

## Gal. 1:1, 2

Gal 1:1 "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) 2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:"

The letters that Paul wrote follows the typical letter format. He began by saying who was writing the letter. Next, he told us to whom the letter was being written. Third was the body of the letter. Fourth was the salutation of the letter. Finally, Paul gave the complimentary close of the letter.

It is important that we know that Paul wrote the letter to the churches of Galatia. Paul was greatly suited to address the issue and problem facing the churches of Galatia. There had come men who taught the people that they are saved by "grace, but" they must be circumcised for that salvation to be effective. This is what I call the "grace, but" doctrine. Those who teach a "grace, but" doctrine teach that a person is saved by grace, but he must do "something else" in order for that grace to be effective in saving him from his sins. What the "something else" is changes from group to group, but it is the same basic principle.

Paul knew the error of the "grace, but" doctrine for he himself was a perfect example of salvation by grace alone. We have this account of Paul's experience of grace in his journey to Damascus in Acts chapter nine: 9:1 "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. 3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. 8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. 13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as

thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized."

From the above we know that Saul was not seeking the Lord, nor was he seeking the welfare of the church. Saul was seeking to destroy those who worshipped the Lord and to put out the mention of his name. Saul was walking in great hatred toward the Lord.

Next, we know that the Lord, himself, struck down Saul along the road to Damascus and blinded him and spoke directly to him. No man preached the gospel to Saul. Salvation was not offered to Saul. Rather, there was a great change in Saul. The Lord revealed himself unto Saul. The change in Saul is evident because he at one moment was seeking to destroy the mention of the name of Jesus and the next moment he asked the Lord "what would thou have me to do." Later, before Ananias came on the scene Saul was praying. Saul's praying unto the Lord was evidence that Saul had been born of the Spirit before the preacher ever came to Saul. Further, Ananias recognized that Saul was already born of the Spirit when he met him and called him Brother Saul. Saul was saved by grace alone. Everything that followed this dealt with Saul's seeking to serve and worship the Lord in the Kingdom of heaven. There was no "grace, but" in Saul's salvation. It was grace alone.

Later on in the first chapter, Paul reaffirms that his salvation is by grace alone: Gal. 1:15 "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:" Paul said that it was God who:

1. separated me from my mother's womb.
2. called me by his grace.
3. revealed his Son in me.

All of the above was performed by the Lord alone without the means of a preacher or of the gospel. It was by the grace of God alone. There was no "grace, but" doctrine in the above works.

Next, Paul tells us of his authority to write a letter to the churches of the Galatians. He says that he is an "apostle." The word, apostle, literally means one sent forth. In the gospels, we read where the Lord had called the original twelve apostles and later that Judas Iscariot fell by transgression. Yet, Paul was just as much an apostle of Jesus Christ as the original twelve men were apostles of Jesus Christ.

Paul informs us that his apostleship was "not of men, neither by men." Men did not call Paul to be an apostle; neither did men make Paul an apostle. Paul affirms that his calling and the gift on an apostle came directly from the Lord Jesus Christ, and God the Father. Men did ordain Paul as an elder or bishop, but the ordination is not what makes a man a preacher, but it recognizes the gift of God and that the person is qualified to serve in the office to which God has called him.

Thus, Paul wrote the churches of Galatia based on the authority given to him of God as an apostle. Further, what Paul wrote was by the leadership of the Holy Spirit and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and thus carried the same weight as a letter from the Holy Spirit to the churches.

"And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:" Paul never directed any of his writings to anyone who was not born of the Spirit of God. He always wrote to born-again children of God. In this example, he wrote to the churches of Galatia. Churches are composed of born-again children of God who have joined the church through water baptism. Therefore, the purpose of Paul's writings was not to get people born-again, but to instruct those who by the grace of God were already born of the Spirit.

Paul invokes the names of "all the brethren which are with me" in his letter to the churches of Galatia. This tells us that the "brethren which are with Paul" are of the same mind and in complete agreement with what Paul was writing. Paul did not stand alone in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. Thus, Paul's stand against the "grace, but" doctrine was fully supported by the brethren which were with Paul and Paul is letting the churches of Galatia know that their support of the "grace, but" doctrine was a departure from the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

### **Gal. 1:3**

Gal. 1:3 "Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,"

There are two great themes in the epistles of Paul: grace and peace. In the opening of every epistle, Paul makes a statement similar to the one above. Further, in the closing of every epistle, Paul mentions once again the grace of God. Thus, it can be said that Paul opens and closes every epistle with the mention of God's grace.

Grace means the unmerited favor of God bestowed upon undeserving creatures. It is by the grace of God that God works the following things for us and in us:

1. Salvation from sin (2 Tim. 1:8 "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.")

2. The Spiritual birth (Eph. 2:1 "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved);"

3. Our belief (Acts 18:27 "And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:")

4. Obedience to the faith (Rom 1:5 "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name.")

5. Justification (Rom 3:24 "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:")

6. Eternal life (Rom 5:21 "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.")

7. God's election of a people (Rom 11:5 "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.")

8. Spiritual gifts (Rom 12:6 "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;")

9. Gospel minister (Rom. 15:15 "Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, 16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.")

10. Spiritual fruits and characteristics (2 Cor. 8:6 "Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. 7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.")

11. The ability to preach (Eph 3:8 "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;")

12. Prayer and help in time of need (Heb 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.")

Similarly, peace is another great theme in the scriptures and comes to us from God. Some examples of peace that is brought to us from God are as follows:

1. Peace from turmoil even in the elements ((Mark 4:39 "And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.")

2. Peace in a troubled heart (John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.")

3. Peace with God (Rom 5:1 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:")

4. Peace from conflict in the church (1 Cor 14:33 "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.")

5. Peace in worship between Jews and Gentiles (Eph 2:14 "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.")

6. Peace with God (Eph. 2:16 "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.")

7. Peace in a heart condemned by sin (Eph 2:17 "And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.")

It is important that we remember the source of this grace and peace. It is from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus to God be all praise and glory.

### **Gal. 1:4, 5**

Gal. 1:4 "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: 5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

We read of a lot of giving that God through his love for his people has done. We read where he gave his people to his Son: Heb. 2:13 "And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me."

We read how that the Father gave his Son to the elect family of God: John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

We also read how that God gives eternal life to his children: Rom. 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Now all of the above given is according to the will of the Father. This will is set forth for us in the covenant of redemption: Rom. 8:29, 30 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

The Lord said that he came to save those whom the Father gave him according to the Father's will: John 6:37-39 "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." This is in perfect harmony with the will or covenant set forth in the covenant of redemption.

Jesus gave himself for the sins of the elect according to the will of the Father (covenant of redemption). Since Jesus gave himself for our sins, then he must have known whose sins and what sins that he gave himself for! If there was a sin of an individual that he failed to give himself for, then that individual is condemned to an eternal hell. There would be no recourse. The idea that Christ gave himself for the sins of all mankind, but the sin of unbelief is preposterous. Jesus made no distinction when it was said that he gave himself for our sins. He gave himself for all of our sins. There is none of our sins that are left out. What individual on the face of the earth is there that at one time has not believed Christ?

Next, Christ did not give himself for the sins of all mankind. He gave himself for the sins of his people only. According to Matt. 1:21 "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." The covenant of redemption is very specific: it is a people that God foreknew, that he predestinate, and called, and justified, and glorified. It was not all of mankind, but the elect only.

"That he might deliver us from this present evil world." The word, might, is not intended to raise doubt, but to assure us that those for whom Christ gave himself for will be delivered from this present evil world. This speaks of a future deliverance. This deliverance also is according to the "will of the Father" in the covenant of redemption. In the glorification of the resurrection, we will be eternally delivered from this "present evil world."

As we live here in time, we will be plagued from time to time by this present evil world. We will be misled, enticed, persecuted, ridiculed, and in some cases destroyed by this present evil world. We are told to save ourselves from this untoward generation. This was given to those who had already been born of the Spirit and had heard the gospel preached and had been obedient to the call of servitude through water baptism. By taking heed to the word of God we can save ourselves from many pitfalls that await us in this present evil world. We cannot, however, save ourselves from our sins or deliver ourselves eternally from this present evil world. Thanks be to God that he has secured our eternal deliverance for us.

"To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." God is free with his grace to his children. However, God is stingy with his glory:

1. Isa. 42:8 "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."
2. Isa. 48:11 "For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another."
3. Ps. 115:1 "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."
4. Ps. 148:13 "Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven."

All of the glory for our eternal salvation from sin belongs to God and to God alone.

### **Gal. 1:6-9**

Gal. 1:6 "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

Verse 6 speaks of two gospels. The use of the term "another gospel" affirms that there is the "true gospel" and there is "another gospel." The brethren of the churches of Galatia had removed from the true gospel to another gospel. Further, it wasn't long after they had been called unto the grace of Christ that they removed to another gospel. They had started out believing the gospel of the grace of Christ which is the true gospel. This gospel simply states that we are saved from our sins by the grace of God through the atoning blood of Christ. The gospel of the grace of Christ declares that salvation from sin is by grace alone.

The "other gospel" that the Galatian brethren had been removed to is set forth in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Acts: 15:1 "And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." These "certain men" were not arguing that salvation was not by grace, but they were arguing that in addition to the grace of God the men of the Gentile converts had to be circumcised after the manner of Moses. This is what I refer to as "the grace, but" gospel. Simply stated the "grace, but" gospel declares that you are saved by grace, but you must do something. In this instance, the something these "certain brethren" were arguing was circumcision.

This insistence on circumcision as a requirement for salvation from sin was a big problem in the early church. A counsel was held in Jerusalem (Acts chapter 15) where the apostles and elders declared that salvation was by grace only and that circumcision was not a requirement for salvation from sin. Yet numerous Jewish false teachers had gone about deluding the people into believing that they must be circumcised.

In verse 7 Paul declared that this "another gospel" was not really a gospel. There is only one true gospel. That true gospel is the "grace of Christ." Anything else that is called a gospel is not really a gospel. Most of what is taught by men today as being the gospel is not really the gospel of the grace of Christ. The vast majority of what is taught as being the gospel of Christ is really the "grace, but" doctrine which is not the gospel at all.

Men had perverted the true gospel and come up with the doctrine that circumcision was a requirement for eternal salvation. The term "pervert" means to corrupt or change. This is what these men had done. They had corrupted the true gospel of the grace of Christ and had changed it to embrace an element of the old law service.

Paul did not have much respect for those who preached any other gospel than the grace of Christ. Paul taught that salvation from sin is by grace only. Paul stated "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Paul called for a curse to be upon anyone who would preach any other gospel that was not the gospel of the grace of Christ. In this call for a curse, Paul included himself or an angel from heaven.

Certainly, this teaches us that even God called men can preach a false or perverted gospel. The word, "accursed," comes from the Greek word, "Anathema." Anathema means excommunicated. Paul is saying that if a man comes among you and preaches another gospel then the church should exclude him from their membership and fellowship. There are to be no exceptions. Paul said that if "any man" preaches "any other" gospel unto you let him be accursed. Certainly, the Lord's true church cannot have fellowship with those who teach another gospel and further this implies that we are not to have church fellowship with those who hold to another gospel and do not repent of it.

Please note that Paul was laboring with those in the churches of Galatia to convert them from the error of their way and to save them from this perverted false gospel. If after gospel labors these brethren did not repent of their error, then there would be no remedy but to withdraw fellowship from them.

## Gal. 1:10-14

Gal. 1:10 "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. 11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. 13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: 14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers."

Paul, in his efforts to convert the Galatians brethren back to the true gospel of the grace of Christ, relates his own experiences of God's grace and of God's revelation to him of the true gospel of Christ. He begins by showing us that he is the servant of God and not of men. As the servant of God Paul's service was to persuade men of the truth and not be a man-pleaser, but to seek to please God.

"For do I now persuade men, or God?" How impossible it would be for any man to try to persuade God of anything. God already knows all things and he has all wisdom and understanding. It is very impossible to persuade God of anything. However, God has sent his gospel ministers to persuade men of the truth and this is what Paul was endeavoring to do with the brethren of the churches of Galatia.

"Or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Paul warned Timothy: 2 Tim. 4:3 "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." Thus, there are those who want their ears scratched with the false doctrines and practices of men and then there are those who want the financial rewards of scratching their itching ears. These are men pleasers. However, a man cannot seek to be a pleaser of men and a servant of Christ at the same time. Paul did not seek to be a pleaser of men, but he sought to be a servant of Christ. Whether or not he received the praise of men was irrelevant. Paul sought to please God by being a faithful servant of the Lord.

