

# PAULINE THEOLOGY



By E.C. Bragg

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## PREFACE

There are two primary purposes in offering to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ another book on Pauline Theology.

First, there is a real need of a new emphasis on Paul's particular teachings on the subject of Christian victory: the fact that a believer may and should be filled with the Holy Spirit; that, in fact, God commands it; and that a believer will be judged by Christ for the defeat in his Christian life if he does not go on in his experience to spiritual manhood, "to grow up into Christ in all things" (Ephesians 4:15). Paul is the great revelator of the believer's riches in Christ.

Second, there is a further need for a criterion, a touchstone, to determine just what church truth is. The church has always had, and now has much more, conflicting and contradictory teachings advanced, with scriptural proofs, heralded as church doctrine. Is there a real criterion? Paul says emphatically, "Yes." It is his own epistles, given unto him by "revelation of Jesus Christ." He pronounces an anathema upon any deviation from that by angels, men or even himself. This he does on the authority that "a dispensation was committed to him" and that he was "the apostle to the Gentiles," and that "he was put in trust with the gospel." Throughout this volume we shall enlarge upon this theme: "Go to Paul's epistles to get your church doctrine."

We trust this volume will be found beneficial as a textbook on Pauline Theology. It is perforce only an outline study, allowing much room for classroom enlargement. We dedicate it to the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and commit it to the Holy Spirit's trust.

Dr. Ervane C. Bragg  
Trinity College, Dunedin, FL  
February 27, 1974

## INTRODUCTION

Pauline Theology is not just another course in Pauline Epistles, nor is it an extension of Systematic Theology. As compared with Pauline Epistles, Pauline Theology does not go into the life and journeys of Paul, nor does it outline the doctrines and purpose of each of his epistles. There is a natural overlapping in places, as all seminary work does. But Pauline Theology goes into the specific teachings of Paul as the great revelator to the church. It systematizes his theology and it defends his unique position as "*the apostle to the Gentiles*" and revelator of church doctrine. The definite article "the" means singularity as opposed to the more indefinite article "a;" hence, it is a defense of Paul's unique apostleship and gospel. In fact, it is preferred that the student first became familiar with Paul's epistles through a careful reading of them before undertaking this particular course. A familiarity with Paul's general position and epistles will enhance this study. As compared with Systematic Theology, Pauline Theology takes up where it leaves off. It goes deeper into the riches of God's revelation to the church, "*the better things which God provided us*" (Hebrews 11:40). There are so many rich truths revealed by the Holy Spirit only through Paul which find no place of expression in the eleven cardinal doctrines of Systematic Theology:

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Theology:     | Doctrinal study of the nature and attributes of the Godhead |
| Angelology:   | Doctrinal study of angels, Satan and his angels, and demons |
| Anthropology: | Doctrinal study of man                                      |
| Bibliology:   | Doctrinal study of the Bible                                |
| Christology:  | Doctrinal study of Jesus Christ                             |
| Cosmology:    | Doctrinal study of the whole of creation                    |
| Ecclesiology: | Doctrinal study of the Church                               |
| Eschatology:  | Doctrinal study of prophecy                                 |
| Harmatiology: | Doctrinal study of sin                                      |
| Pneumatology: | Doctrinal study of the Holy Spirit                          |
| Soteriology:  | Doctrinal study of sin                                      |

We shall consider one great truth in our course as fundamental to all the rest. We shall term it our "Fundamental Postulate." For the purpose of logic we form this postulate in the form of a syllogism. The syllogism has three parts: the major premise, the minor premise, and the conclusion. If you can prove the major premise, and then the minor premise growing out of the major, then the conclusion must automatically follow (if there is no error in your chain of reasoning). One year's course of Pauline Theology will be occupied with proving the two premises. This syllogism must be learned:

Major Premise: Paul is the revelator to the church.

Minor Premise: Only unto Paul was committed the complete revelation of church doctrine.

Conclusion: Therefore we must build our church doctrine on Paul's revelation.

Negatively we shall see that, if Paul doesn't teach it, it is not distinctively church doctrine. This position at first is startling to those who have never steeped their souls in Paul's epistles. Its truthfulness grows upon one's thinking. But whether the student dares to boldly accept the whole syllogism without equation, or only lets it flavor his theology until he becomes more Pauline in his convictions and teachings, the study will be profitable to keep his church doctrine pure and guarantee his not "being removed from Paul's gospel to another gospel which is not another gospel but a perversion of the gospel of Christ" (Galatians 1:6-9). Paul himself uses his own teachings as a criterion of the brother who walks disorderly (Greek "those who break rank") and of those who set up their own commandments, creating new doctrines not received from Paul (II Thessalonians 3:6-14). If they didn't receive it from Paul, "Mark him and withdraw from him."

How confusing are the varied opinions taught as "church truth." Where is the criterion? No wonder when the Seventh Day Adventist tries to saddle Sabbath observances on the Christian, the Christian has no answer, since he sees no distinction between the Old Testament and the New, or between Moses and Paul. The Protestant who plainly ignores the Holy Spirit's explicit declaration that "this dispensation is committed unto Paul" and that Paul is "the apostle to the Gentiles," and goes to the Old Testament to build his church doctrine, is just as guilty of misinterpretation of church doctrine as the Roman Catholic who builds his doctrine on the "traditions of men" (infallibility of the Pope and College of Cardinals). Both are in error and miss the true commandments of God. The former ignores the great dispensational lines the Holy Spirit Himself has drawn and builds his doctrines upon Scriptures never given for the church as doctrine. How many interesting theories would have died aborning if our syllogism had been believed?

How few ever come to the real full knowledge of the church as a unique body, "hidden from all ages past," a truth only Paul reveals, but which is now revealed. Elijah was not a deacon in the First Baptist Church of Chebar. The church is just not in the Old Testament at all. God kept it hidden only in His own heart, until He was ready to reveal it, and we shall see that He chose only one man to whom He revealed the complete system of church truth. Most folks have not read deeply enough in Paul's gospel to see that the church is not just converted, renovated, Christianized Judaism, revamped and with Christ added; the church is a brand new thing, and, we shall see, the best thing God ever made, His most prized possession and His Son's eternal bride. The two ordinances of the church are not mere converted Jewish rites. The Lord's Supper is not synonymous with the Pascal Supper; the sprinkling of the ashes of the red heifer is not the same as Christian baptism. So the Lord's Day is not a changed Jewish Sabbath. (Never be guilty of calling Sunday "This beautiful Sabbath Day." It just isn't, and never was, and never will be.) Again, the church is a brand new thing, hidden from all ages past, its every ordinance and rite is brand new, and, as such, it needed a brand new revelation as distinct as was Moses on Sinai. Now such does Paul declare His gospel to be a new, direct revelation, and he defends it against all comers; such we shall do also.

Therefore, we shall see in our course that there is a complete body of church truth in the New Testament, given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit and by direct revelation of Jesus Christ, to only one apostle, Paul. It is in this sense we call it "Pauline Theology." It pleased Christ to separate one man, even before he was born (Galatians 1: 15), to the particular and peculiar position of being His revelator to the church. It further pleased Him to reveal only to this one man the whole complete system of church truth. I do not know why He passed over all the

others, but we shall see some suppositional reasons later; but "known unto Him are all His works." Paul gives this complete system of church truth in his thirteen recognized epistles (Romans through Philemon) and in the Hebrews. (We shall consider why we believe Hebrews was written by Paul.)

Our course is outlined by our basic syllogism. The major premise will occupy our attention first: Paul is "the" (not "a") revelator to the church. This is his unique apostleship, Paul as the "chosen vessel," "the steward of the mysteries of God," and the "apostle to the Gentiles." The rest of the book will be occupied with the consideration of the minor premise: Only unto Paul was committed the complete system or revelation of church doctrine. We term this division Paul's unique gospel, those great church truths which Paul and Paul alone, reveals, proving that unto him was committed the complete revelation of church doctrine, thus it is "the gospel according to Paul."

We might here further inquire into the need for this course. It will enable us to follow Paul's admonition to Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). A thorough understanding and indoctrination in the truth of our postulate will enable the student to rightly divide the word of truth. There are untold "wrestings" of the Scriptures, a world of "deceitful handlings of the word of truth," a twisting of the Word of God to fit some pet theory, the building of innumerable false doctrines, the founding of cults and 'isms' all built upon either ignorance of, or deliberate ignoring of, this fundamental truth of Paul's unique apostleship and revelation. For illustration, how utterly foolish, and impossible of justification, to try to reconcile with Paul the applying of the law principle for salvation, justification by works, when Paul distinctly says, "We are not under law, but under grace." (Romans 6:14) To be firmly indoctrinated with the Pauline doctrine of absolutely pure grace is to be freed forever from any enslavement to any effort toward salvation by works or law.

