, Poetry and Prophets) and simply said, "Is it not written in your law." The English word "allegory" comes from the Greek word, allegoria. The Greek word is a compound word from allos, meaning "other" and agorein, "to speak publicly in the agora"

(market place). It means to express yourself by symbolic and emblematic figures of speech. An allegory is a short “parable.” The allegory itself can be either fictional or historically true—but it is intended to represent something through terminology and events other than what it is itself. Greek philosophers and teachers loved to speak in allegories to illustrate the meaning of their messages. Jesus used extended allegories and we call them “parables.” Much of the Old Testament Law and most of Israel’s history is typological (i.e., allegorical) of Christ and the New Testament dispensation (see 1 Cor. 10:1-13; Heb. 9:9, where the Greek word *tupos*, or “type” describes the aim of what went on during the Exodus and the erection of the Tabernacle). This does not mean these events and objects were not literally existing, it simply means they had a spiritual truth greater than their literal existence as their ultimate goal. Even in the O.T. God was telling Abraham that Hagar’s child (Ishmael) represented man’s attempt to save himself, while Sarah’s child (Isaac) represented God’s redemption by grace (i.e., “promise”) through faith. All of history is God’s “allegorical” message—“Repent, for judgment is coming!” That is true because God is the Source and Sustainer of all history (the books of Daniel and Revelation emphasize this!) Human history is not “a tale told by idiots, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing!” NO, NO, NO! The everyday events in the life of Abraham were allegorical with a great historical but spiritual reality as their ultimate goal!

Isaiah chapter 54 follows Isaiah chapter 53! It is all Messianic (Isaiah chapters 53-55)—ONE BIG CONTEXT! (Compare Acts 13:32-35 with Isaiah 55:3). Isaiah, ch. 53 teaches that the “Suffering Servant,” a Person, not the nation (the Messiah) will be slaughtered, but will come back to life and “see his offspring.” The Messiah’s death will atone for the sins of men and “make many to be accounted righteous.” Isaiah says that “the Lord has laid on him (the Messiah) the iniquity of us all.” In other words, Isaiah 53 teaches that God is going to justify all who believe, by his grace accomplished through the coming Suffering Servant. Isaiah 54 goes right on with the same context, the same discussion, stating that the children of “the desolate one” (Sarah) represent those with faith in God that he will keep his promises through Christ (Messiah). Those of the desolate one were to be more numerous than those of the “prolific-married one” (Hagar) who represent the unbelieving world because her child was by Abraham’s unbelief. From Isaiah 53:1 through 55:3 there are 4 prophecies quoted in the N.T. as having fulfillment in the gospel of Christ’s redemption by grace (John 6:45; Acts 8:26-40; 13:34; Gal. 4:27). God tried to prepare the Jews ahead of time for this “fulfillment” of his redemptive plan of salvation by grace through faith. But they wouldn’t budge from their “justification by the works of the law.” The Jews confronted by Jesus just could not believe that God was sovereign enough to save people by grace. They had brought themselves to believe that God would save them because they were good law-keepers and the law was given exclusively to save the Jews! Sarah represents all Christians who believe in salvation by grace; Hagar represents the Judaizers who believe in salvation by works of self-righteousness. Hagar actually represents all forms of human religions or attempts to be justified by self-righteousness. These are “the Jerusalem that is below and is doomed to ultimate destruction just like the Jerusalem that was “present” when Paul wrote Galatians and was destroyed in A.D. 70. Sarah represents the true (the only true) gospel of the grace of Christ and the only true church of Christ which is the Jerusalem that is above (i.e., “heavenly, preeminent, eternal, see Heb. 12:22-24),

which can never be destroyed.

It wasn't easy for Abraham, even the second opportunity he had, to (a) trust God that his barren wife Sarah would have a son; (b) to cast out his son, Ishmael and his mother Hagar; (c) to take his son of promise, Isaac, to Mt. Moriah and offer him as a sacrificial burnt offering, but he was determined to do so! And it isn't easy to trust God that you are righteous because of what Christ has done for you—and your inheritance is yet to be given to you. CAN WE BE SATISFIED WITH “PIE IN THE SKY BYE AND BYE”? The great preacher of yesteryear, Alexander Maclaren once said, “the highest joy to the Christian almost always comes through suffering. No flower can bloom in Paradise which is not transplanted from Gethsemane. No one can taste of the fruit of the tree of life, that has not tasted of the fruits of the tree of Calvary. The crown is after the cross.” THE ONLY BIRTHRIGHT OR INHERITANCE THE CHRISTIAN HAS IS IN THE NEXT WORLD—IN HEAVEN! THIS EARTH IS NOT HIS HOME—HE'S JUST A-PASSING THROUGH (Rom. 8:18-25; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 5:6-15; Phil. 1:21-23; Heb. 11:13-14; 1 Pet. 1:3-5, etc.). God, in his own good time, will fulfill all his promises. “But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son....” TIME IS HISTORY. God worked man's redemption in history. God controls history, and he proved that by overruling the schemes and boasts and plans and deeds of great and powerful men and empires in history to accomplish the mission of Christ exactly at the time he chose and predicted! God will give every Christian his/her inheritance in the next world, exactly at the time he chooses! YOU CAN PUT THAT IN THE BANK OF HEAVEN! IT WON'T EVER BE STOLEN NOR WILL IT EVER RUST AWAY!