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." None of us today can say what Paul said. The gospel of the grace of Christ that we preach we received it of men and were taught it by men. This is the way that we are supposed to receive it: Paul told Timothy " And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). However, the initial revelation of the gospel was a direct revelation from Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ called his twelve apostles and taught them the gospel of the grace of Christ. They received it from Jesus Christ as he taught it to them. In like manner, Paul informed the brethren of Galatia that no man taught him the gospel of the grace of Christ, but he received it as a direct revelation from Jesus Christ.

When someone receives something by direct revelation from Jesus Christ you cannot say of them that they were misinformed or that they misunderstood what some man meant. Paul, therefore, could speak with all confidence that he knew what the true

gospel is. The fact that the churches of Galatia knew that Paul was an apostle and that he received the gospel by a direct revelation from Jesus Christ should have made them confident that what Paul was telling them was true.

"For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: 14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." Paul rehearsed to these primarily Gentile brethren that which they had previously heard concerning Paul. Paul, prior to his Damascus Road experience had been an expert in the Jewish religion. Elsewhere in the scriptures, Paul relates to us his experiences in the Jewish religion: Phil. 3:4 "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ."

Paul had been brought up in the Jews' religion. He had studied in the Jews religion. He had become renowned in the Jews' religion. He had been exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers. Further, he had hated the Lord's church; the Lord; and the teachings of the Lord. This hatred was manifest in his persecuting beyond measure the church of God, and having wasted it. Paul had the experience above any other Jews to warn people of the errors of the Jews religion. He also had the experience to tell people of the grace of Christ, as he was a recipient of that grace that was made manifest unto him through the Damascus Road experience.

We need to also understand that the "Jews religion" was more than the law of Moses. While the Law of Moses was a part of the Jews religion, the Jews had misinterpreted the purpose of the Law of Moses and had added the tradition of the fathers to be equivalent or in some cases above the Law of Moses. The Jews under the Jewish religion thought that they could obtain eternal life through the keeping of the law: Jesus told some unbelieving Jews: John 5:39 "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." These unbelieving Jews thought that in the scriptures they could obtain eternal life by keeping the law. Yet the Lord informed them that the true purpose of the Old Testament scriptures was a testimony of Jesus.

The Jews were going about trying to establish their own righteousness through the works of the law: Rom. 10:1 "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The false brethren who brought in the doctrine of circumcision as a requirement for salvation from sin were perpetrating the error of the Jews religion. They were teaching that man could do something in order to get right with God. This is contrary to the "grace of Christ."

In like manner today, all that teach a "grace, but" doctrine are committing the same error as those who taught that you are saved by grace, but you must be circumcised. God forbid that we teach or preach any other gospel than the grace of Christ.

## Gal. 1:15-24

Gal. 1:15 "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. 18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. 20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. 21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; 22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: 23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. 24 And they glorified God in me."

"But when it pleased God:" Paul continued his discourse of his personal experiences in showing the Galatian brethren the folly of following the "grace, but" doctrine. Paul speaks of the sovereignty of God in his own personal experiences. The "grace, but" doctrine is based on the free will of man and the idea that God waits upon man to see what he will decide and then takes action based on what man decides. However, this is not consistent with Paul's personal experiences. Notice the word, "when." The things Paul associated with God's work towards him he connected with the adverb "when." This shows us that these things took place at God's appointed time. It did not take place when man wanted it to. Man had no ability to affect the outcome. Paul's natural birth, Paul's spiritual birth, and the revelation of Christ to Paul all took place at God's appointed time. Furthermore, those things were according to the will of God (it pleased God). If it had not pleased God, then none of those things would have happened.

"Who separated me from my mother's womb:" Some will carry this statement to the extreme and say that God predestinated Paul's natural birth and the events surrounding it. However, this does not speak of the predestination of God but of the providence of God. Without the providential watch care of God, man could not survive. God in his providence is watching over his creation. This does not mean that God causes every thing to happen, however. Certainly, it pleased God that Paul be born naturally and that he one day become an apostle of Jesus Christ. God in his providence watched over his life to that end. God, however, never made Paul to sin and to commit the heinous acts that he committed against the church of God.

"And called me by his grace:" It is God who called Paul into spiritual life. This call is according to the covenant of redemption stated to us in Rom. 8:29, 30 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also **called**: and whom he **called**, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Paul affirms that this calling of God to spiritual life was solely by the grace of God. Paul did not do anything to bring about this calling or the spiritual birth that was a result of this calling. It was all by the grace or "unmerited favor" of God. It took place when it pleased God. The Lord said concerning the spiritual birth in John 3:8:

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Therefore, all the elect are born of the Spirit in the same way and all according to when it pleases God. We cannot affect the outcome or control the time of our Spiritual birth.

"To reveal his Son in me:" This is something that cannot be taught by man. The Lord asked the disciples in Matt. 16:15 "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The Lord told Peter that he was in a blessed condition, because man had not revealed to Peter who the Lord was, but the Father in heaven had revealed this unto him.

Further, we read in Heb. 8:10-11: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Notice that man does not teach us who the Lord is, but God himself reveals this unto us.

"That I might preach him among the heathen;" Paul was called of God and sent by God to preach the gospel to the heathen (Gentiles). This was at a time when the Jews generally had no dealings with the Gentiles and considered them dogs. Moreover, there were doubts even among the Lord's church that the Gentiles would have part with the Jews in the church. Perhaps it was these doubts that led men to begin to advocate that the Gentiles had to be circumcised in order to be saved. However, Paul was "the apostle to the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:13) and he taught no such thing.

Moreover, Paul's call to be a minister of the gospel and the directions of where he preached the gospel was by the calling and direction of the Lord. This is true for God's entire called gospel ministry.

"Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother." Paul reminds the brethren that the things that he preached he received by revelation from the Lord. After that God called him to preach the gospel on the Damascus Road, Paul did not go to the schools of men or to the apostles to learn what to preach or how to preach, but he was led of the Spirit into the wilderness where God revealed to him this precious "gospel of the grace of Christ."

"Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me." It is of great note that Paul, who had not learned the gospel of the grace of Christ from the apostles and was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea, yet preached the same gospel that the apostles and elders were preaching at Jerusalem. Further, the churches of Judaea recognized that Paul was previously the Saul of Tarsus that had so vigorously persecuted the church. They glorified God in him recognizing that it was by the grace of God that Saul was changed from being the worst persecutor of the church to

being the greatest defender of the church. Paul's experiences testify of the grace of Christ.

### **Gal. 2:1-5**

Gal. 2:1 "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. 3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: 4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: 5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."

In the above, Paul is beginning to recount the events leading up to and including the counsel that was held at Jerusalem concerning the false teaching that in order for the Gentiles to be saved, they must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses.

In Acts chapter 15 we read: Acts 15:1 "And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question."

Paul and Barnabas knew this teaching was wrong from the first time they heard it. They had much dissension and disputation against the false teachers who were bringing in this damnable heresy. Antioch, the church where Paul and Barnabas were members, consisted of both Jews and Gentiles. The Jews of that time were circumcised under the Law of Moses prior to coming to the true church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Gentiles, however, had not been circumcised. These false teachers were trying to compel the Gentiles to come under the bondage of the Old Covenant of worship given to the Israelites on Mount Sinai.

The church at Antioch sent Paul, Barnabas, and certain others up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders to determine the validity of this teaching that was new to them.

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

Paul wanted the brethren in Jerusalem to know exactly what he had been preaching. It wanted them to understand that he had been preaching the gospel of the grace of Christ unto the Gentiles. Further, he wanted them to understand that he considered the doctrine that you must be circumcised to be contrary to the doctrine of the grace of Christ. Paul taught these things both publicly and privately as the occasion required. There should be no doubt that the question that came before the counsel of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem was clearly articulated to the apostles and elders so that they would know exactly what was at issue. Paul is clearly showing to the brethren of the churches of Galatia that this question of circumcision had already been settled by the counsel of Jerusalem.

The counsel at Jerusalem rendered this finding by letter to the church at Antioch: Acts 15:23-29 "And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well."

The counsel of apostles and elders at Jerusalem had refuted the grace, but circumcision doctrine. Salvation from sin is by grace alone.

"But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: 4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: 5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." The false teachers had insisted that Titus, who was a Greek, had to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses. Paul and the brethren with him refused to have Titus circumcised. They knew that to circumcise Titus would bring them into the bondage of the law service from which Christ had delivered them. This refusal was an example unto all that would be inclined to hold to a grace, but doctrine.

Paul knew that to compromise would destroy the utility of the very gospel of the grace of Christ, which he knew to be the truth. He refused to compromise.

Some would say that this is not consistent with the fact that Paul had Timothy circumcised. However, Timothy's father was a Greek, but his mother was a Jew. Timothy could have a labor with both Jews and Gentiles. He, being a blood Jew, could preach the gospel to Jews and perhaps convert them to the truth. However, if Timothy was not circumcised then the Jews would not have listened to him. Therefore, Timothy's circumcision was one of convenience, enabling him to preach among the yet non-converted Jews, and not of compelling him to come under the Law of Moses.

## **Gal. 2:6-10**

Gal. 2:6 "But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: 7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) 9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the

heathen, and they unto the circumcision. 10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do."

"But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me." Appearances are often deceiving, especially if the appearance is being judged after the flesh. The Lord said: Luke 16:15 "And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." The Lord looks on man's heart and not on his appearance. God accepts no man's person. There were those that Paul conferred with in conference who seemed to be somewhat. They had an appearance of being somewhat.

Sometimes false doctrines, false teachings, and false practices are brought in by those who "seem to be somewhat." We are not to accept the person of a man, but what does he teach and what does he stand for and how does he conduct his life. There were those who brought in damnable heresies, but what they taught did not agree with "thus saith the Lord." If it does not agree with the word of God, then what is said adds nothing to the child of God. When men preach the truth in power and demonstration of Spirit and I rejoice in a Savior's love this adds much joy to me. When men are given an understanding of scripture and through their teachings, I learn more about the scriptures, this adds to me. Those, who were highly esteemed among men or who seemed to be somewhat, Paul says they added nothing to him.

What is important is not the appearance, or eloquence, or popularity of a man, but what does he preach and teach?

"But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)" Unlike these who seemed somewhat in conference, Paul demonstrated by his teachings that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto him. It was manifest through the preaching and teaching of the apostle Paul that the Spirit was working effectually and mightily in him toward the Gentiles. This was just as manifest as the manifestation of the Spirit working effectually and mightily in Peter to preach the gospel unto the circumcision. The Spirit determines where and to whom the gospel is to be preached and who is to preach it unto them. The Holy Spirit made Peter the apostle to the Jews and the Holy Spirit made Paul the apostle to the Gentiles.

"And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision." The only way to perceive that someone is a pillar in the church is to see their demonstrated knowledge and practice in the church. This is how Paul perceived that James, Cephas, and John were pillars in the church at Jerusalem.

These pillars in the church perceived the grace of God given unto Paul to preach the gospel of the grace of Christ unto the Gentiles. Consequently, and consistent with their on beliefs, they gave unto right hand of fellowship that they should go unto the heathen and they unto the circumcision. Now the right hand of fellowship indicates agreement. By writing this to the brethren of the churches of Galatia, Paul is stating that

James, Cephas, and John were in complete harmony with Paul and Barnabas that the true gospel is the gospel of the grace of Christ and not the grace, but doctrine.

"Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do." James 1:27 "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." The truth should be accompanied by pure religion. Pure religion adorns the gospel of the grace of Christ. We love God because he first loved us. By remembering the poor and visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction and by keeping oneself unspotted from the world, we are giving praise and glory unto the one who has redeemed us by his grace.

### **Gal. 2:11-14**

Gal. 2:11 "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. 12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. 13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. 14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"

The problem here is not that Peter did not know that the Gentiles were justified by the blood of Christ and were therefore clean. God had showed Peter that in the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of Acts: Acts 10:9 "On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: 10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, 11 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: 12 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. 13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. 14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. 15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. 16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven."

At the house of Cornelius Peter said: 28 "And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." Also, 34 "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

The problem is that Peter succumbed to peer pressure. As long as it was just the Gentiles and the Jews that were with Peter, Peter had no problem eating pork and catfish with them. However, when the "highly esteemed" Jews came around, Peter withdrew and separated himself, fearing them of the circumcision. The truth stands regardless of what peer pressure we may face. We are not to compromise the truth in the face of peer pressure.