What utter confusion there is when this great truth of Paul's unique position is ignored! There is such a vast array of human opinion taught as church obligations until the weak brother, in bewilderment, asks, "What are we to believe?" What simpler standard can there be than this one: "Go to Paul to see if he teaches it; if he does not, then it is not a church doctrine!"

Again, through the course, we shall see that our postulate is the touchstone of all the error taught as church doctrine, the misapplying of the Scriptures, making them teach what the Holy Spirit never intended them to teach. A man may have all manner of eloquence and bring lovely, witty, unique, startling, original, entertaining, cute, little messages from all over the Word of God, but, if he isn't Pauline in his theology and preaching, he isn't preaching the gospel. He may be able to bring wonderful applications from all over the Bible, bolstering new precepts for the church, but, if Paul hasn't included them in "his gospel," then that preacher is misapplying Scripture (Peter calls it "wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction"), leading his hearers astray, and he is not a "God-approved" workman. Even Peter witnesses to this truth by quoting Paul in II Peter 3:15.

Further, from our text above, it will contribute to a God-blessed, God-approved ministry. Paul calls his preaching and ministry a number of times as conducted "in the sight of God" (as II Corinthians 2:17; 4:2). Paul emphatically states in Galatians 1:12 that his gospel was not of any human origin or devising. I often wonder what God thinks of these "brilliant expositors" and "common-taters" that shoot off on a tangent, confounding rather than expounding the Scriptures. I have often said, "I would rather be true to the Book than startling in my teaching."

Theirs may be more ingenious and have a lot more appeal to the fleshy saint as being looser, allowing more play to the imagination, but we shall both have to answer to God. Shall we be men-pleasers or God-pleasers? Three times Paul uses the term "men pleasers, Galatians 1:10, Colossians 3:22, and Ephesians 6:6. Many Bible teachers and preachers most make this choice with eternal consequences.

It will spell the death knell to a lot of accumulated rubbish man has added through the church dispensation as "aids to worship," "means to grace," "necessary steps," etc. How much of ceremonial, man-made ordinances, human traditions, and methods of worship, built upon Old Testament modes, are seen to be worthless in the light of Paul's gospel? He goes back to the true spirituality of our worship that Jesus said would come and condemn all the "will-worship," "the rudimentary elements of this world," and "commandments of men" (Titus 1:14), "the observance of days," "bodily exercise," and prohibitions.

There is one more very important need of this course and it is not the least at all. It will contribute to a growth in grace, "that ye might grow up into Christ in all things" (Ephesians 4:15). To become thoroughly Pauline, steeped in his rich revelations of our position in Christ as a part of His body, possessor of His life, hidden in Him, crucified with Him, buried with Him, risen with Him, seated in the heavenlies in Him, complete in Him, filled with His Spirit, heirs with Him, will be to come to full age in Him. It will be to become "the spiritual ones" in Him, instead of the "weak brother." Here in Paul's gospel alone do we get the "epignosis," the full or exact knowledge of Christ.

As God calls, instructs, and enables you to be separated unto the ministry by the Holy Spirit, it is of paramount importance that you be fully grounded in this truth and become Pauline in your teaching and preaching; not that you will not be permitted to draw illustrations and spiritual truths from the whole Word of God - it "was all written for our learning;" (Romans 15:4) nor yet that you should ignore the teachings of Jesus, nor of the General Epistles; but it does mean that you have built your church doctrines upon the great church apostle and revelator, Paul. Twice, in Galatians 1:8-9, Paul calls down a special anathema (curse or devoted to judgment) upon any man, or an angel, or even himself, if they preach any other gospel than he had already preached to them. That is mighty all-inclusive. We shall repeatedly warn that this does not mean that Peter, James, John, Jude, Mark, Matthew, or Luke, were not inspired or that they wrote contrary to Paul, nor that it is not for us. What they wrote is a part of the "all Scripture inspired of God and profitable" (II Timothy 3:16). They all wrote for the believer and revealed wonderful truths. But, this is very important: It pleased God to reveal only to them what He did reveal; but it also pleased God to pick another man separate from all the rest and to reveal to him alone the complete system of church doctrine, to commit to him alone the dispensation.

You will find no doctrine of the church revealed to any of the other New Testament writers that is not revealed to Paul more completely; but contrariwise, you will find very, very much that was revealed only to Paul. It is this that is revealed only to Paul which forms the basis for our study of Pauline Theology and proves our minor premise. We shall see more graphically, as we progress, that if you take Paul's fourteen epistles from the New Testament, you would know almost nothing at all of church truth which is distinctly church truth. We would know nothing of the truth of the church as the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, and the living relationship of the members one of another and to the Head, Christ. No other apostle even so much as mentions these truths. The four great mysteries for the church are taught only by Paul. The great doctrine of justification by faith is taught only by Paul, and is not even mentioned by

any other New Testament writer. The believer's identification with Christ in death, resurrection, ascension, and position now in the heavenlies, is given only by Paul, etc. In fact, the apostle Peter had to learn these great truths the same way we learn them - from Paul (II Peter 3:15-16). This is a very revealing portion and we shall refer to it again. It speaks graphically of Paul's unique position and goes far to prove our syllogism.

Our method of procedure will perforce be a mere outline. A book could be written on each distinctively Pauline revelation and many have been written. We shall only introduce in broad outline the syllogistic proofs and leave to your future studies all the minute details. To those who think that our position is startling, and maybe a little too extreme, I would recommend a little closer consideration of many of the great exegetes of church history. You will find many indications that our postulate guided them also. Time would fail us to tell of the many we have found in our own research, from the early Church Fathers to the present day. But, as far as I can ascertain, this present course is the first time any effort has been made to systematize into one coherent whole this great truth of Paul's unique position in the New Testament. Even Martin Luther so firmly believed in Paul's unique place that he refused to include James in his translation of the New Testament; because he thought he disagreed with Paul; he termed James a "right strawy Epistle," i.e., naught but stubble. Dr. C. I. Scofield, in his Reference Bible, indicates our position, in the "Introduction to Romans," p. 1189, and the "Introduction to Hebrews," p. 1289. Dr. Adam Clarke, in his Commentary on Acts 22:21, states: "The Epistles of Peter, John, James, and Jude are great and excellent; but, when compared with those of Paul, however glorious they may be, they have no glory comparatively, by reason of the glory which excelleth. Next to Jesus, St. Paul is the glory of the Christian Church. Jesus is the foundation; Paul, the Master-builder."

Dr. T. D. Bernard's invaluable book, *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament*, comments on the utter absence of church doctrine in the book of Acts, as a part of the plan of the Holy Spirit to wait for Paul's epistles to fill the need of explaining the truth of Christ within the believer, while Acts was the gospel to the unsaved.<sup>1</sup> My syllogism, in embryonic form, is found in this book: "Who are the appointed teachers of the church, Peter and John, the two chief Apostles; James and Jude, the brethren of the Lord? We take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus and own the highest authority which association with Him can give, but the chief place in this system of teaching doesn't belong to any of them, nor to all of them together. Their united writings form but a second volume, and that a very thin one, just one-fifth the bulk of the first, to which moreover it bears in some degree a kind of supplementary relation. The office of working out the principles of Christian faith into full proportions and clearly defined forms was assigned to another, to "Paul, the servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle."<sup>2</sup> And then he goes on to note that Christ wanted an entirely different kind of a man, divorced from all the earthly associations the twelve had with Christ.

For those who shout "Back to Christ," and ignore the Epistles, Dr. Oswald Chambers, in his book, *The Psychology of Redemption*, says: "The Gospels always present in nugget form the truth, and if we want to know the stages of evangelical experience, we must go to the Epistles which beat out into negotiable gold the nuggets of truth presented by our Lord."<sup>3</sup> Sir Robert Anderson, in *The Silence of God*, states: "'My Gospel, three times repeated by Paul, are

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<sup>1</sup> T. D. Bernard, *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament* (London: Pickering and Inglis, n.d.) 142.

<sup>2</sup> Bernard 152.

<sup>3</sup> Oswald Chambers, *The Psychology of Redemption* (Fort Washington: Christian Literature Crusade, 1930)

no mere conventional expressions. They are explained in several of his epistles and with peculiar definiteness in his letter to the Galatians. He there declares in explicit and emphatic terms that the gospel which he preached among the Gentiles was the subject of a special revelation peculiar to him. Not only was he not taught it by those who were apostles before him, but he it was who by Divine Command, communicated it to the twelve,<sup>4</sup> etc.