TEACHER'S NOTES

prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

GALATIANS 5:1-26

Christians are freed from the bondage of the fear of death (Heb. 2:5-15) in order to be sanctified and glorified by God! Paul calls Judaism and legalism a “yoke of slavery.” Peter called it the same thing in Acts 15:10. Every farmer knows what a “yoke” is—it is to enslave an animal to a plow or some other object of servitude. It restricts, hurts, and humiliates. THAT IS WHAT LEGALISM DOES. LEGALISM IS THE ATTITUDE OF ATTEMPTING TO FIND JUSTIFICATION BY LAW-KEEPING! God told the Israelites that he had “brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that they should not be Egypt’s slaves and that he had broken the bars of their yoke and made the walk erect” (Lev. 26:13). God promised them they would continue to be free (physically and spiritually) so long as they trusted him and obeyed his word. BUT THEY DIDN’T TRUST HIM, SO HE TOOK THEM INTO SLAVERY AND OPPRESSION BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS SHORTLY THEREAFTER, IN THE EXILE, FROM WHICH THEY WERE NEVER AGAIN COMPLETELY FREE! Why do so many people seem to love the slavery of sin and despise the freedom of Christ? Paul wrote to Titus that such people are “foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing their days in malice and envy, hated by men and hating one another” (Titus 3:3). Peter wrote, “They (false teachers, profligates) promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for whatsoever overcomes a man, to that he is enslaved” (2 Pet. 2:19). Jude admonishes those who “revile whatever they do not understand, and by those things that they know by instinct as irrational animals do, they are destroyed....they walk in the way of Cain and abandon themselves for the sake of gain...they are twice dead” (Jude 3-13). CHRISTIANS ARE SET FREE FROM ALL THAT! What is there to love about a guilty conscience, bondage to bodily urges, enslavement to a mentality of distrust, rebellion and depression? NOTHING! But people have allowed the devil to seduce and deceive them in unbelief that Christ cannot set them free of all that! The devil and his henchmen (legalists and libertines) have deceived the majority of human beings that to love, trust and obey the God and Christ of the Bible is slavery—to be free a person must be his own god, his own savior, his own justifier. GOD HAS SET HUMAN BEINGS FREE IN CHRIST TO GIVE THEM JOY—MAKE THEM HAPPY! GOD HAS SET HUMAN BEINGS FREE IN CHRIST TO GIVE THEM ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR THEIR LABORS FOR HIM (1 COR. 15:58) PURPOSE AND SATISFACTION IN THIS LIFE AND ETERNAL JOY AND FULFILLMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE NEXT LIFE! CHRISTIANS ARE FREE FOR A PURPOSE....IT IS NOT AN AIMLESS, NON-PRODUCTIVE FREEDOM WE HAVE IN JESUS! Serving God and Jesus in righteousness will bring infinite happiness and satisfaction because what is done will redound to their glory forever and that is where human beings find the purpose for which they were created!

Jesus clearly places the blame upon the individual human being for submitting to death-dealing enslavement (John 8:31-38). So does the apostle Paul in all his epistles but

especially here in Galatians 5:1. And so does Peter (2 Pet. 1:1-22). Everyone makes his own choice as to the one to whom he will be enslaved (see Rom. 6:12-23). **IT IS NOT GOD WHO ENSLAVES HUMAN BEINGS TO SIN AND THE DEVIL!** Human beings put themselves into bondage to the fear of death because they have rebelled, along with the devil, to God's sovereign grace. Peter writes, "for if, after they (Christians) have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overpowered, the last state has become worse for them than the first." (2 Pet. 2:20). Paul writes, "Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience which leads to righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16). It is true that when we become Christians we become "bond-slaves" to Christ. **BUT THAT IS "SLAVERY" UNTO RIGHTEOUS OBEDIENCE TO GRACE! THAT IS SLAVERY UNTO FREEDOM!** This is one of the great paradoxes of the Christian religion—we become "slaves" to Christ in order to be set free. Servitude to a loving, gracious, beneficent, providing, promoting, Master is not really slavery. "Slavery" connotes drudgery, slavish-dread, fear, degradation, deprivation, bondage, torment—**THAT IS WHAT SATAN HAS TO OFFER IN RETURN FOR JOINING HIM IN SIN AND REBELLION AGAINST GOD!** Christians are free to do everything Christ directs them to do in order to have "LIFE MORE ABUNDANTLY" and to enjoy every privilege and promise Christ makes. Think of all the promises just in the "Beatitudes" (Matt. 5:1-16)—possession of the kingdom of heaven; comfort; inherit the earth; filled with righteousness; receive mercy; see God; called sons of God; great rejoicing; great reward in heaven; be the salt of the earth; the light of the world. **WHO ELSE IS PROMISED THAT? NO ONE!** That's what you have been set free for in Christ. The better you know him, the freer you become; the more you serve him, the happier you become. Was there ever a person more free than Jesus Christ? Even in the "servitude" he performed (Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 10:5-10) here on earth, he was the freest person who ever walked this earth!

Anyone who tries to keep the law of God for self-justification must keep it perfectly, without fail, **THE WHOLE LAW OF GOD**, both the letter of the law and also the spirit of the law (Gal. 5:3). James wrote the same: "For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it" James 2:10—see also James 4:17. Galatians 3:10 says, "Cursed be every one who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, and do them." There will be no "picking and choosing" by human beings! **GOD SAYS YOU MUST KEEP THE WHOLE LAW—EVERY "JOT AND TITTLE."** How many "laws" does God have? The scribes of Jesus day said there were 636 commandments in the Torah! As we have already pointed out, human beings can't even keep the laws they, themselves, make—let alone all the laws an infinitely sovereign, omniscient, and omni-present God makes! **AND IT IS CLEAR FROM JUST READING THE OLD TESTAMENT, GOD HAD SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES, AND ESSENCES EMBODIED IN THE PRECEPTS OF THE "COMMANDMENTS" IN THE O. T.!** There was a "Spirit" behind the laws that God expected the Israelites to keep—not just the "letter" of the laws. Hebrews, chapter 11, clearly indicates that the great "heroes of faith" were people who recognized that there were "principles and essences" embodied in the "laws" of God for the patriarchs and Israelites—because they kept them and were "justified by their faith" not by their "keeping the letter of the laws (Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, David, et al.). The main "spirit" embodied in the law is repentance

—submission to the will of God and faith that God will justify by his sovereign grace! Attempting to justify oneself by law-keeping (any law, that of Moses or one made up by oneself) leads inevitably and inexorably to falling from grace because no one can keep law perfectly—not even a law he makes up for himself (see Rom. 2:12-16).