When a leader acts inappropriately, others are often led to acts inappropriately as well: "And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." Now, Peter's inappropriate action did not excuse the inappropriate action of the others, yet his actions put doubt in the minds of the others and they withdrew.

"But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" Peter had no problem living after the manner of the Gentiles so long as the "esteemed Jews" were not around. However, when the "esteemed Jews" came around, he wanted the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews. For this, Paul rebuked Peter to his face. We cannot have it both ways.

True worship today is under the covenant of grace and not under the covenant of the law. To try to compel people to worship under the "grace, but" doctrine is to try to bring them into the bondage to the law. The "grace of Christ" gospel has never been popular. Peer-pressure often is exerted to try to keep people from worshipping under the true gospel of the grace of Christ. We are not to succumb to peer-pressure, but we are to worship God in Spirit and in truth. One of the problems that the brethren in the churches of Galatia were faced with was peer-pressure to hold to the false teachings to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses.

## **Gal. 2:15, 16**

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

"We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles:" Paul is making a distinction between the background of the Jews and the Gentiles at that time. The Jews had come up under the Law of Moses. The Gentiles had not come up under the Law of Moses. All men are sinners. The use of the term "sinners of the Gentiles" is not a reflection that the Gentiles were sinners and the Jews by nature were not. Rather it is matter of knowledge based on ones background. The Jews who had come to understand grace had a knowledge of the Law of Moses and understood that they could not be justified by the Law of Moses.

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ." No matter how hard you may try to keep the law, that same law will condemn you, as we are all breakers of the law and therefore are under the curse of the law. Therefore, to seek to be justified by the works of the law is a great bondage and impossible to do. As Paul said later, "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." If we cannot be justified by the works of the law, then how can we be just before God? The answer is by "the faith of Jesus Christ." Notice, he did not say, "by faith in Jesus Christ." The "faith of Jesus Christ" is a lot different from "faith in Jesus Christ." The

"faith of Jesus Christ" speaks of Jesus Christ's faith. The "faith in Jesus Christ" speaks of man's faith.

How are we justified by "the faith of Jesus Christ?" The faith of Jesus Christ is the faithfulness of Jesus Christ to execute the covenant of redemption. The covenant of redemption is stated for us in Rom. 8:29, 30: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Jesus Christ is the executor of this covenant that God made with himself before the foundation of the world. The angel declared unto Joseph concerning the birth of Christ: "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Jesus came to save his people from their sins.

Later Jesus said that he came to do the will of the Father (covenant of redemption): John 6:37-39 "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." As the executor of the covenant of redemption, Jesus died to save his people from their sins and so justify them: Heb. 10:14 "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." We read in Romans that we are justified by grace through the faithfulness of Christ and his shed blood: Rom. 3:21 "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:" Therefore, being justified by the faith of Christ speaks of Christ faithfulness to execute the covenant of redemption. It does not require man's faithfulness to believe in Christ. Justification before God is by the grace of God alone and not by any actions of man.

"Even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law:" The question we must ask ourselves is: "Are we justified by the faith of Christ or are we justified by the works of the law?" Our belief is not causative of our being justified by the faith of Christ, but rather states that we have believed in Christ who has justified us by his faithfulness to execute the covenant of redemption on our behalf. Others believe that they must keep some form of law or rule in order to be justified.

The true gospel of the grace of Christ says that we are justified by grace through the shed blood of Christ. The "other gospel" Paul spoke of says that we are justified by fulfilling some law or rule (the false teachers to the churches of Galatia taught them that they had to be circumcised in order to be saved). The truth is that we are justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the law.

"For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." This statement alone tears down all the systems of men for salvation other than the truth and that is "salvation from sin is by grace alone." There is absolutely nothing that a man can do to justify

himself before God. Salvation from sin is God's work alone and we, the elect of God, have it by God's grace alone.

## **Gal. 2:17-21**

Gal. 2:17 "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. 18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. 19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. 21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid." The "grace, but doctrine" is a great contradiction. If we are justified by Christ alone, then it is grace. If we are justified by the works of the law then it is works. However, the previous verse had told us that through the works of the law shall no flesh be saved. To try to combine salvation by grace with salvation by works leads only to confusion.

In like manner, Paul taught concerning election: Rom. 11:5 "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." This clearly teaches us that grace and works cannot be mixed. If there is any work involved, then it is not grace.

The works of the law finds us sinners as we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. To mix justification by Christ and justification through some work of the law is mixing grace and works. To mix these two would make Christ the minister of sin. To this, Paul said "God forbid."

"For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor." To build salvation through the law when Christ hath fulfilled the law and justified us by his blood through grace is to build again that which is destroyed. By trying to reestablish the law is to make us transgressors of that law and is no justification at all.

"For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." Christ fulfilled the law to a jot and a tittle. According to the law, he became the Lamb of sacrifice to satisfy the sins of the people. As he died on the cross, he fulfilled the law and justified his people from their sins. Thus, through the law and Christ sacrificial atonement under the law we are now dead to the condemning affects of the law. We no longer are to serve the law, but to serve the one who redeemed us from the law. Thus, we are to live unto God.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." To be crucified with Christ cannot mean that Paul hung on a cross next to Christ, but it means that in covenant he was in Christ. Likewise, we were in covenant in Christ as Christ was crucified. By being in covenant in Christ, whatever Christ did, we, legally, before God were embraced by Christ's work.

Similarly, when Christ arose, we in covenant arose with him. We live before God, because of what Christ did for us and what he did in us. Christ died for us and he quickened us when we were dead in trespasses and sins to give us spiritual life. Paul is saying that the life he now lives in the flesh he has because of the faith of the Son of God. Christ is the one who loved Paul and gave himself for Paul. Likewise, Christ loved each of the elect and gave himself for each of the elect. Through the faithfulness of Christ, our sin debt has been paid and we have all been quickened into spiritual life when we were before dead in trespasses and sins. Therefore, the life that each of us now lives we live by the faith of the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us.

"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." To add anything to the grace of God is to frustrate the grace of God. Let us be careful to not add any requirement under the false "grace, but" doctrine. Righteousness comes by the grace of Christ. It does not come through the works of the law. If righteousness is by the works of the law, then Christ death was simply in vain. God forbid that we think that Christ death was in vain.

### Preface to Galatians chapter 3

The word faith is used in three different ways in chapter 3.

There is the faith of Jesus Christ. The **faith of Jesus Christ is simply Christ's faithfulness to execute the covenant work of God** set forth in the covenant of redemption. This covenant is set forth for us in Rom. 8:29, 30: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Christ is the executor of the covenant as he told us in John 6:37-39: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Christ is **the man** that Isaiah wrote of in Is. 46:9-11: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, **the man** that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

Some examples of the use of the phrase "the faith of Christ" is set forth below:

1. Rom. 3:22 "Even the righteousness of God which is by **faith of Jesus Christ** unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:"
2. Gal. 2:16 "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by **the faith of Christ**, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."
3. Gal 3:22 "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by **faith of Jesus Christ** might be given to them that believe."

4. Eph. 3:11-12 "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the **faith of him.**"

5. Phil. 3:9 "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through **the faith of Christ**, the righteousness which is of God by faith:"

Next, there is the faith of the individual manifest in his trusting in the covenant work of Christ. Now faith is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The only ones that have this faith are those who are born of the Spirit. Four times in the scriptures, there is a statement: "**The just shall live by faith.**" The ones that live by faith must first be made **just**. They are made **just** through the atoning blood of Christ. Second, the ones that **live by faith** must first have **life**. You cannot **live by faith** until you first have life. Since **faith is a fruit of the Spirit**, the **life** that is required for someone to **live by faith is spiritual life**. We receive spiritual life when we are born of the Spirit. We cannot live by faith in order to be justified, nor can we live by faith in order to get life. We must first be given life and be justified by the blood of Christ in order for us to live by faith.

A person who has been born of the Spirit of God has spiritual life and has the ability to manifest faith. This faith is manifest in believing the word of God and trusting in the promises of God.

The third way the word faith is used is to delineate between the New Testament form of worship and the Old Testament form of worship. Jude 1:3 "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for **the faith** which was once delivered unto the saints." **The faith** that was once delivered to the saints is that system of New Testament worship (including doctrines, practices, and government) predicated on the children of God trusting in the covenant work of Christ. There are only two covenants of worship: the Old Testament, known as the law covenant or law, and the New Testament, sometimes referred to as **the faith**.

The word, "faith," is used in all three of the ways listed above in the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Galatians. A careful reading of the context will show us which way is being used when the word is found.

Next, we must distinguish between justification by the blood of Christ by grace and justification by faith. "Justify is a court room term. To understand the difference between justification by blood and justification by faith, we must understand the different courtrooms in which this term "justify" is being used. To justify before God means that we are tried in the courtroom of God and declared to be righteous before God. Nothing we have or can do can make us righteous before God. We are justified by the blood of Christ. The atoning blood of Christ atoned for our sins and Christ's righteousness was imputed unto us. 2 Cor. 5:21: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Justification by faith takes place in another courtroom. While all the elect are justified by the blood of Christ in the courtroom of God, yet the knowledge of that justification comes into the heart of the individual elect child of God through the preaching of the gospel. In the courtroom of his heart and mind, he first feels the conviction of sins and feels condemned by sin. When the gospel comes to him telling him that he has been justified by the blood of Christ and he through faith believes the

gospel report, he now has the assurance of justification in his heart. This is justification by faith.

Not all the elect experience the justification by faith. They are still trying to get right through the works of the law or by some rule of law. In other words, they are trying to get right through their efforts.

### Gal. 3:1-4

Gal. 3:1 "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? 2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? 4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain."

Paul tells the brethren of the churches of Galatia who have followed after another perverted gospel that they are foolish and that someone has bewitched them. The Greek word for foolish is "anoetos" and means "unwise." Obviously the Galatians had made an unwise choice in believing a false "grace, but" doctrine. The Greek word for bewitched is "baskaino" and means "to fascinate by false representations." The "grace, but" doctrine fascinates the flesh because our fleshly nature likes to think that we can do something to obtain eternal life. The "grace only" truth gives all the glory and praise to God. The "grace, but" doctrine gives glory and praise unto man telling him that he is instrumental in earning eternal life.

Those who set forth a "grace, but" doctrine are making false representations of what the gospel is and what it is that saves from sin and gives eternal life. The word of God does not support their representations. Anytime you bring in a legalistic principle of doing something to get eternal life, you deny the total depravity of man and his complete inability to change his nature and to understand the things of the Spirit of God. Further, you rob God of his glory by denying his grace.

The Galatia brethren had turned from the truth and were now denying the truth by accepting the false representation of the false teachers. In the beginning, the Galatians had heard the truth that Jesus Christ had come and was crucified to deliver them from their sins and that he had arisen the third day. They had heard the truth that salvation from sins was by the grace of Christ. When false teachers came along and told them that they were saved by grace, but they must be circumcised in order to be saved, they were fascinated by this falsehood and they believed the falsehood. Paul told them that they were foolish to do so.

Next, Paul asked this question: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Now this verse can be taken in two different ways. It could be taken to mean, "received ye the new birth by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" or it could be taken to mean, "received ye the ministry of the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

**Faith** is a **fruit** of the Spirit: Gal. 5:22, 23 "But the **fruit** of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, **faith**, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Therefore, in order to have faith, one must first be born of the Spirit. You cannot have the **fruit of the Spirit** unless you **first have the Spirit**. Thus, we

cannot receive the new birth by either the works of the law or the hearing of faith. We conclude that Paul is asking the question: "received ye the ministry of the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

Paul writes in 1 Cor. 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." One must have been born of the Spirit of God in order to receive the things of the Spirit of God. In the early church, there were sign gifts. When the gospel was first preached to a people, it was sometimes accompanied by sign gifts. Included in these sign gifts, the people were filled with the Spirit and spoke in tongues. Even today, when someone hears the gospel they often are filled with the Spirit and rejoice in the gospel message. Whether the brethren at Galatia had the sign gifts I know not, but I they must have rejoiced at the gospel message. They received the ministry of the Spirit by the hearing of faith. They had faith because they were born of the Spirit. They heard the gospel message by the hearing of faith and rejoiced. They received the Spirit by the hearing of faith and not by the works of the law.

"Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" There beginning in the church kingdom of God was through the Spirit. How can the commandments under the law covenant placed upon the flesh bring perfection? Paul was right in calling them foolish. Righteousness is by the shed blood of Jesus Christ and bestowed upon the elect in the new birth. This is the work of the Spirit. We are righteous before God because of this. We cannot hope to get more righteous through the working of the law. The law brings us into bondage under the curse of the law.

"Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain." The brethren at Galatia had been persecuted for their belief in the gospel of the grace of Christ. They had suffered for the cause of Christ. Paul is now telling them that if they be turned away from the truth and turned unto legalism, then they have suffered for the cause of Christ in vain. Most persecutions come from the legalist. To be under legalism takes away the reproach for believing in the truth. It also takes away the fellowship we have with the Lord in worshipping him in Spirit and in truth.

### **Gal. 3:5-9**

Gal. 3:5 "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

"He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Paul continued with his indisputable evidences against righteousness coming by the works of the law. He appeals to the reason of the Galatia brethren to consider that the apostle who had ministered among them and was given sign gifts that the manifestation of these gifts was by the working of the Holy Spirit and done by the apostle through his faithful trust in the

promises of God. Nothing in the works of the law can account for these miracles that were done among the brethren.

"Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." We notice the order. First, there is the work of God in regeneration or new birth. This is evidence in the three examples above:

1. Receiving the ministry of the Spirit by the hearing of faith.
2. Working miracles by the hearing of faith.
3. Abraham believing God by faith and it being accounted to him for

righteousness.

Faith is a fruit of the Spirit and therefore evidence of regeneration.

Following regeneration there is the fruit of the Spirit manifest by faith of the individual. The consequence of faith is:

1. Receiving the Spirit.
2. Working miracles.
3. Believing God and this being counted for righteousness.

Believing God does not make one righteous. Abraham was already born of the Spirit when it was said of him that he believed in God and it was accounted to him for righteousness: Gen. 15:3 "And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. 6 **And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.**"

Prior to this passage in Genesis chapter 15, God had appeared to Abram in Genesis chapter 12 and the next several chapters show us the actions of Abram. Between chapters 12 and 15, God had commanded Abram to leave his country, his father's house, his kindred, and go into a country that God would show him. Abram did this. Also, God had promised several things concerning the seed of Abram. In addition, Abram had built altars to worship the Lord. Moreover, Abram had defeated the armies of the people who had taken Lot captive by faith. Then he was met by Melchisedec who blessed him bringing forth bread and wine. Obviously Abram had already been born of the Spirit and had been walking with God for some time before the events in Genesis chapter 15. Abram was already righteous and his believing in the promise of the Lord was a righteous action of a righteous man. Belief in the promises of God is a righteous action of a righteous man.

"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." Abraham is said to be the father of the faithful. This is true, not only of the natural descendents of Abraham, but also of the Gentiles. Abraham is not the father of the faithful through natural generation, but he is the fatherly example of faith that we are to follow. When we, who have been born of the Spirit of God, believe the promises of God, we are following the example of Abraham who is our fatherly example.

"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." The promise of God

was sure, whether Abraham believed it or not. However, Abraham did believe it and he received the assurance of faith thereby.

The scriptures, given to us by the inspiration of God, show us in the events of God's promise to Abraham that the Gentiles are embraced in the work of the promised seed of Abraham. This was done in the saying of God: "In thee shall all nations be blessed." Christ, the promised seed, was faithful to fulfill the promise of God and to justify the elect in all nations of the earth. The heathen were justified through the faithfulness of Christ to fulfill the promise of God and to die on the cross to redeem them from their sins.

What God said to Abraham concerning the promised seed and all nations being blessed by that seed is the same message of the true gospel of the grace of Christ. That message is that God has a people in all nations of the earth that he chose before the foundation of the world and that Christ came to redeem his chosen people from their sins by his grace. Therefore, we which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham in believing the gospel of the grace of Christ.

### **Gal. 3:10-14**

Gal. 3:10 "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. 12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. 13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Who, among all of mankind, can honestly say that he has continued in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them? We are all guilty before God. The law requires perfection for justification. James wrote: James 2:10 "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. 11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." To keep all of the law but one very small part, still renders one as being a transgressor of the law and therefore under the curse of the law. The law renders us condemned and not justified.

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith." Notice the difference in this statement than what is taught by the false "grace, but" doctrine. The "grace, but" doctrine has the following sentiment: "the unjust shall get life by obeying some precept of some commandment."

The truth is one must first be just before he can live by faith. Practical justification comes through the new birth, where the atoning blood of Christ is applied to the soul and we are born of the Spirit of God, which gives us spiritual life. Christ does this under his covenant work. Once we are justified by the atoning blood of Christ and born of the Spirit, we have the fruit of the Spirit, which includes faith. Now we can live a spiritual life by faith.

"And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them." Attempts to keep the law are by the works of the flesh. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. The law which we try to keep in the flesh we find that rather than justifying us ends up condemning us.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:" Throughout the Old Testament, the lessons of substitutional sacrificial atonement are manifest. Christ was made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor. 5:21). Christ, in becoming our curse on the tree of his cross, redeemed us from the curse of the law. We no longer are under the curse of the law. Christ performed this work all by himself. There is nothing in this statement that indicates that man had anything to do with bringing this to pass. The work of atonement was by grace alone.

"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." This is what the promise of God to Abraham was all about. "All nations are blessed in the seed of Abraham" and they were blessed at the tree of the cross where the promised seed (Christ) was made to be a curse for them. By faith, we receive the assurance of this promise of the Spirit. We embrace it in our hearts that Christ died to redeem us from sin and that this work was by the covenant promise of God and is by grace alone.

### **Gal. 3:15-18**

Gal. 3:15 "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise."

"Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto." Paul is showing to the brethren at Galatia that based on a covenant being confirmed, no man can disannul it or add to it. This is true under man's system of laws, and it is even more so under God's system of jurisprudence. Once a covenant is confirmed, the covenant is in effect and cannot be disannulled or added to. The terms of the covenant must be carried out. God made a covenant before the foundation of the world. This covenant is stated for us in Rom. 8:29, 30: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

God confirmed this covenant in Abraham:

1. Gen. 12:1 "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

2. Gen. 15:5 "And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be."

3. Gen. 22:16 "And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;"

4. Gen. 13:16 "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered."

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Abraham had a total of eight sons by natural birth. He had one son by promise. Yet none of the eight sons was the seed that God had under consideration when he confirmed the covenant unto Abraham. The seed under consideration is "Christ." Christ is the seed that God said he would multiply as the dust of the earth, and as the sand upon the seashore, and as the stars of heaven. Christ is the seed that possessed the gate of his enemies. Christ is the seed that all nations, kindreds, peoples, and tongues are blessed in.

"And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." Since the covenant promise has before been confirmed of God in Christ, then no man can disannul it or add to it. Names cannot be added to this covenant promise nor names be taken out of it. It is fixed forever. This covenant promise is sure to all the multiplied seed. The law which came four hundred and thirty years after the promise was confirmed in Christ cannot disannul the covenant promise or add to it.

"For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise." The inheritance is not by the law, but it is by promise. Our eternal inheritance has been given to us by covenant promise that God promised before the world began. No law can disannul it or add to it. This completely destroys the "grace, but" doctrine. The doctrine that says you have to do something in order to get eternal life would either disannul the covenant promise or add to it. This is just not possible. The inheritance is certain to all the heirs of promise and it cannot be altered. Praise God!

### **Gal. 3:19, 20**

Gal. 3:19 "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one."

"Wherefore then serveth the law?" If our eternal inheritance is not by the law, then what was the purpose of the law? Paul wrote in Rom. 3:19 "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the

deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." The law showed us that we were sinners. All arguments for intrinsic righteousness or man's ability to make himself righteous are destroyed by the law and all the world is condemned by the law before God.

"It was added because of transgressions." Transgression did not begin with the law of Moses. Transgressions began in the Garden of Eden when Adam broke the law of sin and death and brought himself under the curse of the law and brought all of his posterity under the curse of the law of sin and death. While those before the giving of the ten commandments may not have had full knowledge of what God's moral law required, yet they were still breaking the commandments even without that full knowledge. In the eyes of a just and holy law, they were still guilty of transgressions. The law was added because of these transgressions to bring knowledge of transgressions and the wrathful judgment of God towards these transgressions. The law taught us that we are sinners and that no flesh can be justified in his sight by the works of the law.

"till the seed should come to whom the promise was made" The law covenant was given for a period of time. Once the seed (Christ) should come to whom the promise was made, the law would be fulfilled by that seed and the multiplied seed (elect of God) would be justified before God and the New Covenant of worship would be established. This effectively negated the need of worship under the law covenant.

"And it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." The word, "ordained," means appointed. The word, "angels," means messengers. Paul is writing that the law was appointed by messengers in the hand of a mediator. We know that Moses was given the law by God on Mount Sinai. He delivered it to the children of Israel. The totality of the Old Testament was written by the prophets that God sent. These prophets were messengers writing as God appointed them. The law revealed the exceeding sinfulness of sin. It also by types and shadows and by prophesies showed the remedy for sin. The remedy God gave for sin under the law was that a suitable sacrifice had to be made by a proper mediator.

There are two parties to any mediation. When one party is aggrieved at another party then a mediator is sometimes appointed to bring the two parties together. The qualifications of the mediator is that he must be able to relate to both parties. However, how can anyone relate to both God and men and be a suitable mediator? The person must be a God/man. There is only one God/man and that is the man Jesus Christ who is also God manifest in the flesh. Christ is our mediator. He is also the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He is the one who satisfied the legal requirements of the wrath of God against the sins of his elect people. He was their representative who shed his blood on the cross of Calvary to deliver them from the wrathful judgment of God as he suffered in their room and stead. Christ is their mediator and their atonement.

### **Gal. 3:21**

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

Since the promises of God were made long before the law was given, it makes no sense that God would set up a law that would be in opposition to the promises that he had made or that made his promises of none effect. This would have been completely

contrary to the very nature of God that cannot lie. God's promises are sure and cannot fail.

Next, we notice that no law has been given that gives life. This goes contrary to the belief system of many people. Today it is common for people to believe that John 3:16 is the law that is given to give life. Yet John 3:16 plainly does not give life. Some say that if you will accept the Lord as your personal savior you will get life. This is the law that they believe that will give you life. Again, there has been no law given that gives life. Even others say that if you will hear the gospel, believe the gospel, accept the Lord as your personal savior, invite him into your heart, and be baptized that you can get life. Once again, God has not given us any law which gives life.

Righteousness does not come by the law. Righteousness is given to us by the promise of God and through the atoning blood of Christ. It is imputed into us in God's work of regeneration. We do nothing to make ourselves righteous before God. It is by the grace of God alone.

### **Gal. 3:22**

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

"But the scripture hath concluded all under sin." Paul goes into a lot more detail on this in the third chapter of Romans: Rom. 3:9 "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17 And the way of peace have they not known: 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes. 19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

The law is all encompassing in its condemnation of the entire human race. We are all under the law of sin and death. There is none among either Jew or Gentile that is righteous under the law. The law gives us the knowledge of sin and shows us that we are all guilty before God and worthy of his eternal condemnation.

"That the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." In contrast to the law, the promise of God gives us great hope. This covenant promise is sure because of the faith of Jesus Christ. Christ is the executor of the covenant promise of God. Thus, because God cannot lie and Christ cannot fail, we know that the completeness of the covenant promises of God will be fulfilled.

These covenant promises are given into the belief system of our heart to assure us that we are saved by his grace through the preaching of the gospel and our belief in those covenant promises.

## Gal. 3:23-25

Gal. 3:23 "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

Paul is addressing the two covenants of worship that God's people have been under. The first is the covenant of the law. The second covenant he terms "faith." This is the New or second Covenant.

"But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Before the covenant of faith came, the covenant of the law had been given to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. While the covenant of faith is prophesied of in several places in the Old Testament, yet it was generally hidden from the eyes of the people until God's appointed time to reveal it unto us. Until the time appointed of God for the covenant of faith to come, all true worship of God took place under the law covenant. As we have already been told, this law covenant made no one righteous, but showed us the exceeding sinfulness of sin and showed us that we were under the condemnation of sin and in need of a savior.