We should take note here in this Introduction of a warning against the abuse of our postulate. We have noted those who ignore it altogether and confuse church truth with kingdom and Jewish truth - those who build all kinds of ingenious interpretations upon other than Pauline revelations. Now we wish at the very outset of our course to warn against those who, having seen a little of this truth, press it beyond all proportion and go way over into ultra-dispensationalism. We shall devote a whole chapter to them later. They would take only Paul and throw out all the rest. Because it is not written about us, they think it is not for us. They forget that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable" (II Timothy 3:16). This is extreme dispensationalism, i.e., the dividing of the Scriptures into water-tight compartments. We must again warn the student that to ignore any of the Scripture is to miss some God-given revelation to your heart. James and John and Jude and Peter were just as inspired as Paul, and they wrote to the church, for the church, and about the church. What God revealed to them is just as much for us as what Paul wrote. All we contend is that the New Testament distinctly teaches that to Paul alone was committed the whole complete perfect revelation of church truth, and, therefore, we must go to him to build our system of church doctrine.

In closing this Introduction, there is one more thing to note. We believe that Paul received the whole of it at one time in Arabia shortly after his conversion - the whole gospel which he preached. We shall see this taught in Galatians 1-2. Dr. C. I. Scofield was probably the first to teach that Paul got two distinct revelations: one, the first, in Arabia, embodying a partial and elementary revelation of church truth; the second, while he was in prison, embodying the deeper revelation of the mysteries, contained in the prison epistles. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, in *The Kingdom in History and Prophecy*, follows Scofield in this belief.<sup>5</sup>

There is too much of the deep truths of Christ as Head of His body, and we as members, His bridegroomship (as II Corinthians 11:1-3), and the mysteries (Romans 16:25-26) in the first general epistles of Paul to support this. Nowhere does Paul make any statement of a new direct revelation from Christ of deeper truth as in Galatians 1:11-12, of his Arabian revelation. I grant you that there is a deeper spiritual tone and a deeper revelation in the prison epistles, but instead of crediting it to a further revelation, I believe it is due to a more mature, more spiritual church to whom he was writing and could reveal new depths of his gospel, which he was hindered from giving prior to this to the more infant church.

As a proof of this, see his writing to the Hebrew saints (Hebrews 5:11), to whom he said: "Of whom (Melchisedec) we have many things to say and hard to be uttered (explained) seeing ye are dull of hearing (sluggish hearers.)" Here, it was not because Paul had no revelation about Melchisedec, but he could not reveal it to the Hebrew saints because of their sluggishness of hearing, something like this complaint concerning the Corinthians, "I could not feed you meat, but milk" (1 Corinthians 3:2: "I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it; neither yet are ye able."). But to the Ephesians, etc., he could send them a choice beefsteak, not milk-toast.

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<sup>4</sup> Anderson, Robert, The Silence of God (London: Pickering and Inglis, n.d.) 106

<sup>5</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, The Kingdom in History and Prophecy (Philadelphia: Sunday School Times, 1915) 10.

## **Chapter One**

### **PAUL'S UNIQUE APOSTLESHIP**

This follows our major premise in our syllogism: "Paul is the revelator to the church." This places Paul in the position of being a unique apostle, separated from all the rest, "a chosen vessel," recognized by the "Pillars" in the church at Jerusalem as the particular recipient of "the gospel of the uncircumcision" (Galatians 2:7), to which they themselves were strangers, since Paul had to communicate it to them (Galatians 2:2). This is the natural starting point for our course in Pauline Theology - the absolute uniqueness of Paul's apostleship, the revelator to the church.

To strike the keynote of this section we wish to state first of all: "There are two great revelators in the Bible, each standing in a unique relationship to his own age and separate elect peoples." (to two great elect peoples - Israel, the one chosen nation from all the rest; the church, election of grace, a people for God's Son). There are two separate complete revelations to the two great brides of the Bible - Israel, God's wife (Hosea 2), and the church as the bride of Christ (II Corinthians 11:2-3). Moses is the revelator of the Old Testament and of Law. Unto him was given the complete system of the Law, both ceremonially and morally, in relationship to God's people, Israel, His chosen nation. All through the New Testament, Moses and the Law are used interchangeably (like John 1:17: "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ"; cf. Luke 16:39: "They have Moses and the prophets"; cf. John 5:45-46; 7:19). The general expression used all through the New Testament is "the Law of Moses." Revelations were given to others just as inspired, at least a couple of dozen of them in the Word of God. These were important revelations, some of immediate concern, some devotional, some prophetic, but none of them added to the Law of Moses. To none other did God commit a complete system of the Law under which Israel was to abide. Thus, he stands alone, the unique, single revelator of the Old Testament system of Law.

There is another who stands in the same relationship in the New Testament as did Moses in the Old; namely, Paul. He is the great revelator to the church, the New Testament elect people; to him, and him alone, Christ revealed a complete system of church truth, summed up by Paul as "my gospel." His position in the New Testament is as unique as was Moses' in the Old. Many will immediately cry out, "What of Christ? I thought He was the great Teacher," Surely "Never man spake like this Man" (John 7:46). He was the Master Teacher, for He spoke with authority as the Fountainhead of truth. But we shall see that He Himself told them, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (John 16:12). And being sent "only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and born under the Law," He could not reveal personally unto them the gospel of the grace of God, but, in reality, more is taught about Christ than taught by Him. He is the theme of the Bible from beginning to end. He mentions the church by name only twice, and that in a future tense, as Matthew 16:18: "I will build my church," was not yet built when He said that. How could Christ teach church truth to these disciples? Christ was born, lived, taught, and died under the Law, under its curse. The church was not yet born, for the Holy Spirit was not yet given. Paul gives us the reason why Christ could not give church truth: He says that Jesus was a "minister of the circumcision to maintain the truthfulness of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Romans 15:8), and Jesus Himself said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24).

No, Christ could not reveal to these disciples before Pentecost the great body of church doctrine. They were too dull of hearing (cf. Acts 1:6; John 16:12). He must be "glorified" and shed forth the Holy Spirit to be their teacher and choose a man to be the repository of the gospel. That man was Paul. He alone goes deep to interpret the cross, the bride, the believer, the body of Christ, in its mysteries, organism, gifts, privileges and destiny. There is so vast an amount that no other even mentions. James writes to "the twelve tribes of the dispersion," now converted ones and gives practical Christianity or "religion." Peter writes to "the strangers of the dispersion," Jewish converts dispersed, mostly Paul's converts in Asia Minor. Paul distinctly tells us "that the council at Jerusalem appointed" Peter, and James, and John to go to the Jews (Galatians 2:7- 9).

God, in His infinite wisdom and sovereign decree, picked one man to reveal to Israel His complete system of Law. That man was Moses. Christ, in His infinite wisdom and sovereign decree, picked one man to reveal to the church His complete system of grace and church truth. That man was Paul. William R. Newell says, in his pamphlet on Galatians I and II: "God does as He pleases, and it pleased Him to choose - first, to save people in this dispensation through the foolishness of preaching" or the 'preached thing': that is, through the exact message about Christ crucified and what was done at the cross (see I Corinthians 1:21) and, second, it pleased Him to choose Paul to be the great Proclaimer and Revealer of just what the gospel is for this dispensation.<sup>6</sup> And Paul was just as independent of human resources and sources for his gospel as was Moses for his Law and when he wrote of creation thousands of years after it took place.

Note: Paul compared with Moses (to see the uniqueness of both revelators). This is more than mere coincidence.

1. Both were thoroughly trained in earthly wisdom and dialectics - Moses in the courts of Egypt: Paul in the universities of Tarsus and at the feet of Gamaliel at Jerusalem; both had trained minds.
2. Both were prepared from birth for their great ministries of stewardship of a dispensation. In Moses we see it in the miraculous preservation as a baby; in Paul, he so states in Galatians 1:15: "separated from birth."
3. Both were arrested by God in a marked manner - Moses at the burning bush; Paul on the Damascus Road.
4. Both were called and commissioned by God, face to face, uniquely and not by human instrumentality.
5. Both were trained by God privately, personally, after their calling and commissioning - Moses for 40 years, and on the Mount; Paul in Arabia, maybe the same Mount, for 3½ years.
6. Both received their complete system for their elect peoples and dispensations by personal revelation from God face to face in seclusion and independent of all human authority or teachings - Moses, Exodus 33:11: "And the Lord spoke unto Moses face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend," and Deuteronomy 24:10: "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses whom the Lord knew face to face"; Deuteronomy 5:4; see Numbers 12:6-8; Paul, in Galatians 1:11-12: "direct revelation of Jesus Christ."
7. Both were completely independent of human sponsorship or ordination.

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<sup>6</sup> Newell, William R., Peter and Paul (Chicago: Weir Brothers, 1930) 5.