Legalism is a terrible and despicable thing in the eyes of God. It is nothing less than apostasy; it is personal, re-crucifixion of Christ; it is holding Christ up to contempt (see Heb. 6:1-8). To seek to be justified before God by any other means than the atoning death of Jesus Christ means a person has “fallen from grace.” IT IS POSSIBLE TO FALL FROM GRACE EVEN THOUGH ONE HAS ONCE BEEN “IN THE GRACE OF CHRIST.” That is the very reason the apostles wrote all their epistles! Those who “spurn the Son of God, and profane the blood of the covenant (of grace)...and outrage (despise) the Spirit of grace...” have no longer any sacrifice for their sins, but must look forward to a “fearful prospect of judgment, and a fury of fire which will consume the adversaries.” Heb. 10:1-39 is all about those Hebrew Christians who were being tempted to leave the gospel of the grace of Christ to return to the law-keeping of the Judaizers and seek justification by it. Legalism or libertinism, both are contemptible affronts and mockeries to a God of perfect grace and mercy. By faith we wait—for the hope of righteousness (Gal. 5:5). We do not work for our righteousness—we wait for it by faith! However, the Christian faith is a “faith working through love”—that is the impetus for Christian works—LOVE, not law. “The love of Christ constrains or controls us” (2 Cor. 5:14). We are to provoke one another to love and good works because of the access to God provided by the grace of Christ (Heb. 10:24). Our works of faith and labors of love are because of our steadfast hope in the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 1:3). We are zealous for good works because of the grace of God as we await our blessed hope in Jesus (Titus 2:11-14). If we love Christ we will keep his commandments and love all men (Jn. 14:15,21,23; 15:10,14; 1 Jn. 4:16-21). FAITH WORKS BECAUSE OF GRACE, NOT BECAUSE OF LAW OR SELF-GOODNESS. ANY WORKING DONE FOR OTHER MOTIVES IS NOT FAITH BUT UNBELIEF. That is exactly what Jesus taught about the legalism of the Pharisees! MOTIVE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

Truth is SOVEREIGN! Falsehood was introduced into the scheme of existence by Satan. He rebelled against Almighty God, along with some other angels who “did not keep their own position but left their proper dwelling...” (Jude 6), and began to disseminate lies to God’s “crowning achievement”—MANKIND. Paul told Timothy that “pride” was the snare of the devil. Evidently Satan became jealous that God had made man just a little lower than God himself (Psa. 8:1-9; Heb. 2:5-18), and chose to despise his Creator, rebel against him, and take out his hatred on mankind. Wendell Phillips (1811-1884), the great abolitionist, said, “Truth is one forever, absolute...” Charles Sumner (1811-1874) Senator from Massachusetts, co-founder of the Republican political party, said, “Nothing from man’s hands, nor law, nor constitution, can be final. Truth alone is final.” Adlai Stevenson said in a speech, November 9, 1952, “Man may burn his brother at the stake, but he cannot reduce truth to ashes; he may murder his fellow man with a shot in the back, but he does not murder justice; he may slave armies of men, but as it is written, ‘Truth beareth off the victory..’” TRUTH IS GOD, GOD IS TRUTH! Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” Truth is

the DIVINE, ULTIMATE, SOVEREIGN PERSON—TRUTH MUST BE OBEYED! All facts are true, but not all facts are truth! Christians are obligated by the grace of God to obey the truth as God has revealed it; they must despise false teaching and not obey it (Gal. 5:7-8). Truth (God/Christ) exists to be obeyed, not just admired! If the word truth means anything at all, it means goodness. It is also synonymous with purity, wholeness, justice, faithfulness and trustworthiness. Paul wrote the Romans that there were some who were “factious” and did not “obey” the truth—rather “obeyed” wickedness (Rom. 2:7-8). Both truth and wickedness are “obeyed”—everyone obeys one or the other! If truth is goodness and wickedness is “badness”—why would anyone reject obeying the truth in favor of obeying wickedness? Because the pay-off for obeying goodness (truth) or obeying wickedness doesn’t always come in this world, and most people are not willing to trust God’s word that obeying truth will eventually pay-off with eternal glory while obeying wickedness will eventually pay-off with eternal torment! (See the “foolish” farmer parable, Lk. 12; and the stingy rich-man parable, Lk. 16). THE GOSPEL OF GRACE IS TO BE OBEYED (2 THESS. 1:8). The truth is to be obeyed not to earn salvation, but to overtly, physically, fully, and with the total being of humanness, express faith in the grace of God! Truth cannot be “obeyed” with the mind and “disobeyed” with the body! That’s what first century Gnosticism taught—and what John and Paul adamantly denounced in their epistles! Christians must abhor (not ignore—there’s a difference!) the insidious, leavening, infectious nature of false teaching and false teachers (Gal. 5:9). The Greek phrase in 1 Cor. 15:33 *me planasthe, phtheirousin ethe chresta homiliai kakai*. Literally translated it would read, “Do not be deceived, destroyed are the good things by homilies that are evil.” The Greek word *homiliai*, does not mean “companionships” it means “homilies, dissertations, communications”. In other words, it is evil communications, i.e., false teachings (in the case of the Corinthians it was the false teaching that Christ had not arisen from the dead) that corrupts everything that is good. It would be the epitome of audacity for Paul to say (Gal. 5:10), “I have confidence...that you will take no other view than mine” BUT PAUL SAID IT, AND MEAN IT! Christians must cling to the apostolic word alone and consider those who would teach other than apostolic doctrine as being “castrated” (Ga. 5:12—Greek *apokopsontai*, “castrate, cut off, emasculate”) thus unfit (like eunuchs of old) to serve the living God! STRONG SATIRE FROM AN APOSTOLIC PEN! False teachers entice unsteady souls (2 Pet. 2:14) and bring in destructive heresies secretly (2 Pet. 1:1-3) in order to exploit people with false words. No one, not even an angel from heaven, is to teach any other gospel than the one the apostles taught (2 Thess. 1:8-9). Christians may know the difference between truth and error by know whether a teacher is “listening to” (teaching) what the apostles taught or not (1 Jn. 4:1-6).