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." A schoolmaster is one who takes the children to school. The law was our schoolmaster. The Israelites were given the oracles of God and were much versed in the letter of the law. The law showed the exceeding sinfulness of sin. It also showed the people there was a need for a sacrifice to atone for the sins of the people. The great multitude and types of animal sacrifices had a common message. There was a great need of a perfect sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people. The animal sacrifices could never atone for sin, but brought sin to remembrance and testified of the need of a sacrifice that would atone for sin. Likewise, numerous prophecies of the Old Testament pointed to the coming of one to redeem the family of God and to establish an everlasting kingdom. Furthermore, the types and shadows of the Old Testament testified of the one who was to come. In this manner, the people were brought as a schoolmaster by the law to Christ.

Furthermore, in the heart felt experiences of God's people whether they be by natural Jews or Gentiles, after they are born of the Spirit and God writes his laws in their hearts and minds, they experience the condemnation of sin in their hearts and minds under the moral laws of God. This causes them to search for the answer of how can they get right with God. Thus, the laws written in the hearts and minds of all of God's elect is a schoolmaster also, to lead them to see the need of a redeemer to justify them before God.

That we might be justified by faith." Experiential condemnation takes place in the courtroom of the heart and mind of the child of God. Isaiah related his experience of grace to us in the 6<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Isaiah when wrote about the condemnation he felt in his heart: Is. 6:5 "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." After experiencing this condemnation of heart, he experienced God's deliverance: Is. 6:6 "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a

live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: 7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Christ is in type that live coal from off the altar. The seraphim is in type the gospel minister delivering the gospel message. Notice that the lesson was not that Isaiah does something to get his sin purged, but rather the message was that the live coal (Christ) had already purged his sin. Upon hearing the message of the seraphim, Isaiah was satisfied that his sin was purged. This is justification by faith. Believing in the gospel truth of salvation by grace brings an assurance of salvation (justification) into the heart of the believer.

"But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." Christ fulfilled the law to a jot and a tittle. Jesus Christ satisfied the demands of the law. Christ made the atoning sacrifice for our sins. There is no longer a need for animal sacrifices. Further, all the prophecies of his work and his kingdom are fulfilled. There is no longer a need of a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. Now we worship God in a new covenant of worship that Christ has established for us. This is the faith that was "once delivered unto the saints." We are not to go back under the law and bring elements of the law into our worship or mix them with the doctrine of salvation by grace. There is no place for the "grace, but" doctrine.

### **Gal. 3:26**

Gal. 3:26 "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

The scriptures speak of us being children of God in several different ways. First, we are children of God by covenant election:

1. Heb. 2:13 "And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me."
2. Eph. 1:4 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:"

Second, we are the children of God by Spiritual birth:

1. 1 Pet. 1:23 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
2. John 3:3 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Third, we are the children of God by adoption:

1. Eph. 1:5 "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

2. Rom. 8:23 "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Fourth, we are manifest children of God by faith and good works:

1. John 1:12 "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

2. Matt. 5:44 "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Notice that being manifest children does not make us children, but rather it manifest what we already are. By faith and good works, we manifest the inner spiritual nature of our spiritual birth to the praise, honor, and glory of God. In this manner, we are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

### **Gal. 3:27-29**

Gal. 3:27 "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." While there are many baptisms taught in the scriptures, this baptism is the ceremonial baptism of water baptism. Water baptism represents the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. When someone submits to water baptism, he is saying that he believes that Jesus died for him and that Jesus arose the third day having justified him. Further, he is proclaiming his desire to turn from the former lifestyle to walk in newness of life as the disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has put on Christ as his redeemer, master, and king. He has put on Christ with the desire to be the disciple of Christ in His kingdom.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." In the kingdom of God, there is no distinction between a persons nationality, his earthly position, or his sexual makeup. Thus, we do not observe one thing if we are a Jew, or another thing if we are a Gentile. We do not occupy one position in the church kingdom of heaven if we are a master and another if we are a servant. We come into the kingdom of God as a little child of God desirous to serve our redeemer, lord, and master. All class distinctions disappear in the kingdom of God. The church is the body of Christ and has many members. The many members make up the body of Christ. Thus, we are one in Christ Jesus.

"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Being Christ's precedes being Abraham's seed. We are Christ's by covenant election before the world began. The promise was made to Abraham over two thousand years after the world was created that Abraham's seed would be multiplied as the sand upon the sea shore, and as the dust of the earth. Abraham's seed is defined for us as being

Christ. Thus, we are first Christ's and then we are Abraham's seed. Our inheritance is based on covenant promise before the world began and that covenant promise was confirmed in Abraham. Our inheritance is not based on the works of the law. It is by promise.

### **Gal. 4:1-9**

Gal. 4:1 "Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. 8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. 9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"

"Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father." The word, "servant," comes from the Greek word, "doulos," meaning "bond servant" or "slave." This carries the thought that a child is just like a servant until the time his father determines he can assume his position as the heir of the house. Until that time, he is under the rule, direction and instruction of the father. He is not free until the father sets him free. He differs nothing from a servant until the time appointed of the father. The comparison of a child to a servant until the time appointed of the father is made for both the children of God under the law and Christ who came under the law to redeem his people.

"Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:" The phrase, "under the elements of the world" is defined for us in the text to mean "under the law" (See verse 5). We as children of God were in bondage under the law until the time appointed of the Father. We were not free from that law until the time God determined that we would be made free from that law. We were servants to the law until the time appointed of the Father. We were bond servants to the law.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." The people of God were held in bondage under the law until the time appointed of God. In the fullness of time (at God's appointed time) God sent forth his Son Jesus Christ who was made of a woman and made under the law. Christ laid aside the glory he had with the Father to come to this low ground of sin and sorrow and be made of a woman (virgin birth of Christ; without sin) and to be made under the law. He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill the law: Matt. 5:17 "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Christ kept the law perfectly and in so

doing became the perfect sacrifice for the sins of his people. His people were under the law and Christ came to redeem them that were under the law. Having redeemed them from the bondage of the law, we receive the adoption of sons.

We are by nature the children of Adam and under the curse of the law of sin and death. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law having been made a curse for us as he hung on the tree of the cross. He satisfied Divine justice for us so that we are now judiciously perfect in the eyes of a just and holy God. In order for our bodies to be adopted into the family of God, the price for our sins had to be paid. Christ paid the price for our sins and now we are legally sufficient to be the children of God. The adoption process will be completed and consummated in the resurrection.

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The presence of the Spirit of his Son in our hearts is evidence that we are sons of God. Not only does the Spirit of his Son in our hearts cry Abba, Father, but we also cry Abba, Father: Rom. 8:15 "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Because the Spirit of his Son is in our hearts crying Abba, Father, we having received the Spirit of adoption also now cry, "Abba, Father." The term "Abba, Father" is a term of close endearment. The only other time it is used in the scripture is when Christ cried out in the garden: Mark 14:36 "And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." Because of the redemptive work of Christ and because of the spiritual birth given us by the Holy Spirit we now have that close endearing relationship with God as our Father as Christ had with the Father. "Amazing Grace!"

"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." We are no longer servant (bond slaves) under the law, but now our position before God is that of a son. This also makes us an heir of God through Christ. Truly, God's grace is amazing. We have been taken from being hell deserving creatures and have been made sons of God and joint heirs with Christ. All of this has been given to us by God's amazing grace.

"Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. 9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" In this statement, Paul brings us back to the condition of the Galatian brethren who had turned back under the elements of the law for their attempts at worship. He points out to them that prior to knowing God they did service unto them which by nature are no gods. Their service was unto the world system and to the false religions of the world and their false gods. Yet God, according to his amazing grace, had sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts and made himself known unto them and they consequently knew Him.

Paul then reproves them for turning back to the weak and beggarly elements of the law, which only brings them into bondage. They had turned from a belief in the amazing grace of God whereby Christ had redeemed them from the curse of the law and had turned back into the very law service that had enslaved them.

## **Gal. 4:10-18**

Gal. 4:10 "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. 11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. 12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all. 13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. 14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. 15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. 16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? 17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. 18 But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you."

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years." The brethren at Galatia had gone beyond observing circumcision as a requirement for salvation. They had also adopted many of the elements of the law service under the Old Testament economy. In the New Testament church there is no observation of days, or months, or times, or years. The Old Testament had many elements of observing certain days (Passover day, week of unleavened bread, seventh day Sabbath, Year of Jubilee, Day of Atonement, 7<sup>th</sup> year Sabbath of land, New moons, days of fasting, etc.). Often when a group of people go beyond the gospel of the grace of Christ and adopt the false "grace, but" doctrine they began to take elements of the old law service. Examples of this are tithing, observation of holy days, priestly intercessions, etc.

"I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Paul is not saying that he is afraid of their person, but he is afraid that they have turned so far from the truth that his labour for them in the true gospel of the grace of Christ and of the true worship of God had been in vain.

"Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me." Paul reminds the Galatian brethren of how they had at the first received the gospel of the grace of Christ and the manifest love in which they had received. They knew of Paul's physical infirmities, yet had received him as though an angel of God or even Christ Jesus had preached unto them the grace of Christ. They had rejoiced and had been willing to give to Paul their own eyes if possible to assist Paul with his infirmity.

Paul reminded them of that great joy they had experienced and the attendant love that it made manifest in them and the blessedness that they had spoken of in their joy of hearing the truth that Christ had saved them from their sins by his grace. But if salvation is under the law, then the blessedness of the grace of Christ would have disappeared and all that they had previously experienced would have been in vain.

"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" When people depart from the truth, those who told them the truth and remind them of the truth are often then considered the enemies of those who depart from the truth. Yet, Paul was not

their enemy, but a beloved brother who was trying to show them the error and danger of their departure.

"They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. 18 But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you." The false teachers who taught that you must be circumcised in order to be saved, had invoked a zeal in the Galatian brethren. They had become very zealous of this error. They, no doubt, were zealous proponents of this error, thinking that a person must indeed be circumcised for the grace of God to be effective. The false teachers had excluded them from the truth and in effect from the true church of Jesus Christ.

Zeal is good if it is found in the way of truth and not in error. We need to be zealous for the truth. Zeal for error, however, is not a good thing. Zeal does not make something either true or false. We should be zealous for the truth regardless of whether the preacher is physically present with us or not. We should know if what we are zealous for is the truth or error. If it is error, then we should lay it aside. If it is true, then we should be very zealous for it.

### **Gal. 4:19-21**

Gal. 4:19 "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, 20 I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you. 21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?"

"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." According to the above language, we can conclude that Christ had been previously formed in the Galatian brethren and that he was no longer formed in them and Paul was endeavoring to form Christ in them again. He compared this to a birth in which they had previously been born and needed to be born again. Paul is not speaking here of the new or spiritual birth when we are born of the Spirit of God. Paul is speaking of the brethren having an understanding of the truth of Jesus Christ and what he accomplished for them by his grace. At one time Paul had taught them and they had believed the truth of Jesus Christ and that he had saved them by his grace. They were Paul's children in the true faith of Christ. The truth of Christ had been formed in their minds and hearts. False teachers had come along and deceived them into believing a lie. They no longer believed that Christ had died for their sins and redeemed them to God by his grace alone. They had lost the image in their minds of the truth. The truth of Christ was no longer in the belief system of their mind.

Now Paul was travailing again to teach them the truth of Christ and what he had done for them in redeeming them from their sins by his grace. Paul desired that the truth of Christ would once again be formed in their minds by his preaching and teaching.

"I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you." Paul did not stand in doubt as to whether they were children of God. He had called them little children. He knew that they showed evidences of being born of the Spirit of God. Paul did stand in doubt of their belief of the grace of Christ and that salvation was by grace alone. He stood in doubt of their worshipping God in Spirit and in

truth. They had departed from the truth and he wondered if they would be won back to the truth as they had gone so far under the elements of law service and had rejected the truth. Paul desired to be present with them that he might reason with them once again about the true grace of Christ.

"Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" The law declared that we are under the wrathful judgment of God and that we are sinners and worthy of everlasting destruction from the presence of God and from the glory of his power. It declares that we need a suitable sacrifice to redeem us from our sins. It also shows us that we can never get ourselves right with God, for that we are sinners."

Paul is saying that if we have the knowledge of the law and what it is speaking to us about, then we should not desire to be under the law, but rejoice in salvation by the grace of Christ.