8. Both carried their stewardship with deepest love for their charges and could wish themselves accursed or blotted out for their sakes (Exodus 32:32 and Romans 9:3).
9. Both could put an anathema on those who would add or subtract from their revelation or system (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; cf. Galatians 1:8-9).
10. Both were the humblest of men - Moses, "the meekest man on earth," and Paul, "less than least of the saints."

#### I. Proofs of Our Major Premise: "Paul is the revelator to the church."

A. For this position of the revelator to the church Christ couldn't use any of the original twelve (eleven until Matthias was chosen), but He must elect a special unique apostle unhampered by all the earthly associations encumbering all the ideas of the original twelve.

First in importance to determine is that Paul was not one of the original twelve. He was not chosen to take the place of Judas, who fell. This is the interesting theory of a great number of scholars, such as Schaff and A. J. Gordon, in his *Ministry of the Spirit*.<sup>7</sup> Dr. G. Campbell Morgan teaches it in his commentary on Acts. We shall quote him to see how it is taught: "My own conviction is that we have here a revelation of their inefficiency (that is, of their premature election of Matthias) for organization; that the election of Matthias was wrong, their idea of what was necessary as a witness to the resurrection was wrong, so their principle of selection was wrong. Thus we have the wrong appointment of Matthias. He was a good man, but the wrong man for this position, and he passed out of sight; (but so do all but three of the original eleven) and when presently we come to the final glory of the city of God, we see twelve foundations, etc., and I am not prepared to omit Paul from the twelve, believing that he was God's man for the 'filling of the gap.'"<sup>8</sup>

Thus, they would make the election of Matthias only Peter's choice, contending that God set aside his premature, hasty, ill-chosen choice and later chose Paul to fill up the twelve. This they do, failing to see the unique place Paul was to hold to the church and failing to see the distinctively Jewish aspect of the twelve - to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28). Paul was to be divorced from all national hopes of Israel, holding a unique position in regard to the church, which was primarily Gentile.

#### Proofs That Paul Was Not One of the Twelve

1. The Holy Spirit set His seal of approval upon the apostles' choice of Matthias, by blessing the lot in answer to prayer, by baptizing him with the other eleven (Acts 2:4); but, clearest of all, by distinctly referring to him as one of the twelve (Acts 2:14; 6:2). Nowhere in Acts do we read of the Holy Spirit reversing their choice or condemning it.
2. Paul distinctly shows, in I Corinthians 15:5-7, that he was not one of the twelve, nor thought of himself as one of them.

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<sup>7</sup> Gordon, A. J., *The Ministry of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1949) 136.

<sup>8</sup> Morgan, G. Campbell, *Commentary on Acts* (New York: Fleming H. Revel, 1924) 21.

3. Matthias was chosen to take the place of Judas to complete the Jewish witness to Israel, which place Paul was not to have even according to the first church council in Jerusalem (Galatians 2:9). The twelve disciples were to sit upon twelve thrones judging Israel (Matthew 19:28). Along with this 'sitting upon twelve thrones' and witnessing, was the criterion "that they had continued with Jesus." This Paul never did, but no doubt Matthias did (Acts 1:21: "Companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us.") These twelve were with Christ personally, knew Him as a man, saw when He died, actually saw and knew experimentally His burial, were eye-witnesses, saw the "many infallible proofs" of His resurrection, and saw and handled His resurrection body. The first of Acts is taken up with their witness to the resurrection of Jesus to the Jews, but nowhere is there any attempt at interpretation of this great fact (Read Acts 1:21-22). Paul is to be an "apostle to the Gentiles."

B. Second in importance, it is more than passing strange that 17 out of the 28 chapters in the history of the early church, inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Book of Acts, are taken up with a man who was not one of the original twelve, nor even converted while Christ was on earth. Paul was not converted until years later. (The exact date of his conversion is uncertain. Clarke: 33 A.D.; Bengel: 31; Jerome: 33; Ussher: 35; Alford: 37. Pentecost was in 28 A.D., so it was years later by all estimates.) He was not even a follower of Christ on earth. He might never have seen Christ in the flesh while on earth, though it is a disputed point. He "sat at the feet of Gamaliel" (Acts 22:3). (Compare II Corinthians 5:16, but this portion doesn't necessitate Paul having known Christ "after the flesh.") The Book of Acts loses sight of the original twelve and carries forth the history of the early church through the labors of a former stranger to the twelve. Three, and three only, of the twelve hold any place of importance in this Spirit-inspired history, and these three alone of the twelve are used to write inspired writings - James, Peter, and John (Jude was the Lord's brother and not one of the twelve). James, the son of Zebedee, gets only one verse in Acts as an obituary. But all the rest are not even mentioned by name after the Lord's ascension and disappear from the canon of Scripture. The labors of the three take only a few chapters; the deacons take up more space; and, at chapter 13, the whole missionary effort and center shifts from Jerusalem to Antioch in Assyria. Certainly the Holy Spirit considered the apostle Paul important and unique.

C. God needed a different kind of man for the position as the revelator to the church than any of the twelve in Jerusalem. This is clearly seen when you read Acts. The apostles and the church at Jerusalem never got away from Judaism and its taints of legalism. This is very important to see. It explains all we can know of why Jesus passed over all the twelve, even the three of the inner circle - Peter, James, and John - and picked a stranger, a persecutor of the church, one He could separate completely from his "zealousness for the Law." As you read the two sermons of Peter, you see this Jewish aspect. See the method by which God had to get Peter to go to Cornelius - a special vision three times repeated (Acts 10:16). See the church taking him to task for "eating with Gentiles" (Acts 11:2), not for preaching to them; they knew the Gentiles should have the gospel - but on a lower plane, inferior to Jews. They thought this new thing would be like the favored place the Jews had in the Old Testament or even in the times of Jesus "sent only to the

lost sheep of the house of Israel," "and not to cast the children's bread to dogs." This "eating with Gentiles" was the same thing Paul had to condemn Peter about in Galatians 2, showing how little impression the vision had on Peter. Read the minutes of the first church council at Jerusalem in Acts 15. Read the agitations in verses 1 and 2: "no small dissension" over the keeping of the Law to be saved and the one Jewish rite of circumcision to be saved, verse 7: "much disputing." They got the slim concession from Jerusalem, not to put the yoke on the Gentiles. The Jews still had it. "Abstain from meat offered to idols, from blood, things strangled and fornication" (Acts 15:29). No solving of the real problem of Law and grace, just a concession to keep the peace. Paul at Corinth later set aside the "meat offered to idols" (I Corinthians 8:4-13), but this shows that the church at Jerusalem was distinctively Jewish and was observing the Law of Moses. Gentiles were not admitted; in fact, the apostles at that time preached only to Jews (Acts 11:19f).

You cannot read Acts and conceive of any of the twelve apostles or anyone else from the church at Jerusalem writing Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, or Colossians. They were too steeped in Judaism, Law, and legalism. Observe the first church council at Jerusalem, 14 years after Pentecost, still requiring circumcision and the keeping of the Law of Moses, to be saved. They absolved the Gentiles finally "after much disputing" from this "yoke of bondage," but not Jews. See Galatians 2:3-5, at this same conference where they tried to make Paul have Titus follow the Law. The Jews at the Jerusalem church never forsook the Law of Moses, but kept up all the ceremonies and Jewish rites and required them for salvation. Note that they still kept the temple worship and did until it was destroyed in 70 A.D. Acts 2:46: "And they continued daily with one accord in the temple"; stated hours of prayer: 9:00 a.m., noon, 3:00 p.m.; so 3:1: "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at (Rotherham, "for") the hour of prayer being the ninth hour"; 10:9: Peter, when not in Jerusalem, still kept set times of prayer, on the housetop at the sixth hour, 12:00 noon. And it was still unlawful to eat with the Gentiles (10:28; 11:3).

During the last scenes at Jerusalem in Acts, the condition is still unchanged; Acts 21:18-30 shows that they were "all zealous for the law." And James gave the wrong advice to Paul to take the charges of a Nazarite vow to placate the Jews, but it failed. No, none of these could have written the great treatise on justification by faith. God needed a different kind of man; and even he had to be shaken to the depths by the personal vision of the glorified Christ, then, gone for good his Judaism (like the pale morning starlight before the rising of the sun). God must select a new "master-builder" of His church.

D. Neither was Paul called, ordained, or commissioned by the 12 at Jerusalem. Paul defends the utter absolute independence of his apostolic commission from all his predecessors, as we shall see in Galatians 1 and 2. The church didn't give Paul his message, his gospel; but the church got her gospel from Paul. He nowhere addresses his messages from the church, but to the church. He didn't owe his message to the church, but the church owed its message to Paul, hence the great criticism of the Judaizers who dogged the footsteps of Paul. He was too freelance; he had no letters of commendation from Jerusalem (II Corinthians 3:1-5). They could not forgive him for his freedom and independence. They felt that Jerusalem was everything, and, as the mother church, had absolute authority, and all ordinations, etc., should emanate from there.