We all know there are some who take their freedom in Christ as an “opportunity” to indulge the flesh. The doctrine “once in grace, always in grace,” has made its contributions to such ungodly behavior. The Greek word translated “opportunity” in Gal. 5:13 is *aphormen*, and is a derivative of the word *horme* from which we get the English word hormone. It means, “to excite, give impetus to, agitate, originate, trigger,” etc. SOME PEOPLE USE (ABUSE) THEIR FREEDOM IN THE GRACE OF CHRIST TO “EXCITE” THEMSELVES TO FLESHLY INDULGENCE! Some think that being free of the guilt and penalty of sin is a “trigger” to sin even more (see Rom. 3:8; 6:1,12,15,19). NOT SO! Liberty in Christ must not become a “hormone” triggering carnal wickedness! LIBERTY IN CHRIST SHOULD

ACTUALLY “TRIGGER” (OR “EXCITE”) FAITH WORKING THROUGH LOVE! The New Testament warns against this in many places (1 Cor. 8:9; 1:19; Eph 5:21; 1 Pet. 1:16; 2 Pet. 1:17-22). But the subtle thing about it is that legalism and Pharisaic asceticism are both “hormones” that trigger a form of worship of the flesh! Those who punish and deprive the flesh for self-righteousness are as carnal and vainglorious as those who indulge the flesh (Col. 2:16-23). To use Christian freedom responsibly, the Christian must use his body always to the glory and benefit of God—not for himself (neither indulgently nor ascetically). Even if one gives away all he has and delivers his body to be burned (as a martyr), but has not the motive of true love that obeys Christ’s commandments, he gains nothing (1 Cor. 13:3).

Loving our neighbor as we love ourselves fulfills the whole law of God, because God can only be loved and served when we serve mankind. And God’s whole revealed law was designed and given to guide man in serving his neighbor. To give a human example, the marriages with the most freedom are those where two Christian people are eagerly serving one another, counting the “other” better than “self” (see Phil. 2:3-4). Not many people would consider serving others to be freedom! To accept that proposition, you have to accept the authority of the Scriptures as FINAL AUTHORITY FOR ALL OF LIFE! But the person who serves only himself can never know what true spiritual freedom is! The Greek word translated “serve” is douleute and means slave. The Christian is called not to be one master with many slaves, but each Christian is to be one poor slave with a lot of masters! The new morality (or, “situation ethics”) says if we love one another we can safely break the law of God in the interests of love. But Paul says if we love one another we shall fulfill the law (see also Matt. 22:34-40; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 6:2; Matt. 19:19; John 13:34-35). The love of God is keeping his commandments (1 Jn. 5:3). BUT HE WHO DOES NOT LOVE HIS BROTHER WHOM HE HAS SEEN, CANNOT LOVE GOD WHOM HE HAS NOT SEEN...AND THIS IS THE COMMANDMENT WE HAVE FROM HIM, THAT HE WHO LOVES GOD SHOULD LOVE HIS BROTHER ALSO (1 JOHN 4:20-21). Agape-love (the kind of love with which God loves us) equals freedom because coercion, exploitation or ulterior motives are all absent from AGAPE love!

“Flesh” in Gal. 5:16, as in the majority of uses in the rest of the New Testament, means “the mental attitude of selfishness.” The body per se does not oppose the Spirit—it is the rebellious mind of humanness that is at war with the mind of the Spirit of God (Rom. 7:15-24; 8:5-8; Phil. 2:1-11; Col. 2:20—3:4; Jas. 4:1-4; 2 Pet. 2:11). The weapons of our warfare are not carnal (i.e., of flesh and matter) (2 Cor. 10:3-5), but mighty through God to the casting down of strongholds and imaginations and everything that exalts itself against God and bringing every thought into captivity to obey Christ.” IT IS NOT EYES, MOUTHS, ARMS AND LEGS THAT WAR AGAINST THE SPIRIT—IT IS THE MIND WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO CONTROL THE BODY THAT WARS AGAINST THE SPIRIT! Paul says if we “walk around with the Spirit,” (Greek pneumatikoi) we will not “gratify” or, “reach the aim of” (Greek telestete) the body to the exclusion of the Spirit. This “war” is going on constantly in the area of ideas, thoughts, mentalities! Our minds are incessantly being bombarded with the falsehoods of Satan through the “hosts” of Satan’s armies! There is a