### **Gal. 4:22-31**

Gal. 4:22 "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. 24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. 25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. 26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

27 For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. 28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. 29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. 30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

"For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman." The bondwoman was Hagar, and the freewoman was Sarah. Abraham had Ishmael by the bondwoman, Hagar. He had Isaac by the freewoman, Sarah. Hagar was the bondservant of Sarah. She was under service to Sarah. The son of a bondwoman was himself a bondservant. The son of a freewoman was free. This made Ishmael a bondservant and it made Isaac a freeman.

"But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise." Ishmael the son of Hagar, the bondwoman was born after the flesh. Sarah was barren and of advanced age and did not seem to have the prospect of having children according to nature. God had promised to Abraham that he would multiply his seed and that all nations and families would be blessed in the seed of Abraham. Sarah devised a scheme whereby Abraham could have a son by the bondmaid and thus help God fulfill his promise (of course it was foolish to think that God would ever need any help) that He made concerning the seed of Abraham. Abraham took Hagar to wife and she bore him a son, Ishmael. Ishmael birth was according to the desires and efforts of the flesh.

Contrariwise, the birth of Isaac was by promise. When Abraham was 99 years old and Sarah was 89 years old and the reproductive ability of both was dead, God appeared unto them and told them that "at this set time in the next year" that God would restore unto them the time of life and that Sarah would bear Abraham a son and that his name would be Isaac. In this manner, Isaac's birth was by promise from God and contrary to nature, whereas Ishmael's birth was according to the desires and efforts of the flesh.

"Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." There are several covenants set forth in the scriptures, but only two covenants of worship that God has given. An allegory is something that naturally happened but represents another more important truth. Sarah actually had a child named Isaac by promise from God. Hagar actually had a child named Ishmael according to the flesh. In the allegory, Hagar represents the covenant of worship and service that God made with the children of Israel at Mount Sinai and she is represented by Jerusalem, which now is, and the children that attempt to worship God under this law covenant that are in bondage to the law covenant. Sarah represented the covenant of grace that the Lord established for worship in this New Testament age. She is referred to as Jerusalem, which is above, is free, and is the mother of us all. This covenant of grace, under which we worship God in Spirit and in truth is set forth for us in Rom. 8:29, 30: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." We are all children of God according to this covenant of grace.

"For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband." This was written in Isa. 54:1-3 "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." It is apparent that the term "desolate" is referring to the Gentiles. The Israelites were married to the law covenant in the Old Testament dispensation. The Gentiles worshipped idols and as such had no lawful husband.

In contrast, now the Gentiles have been brought into the true worship of God and there are many more that are married to the true worship of God than those who previously were married to the law service. Today there are many more Gentiles who worship God in Spirit and in truth than there are Israelites who worship God in Spirit and in truth.

"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." In order to see how that we are children of promise, it is important that we see how Isaac was a child of promise. Isaac was a child of promise in the following ways:

1. Isaac's birth was promised beforehand of God.

2. Isaac's birth was contrary to nature. The reproductive ability of both Abraham and Sarah according to Romans chapter four was dead. According to nature neither was able to have children. Thus, the birth of Isaac had to be brought about by God.

3. Isaac was born at God's appointed time and not man's time. God said that at this set time in the next year that Sarah would bear Abraham a son and that his name would be called Isaac.

Similarly, our spiritual birth is like Isaac's natural birth. Our spiritual birth is like Isaac's in the following ways:

1. Our spiritual birth was promised beforehand of God in the covenant of redemption. Those that God foreknew or chose before the foundation of the world, he also predestinated, called, justified, and glorified. Thus, God promised to cause all that he chose before the foundation of the world to be called into spiritual life in the new birth. This promise was made before the foundation of the world.

2. Our spiritual birth was contrary to nature. Eph. 2:1-5 shows us how that our spiritual birth was contrary to nature: Eph. 2:1-5 "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" We were spiritually dead in trespasses and sins. Without spiritual life we could do nothing to bring about our spiritual birth or even assist in our spiritual birth. Our spiritual birth was contrary to nature.

3. Our spiritual birth was at God's appointed time. The Lord taught us this lesson in John 3:8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Just as the wind is sovereign in its actions toward us so God is sovereign in bringing about the spiritual birth. We are born at our sovereign God's appointed time and not in our time or in someone else's time.

In the above, three ways our spiritual birth is like Isaac's birth.

"But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." Just as Ishmael persecuted Isaac, so those born after the flesh persecute those who are born after the Spirit. This lesson is also taught us in the case of Cain and Abel. Abel brought forth for worship that which represented Christ. Cain brought forth the works of his hands. God had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but had not respect unto Cain and his offering. Cain became angry and slew his brother Abel. Why? Because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous. Similarly, those who worship under a legalistic works system persecute those who worship under the covenant of grace. The Pharisees and the Sadducees sought to destroy those who worshipped God according to the gospel of the grace of Christ.

"Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." Clearly, this teaches us that we should cast out the covenant of the law made at Mount Sinai as a

means to worship God. You cannot mix works and grace. Bringing in circumcision into the worship of God under the covenant of grace is the same as bringing in the bondwoman and her son. True worship today is not found under the principles of the law covenant, but is found under the teachings of the covenant of grace. We are heirs of God by grace according to the covenant of redemption. We are not heirs of God according to the works of the law. Thus, we are to cast out the legalistic works system and all legalistic works systems and worship God under the covenant of grace.

"So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." We are free from the legalistic works system and no longer need to do something in order to get eternal life. We are not under a "grace, but" doctrine, but we are free according to the covenant of redemption and have no need to do something to get right with God, but rather we praise, honor, and glorify God for what he has already done for us under the covenant of grace, and for what he is doing for us under the covenant of grace, and for what he will yet do for us under the covenant of grace. Praise be to God for his unsearchable riches.

### **Gal. 5:1-4**

Gal. 5:1 "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. 2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. 3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. 4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Christ has made us free from the law of sin and death: Rom. 8:2 "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." We are no longer under the condemnation of the law or the bondage of the law. We will also be delivered from the corruption of our flesh nature through the covenant promise of Christ. Further, we are no longer under the bondage of worship and service under the law covenant, because Christ has fulfilled it for us. We may now worship God in Spirit and in truth. We are free from the condemnation of heart that we had before we came to the knowledge of the truth and now realize that Jesus has saved us from our sins. With the freedom that we have because of what Christ has done for us and to us and the knowledge of salvation that he has given us and the faith that he has delivered to us, we should stand fast and not go back under the bondage of legalism and law worship. Anyone who tries to get right with God through their own efforts or according to some legalistic system is in bondage to legalism and is not free to the knowledge of the truth. The Lord said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

"Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." If circumcision could make us free from the bondage, corruption, and condemnation of sin, then what purpose did Christ's coming and sacrificial atonement serve. If I could do something to make myself right with God, then there was no reason for Christ to come and redeem me. If my efforts are required to make me free from sin, then Christ is of no profit to me. However, of course, Christ is our salvation and we can

do nothing to make ourselves free from sin. Circumcision cannot make us free from sin nor assist in making us free from sin.

"For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." The law required perfection. To keep one part of the law, but fail to keep another part of the law rendered us guilty of the whole law: James 2:8 "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: 9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. 10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. 11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." Therefore, if we seek righteousness through keeping the law, then we must keep the whole law perfectly. We cannot just add circumcision and leave off the rest of the law, but if we are circumcised, then we are debtor to keep the whole law, if we desire to obtain righteousness through the works of the law.

However, it is impossible for us to obtain righteousness through the keeping of the law. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is none righteous, not not one.

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Anyone who thinks that he is justified by the keeping of the law, has no place for Christ, even if they use the name in their attempts at worship. They believe that eternal salvation is dependent on what they do and not totally dependent on Christ. Christ has become of no effect unto them. They are fallen from grace. That does not mean that they are fallen from being embraced by the grace of God, but it means that they have **fallen from a belief in salvation by grace**. The vast majority of Christ professing people have through their ignorance gone under a "grace, but" doctrine and therefore are fallen from a belief in salvation by grace alone. They are under the bondage of a religious works system.

## Gal. 5:5, 6

Gal. 5:5 "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."

The hope of righteousness is the hope of the resurrection of our bodies to be conformed to the image of Christ and to be housed in the glory world. This hope is set forth for us in Rom. 8:23 "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. 24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

We have this hope through covenant promise from God: Tit. 1:2 "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."

"For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." This verse implies that we have the Spirit and we do because of the new or spiritual birth. Further, it implies that we are waiting for something, which we are. We are waiting for the hope of

righteousness in the resurrection. As we have already noted, this hope is a result of God's covenant promise. By faith, that was imparted unto us in the new birth, we wait for this hope of righteousness. Our faith is not the cause of our obtaining the resurrection, but is the means by which we embrace the covenant promise of God. By faith that was given to us in the new birth, we wait for the hope of righteousness.

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." The word, "availeth," comes from a Greek word, "ischuo," and means "can do." So in Jesus Christ neither circumcision can do anything, nor uncircumcision. This teaches us that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any availing properties in the worship and service of Jesus Christ. What does avail in the worship and service of Jesus Christ is faith. This is the faith that is the fruit of the Spirit and of which we have as a result of being born of the Spirit. In the worship and service of God, we should walk by faith. This faith manifests itself by love. We have this love because of the new birth. Love also is a fruit of the Spirit.

### **Gal. 5:7-12**

Gal. 5:7 "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? 8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. 9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. 10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. 11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. 12 I would they were even cut off which trouble you."

There are several points that we can make from the above passage of scripture:

1. The Galatian brethren at one time believed and held to the truth of salvation by grace alone.
2. The Galatian brethren had been persuaded to turn from the truth to believe that circumcision was necessary to be saved from sin.
3. This persuasion by false brethren was not of God who had called them to spiritual life. The men who were doing the persuading were false teachers and not under the leadership of God.
4. Just one legalistic requirement (leaven) leavens the doctrine of salvation by grace so that it is no longer salvation by grace alone. The whole lump is leavened by one legalistic requirement.
5. Paul had confidence that the Lord would lead the brethren out of their error and back to a knowledge of the truth.
6. Further, Paul believed that God would judge the false teacher, who had persuaded the brethren to believe a lie, for what he did.
7. Paul pointed out that he suffered persecution from those who hold to a legalistic works system. If Paul had preached circumcision then he would logically not suffer persecution from those who hold to a legalistic works system.
8. Paul desired that the false teachers be cut off from the brethren of Galatia.

## Gal. 5:13-18

Gal. 5:13 "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."

"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty." This is true both with the effectual call of the Holy Spirit and of the gospel call to repentance and service. The effectual call delivers us from the law of sin and death. It imparts a new nature within us that enables us to understand the things of the Spirit of God and to seek after God. It delivers us from the bondage of our fleshly sin nature. In this fleshly sin nature, we are dead in trespasses and sins, unable to seek after God, unable to understand the things of the Spirit of God, unable to fear God, unable to do good, and unable to cease from sin. Thus, the effectual call of the Holy Spirit that causes us to be born of the Spirit of God brings forth a nature whereby we can cry, "Abba, Father." We can do good, we can seek God, we can understand the things of the Spirit of God, we can walk uprightly, and we can worship God in Spirit and in truth.

The gospel call to repentance and service delivers the born-again children of God from false doctrines, from false worship, from many pitfalls in our daily lives, from the errors of ignorance, from sinful practices, from personal destruction in our lives, in the lives of our families, and it leads us unto the true worship and true service of God. Therefore, the effectual call of the Holy Spirit and the gospel call to repentance and service give us liberty that we would never have without these calls.

"Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh." Paul addresses this issue more fully in the book of Romans. Romans 3:5-8 "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just."

Our unrighteousness does not commend the righteousness of God. God does take vengeance on unrighteousness. Further, we should not expect that by doing evil that good will come. It is dishonoring to the Lord who saved us from our sins for us to use our liberty for an occasion to the flesh. While it is true that we are saved by God's grace and that our sins will not prevent us from the glory world, yet it is also true that God chastens us for disobedience. We, also, reap what we sow in this life. If we sow to the flesh, then we shall of the flesh reap corruption. Do we want to honor God in this life and reap the blessings of obedience in this life? or do we want to sow to the flesh and reap corruption and misery in this life?

"But by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Our motivation to worship and serve God is not out of fleshly fear of what will happen to us in eternity if we fail to live up to some

standard that man has set, but our motivation to worship and serve God is because of the love of God manifest towards us. Based on this motivation of God's love, we are to manifest our love to God by loving our neighbor and serving one another. Our attention to the law is not to give us salvation from sin or to show us what we can do to get right with God. We fulfill the spirit of the law when we love our neighbor as our self. Love is the fulfilling of the law.