In Galatians 1:1 we read: "Paul an apostle not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father;" so it is stated in most of his epistles: "Paul a called apostle by the will of God" (As I Corinthians 1:1, etc.). When at Antioch, in a prayer meeting with Barnabas and others (Acts 13:1-4), Luke says: "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said (not the Apostles, but the Holy Spirit), 'Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.'" Paul says, in Galatians 1: "I conferred not with flesh and blood," and "in conference they added nothing to me." Paul's commission was not from church council or human wisdom, but directly from God. This was the sore spot to the Judaizers. Paul was not one of the 12. Where then did he get his authority? This caused him to have to continually defend his apostleship, 'by my direct commission from Christ' (oft repeated, as in Galatians 1: 1), and "by the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit engifting me" (I Corinthians 2:4).

Neither did Paul receive his commission from Peter, as the first Pope. Paul says: "Those who were apostles before me." The Catholic Church would have "Peter have the preeminence, making him superior in every way, holding the primacy over all others as the first Pope appointed by Christ that Peter was more than their equal; but was their prince, monarch, sovereign, and exercised jurisdiction over all the rest; that Peter was the only Vicar of Christ upon the earth." Peter never claimed this for himself. He calls himself an elder. He was sent on commission from the twelve as a legate, not a pontificate. Anyway, he couldn't be a Pope today, for he was married. Paul says: "In nothing was he behind the very chiefest of the apostles" (II Corinthians 11:5; 12:11). Paul didn't get his gospel from Peter; but Peter got his from Paul (II Peter 3:15-16). There was no seniority of the apostles over Paul because of favorite positions as the twelve original apostles. Paul could rebuke Peter to the face at Antioch when "he walked not uprightly according to truth of the gospel" All of this shows that Peter was not the infallible Vicar of Christ, nor did he hold supremacy over Paul.

E. Paul's unique apostleship springs from his unique call directly by Christ, with a direct independent commission as Christ's apostle or "chosen vessel." Paul's very conversion was unique. Was any so arrested since? He was not saved as a result of the Jewish believers in Jerusalem, nor in the Jewish capital, but near a Gentile city, by a direct intervention of Jesus Christ (Acts 9). Christ then sent him to an obscure disciple in Damascus for instructions and baptism. How many does God thus save by a direct and personal appearance of Christ and great, visible attending signs? Many try to say Paul was sun-stricken that day, but he was Son-stricken. Others say he had a form of epilepsy. May God give us a lot more of that disease if it can transform bigoted, Christ-hating persecutors into Pauls. Festus said he was crazy - a new kind of wonderful insanity.

The commission that Jesus gave with the conversion of Paul was unique. In Acts 9:15 we read: "The Lord said unto him, 'For he is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings and the children of Israel.'" In 22:14-15, Paul tells us more that was said: "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth, for thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." He adds more, in Acts 26:16: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in which I will appear unto thee," (later in Arabia, as in Galatians 1). He adds: "Gentiles unto whom I now send

thee." Note that Christ tells us why He appeared personally to Paul on the Damascus Road. Here is personal, direct commissioning by Christ, to make Paul two things in particular: a minister (Greek, literally, "under rower" - Adam Clarke: "One who is under the guidance and authority of another"; so Paul was to be under the sole authority of Jesus Christ), and a witness of both the things seen and of the future revelations Christ would give to him. He was sent to the Gentiles in particular, though also to Israel. (See also Acts 22:21.) Hence he calls himself "a called apostle" or "an apostle by calling" (leave out the lame, italicized "to be" of the A.V.). Compare Romans 1:1-5. In I Timothy 2:7 we read that he was "ordained an apostle."

Most important to our premise, Paul defines this calling to apostleship as the "committal of a dispensation to him;" "Yea, even the filling up in his body of the sufferings of Christ for the churches' sake." These are the most important Scriptural proofs of our major premise. Each should be studied carefully and digested fully. These comprise Paul's own claims to uniqueness. Three distinct times Paul says that "A dispensation is given me, or committed to me" (Colossians 1:25; Ephesians 3:1-2; I Corinthians 9: 16-17). The word dispensation is from the Greek "oikonomian," which equals a stewardship, administration, from the idea of the economy of a household.

In a unique way Paul filled up two things - the word of God" and "what was lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the church;" Sufferings here is not the Greek word for the passion of Christ, His atonement; He bore that alone. But it speaks of ministerial sufferings (Colossians 1:24); "care of all the churches" (II Corinthians 11:28). So A.V. "afflictions of Christ" is a good translation. Paul calls himself the 'master-builder' (I Corinthians 3:10), who 'laid the foundation" (Greek, arkiteckton - the architect). To him was revealed the whole plan of the building and laying the foundation, and he could warn, "Let every man take heed how he builds on it." Four other times Paul declares that this position is according to the grace of God given unto him. The idea is always "special grace" (Romans 15:15; 12:3; Galatians 2:9; Ephesians 3:2), in relationship to his having the dispensation given to him. He knew he didn't take this office of chief architect of stewardship upon himself, but by 'special grace given unto him.' Paul calls himself "minister to the Gentiles" (Ephesians 3:7; Romans 15:16-18); "a teacher of the Gentiles (I Timothy 2:7; II Timothy 1:11), where he also calls himself an advance herald (Greek 'kerux'). In line with this is the term by which Paul designates himself, "the apostle to the Gentiles" (Romans 11:13), and adds, 'I magnify (glorify, honor) mine office." Twice Paul speaks of the gospel as being put in his trust (I Thessalonians 2:4; I Timothy 1:11). Thus he could speak of being "a debtor to the Romans" (Romans 1:14-15), and includes all others. So, "necessity is laid upon me; woe is me if I preach not the gospels" (I Corinthians 9:16).

There is one more important declaration by Paul which is double in aspect: his unique position as a ministering priest to offer up the Gentiles, and his presentation of the bride, the church, to Christ (Romans 15:16, II Corinthians 11). These two figures present the greatest special grace given unto Paul. Let us look at a literal translation of this important portion in Romans. Conybeare states, "Because of that gift of grace (special grace) which God bestowed upon me that I should be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, serving in the glad tidings of God, that I might present the Gentiles to God, as a priest presents an offering, a sacrifice well pleasing unto Him hallowed by the working of the Holy

Spirit.”<sup>9</sup> Paul says, ‘I have somewhat I could boast about.’ Paul was not merely an apostle, or one of the twelve, but a chosen vessel holding the highest position in the body of Christ, and this portion shows it. The Greek word for minister here is ‘Ieitourges’ – ‘a ministering priest who offers a sacrifice.’ Paul was as a ministering priest bringing the Gentiles as a sacrifice to God, offering them up as an acceptable sacrifice to God in the place of Israel, now cut off. This he says he does by his glad tidings message and his gospel, especially of free grace.

It is this offering up of the Gentiles by Paul’s gospel which made the Gentiles acceptable, through the hallowing by the working of the Holy Spirit. When the church is raptured, the Gentiles will no longer have this special Pauline blessing of free offering and favored place, but will be cut off, and the natural branch will again be grafted in (Romans 11), the Gentiles again being blessed only through the Jews. Then Paul will present this Gentile bride (Acts 15:14), but made up of all nations (for there is neither Jew nor Gentile), to Jesus Christ as a chaste virgin (II Corinthians 11:2). Paul is a unique apostle indeed. All of these Scriptures surely prove the unique place Paul holds in the New Testament, and go far to prove our major premise: “Paul is the revelator to the church.” He is the unique apostle to the Gentiles, with a dispensation committed unto him, put in trust with the gospel which he therefore can rightly call “my gospel.”

From the thirteenth chapter of Acts he fills the scene. The twelve disappear except for a few references to the head three. In Acts 12:17 we read: “And Peter departed and went to another place. This is the last we read of him in the history of Acts, except for James’ reference to him in Acts 15. We don’t rightly know just where he went, or what he did. Luke, the inspired historian, passes over his labors. All we know is that he wrote his epistles from Babylon. The clear indication is that God shifts all the church responsibility from Jerusalem and “the twelve,” to Antioch and the apostle to the Gentiles. Acts is taken up with his flaming missionary work, spreading the gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum (Romans 15:18-19). When the sacred history of the early church closes with Paul in chains, we find the “word of God not bound.” All the great churches over the known world owe their start and founding to the labors of Paul, except Jerusalem and Rome (as far as is recorded). What a debt we owe this man! No wonder he could say, “Be ye imitators of me” (I Corinthians 4:16; 11:1, and Philippians 3:17).