great psychological (spiritual) warfare being waged by the minions of evil through propaganda (lies) contrary to the word of God! AND MILLIONS, YEA, BILLIONS, HAVE CAPITULATED TO THE PROPAGANDA! Satan has even tricked some of the church into cannibalizing itself (Gal. 5:15). Those not committed to serving others will destroy others through slander, exploitation, and falsehood. Both legalists and libertines cannibalize others. Like the Pharisees, they compass land and sea to make one proselyte and having done so they make him two-fold more a son of hell than themselves (see Matt. 23:15). Peter says the carnal-minded, profligate does the same thing to people (2 Pet. 2:1-22). Paul is talking in this context about legalism and libertine-ism. Both of these practices are spiritual cannibalism—they will devour souls and churches! It is a ruse of the devil, however, to persuade most Christians that only immorality, not legalism consumes souls. But the truth of the matter is, probably more souls have been lost due to legalism (in all its forms) than due to libertine-ism. Jesus found he could have more success converting and saving prostitutes and thieves than he could Pharisees! Yet, Peter says of those who “indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority” it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them” (2 Pet. 2:10,21). HOW DOES ONE WIN THIS WAR? BY BEING “CONVINCED” AND “CONTROLLED” BY THE LOVE OF CHRIST (2 COR. 5:14). BY SETTING THE MIND ON THINGS THAT ARE ABOVE WHICH ARE ETERNAL (Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; Col. 3:1-4). THIS WAR IS REAL, IT IS FIERCE, AND IT IS IN EVERY HUMAN BEING! Anyone who has ever been forced to diet knows about this war; anyone who has ever tried to stop smoking knows; anyone who has ever tried to break the habit of cursing, drunkenness knows; anyone who has ever struggled with sexual lust knows how fierce the struggle is! The great apostle Paul experienced this struggle constantly (Rom. 7:15-25).

There really isn't that much difference in the concept about which Paul speaks here. Both the “works—Greek erga— of the flesh” and the “fruit—Greek karpos—of the Spirit” are consequences of a mind-set! The works of the flesh we do (Greek prassontes, “practice”) prompted by the devil---the fruit of the Spirit is what we do by the Holy Spirit of God that dwells in us and prompts us to do through His word. Let me remind you, the Holy Spirit will not do something to bear his fruit by you if you don't want him to do so! THERE CAN BE NO MISTAKE ABOUT THE KIND OF MIND-SET THAT IS “FLESHLY” OR CARNAL. It is given in detail in Gal. 5:19-21. No one can excuse himself before God by saying, “I did not know what the works of the flesh were”—God marks them plainly. Neither shall there be any misapprehension of the “fruit” Holy Spirit will produce in anyone who allows him to do so! “BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM.” ANY DIFFERENCE MIGHT BE CONTAINED IN THE WORD “FRUIT” (A WORD WHICH IS MOST OFTEN USED TO CONNOTE “GOOD” PRODUCE) AND THE WORD “WORKS” (A WORD WHICH SOMETIMES IS USED TO CONNOTE “EVIL”). But as Jesus used the concept in Matt. 7:15-20, “fruit” can also be used to connote something “evil.” The works of the flesh bring down the penalty and judgment of the law and a fearful expectation of eternal doom; the works of the Spirit bring love and goodness against which there is no condemnation.

Self-control in the Greek text is the compound word, enkrateia, from kratos (cf. Titus 1:8; 2 Pet. 1:6; Acts 24:25; 1 Cor. 7:9; 9:25), or “dominion” (2 Pet. 4:11; 5:11; Jude 25; Rev. 1:6; 5:13), and from en, or, en which is a prefix meaning “within.” Thus, “self-control” means “dominion or power” over self (the inner-person). The Holy Spirit will not control us unless we allow it! The motivation to allow him (through his revelation of God’s will—the Bible) to do so is a “conviction of the Love of Christ” (2 Cor. 5:14). “Walking” by the Spirit is in Greek, stoichomen, which means, “to be walking in line with.” We might paraphrase it, “keeping in step with the Spirit,” or “walking in the way the Spirit walks.” WE KNOW HOW THE SPIRIT OF GOD WALKS, FOR HE WAS HERE IN A HUMAN BODY AND WALKED THIS EARTH! HE WAS JESUS OF NAZARETH! Did he have control!

TEACHER'S NOTES

prepared by Paul T. Butler Th.D

GALATIANS 6:1-18

The key verse of chapter 6 is verse 6. This chapter is all about sharing. “Let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches...” The Christian set free from sin by the grace of God will value his own freedom so intensely he will do all that is possible to restore (Greek *katartizete*, “mend, repair, restore”) a brother overtaken in sin. In doing so, the Christian is sharing his freedom with the person near to going back into the slavery of sin. The Greek word is a present tense verb meaning restoration of the fallen is a continuing necessity. The sinner who is to be “restored” is one who has been “taken before he knows it” (Greek *prolempthete*, literally, “before-taken”) or “caught unawares” in a sin. W. E. Vine says the word means, “being caught by the trespass through being off guard.” Restoration is often impossible for those who are deliberately and impenitently sinning! Jesus said that to restore a brother overtaken in sin is to “gain” a brother (Matt. 18:15ff). The Greek word translated gain in Matt. 18:15 is *ekerdesas*, is a word of the ancient market place used to characterize the process of accumulation of wealth. Restoring a sinning brother is spiritual wealth to the church! This sharing of the grace of God with a sinning brother is to be done in a spirit of gentleness (Greek *prautes*, “meekness, kindness, gentleness—strength under the control of humility”). Christians cannot afford to be weak, compromising or vacillating when trying to mend or repair a life caught unawares in the devil’s trap and bring it back to God’s grace, but we must do it under the control of humility and love. (See also 2 Cor. 2:5-11; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; Heb. 12:12-17; James 5:19-20). Do you believe Paul was “gentle” and “humble” when he “restored” Peter and Barnabas (Gal. 2:11-16)? **OF COURSE HE WAS—HE ALWAYS PRACTICED WHAT HE PREACHED!**