"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." Biting and devouring one another is a carnal, fleshly action. It leads to destruction of families, to churches, and to our joy and peace in this life. If we, as members of the church, bite and devour one another, then we should fully expect that the fellowship, joy, peace, comfort, and rest that we have in the gospel would be consumed by our biting and devouring of one another.

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." All that have been born of the Spirit of God have a two-fold nature. We have a spiritual nature that cannot sin and we have a fleshly nature in which dwells no good thing. We are not to attempt to tame or change the flesh, but we are to mortify the deeds of the flesh. We are to bring our bodies into subjection. Only by walking (living our life by the leadership of the Spirit) in the Spirit, can we mortify the deeds of the flesh and bring our bodies into subjection to the spiritual inner man. So long as we walk in the Spirit, we are not fulfilling the lust of the flesh. Once we start walking in the flesh, we are fulfilling the lust of the flesh.

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." We are admonished to take up our crosses daily. We have a cross between the Spirit and the flesh. These two natures are contrary to one another. We will have this warfare until we pass from this life unto death of the body and the going forth of the soul and the spirit unto God.

"But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." The law condemns the actions of the flesh. When we walk by the Spirit, we fulfill the spirit of the law in love. However, we are assured that if we are led of the Spirit that we are not under the law, but under the grace of God. The law can no longer condemn us. Christ has fulfilled the law on our behalf.

### **Gal. 5:19-21**

Gal. 5:19 "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

In the above passage, there are seventeen specifically named works of the flesh along with the statement "and such like." Since all of the specifically named works of the flesh are condemned in the scriptures and are sin, then the "and such like" must also be condemned by the scriptures and are sin.

Thus, we conclude that all the works of the flesh are sinful works. Yet, nearly every denominational Christian religion has a part of their belief system that man in the flesh must do something in order to be born of the Spirit and to be saved from his sins. For the flesh to bring about the new or spiritual birth and to cause one to be saved from his sins, would require a sinful work to bring about the new spiritual birth and salvation from sin. This is impossible. Paul said, "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." If in our flesh dwells no good thing and our flesh is incapable of doing good, then our flesh cannot bring about the new birth or cause us to be saved from our sins.

Another consequence of our fleshly actions is that, as long as, we walk after the flesh we cannot possess (inherit) the church (kingdom of God) while we live in this life. Only by mortifying the lust of the flesh are we capable of possessing the church while we live in this life.

### **Gal. 5:22, 23**

Gal. 5:22 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

It is a law of nature that you must have a tree before a tree can bear fruit. The fruit of a tree cannot be borne when there is no tree. Now all of this is obvious. Yet, many today seem to fail to grasp that which is so obvious. You must first have the Spirit before you can bear the fruit of the Spirit. The flesh cannot bear the fruit of the Spirit. You must be born of the Spirit before you can bear the fruit of the Spirit.

As Jesus said in Luke: Luke 6:43 "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 44 For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. 45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh."

By comparing the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit it is obvious that the works of the flesh relate to an evil tree (flesh) bringing forth evil fruit (works of the flesh). Likewise, the fruit of the Spirit relate to a good tree (spirit) bringing forth good fruit (fruit of the Spirit).

Many people today say that you must have faith in order to be born of the Spirit. The problem is that faith is a fruit of the Spirit. You must have been born of the Spirit in order to have faith (the fruit of the Spirit). Faith cannot be the cause of the spiritual birth. The spiritual birth is the cause of faith.

Furthermore, you show me someone who is manifesting the love of God, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, or temperance and I will show you someone who is already born of the Spirit of God. The spirit brings forth these fruits, not the other way around.

"Against such there is no law." Nowhere in the scriptures do we find a law that forbids or is against a person manifesting "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, or temperance. There is no law against manifesting spiritual fruit. In contrast, all the works of the flesh are forbidden in the scriptures.

## **Gal. 5:24-26**

Gal. 5:24 "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

"And they that are Christ's" is not talking about those who are Christ's by covenant election as many of the elect have not yet been born of the Spirit of God. Further, "And they that are Christ's" is not talking about the spiritual birth as many who have been born of the Spirit have not yet come unto a knowledge of the truth. However, "And they that are Christ's" is speaking to us about those who have believed in Christ and his covenant work. They are Christ's by their belief in salvation from their sins by the sacrificial atonement of Christ and by his grace. These that are Christ's in this manner have, in their belief system in their heart and mind, have impaled on the cross the works of the flesh with the affections and lust. Thus, in the belief system of our minds and hearts, our flesh has been crucified with Christ and we have been made righteous by the blood of Christ.

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." The word, "if," is not intended to call in question whether we live in the Spirit or not, but is used as the basis of a rational statement. It would do the meaning of the sentence no harm to say "since we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." We live in the Spirit because we have been born of the Spirit. We have spiritual life because of being born of the Spirit. Paul is teaching us that since we have eternal life through the new birth by the Spirit of God, then we should also walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. Our manner of living should be to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in our daily lives. We should not strive to fulfill the lust of the flesh in our daily lives.

"Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." The desire for vain (empty) glory in this life is a work of the flesh. It is the manifestation of pride. Everywhere in the scriptures, pride is condemned. We are not to be proud. We should not desire to receive the praise and honor of men for our works. Further, we should not provoke or envy one another. These too are works of the flesh. The flesh gets a carnal thrill out of provoking others to wrath. This is wrong. We should encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ unto good works and to honoring and glorifying God for his love's sake. Likewise, we should not be envious of one another. Whatever gift someone else has or work that someone else has done that is pleasing and honoring to God is of God. Moreover, we should not envy one another for their worldly possessions or positions. Having food and raiment, we should be content with such things that we have. This is pleasing and honoring to God.

## **Gal. 6:1**

Gal. 6:1 "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

Paul is writing the book of Galatians to the churches of Galatia. Thus, we conclude that the above statement is a church responsibility bestowed on the members of

the church. Every one of us is subject to being overtaken in a fault. Thus, any of us may at times need to be restored. The Greek word for fault is "paraptoma." It means a side-slip (lapse or deviation). It can be anything from an unintentional error to a willful transgression. It includes falls, faults, offences, sins, and trespasses. The thought of being overtaken in a fault is that some sin, or offence, or trespass overtakes us and we become prey to it and follow after it. We cannot continue in these things and remain members in good standing in the church. We lose fellowship with the fellow members of the church when we are overtaken in a fault and continue therein. We have need of restoration when we are overtaken in a fault.

There is a right way and a wrong way in which to try to restore someone when they are overtaken in a fault. The wrong way is to approach the brother with pride that we are not overtaken in the fault and that we are somehow doing better than they because of the fact that we are not overtaken in that fault. This leads to self-righteous condemnation of the brother who is overtaken in a fault. Rather than restoring the brother, we will in fact drive him away from us with this attitude.

The right way to restore a brother that is overtaken in a fault is to approach them with the spirit of meekness. To approach in the spirit of meekness means that we must be meek and realize whom we really are. We are sinners saved by the grace of God. It is much easier for us to have a meek attitude when we do not think of ourselves being better than others are. Paul's attitude concerning himself and his relationship with others is one that we all should adopt. The following three passages of scripture show forth Paul's view of himself:

1. Eph. 3:8 "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;"

2. 1 Tim. 1:15 "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

3. 1 Cor 15:9 "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."

Thus, Paul viewed himself as being less than the least of all saints, as being the chief of sinners, and as being the least of the apostles. When we have such a view of ourselves then we address the actions of others with the mind that we are not better than they are. It is with this view of ourselves that we can restore a brother who is overtaken in a fault. Now we are approaching him as a brother in Christ and that we are alike sinners saved by the grace of Christ.

## **Gal. 6:2**

Gal. 6:2 "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

What is the law of Christ? The Lord was asked one time, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? (Matt. 22:36)" Jesus answered the man this way, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Later, the Lord gave a new commandment: John 13:34 "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye

also love one another." Therefore, to love one another as Christ has loved us is the law of Christ. The following verses reinforce this truth:

1. John 15:12 "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."
2. John 15:17 "These things I command you, that ye love one another."
3. Rom. 13:8 "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."
4. 1 Th. 4:9 "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."
5. 1 Pet 1:22 "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:"
6. 1 John 3:11 "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."
7. 1 John 3:23 "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."
8. 1 John 4:7 "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."
9. 1 John 4:11 "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."
10. 1 John 4:12 "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."
11. 2 John 1:5 "And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another."

We conclude that to love one another as Christ has loved us is the law of Christ. Since we are to bear one another's burdens, we first notice how Christ bore our burdens. We had a burden of sin-guiltiness because of the sin of Adam and because of our sins. We, thus, had a burden of condemnation before God and rightfully so. We had a burden of being dead in trespasses and sins and being completely unable to deliver ourselves or even desiring to deliver ourselves. In addition, we have a burden of the corruption of the flesh and a date with the undertaker.

Jesus came to bear our burden of sin-guiltiness on the cross and to deliver us from the condemnation of God's wrathful judgment. This he did when he was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Further, Jesus delivered us from the burden of being dead in trespasses and sins, when he quickened us into spiritual life in the new birth. Thus, he gave us the ability to know God, to seek after God, to understand the things of the Spirit, to serve God, to worship God in Spirit and in truth, and to do good.

Moreover, Jesus will deliver us from the corruption of our flesh and our date with the undertaker as he comes in the morning of the resurrection and as the great uppertaker changes our vile bodies to be conformed to his perfect body and to take us up into heaven's glory world destroying the last enemy, death.

In addition, Christ helps us with our timely burdens as well. 1 Pet. 5:7 "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." Job 5:19 "He shall deliver thee in six

troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." Phil. 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

We note that when Jesus bears our burdens, he does it by his grace. He does not wait until we are worthy for him to bear our burdens, but he bears them when we are completely unworthy.

Next, the love of Christ is sacrificial. John 15:13 "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." When Jesus came to bear our burdens there were some things that he sacrificed:

1. He laid aside the glory that he had with the Father before the world began: John 17:5 "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

2. He laid aside his will to do the will of the Father: John 6:37 "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

3. He laid down his life for his people: John 10:15 "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. 17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

Furthermore, we are inseparable from the love of Christ: Rom. 8:35 "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

To fulfill the law of Christ, we are to bear one another's burdens. The law of Christ is that we are to love one another as Christ has loved us. Thus, we are to bear one another's burdens not according to the value of worth that they may or may not have toward us. Our bearing of our brothers and sisters burdens is not based on whether their personality meshes with ours or whether it clashes with ours. We are to bear one another's burdens as Christ bore our burdens. We were not worthy yet he loved us and bore our burdens. Therefore, we are to bear our brothers and sisters burdens even if we feel they are unworthy of us doing so.

Next, our love to our brothers and sisters is to be sacrificial just as Christ's love to us is sacrificial. We are to be willing to give of ourselves regardless of what it cost us. We are not to hold back from helping our brother or sister because we are saving up for that new car or that new television. 1 John 3:17 "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

Moreover, as we cannot be separated from the love of Christ's, our love to our brothers and sisters is to continue throughout our lifetime without interruption. Therefore, we are to assist them in their burdens so long as we live.

There are many burdens that each of us has from time to time in our lives. Sometimes, we need help with our timely needs such as food, clothing, necessities, or other financial problems. Sometimes, we need a shoulder to cry upon or someone to listen to us. Sometimes, we need someone to pray for us due to sickness, death, or family problems. Sometimes, we need advice for problems and troubles. Sometimes, we need someone to correct us or encourage us. We are to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

### **Galatians 6:3**

Gal. 6:3 "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."

Oftentimes there is a gap between what we think ourselves to be and what we really are. If we think ourselves to be something more than what we really are then we are practicing self-deception. We are not being honest with our self.

What we are in nature is nothing. This is proven by the following scriptures:

1. Rom. 7:18 "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."

2. Rom. 3:9 "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17 And the way of peace have they not known: 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes."

3. Eph. 3:8 "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;"

Elsewhere, Paul tells us through the leadership of the Spirit:

1. Rom. 12:3 "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

2. 1 Cor. 4:6 "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."

To think of ourselves more highly than what we are is to be lifted up in pride and self-righteousness. This leads to arrogance, deploring of others, consternation at the sins of others and all kinds of wicked thoughts and actions.