F. Paul’s defense of his own unique apostleship and gospel is clearly outlined in Galatians 1 and 2. This portion in Galatians 1 and 2 goes far to prove our basic syllogism: “Paul is the revelator to the church, and only unto Paul was committed the complete church revelation.” Here is Paul’s own defense of his unique position, and we do well to study it very carefully as our final proof of our major premise.

From a consideration of Acts 13:42-49; 14:1, and the whole book of Galatians, it can be seen that Paul was well received in the region of Galatia, except for some Jewish opposition, which turned them against Paul. These Jewish messengers from Jerusalem evilly affected them, introduced another gospel, until Paul “marveled” at their soon removal, and travailed, that Christ could be formed anew in them, etc. These emissaries from Jerusalem seemed to have much on their side, hence their success. They came from the mother church, were sent personally by the original twelve, bearing letters of

<sup>9</sup> Lange, John Peter, Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, Vol. 22, “Hebrews” (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, n.d.) 6.

commendation, seemed to have the Scriptures on their side (as only the Old Testament was then in existence), and could accuse Paul of forsaking Moses (Acts 16:4). Paul could wish them "cut off who trouble you" (Galatians 5:12).

Here then is the setting, the backdrop, of this urgent epistle in which Paul must defend his authority as an apostle, and his gospel. We can but outline the 28 ways in which Paul defends his authority and absolute independence from all human sources, as to his apostleship and gospel:

1. Paul, an apostle not of men (Greek "apo"--from) as to source (1:1);
2. Neither by ("dia") through man as to its transmission (1:1);
3. But through (instrumental case) Jesus Christ (1:1);
4. And God the Father (same instrumental case) (1:1);
5. Who raised him from the dead; His detractors placed Paul as coming on the scene too late to be an apostle; but Paul places his apostleship as from the risen Christ personally, here and everywhere else (1:1);
6. His gospel was so exclusive it could not be altered in anyway, or eternal damnation is assured (1:7-9). Starting with 1:6, Paul forbids three kinds of perversion of the gospel of Christ which he gave them:
  - a. "hetron euaggelion" - another or contrary gospel, a different kind of a gospel (1:6)
  - b. "a par euaggelion"- a competitive gospel, alongside (1:9)
  - c. "metastrepsal to euaggelion" - a perverted gospel.

All three are worse than useless; they damn the ones accepting them and devote to judgment those who preach them. Paul is emphatic and dogmatic; no other gospel is possible other than the one he preached to them;

7. His whole ministry was in the sight of God and not as men-pleasing or placating (1: 10) - no doubt one of their accusations;
8. His gospel was not of any human devising (1:11), "after men" (Greek "kata"), "according to," after human fashioning or devising;
9. His gospel was not "from men" as to transmission; no man gave it to Paul (1:12);
10. His gospel did not come to him by human study (1:12); he was not taught it;
11. His gospel came to him as a direct revelation of Jesus Christ (1:12); there was no human agency at all-his own or others';
12. It could not have come to him from his early training (1: 13-14), as his hatred for Christians, and his zealousness for the Law, proved;
13. His apostleship and gospel were by God's choice of him before he was born (1:15-16);
14. To show his utter independence, "he immediately conferred not with flesh and blood" for confirmation or ordination (1:16);
15. He didn't go up to Jerusalem, the mother church, for ordination, to the senior apostles (1:17);
16. Instead, he went into Arabia, to get his gospel, (1:17); here is where, for three years, by revelation of Jesus Christ, he got his gospel;

17. To further show his independence he spent only fifteen days with the apostle Peter (1:18) - not long enough to get his gospel 'straightened out';
18. He didn't even see the rest of the "college of apostles," only Peter and James; so there was no consensus of apostolic authority to enhance his gospel (1:19);
19. Instead of heading for Jerusalem, he went in the opposite direction - Syria and Cilicia (1:21);
20. In fact, he was "unknown by face to the churches of Judaea" (1:22);
21. Paul further shows a lapse of fourteen years and no intercourse with the church in Jerusalem (2:1);
22. He did not then go to Jerusalem at their invitation, nor his own will, but by revelation (2:2);
23. Instead of them enlightening Paul, he made known unto them "the gospel which he preached among the Gentiles" (2:2), the only place they could get it;
24. Furthermore, those who seemed to have a reputation. "Be somewhat, in conference added nothing to me" (2:6); but Paul added something to them (2:2);
25. In fact, Paul withheld the whole apostolate at Jerusalem against their desire to compromise the gospel of free grace from admixture with Law, about circumcising Titus (2:3-5);
26. Paul stood absolutely alone against the combined pressure of his own companions and the Jerusalem church, that the "truth of the gospel might remain" (2:5, 10-14): "even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulations Greek "hypocrisy");
27. Even the whole church at Jerusalem recognized Paul's absolute independence and apostolic authority as the apostle to the Gentiles (2:7-9; cf. Acts 15);
28. Paul's public condemnation and correction of the apostle Peter at Antioch for hypocrisy in distinguishing, and separation from Gentiles (2:11-18) shows apostolic authority as Paul rebukes publicly even the head pillar of Jerusalem.

So Paul, like Moses, stands alone in the gap when everyone else is drifting from the "truth of the gospel" and "not walking straightfootedly," and stops the defection; but it proves our syllogism very graphically. Paul is the revelator to the church, and only unto Paul was the complete revelation of church truth given.

## II. "Some Concrete Illustrations of Errors Taught as Church Truths Because of the Ignoring of Paul's Unique Apostleship."

We shall select but a few of the many that could be cited. How often has the assertion been made, "It is in the Bible: therefore it is gospel for us!" The church has been saddled with all kinds of contrary and farfetched duties, commandments, and prohibitions that God never intended for us, but which constitute "another gospel." Put them to this test: "Does Paul teach them?" If not, then they do not constitute church doctrine.

### A. The Number and Spiritual Significance of the Ordinances

How varied are the teachings of men on this subject. The Catholic Church adds five more to the two recognized ordinances: namely, confirmation (taking the initiated into the church membership), penance (payment by the penitent for post-baptismal sins), confession to the priest, holy orders (the Catholic hierarchy), marriage (only by the priest), and extreme unction (only by the priest, to usher the departed Catholic into eternity and guarantee his salvation); they make seven ordinances. Paul nowhere teaches the other five, nor does he ever make any of the seven a means of grace: neither does he teach baptismal salvation, nor transubstantiation (transforming the wafer and the wine into the literal body and blood of Christ).

There are others who make the ordinances three, adding feet-washing. Some, like the Quakers, have no ordinances, saying every time we eat or bathe we are observing spiritual ordinances. Ultra-dispensationalists have but one ordinance, the Lord's Supper, denying that baptism is for our dispensation. The apostle Paul gives two ordinances for the church and explains only these two as to their spiritual significance. He explains the Lord's Supper in I Corinthians 11:23-33, and baptism, in Romans 6:1-13.

#### B. Foot-washing as an Ordinance Tested

It is interesting here, as in the other errors, in the light of our major premise, to see that all the groups who teach foot-washing as an ordinance, never try to build their doctrine upon Paul, but upon the gospels only. We shall not here discuss the real lesson. Jesus was trying to impress upon the minds of His disciples humility: "If I, your Lord and Master, wash your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14) Nor shall we go into the lack of the one vital requirement to exalt any church observance into the sacred order of an ordinance; that is, the deeply spiritual significance, as in the two recognized ordinances, of a vital union of life with Christ in the ordinance. We see this in the two recognized ordinances. In baptism, there is the wonderful significance of being baptized into His death, burial, and resurrection. So now we are in Him and He is in us, in living union - a baptism into His very body, and drinking into His very Spirit (Romans 6:1-13; I Corinthians 12:13). In the Lord's Supper, there is the spiritual sharing of the very body and blood of Christ as we partake of the elements, called by Paul, in I Corinthians 10:16, "the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (sharing) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion (sharing) of the body of Christ?" Where is this communion (sharing) in the life, the nature, and the very essence of Christ in foot washing?

Primarily, where does Paul teach foot-washing as an ordinance? He plainly teaches baptism and the Lord's Supper, but nowhere does he teach foot-washing; so it is not an ordinance. He mentions it but once, but gives no spiritual significance or command of observance. In I Timothy 5:10, a widow was to be put on their list or roll: i.e., to be supported by the church as though working in it if she were "well reported for good works: if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, etc.," or in other words, "given to hospitality." Paul is laying down no ordinance; if so, then so is lodging strangers and bringing up children. If it were an ordinance, it would be no condition for "the list" since all widows would have been

doing it. So foot-washing is not an ordinance since Paul doesn't teach it, and the greater majority of the church has been right for 2,000 years in not so observing it.