Bearing another’s burden is probably the most significant thing a Christian can do! Much is said in the N.T. about this (Gal. 5:14; Rom. 13:8-10; 3 John 5-8; John 13:34-35; 1 Cor. 13:1-13) and the N.T. gives many examples of Christians doing so. The Greek word for burden is *bare*, “load, weight, something that presses down” in the spiritual sense (Rev. 2:24; Acts 15:28). Something **UNBEARABLE BY ONESELF!** On the other hand, the Greek word for burden in Gal. 6:5 is *phortion*, and usually means something “light enough to be carried or borne by one.” Jesus said his “burden” for each individual to “take” (*phortion*) was “light” in Matt. 11:30. But how does bearing another’s burden fulfill the law of Christ. Is there nothing more to being in a right relationship to Christ than bearing the burdens of others? **NO! NOTHING!** Bearing the burdens of others is the goal of all preaching, teaching, worshiping. God cannot be served except as we serve others! (1 Jn. 4:7-12). **LOVING OTHERS IS THE LAW OF CHRIST! THIS IS THE COMMANDMENT CHRIST GAVE HIS DISCIPLES, JOHN 13:34-35.** On the “laws” of loving God with all of one’s being and one’s neighbor as oneself hang all the law and the prophets! There are many ways to “bear one another’s burdens”—and all of them will cost something! There are burdens of guilt, ignorance, depression, loneliness, shame, temptation, weakness, hatred, envy, bereavement, anxiety, ad infinitum.

Some will say, “But I have enough burdens of my own to bear!” WHAT IF JESUS HAD SAID THAT?

There is one burden we cannot bear for another—AND THAT IS PERSONAL, MENTAL & MORAL RESPONSIBILITY—RESPONSIBILITY TO KNOW, BELIEVE AND OBEY GOD’S WORD! Every human being must ultimately face personal responsibility toward the Creator’s commandments. No person can bear my moral and mental responsibility to know, believe and obey God’s word. And, as we try to bear one another’s burdens, we dare not make the mistake of trying to justify our short-comings by comparing ourselves with the one we are trying to “restore.” The Pharisees were in the business of being “spiritual leaders” because the ignorance and “un-kosherness” (i.e., “uncleanness”) of the common people helped them rationalize that they were holier than everyone else (Lk. 18:9-14). The Jews of Ezekiel’s day had the proverb, “Our fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children’s teeth are set on edge” (i.e., we are sinners because our fathers were sinners—it’s not our fault!). BUT GOD ORDERED EZEKIEL TO TELL THE PEOPLE TO “KNOCK-IT-OFF” WITH THE “PARABLE!” Ezekiel is the prophet of personal responsibility for sin (see Ezek. chs. 18 & 33). But personal responsibility applies to those who are having their burdens borne by someone else, too! While we all need the encouragement and concern and help of others, we must face responsibility toward God for ourselves. We can be counseled, prayed for, listened to, encouraged and hugged, but eventually, we must face personal responsibility and person commitment to God’s will. No one can be responsible for our sins; we cannot blame our sins on someone else. Even if we never receive any help from any one—we still must face Gods’ demands personally! At the judgment day there will be no pointing of fingers at and accusations of SOMEONE ELSE. We will be accountable to God on our own (Matt. 16:27; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom. 2:16; 14:10, 12; 2 Cor. 5:10). LET US CLING TO THE GRACE OF GOD BY COMING TO COVENANT TERMS IN JESUS CHRIST!

The Greek sentence in Gal. 6:6, is: koinoneito de ho katechoumenos ton logon to katechounti en pasin agathois—literally translated, “Let him share, the one being catechumen-ed with the word, with the one doing the catechumen-ing, in all good things.” We want to emphasize the word katechoumenos! From it we get the English words, catechism, catechumen. When we think of “catechism” we think of teaching-by-rote-memory, and that is exactly what teaching and learning is all about! WITHOUT MEMORIZATION, THERE IS NO LEARNING, FOR WITHOUT MEMORIZATION, THERE CAN BE NO APPLICATION OR PARTICIPATION! Think about “learning” to drive an automobile. One must learn the functions of the ignition, steering, and braking of a car by rote memory before one should be allowed to get behind the wheel to “practice” driving (as well as the rules of traffic, etc.)! WHAT IS WRONG WITH TEACHING THE BIBLE (THE WORD) CATECHETICALLY? NOTHING!!!! THAT’S THE ONLY WAY IT CAN BE LEARNED. It certainly isn’t learned by osmosis! It’s not learned by divine miracle! It is memorized, then practiced, and that is when the learning process takes place! Literally, the word katechoumenos means “to impress by sound” i.e., to teach by word of mouth, orally. It is a method of instruction by lecturing, asking questions, receiving answers, and offering

explanations and corrections. Here, the catechumens (ones being taught) are commanded (Gr. koinoneito, imperative mood of koinonia) to share all their good things with the catechists (those doing the teaching)! See 1 Cor. 9:1-14; Phil. 4:15-20. Preaching and teaching, if done conscientiously and skillfully, is WORK—HARD WORK—DEMANDING EXPERTISE. It has always been the will of God that those teaching the word of God “full-time” be financially supported by those who receive the teaching. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:1ff; Heb. 7:1ff). The priests of the OT were supported by the worshipers (Lev. 6:14-18; 6:26; 7:6; 7:31-36; Num. 5:9-10; Deut. 18:1). Jesus authorized the apostles and evangelists of his day to be supported by those they taught (Matt. 10:10-15; Lk. 10:7). The apostles commanded it (1 Cor. 9:11; 1 Tim. 5:17). And while a paid “clergy” arrangement sometimes tempts preachers or teachers to be lazy; and it sometimes tempts congregations to control the preacher’s preaching and teaching through his salary; it is still the pattern taught in the New Testament! Martin Luther (A.D. 1511) said: “...it is impossible for one man both to labor day and night to get a living, and at the same time to give himself to the study of sacred learning as the preaching office requires.” The apostle Paul usually worked at his trade (tent-making) to support himself, but he did accept financial assistance from the Philippian church (Phil. 4:17) in order to give them the opportunity to share in the fruits of his labors! And, he made it plain to the Corinthian church, that he had a right to expect support from them but he deferred his right so as not to “offend” them! “THE LABORER IS WORTHY OF HIS HIRE!” Shame on any congregation that does not understand the Biblical principles we have discussed here!