The proper way for us to think of ourselves is that we are poor-wretched hell-deserving sinners saved by the grace of God. In addition, Paul advised us: 1 Tim 1:15

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

### **Gal. 6:4, 5**

Gal. 6:4 "But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5 For every man shall bear his own burden."

There are many things that the scriptures tell us to prove:

1. Rom. 12:2 "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

2. 2 Cor. 8:8 "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love."

3. 2 Cor. 13:5 "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

4. Gal. 6:4 "But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."

5. 1 Th. 5:21 "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

The above text tells us that we are to prove our own work. To prove means to examine, to test, or to try. Each of us has a work that is assigned to us of the Holy Spirit. While there are different spiritual gifts given to us in the scriptures and these gifts are categorized, yet the work within each gift can and often does vary from person to person. As a gospel minister, I have a gift to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. However, many men are called by God to be gospel ministers and to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The work of many of the gospel ministers varies somewhat or a lot from the work of other gospel ministers. While every true God-called gospel minister should preach the same gospel and adhere to the same faith that was once delivered to the saints, yet many things can vary about the work of each one. For instance, I presently pastor a church at Denton, Texas. I do not know of any other Primitive Baptist preacher that has been called to pastor a church at Denton, Texas. For each pastor of each church, there are a different set of people, and a different set of circumstances of the members, and a different set of spiritual gifts for those members, and a different set of natural and spiritual needs of each congregation. In addition, the places that each minister may be called to go preach, and the messages at any specific time most often varies. Further, each minister has a preaching talent that varies from other preachers. Moreover, the preaching style of one preacher often varies from the preaching style of another preacher.

The things that can be said of the gospel ministers can also be said of the other members of each congregation. We do not all have the same spiritual gifts, nor is the work of each member the same identically to the work of other members. We all have different talents, different fields of labor, and different circumstances in which we labor.

In summary, we all have our own work or labor. My work or labor is not identical to another man's work or labor. Further, the Lord called me to pastor the church at Denton, Texas. He did not call someone else to pastor the church at Denton, Texas. Pastoring Denton Primitive Baptist church is my field of labor and not someone else's

field of labor. Only I can fulfill the work that God has assigned me. If I fail to fulfill the work, He may call someone else to do that work, but it will be to my detriment if that happens. I am to prove my own work.

To prove my own work, I need to be certain that the Spirit has assigned the work to me and that I am doing the work according to the word of God. I need the grace and mercy of God to do the work assigned and I need the leadership of the Holy Spirit to be able to do the work assigned. Since, this work is assigned to me, then I should not look to some other man to do the work for me. This burden is assigned to me. Now I know the Lord is my helper and I cannot do anything without Him. But, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

If I do the work that the Spirit has assigned to me, and I do it according to the leadership of the Spirit and in harmony with the word of God, then when it pleases God he will bless me to rejoice in the fruit of the work. He will bless my heart with a "well-done, thou good and faithful servant." This is the joy that is given us in serving the Lord and doing his bidding.

## Gal. 6:6

Gal. 6:6 "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."

Plainly, this is teaching that the student is to communicate unto the teacher in all good things. The teacher spends a lot of time in studying and prayer and in teaching those whom the Lord has led them to. To be a teacher and preacher of the gospel and the word of God requires a lot of time and sacrifice on the part of the gospel minister. Countless hours are spent on studying and reading and meditating on the scriptures and many hours are spent in prayer asking God to reveal his truths unto the preacher. Further, the gospel preacher spends much time going to the meeting places and often under hazardous conditions in order to preach and teach the word. He makes many sacrifices, including sacrificing time and effort away from his wife and children in order that others may be blest to hear the gospel preached. He also, often, suffers the persecution of unbelievers and scoffers and religious and secular organizations that oppose the preaching of the grace of Christ. He does these things because of the love of Christ and that: 2 Tim. 2:10 "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

The word, **communicate**, appears in the New Testament three other times beside the above:

1. Phil 4:14 "Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did **communicate** with my affliction. 15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. 16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. 17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. 18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God."

2. 1 Tim. 6:17 "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to **communicate**; 19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

3. Heb. 13:16 "But to do good and to **communicate** forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

The word, communicate, comes from the Greek word, koinoneo, meaning to share with others, distribute.

Paul tells us of the importance of communicating unto the needs of the gospel minister in 1 Cor. 9:7-14: "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."

While the scriptures do not teach anywhere that a minister of the gospel should be salaried, yet the teaching is plain that those who are taught in the word have a loving responsibility to communicate unto those who teach the word. Paul said that this is a sacrifice that is acceptable and well-pleasing unto God.

### **Gal. 6:7-10**

Gal. 6:7 "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. 9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

There are many lessons taught us in this passage of scripture. First, we are taught that we not to deceive ourselves: "Be not deceived." Many people deceive themselves into thinking that in going through the ceremonies of religion that they are doing what is pleasing to God. They take no thought of the type of lives they are living, but think that ceremonial exercises are all that God requires. In Matthew chapter 23, the Lord warned the Pharisees, scribes and hypocrites about the hypocrisy of ceremonial religion without a change in their manner of living. A portion of this passage is quoted below:

Matt. 23:23 "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law,

judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. 24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. 25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. 27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. 28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

Second, we are told that "God is not mocked." To be mocked means to be ridiculed. God does not take kindly to the ridicule of men. A person who ridicules God can fully expect to receive of God's timely judgment upon him for such blasphemous behavior. The grandson of King Nebuchadnezzar mocked the service of God and was destroyed in the very night that he mocked.

Third, we are told that we reap what we sow. This is a natural truth that teaches us an important spiritual lesson. In nature, what we plant in the ground is what we can expect to come up out of the ground. If we plant watermelon seeds, we do not expect carrots to come up. We expect watermelon seeds sown in the ground will bring forth watermelon plants. Another lesson in nature is that we reap where we sow. I have never sown seed in one plot of ground and reaped the fruit of those seed in another plot of ground. We reap where we sow! Thus, we sow in this time world, and we reap in this time world. We do not sow in this time world, and then reap in the glory world. That would violate the law of nature.

When we sow to our flesh nature, we will reap the fruit of that flesh nature. Gal. 5:19-21 told us the fruit or work of the flesh. All the fruit or work of the flesh is sinful. To sow to the flesh means that we will reap the corruptible fruit of sin.

Furthermore, if we sow to the incorruptible nature of the inner man that is born of God, then we will reap the fruit of that everlasting life given us in the new birth. That fruit we are told in Gal. 5:22, 23 is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance."

Obviously, the best and most God-honoring life of a child of God is for him to sow to the Spirit. This will result in praise, honor, and glory to God, and will result in him bearing the fruit and blessings of the Spirit.

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." It is true that we do not always immediately see the results of our reaping to the Spirit. This is also true in nature. In nature, there is a planting season that is followed by a growing season, and then a reaping season. The fact is that the good that we do and the seed that we sow spiritually often need to be allowed to grow and then it will bear fruit in due season. If, however, we give up (faint) before the fruit is produced, then we will not see the fruit of our labors that we began. We need to be patient and then we will reap as the Lord has promised us.

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." It is true that we do not always have opportunity to do good. If we do not have opportunity, then we cannot do the good that we may desire to do. However, when we have opportunity, then we should be prepared to do good and then do it unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of

faith. The problem so many of us have is that we have opportunity and means and then fail to do the good that we should. We should put away pride and greed and help those in need:

1. 1 John 3:17 "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

2. James 2:15 "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?"

### **Gal. 6:12-15**

Gal. 6:12 "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. 13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. 14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. 15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

People's actions are often predicated upon their motives. Those who had taught that you are saved by the grace of Christ, but you must be circumcised did not desire to suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. They found that by changing the message from the grace of Christ to what man can do, that it eliminated the persecution of the Jews and the religious and secular leaders. This suited them well. However, it is not honoring to Christ.

Their system made a fair show in the flesh. It appealed to the fleshly nature of man. It touted what man could do to get right with God. It ignored that it is impossible for man to get right with God. Only God can make us right with Him. Even today, with the myriad of "grace, but" doctrines that are being taught, they all exalt man and what they say that man can do. It excites the flesh. People get excited in hearing these false doctrines telling them how much man can do to get himself saved from sin.

These people glory in the flesh and its actions. They glory that they have fulfilled a ceremonial set of rules and they glory in other people fulfilling those same ceremonial set of rules.

The fact is that the law requires perfection and we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. None of us has ever kept the law to perfection. We have not kept the law nor do those who are taught in a legalistic system have kept the law. Yet there is the glory of man in the actions of the flesh in keeping a set of rules devised by man.

We have no room to glory in the flesh. The only thing that we can truly glory in is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. This boasting is not of self, but is boasting of what Christ has done for us in that he redeemed us from our sins on the cross. We who believe in salvation by grace alone boast of what Christ has done. Those who believe in a "grace, but" doctrine boast in what man does. Man will say, "I believed and therefore I got saved," or "I accepted the Lord as my personal savior and therefore I got saved," or "I

believed, I accepted the Lord, and I was baptized and therefore I got saved." This is all boasting in the actions of men. In contrast, those who believe the bible truth that salvation from sin is by grace alone will say, "I was a depraved, hell-deserving sinner, and Christ saved me by his grace alone through his atoning sacrifice on the cross." This gives all the praise to Christ.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." The "new creature" is the result of the work of Christ in "regeneration." Whether a person is circumcised or uncircumcised will not make a man a new creature. Only Christ by his grace can make a man a new creature. This is all that avails in the eyes of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

### **Gal. 6:16**

Gal. 6:16 "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

The word, rule, means a standard (of faith and practice). The Greek word for walk is "stoicheo" which means "to march in rank." Thus, to walk according to this rule literally means to march in rank according to this standard of faith and practice. Paul is telling us that we are to march in rank with the standard of salvation by grace alone and that our practice should not incorporate elements of the old law service.

Further, Paul tells us that all of us that walk according to this rule, will experience the peace of God that passes understanding and the tender mercy of God will be manifest to us in our lives as it will be upon all the "Israel of God."

The Israel of God has meant different things in different ages. During the Old Testament economy, God had made a covenant of worship with the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that as a nation composed the nation of Israel. God made this covenant with them on Mt. Sinai. This was the Old law covenant.

In Romans chapter nine, Israel is defined there as the spiritual born children of God regardless of their race or ethnic background: Rom. 9:6 "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." This use of Israel embraces all the elect family of God.

In this current New Testament economy of worship, Israel is defined as those who worship God in Spirit and in truth under the New Testament: Heb. 8:8-12 "For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their

unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Thus, the Israel of God Paul is referring to above is the Lord's church kingdom in this New Testament age.

It is here in the New Testament church that we as God's covenant people find peace and mercy in worshipping God in Spirit and in truth.

### **Gal. 6:17**

Gal. 6:17 "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

Paul had marks in his natural body that were evidences of the fact that he did not preach any other gospel other than the "grace of Christ." Had he perverted the true gospel of the grace of Christ and preached a "grace, but" doctrine he would not have suffered the persecutions that he did. However Paul willingly suffered for the cause of Christ that he might honor and glorify the name of his blessed Redeemer.

Some of the things that Paul suffered for the cause of Christ are listed in the following verses:

1. 2 Cor. 11:23 "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. 24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? 30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities."

2. 2 Cor. 1:6 "And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation."

3. Gal. 5:11 "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased."

4. Phil. 3:8 "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,"

5. 1 Th. 2:2 "But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention."

6. 1 Th. 3:4 "For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know."

7. Acts 9:15 "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

Likewise, Paul told us that all who will live Godly in Christ Jesus can expect to suffer persecution: 2 Tim. 3:12 "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

## Gal. 6:18

Gal. 6:18 "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen."

Grace is the closing signature in each of Paul's epistles:

1. Rom. 16:24 "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."
2. 1 Cor. 16:23 "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."
3. 2 Cor. 13:14 "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."
4. Eph. 6:24 "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."
5. Phil. 4:23 "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."
6. Col. 4:18 "The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen."
7. 1 Th. 5:28 "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."
8. 2 Th. 3:18 "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."
9. 1 Tim. 6:21 "Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen."
10. 2 Tim. 4:22 "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen."
11. Titus 3:15 "All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen."
12. Phile. 1:25 "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen."
13. Heb. 13:25 "Grace be with you all. Amen."

With each signature concerning God's grace, Paul punctuated it with the word, "Amen" meaning surely, beyond doubt. There is no reason to doubt God's grace.