### C. Unknown Tongues Tested

Another teaching finding great stress these days, needing treatment by our basic syllogism, is the speaking in tongues as an infallible sign and absolute necessity for the charismatic impartation of the Holy Spirit. There is also the teaching of some that without tongues you are not even in possession of the Holy Spirit. Now, if true, this is a very serious doctrine. It is finding an even larger following. Most Pentecostal or Holiness groups teach it, plus the new Charismatic movement among many denominations. Many great scholars have taught against it. In fact, some, in their zeal to discount it, have gone way too far in the opposite direction and denied that there is any real deeper work of grace in the believer, such as a filling with the Holy Spirit. Many of the great scholars in the church have denied not only that there is any gift of tongues now in the church, but that there are any of the sign gifts of the Spirit still active. They confine the sign gifts to the apostles and contend that they were to cease with their deaths. The only proof they use is I Corinthians 13:8-10: "Whether there be tongues they shall cease." This is poor exegesis, as they try to use the next verses as proof of the time of their ceasing: "When that which is perfect is come." They say, "That is the New Testament." But Paul tells us the time when tongues are to cease and "the perfect is come in"; it will be when "the in part is done away," when "I shall no longer see through a glass darkly, or know in part, when I get my full adulthood, when all my knowledge will be face-to-face and as perfect as I am known." That didn't take place at the conclusion of the New Testament, but will at the rapture. That is when the gifts shall be withdrawn as no more needed. But until the rapture of the saints and their perfecting into the image of Christ, we are still in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit and His gifts are still in the church. (More of this later as we consider the gifts of the Spirit.)

Is the speaking in unknown tongues the necessity and the evidence that the believer has been "baptized with the Holy Spirit," received the infilling of the Holy Spirit," or the "charismatic baptism of the Spirit?" This is an important doctrine if it is true, and needs very clear Scriptural teaching. And in the light of our syllogism, Paul should be very plain here. But right here Paul is strangely silent on any such teaching, but, contrariwise, teaches the opposite. Since those teaching this idea are very dogmatic and emphatic, no tongues, no baptism of the Holy Spirit, it should be clearly taught, not only elsewhere, but by Paul. It shouldn't be taught from apostolic experience, but from apostolic epistles. In fact, they find it very hard to circumvent Paul's stringent regulation of tongues in I Corinthians 14, and his emphatic declaration in the Greek of I Corinthians 12:29-30: "All do not speak in tongues." It isn't for all. They also find difficulty with his belittling and regulation of tongues in chapter 14. But here, just note: Where does Paul teach that tongues are the infallible evidence of the Holy Spirit's charismatic operation in the believer? The answer is, you can't find it in Paul's writings, so it isn't a church doctrine. (See our chapter on the gifts.)

#### D. The Partial Rapture Theory Tested

There are a great many errors taught as church truth which could be examined at this time by our postulate, but many of them will appear in the true light as we study Paul's gospel as a complete system of church doctrine. These are given only as examples.

There have been many very specious arguments advanced to scare folks into sanctification or to enforce a strained position of doctrine. This one is used, that part of the church is to go up in the rapture at the coming of Christ for His own, and the rest of the church must go through the great tribulation. The usual teaching is that only the spirit-filled saints are in the bride of Christ and will be raptured; the rest of the church is not in the bride of Christ and will have to go into the tribulation. Almost without exception, this false idea of a partial rapture is built upon an erroneous interpretation of the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25. Without this portion, no theory of a partial rapture would ever have been devised.

See how they built it, not on Paul, but on a prophecy of Christ regarding the nation of Israel. These same folks wouldn't think of applying the words of Jesus, in the same sermon: "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken by the Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place, then flee to the mountains," to the church, but will borrow anything else which seems to fit their idea and apply it to the church, ignoring Paul. Does Paul teach a partial rapture? That is the real question here. If not, then it isn't so. Whatever Matthew 25 does teach, it doesn't teach a partial rapture for the church. Paul is the revelator to the church. Where then does he teach a partial rapture? Certainly it is an important truth if it is so. Paul not only doesn't teach it, he teaches against it. Nowhere does he divide the body of Christ into two bodies - a bride made up of only the Spirit-filled (with oil), and of the plain ones who, for lack of oil, are not in the bride.

There isn't the slightest intimation in all his epistles of a partial rapture; Paul commands the infilling of the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), but doesn't enforce it with any such idea, that if they refuse they will not be raptured. The only verse from Paul the proponents of the partial rapture have ever alighted upon is the last verse of Hebrews 9: "Unto them which look for him shall he appear the second time apart from sin (or a sin offering) unto salvation (to complete their redemption)." They claim only the spirit-filled are looking for him. Are they? Let us examine this. The Greek literally is: "Unto them which are expectantly awaiting" (Greek doesn't just include the idea of looking, for in Romans 8:19, 23 it is used of creation: "The earnest expectation of creation waiteth the apocalypse of the Son of God.") Is only intelligent creation meant here? No, for they are mentioned before, the sons of God. Creation isn't looking, but it is expectantly waiting. Paul uses it of the carnal Corinthians (I Corinthians 1:7): "Waiting for the "apokalupsin" of our Lord Jesus Christ." Yet Paul doesn't use it as a club to scare them into sanctification. He uses the argument of their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. Modern holiness preachers would have used it as a club. If any church needed the daylights scared out of them, they did. Either Paul missed a good opportunity, or there isn't any partial rapture. The whole body of the redeemed is waiting the final appearing of Christ, this time without a sin offering, so that He can complete their redemption. For this all

saints wait, for our redemption is not yet completed until "the redemption of our bodies," and that awaits His coming (Romans 8:23).

There are only two plain, complete portions in the whole Bible which reveal the rapture. Both are by Paul. If they teach a partial rapture, then whatever my own wishes might be, I must believe in a partial rapture. If, though, there is not any intimation in these two portions where the details and order of the rapture are given, I must deny that there is any such church teaching. Read very carefully these two portions; see if you can find a single intimation of a partial rapture:

1. I Corinthians 15:50-53: Certainly there is no intimation here of any partial rapture: "We shall all be changed, in an atom of time - the twinkling of an eye." He is talking to Corinthians, who were accused of him, of being yet carnal; but of them he says: "We shall all be changed instantaneously, dead and living saints."
2. I Thessalonians 4:13-18: Here is the complete order given, the clearest light on the rapture. I defy anyone to find a partial rapture here. If there is one, don't you think this is the place for Paul to give it? "The dead in Christ arise first." Which dead, only the sanctified? No, all of them; then "we which are alive and left over." is the Greek. Who is that, Only the sanctified? No; all the left-over ones, the living saints.

There is no partial rapture of the saints, for the simple reason that Paul nowhere teaches it. If there is, he, as the great trustee of this dispensation, should have given it. Wouldn't it be strange if he gave all the rest of church doctrine except its final destiny?

## Chapter Two

### PAUL'S UNIQUE GOSPEL

Throughout the remainder of the book we shall be occupied with the minor premise of our syllogism - only unto Paul was committed the complete revelation of church doctrine. This complete revelation he very aptly calls, three times, "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8, and once, "our gospel" (II Thessalonians 2:14), and says that God "put him in trust with it" (I Timothy 1:11). He would allow no admixture or perversion of that gospel, but called down anathemas upon all who deviated (Galatians 1:8-9). He knew where he got that gospel, as by direct revelation from Jesus Christ, and that it alone was "the power of God unto salvation." He alone defines the boundaries of that gospel (I Corinthians 15: 1-4), where he shows it to be the message of a Person, starting with His death, through His resurrection. That Person (the Lord Jesus Christ) filled all of Paul's vision and message.

As we proceed, we shall find that Paul's gospel is divided into two parts: a gospel for the unsaved and a gospel for the saved. For the unsaved, it is the glad message of what their Substitute did for them on the cross. For the saved, it is the glad message of their identification with Christ on the cross, His burial and resurrection; to the unsaved, Christ giving His life for them; to the saved, the sharing of that life. Romans 5:10 seems to give both ideas: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Conybeare gives the full force to the Greek, here translated "by," which should be "in," "the sharing of his life." Don't stop short of the "much more" salvation.

#### Definition: Defining the Word Gospel

The word gospel is primarily a Pauline word, though not exclusively. Outside of its usage in the four Gospels, mostly by Christ, and a few times by Luke, the associate of Paul, in the book of Acts, and five times by Peter writing to Paul's converts in Asia Minor, and once in Revelation, it is Paul's unique title for "his gospel." He uses it 76 times. James, John, and Jude do not use it at all in their letters. For illustrating, John uses five different words to say what Paul would have used the word gospel to say, for the sum of 43 times (word, commandments, message, record, and truth). The Greek word for gospel is "euaggelion" from "eu-well" and "aggelia" a message, so "a glad message, joyful message, good news, glad tidings." In the margin of the Geneva Testament of 1557, gospel is defined: "This word signifieth good tidings and is taken for the story which containeth the joyful message of the coming of the Son of God."