To sow to the Spirit is to plant the “seed” of the Holy Spirit in the “garden” called your “heart” (mind, soul, personality). THE WORD OF GOD IS THE “SEED” OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Lk. 8:11; 1 Pet. 1:22-23; Psa. 126:6; Mk. 4:14-25; 1 Cor. 9:11; 2 Cor. 9:10; Hosea 10:12; Prov. 11:18). It is possible for human beings to “sow” to Satan and wickedness (Job 4:8; Prov. 6:14; 16:28; 22:8; Hosea 8:7; Isa. 17:11; Jer. 12:13; Gal. 6:8). Actually, if we carried the metaphor to its conclusion, God sows his Spirit of righteousness in the world, and the enemy (the devil) sows his “tares” of wickedness in the world. The “field” is the “world” (Matt. 13:38-39). THE “HEARTS” OF HUMAN BEINGS ARE THE “SOILS.” (See Matt. 13:1-58; Mk. 4:1-34; Lk. 8:4-18). Essentially, “sowing to the Spirit” takes place when the human being (to whom God has given sovereignty over his own heart) ALLOWS God to sow the WORD OF THE SPIRIT in his/her heart! But, evidently, from 1 Cor. 9:11 and our passage here in Gal. 6:7-8, the Christian, who has allowed God to sow the “seed” of the Holy Spirit in his/her heart, becomes, in turn, a “sower” of that Holy Spirit of God on other hearts by righteous, merciful, loving deeds and by verbalizing (proclaiming, preaching, teaching) the word of God to others! The “seed” of God’s Spirit (his word) falls on, basically, four different kinds of soil (“hearts”)—three of them produce no spiritual harvest! It’s a sobering thought to consider that 3/4 of all the “seed” of the Holy Spirit of God sown in the world will never come to harvest for God! This indicates that the “sowing” of God’s Holy Spirit must take place by every means possible—constantly, pervasively, and militantly! The church is not to “wait” for the “soil” to come to it—the church (members) must “go forth sowing” (Psa. 126:6).

It is tragically true, that sometimes Christians are more apt to do good to those

outside the church and neglect those within the church (membership) needing help—just like family members often are kinder and more benevolent to strangers and “outsiders” than they are to their own families! “Charity begins at home!” Jesus commanded his disciples to “minister” to one another (Matt. 10:43-44; Jn. 13:14; John 21:16; Rom. 12:9-13; Gal. 6:2). We are to “love the brethren with unfeigned, i.e., non-hypocritical, love” (1 Pet. 1:22). We are to “provoke one another unto love and good works” (Heb. 10:24). We are to love the “brothers and sisters” impartially (Jas. 2:1-17). Our first loyalty is to Christ’s church (“the brotherhood”)—“the household of faith.” BUT WE MUST ALSO “DO GOOD” TO ALL MEN—EVEN OUR ENEMIES! For if we love only those who love us, what reward shall we have?—even the heathen (“publicans”) love those who love them! If we are to be “perfect” (whole, complete) as our heavenly Father is, we must love even those who do not love us in return—GOD DOES! Pay your preacher a sufficient salary before you give to “outside” benevolence; see that those who serve your congregation are cared for as you would one of your own family members before you lavish care on those who make no contributions to the “assembly of the saints.” One who cannot take care of his “own” has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel (1 Tim. 5:8).

Paul is, of course, talking about the “legalists” in this context—the Judaizers who wanted to force all the Christians of the churches in Galatia to be circumcised according to the law of Moses. These “legalists” wanted to “glory” in the “flesh” (the outer ritualism) which they thought was the most important matter in relationship to God. The word “glory” in Hebrew means “weight, majesty, authority, place—position.” The Greek word *kauchesontai* (pronounced, *caw-kay-son-tie*) means, “take pride in, boast about.” Judaizers who had secretly invaded the churches of Galatia, if they could get the Gentiles to agree that they had to keep at least parts of the law of Moses, would then be able to boast with pride to the leading Judaizers (probably back in Jerusalem) that they had “straightened-out those Gentiles” (and perhaps even some Jewish-Christians) and had “protected” the Torah (the laws of the Jews). The Judaizers probably also felt they would have God’s blessing for having done this! After all, circumcision was the most glorified (“weightiest, most majestic, authoritative”) matter in the Old Testament for covenant relationship to God! Furthermore, what great reputations these Judaizers could make for themselves if they could “override” the doctrine which the apostle Paul had preached to the Galatians! That would make them appear to be “equal” to the apostles—but Paul called them “messengers of Satan” (see 2 Cor. 11:12-15). “False brethren” creep into the congregations of Christ today and lay upon members as “gospel doctrine” their own opinions and traditions—insisting people must keep them to be saved! THEY DO IT FOR THE SAME REASONS—TO ATTAIN AUTHORITY, TO GAIN REPUTATIONS AS POWERFUL—TO TAKE PRIDE IN HAVING “OVERRIDDEN” THE WORD OF GOD! BEWARE, O CHURCH OF CHRIST! KNOW WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT SAYS, AND DOESN’T SAY! DO NOT LET PRIDEFUL PEOPLE “GLORY” IN YOUR STUPIDITY AND SUBMISSIVENESS BY BELIEVING YOU HAVE TO DO SOMETHING THE N.T. DOES NOT COMMAND, OR NOT DOING SOMETHING THE N.T. DOES COMMAND!

The rule New Testament Christians have to walk by is: “Neither circumcision nor

non-circumcision avails for salvation” but only “glorying in the cross of Christ” (i.e., making the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross the most majestic, most glorious, most authoritative) for salvation (1 Cor. 1:18-31; Ga. 2:20). Of course, “glorying in the cross of Christ” (putting Jesus’ atonement at the center of life) means we will, because of his infinite love for us, be controlled by that love and keep Jesus’ commandments (e.g., 2 Cor. 5:14; John 14:21-23; 15:10-11, etc.). But Jesus never commanded circumcision as necessary to salvation—AND THERE ARE A HOST OF OTHER “TRADITIONS” AND “OPINIONS” OF HUMAN BEINGS EVEN TODAY BEING FORCED UPON CHRISTIANS WHICH JESUS NEVER COMMANDED! Christians walk only by the “rule of regeneration” (i.e., being a “new creation”). This is the “rule” God made for man---REGENERATION! The Greek word *kanoni*, is the word from which we get the English words “canon and canonical” which mean “standard, measurement, rule, acceptable, sanctioned.” The Greek word *kanon* means literally, “keep straight as a rod.” It is often translated, “limit” (2 Cor. 10:13,15,16). Thus God’s “limitations” for the New Testament covenant are “regeneration in Christ.” REGENERATION is often called in the N.T., “the new birth, or begotten anew.” People are born anew, regenerated, or made to be new creatures” by all of the following: (a) the mercy of God (Titus 3:5; (b) the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5) (which clearly includes immersion in water, i.e., baptism—John 3:1-15); (c) the imperishable, living and abiding word of God, the gospel (1 Pet. 1:22-25); (d) by water and the Spirit (John 3:1-15—this also refers to baptism); (e) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:3); (f) by the word of truth (James 1:18); (g) by the knowledge of Christ (Col. 3:10); (h) in the spirit of our mind (Eph. 4:22-24); (j) by burying the old man in baptism we rise to walk a “newness” of life (Rom. 6:1-6). There are, of course, many other scriptures which speak of our being “transformed,” “regenerated,” and “made anew.” AND THEY ALL HAVE TO DO WITH OBJECTIVE REALITIES, FIRST, AND SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCES SECOND!

Those who have been “born again,” “regenerated,” “made new creatures” (see 2 Cor. 5:14-21) by coming into Christ, THESE ARE THOSE WHO WALK BY THE “RULE” OF GOD AND THESE ARE THE “ISRAEL OF GOD” TODAY! The Jews of Paul’s day, most of the Jews today, and some Christians today, believe that those who claim genetic Jewish ancestry are the true Israel of God. WRONG—ON TWO COUNTS! First, no modern Jew can trace his ancestry back beyond 400 or 500 years. Genealogical records are simply not available to do so! “Jews” have been so thoroughly “mixed” with other races over the centuries beginning in 721 B.C. with the exile of Israel and 586 with the exile of Judah, including another “exile” in A.D. 70, to claim pure Jewish ancestry today would be impossible! Many modern Jews do not believe God exists and do not believe the Bible to be his exclusive revelation to mankind—not even just the Old Testament! “Jewishness” today has to do primarily with politics and religious “traditions.” Second, and most important, God recognizes as his “chosen people” today ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE PUT THEIR FAITH AND OBEDIENCE IN CHRIST (Read carefully Romans, chapters 9-10-11). “All the Israel that shall be saved” (Rom. 11:26) will be those who are “in Christ” and all those—Gentile and Jew—who are “in Christ” are God’s “Israel.” In the church of Christ there is neither Gentile nor Jew, neither freeman nor slave, neither male nor female! ALL WHO ARE “IN CHRIST” ARE OF EQUAL STATUS—SAVED! So, enough of this talk that God has “something special for the Jews” apart from the New Testament in Christ Jesus! IT JUST ISN’T BIBLICAL! Great

amounts of time, money, and human life has been expended because of the innocently misguided (we hope it isn't deliberate) theologies and ideologies of dispensational-premillennialism and Zionism today. The Bible nowhere (actually not even in the O.T. if all the types and prophecies were fulfilled in Christ) holds out to the Jew any ultimate or final promise of redemption just because they are "Jews." That is what the whole book of Hebrews is all about! EVERYTHING IN THE O.T. FINDS ITS FULFILLMENT IN THE N.T. There's no further message to come from God. The New Testament is final, complete, ultimate, exclusive, and "once-for-all" the faith delivered unto the saints (Jude 3). Those who are claiming, looking for, or waiting for "another word from God" after the completion of the N.T. look and wait in vain! "IT AIN'T EVER GONNA BE!" NOT UNTIL THE TRUMPET BLAST ANNOUNCING THE END OF TIME!

Introduction to Paul T. Butler Th.D

Paul was born in Springfield Missouri and graduated from Conway High School prior to enlistment in the US Navy. He began serious bible study with correspondence courses from San Jose Bible College. He later enrolled in Ozark Bible College and acquired his Bachelor of Theology degree June of 1961. He received a Master of Biblical Literature degree from Ozark in May of 1973. He received a Doctorate of Theology from The Theological University of America in October of 1990.

Paul taught at Ozark Christian College from 1960 to 1997. He also served many years as registrar for the college.

Introduction to the Sound Bible Study project.

The Sound Bible Study project is a cooperative effort of Christian educators and Jordan Media Enterprises LLC to provide the serious examination of the Scriptures for the conscientious student. All the teachers are experienced educators who have spent countless hours in the classroom on both sides of the lectern. The audio recordings and written notes are made available for those who wish to learn God's Word at a collegiate level but have been unable to matriculate. There is no intention to compete with the many faithful Bible schools, but rather to serve along side and strengthen both the student and the teacher for a stronger and more effective Kingdom of God that knows how to properly divide the Word of God.