The writers of the biography of Christ must have so used the word. See Mark 1:1: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ." Conybeare consistently translates it "glad tidings," and Rotherham, "glad message." Hence, see the beauty of Paul's declaration in I Timothy 11: "The glorious glad tidings of the happy God which was committed to my trust." Rotherham renders it: "According to the glad message of the glory of the happy God, with which entrusted am I." Here is the threefold truth of Paul's gospel:

1. It is good news or glad tidings;
2. It emanates from the God of all happiness;
3. Paul is the revelator and trustee of it.

In its content it is a blessed, happy, joyful message; in its source it springs from the only Source of happiness and joy, the happy God; and in its completeness it is put into the trusteeship of Paul for its communication. Hence Paul calls himself "an advance herald" of it (this is the Greek word for preacher and preaching in Titus 1:3; it equals the proclamation or announcement of a new truth for the first time - I Timothy 2:6-7; II Timothy 1:11). These three words Paul applies to himself: "preacher" - "proclaimer" or "advancer" of a new truth; "apostle" - one with the divinely given authority to announce it; and "teacher of the Gentiles," the guide into these truths to appropriate them.

There is one more thing we should consider before going into the detailed study of Paul's unique gospel; i.e., the spiritual qualifications needed for the full appropriation of these deeper truths. There should be not only the effort to grasp them mentally, but experimentally. These are not cold, impersonal facts, curious doctrines, and interesting theories: they are living verities, God's glad tidings to us of our present possessions in Christ Jesus, glorious possibilities. Let us enter into them, nothing doubting. Here we dig a little deeper into the three-fold mystery of Christ, the church, and the believer. We shall recount the glories that are ours by rightful inheritance as members of the body of Christ.

Here, more than anywhere else, we need the illumination of the Holy Spirit, as Paul says in the gateway to the epistle to the Ephesians (1: 16-20): "The eyes of your understanding (heart) being enlightened (illuminated); that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, the riches of his inheritance in the saints, and the exceeding greatness of his power to us who believe," all "in the knowledge of him," for Paul asks for them "the spirit of revealed wisdom" (literally). Only the Spirit searcheth or fathoms the deep things of God. Here your A.B., your Th.B., your M.A. and Ph.D. are of no avail. Paul says: "We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God" (I Corinthians 2:12). How we need here the Spirit of truth to guide us into all truth. Christ said: "He shall take of the things of mine and shall show them unto you," and "He shall glorify me." How shallow is so much of the modern preaching, prating of ethics, and discourses on dead issues, never leaving the first principles of Christ and the first works, much less ever sounding forth the life of victory in Christ, through following Him via Calvary, taking His cross, denying self, experiencing burial with Him and resurrection with Him, and now ascension with Him, seated with Him in the heavenlies (Ephesians 2:1-6)!

## I. Paul's Distinctive Doctrines about Christ

Much of the unique revelation by Paul has to do with Christ's relationship to the believer, to be taken up later under that section. But here, under this heading, are two of the most important revelations of Christ that Paul alone gives:

The universal headship of Christ over all  
The headship of Christ over the church

Summed up in their entirety they form what Paul calls "the mystery of Christ" (Colossians 2:2: "the exact knowledge or full knowledge of the mystery of God and of the Father and of Christ;" I Timothy 3:16: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh."). We shall wait to consider later, in relation to the other three mysteries,

the meaning of the word "musterion," used here by Paul alone of human authors, but for our present purpose the mystery of God is summed up here as the manifestation of God in human form, the incarnation of Christ. "In him are hid all the resources of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3), and "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9); "it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell" (Colossians 1:1-8), and verse 17: "that in all things he might have the pre-eminence," In relation to all of creation to sum up in him all things and reconcile all things unto God (Colossians 1:20-21), but primarily to be Head of the church and of a new race of "sons of God."

This ascribing to Christ all pre-eminence is what I like to call Paul's unique doctrine of the Christ-centered theology. Christ is the beginning, the center and the end or purpose. For Paul, all else counts for naught: he could "count them all but refuse that he might win Christ." He wanted to "know Him, the fellowship of His suffering, being made conformable unto His death, that he might know the power of His resurrection." This two-fold exaltation of Christ both in and through Paul are in one verse, which he gives as the starting point of his ministry - Galatians 1:16: "To reveal his Son in me that I might preach Him among the nations."

Paul seems to stand in a clearer light concerning Christ's glorified position as containing in Himself the fullness of God. He had not walked with Him in His humiliation, seen His weariness, His human infirmities, or His sufferings and death. This must have been the reason Christ passed over those twelve who followed Him on earth, even the magic circle of the three, and even the one who leaned on His bosom, the closest of the three. The first vision Paul had of Christ was one of the ineffable resurrection glory. And that vision never faded through thirty years of serving Him. In all his epistles the conceptions of Christ are of constant, unspeakable glory, the same blinding light which filled his vision and robbed him of all sight of anything else for three days, seems to have filled his life and labors. For illustration: James mentions Christ but twice in his epistle. Paul cannot write a line without somehow getting Christ into it.

Now note this two-fold revelation of the Headship and pre-eminence of Christ.

#### A. The Universal Headship of Christ

The fact that Christ is to head up all of creation itself is revealed in Ephesians 1:9-10: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." Read carefully and note the Greek for "gather together" equals to sum up, like an arithmetic problem in addition, to unite under one Head. All the times Christ is called Messiah in the Old Testament point to this, for Messiah means His Kinghood - "the anointed" - and the Greek "Christ" equal the same. See Philippians 2:9-11. In this relation, notice I Corinthians 15:22-28, a chapter wholly made up of distinctive Pauline revelations. Note here: sometime way out in eternity, when Christ shall have reigned long enough to subdue all opposition to God, then He Himself shall deliver the kingdom up to God the Father, and His time mission will have ended. History opens, "In the beginning God," and ends, "God all in all" (cf. Colossians 1:16-17; Colossians 2:9-10; Ephesians 1:20-22).

## B. The Headship of Christ over the Church

But the primary point of Paul's revelation of the mystery of Christ's Headship is His Headship over the church, which we shall consider under the mystery of the church as His body. In Romans 5:15-21 Paul shows that Christ is the federal Head of a new race, as Adam was of the first race (cf. I Corinthians 15:22, 45-47). This new race is to be conformable to Christ Himself (Romans 8:29). Through His sufferings it is accomplished (Hebrews 2:10). Read carefully Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:15-19; 2:16-19. Here is the greatest source of error in the church and the spiritual babyhood - losing touch with the Head, Christ Jesus (A.V. "holding the head;" Greek "keeping in touch with the head"). For it is from Him the whole body received nourishment, ministered, and increased with the increase of God. In Him are both our life and the source of our knowledge. For all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Him. Lose touch with the Head, lose His absolute Headship and both error and retrogression result. There are two other great truths taught by Paul concerning this unique position Christ holds as Head of the church which need considering. He alone gives them.

### 1. Paul's Teaching About the Cross of Christ

As the center of our preaching and of our lives, the cross is the burning message unto salvation for the sinner and is the means of escape for the believer from the world of self and sin and worldliness. He gives both in one verse (Galatians 6:14: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.") Here is the double crucifixion of the believer, by which he died to sin and sin dies to him. Paul alone, outside of the Gospels, uses the word cross.

On the literal cross of Christ was accomplished God's redemption. "Paul is the great revelator of what God did at the cross." Throughout the Gospels we read how He came. But Paul tells us why He came. The gospel which Paul declares to be "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth," in Romans 1:16, he explains, in I Corinthians 1:18, to be "the preaching of the cross" (literally "word of the cross, discourse of the cross"), not the cross itself, but the message of the cross (logos of the cross). All heathenism has a cross, but they know nothing of the message of the cross; i.e., what God did there. Paul goes on in verse 23: "but we preach Christ crucified," so the message of the cross, what God did there to bruise His Son, that is the gospel, and the power wrought through the cross of Christ would be to through all of his epistles. But note Ephesians 2: 12-18; Colossians 1:20; 2:13-14. The message of the cross is what John calls "the record God gave of his Son, which gives us eternal life" (I John 5:10-11). God, on the cross of Christ, "reconciled the world unto himself" (II Corinthians 5:19), "broke down the middle wall of partition to admit we strangers to the covenants" (Ephesians 2:16), "brought us nigh" (Ephesians 2:13), "reconciled us while we were enemies" (Romans 5:10), "brought us peace" (Colossians 1:20), and "took the guilt of a broken law which was against us, nailing it to his cross" (Colossians 2:14). Look up all references to His blood which was shed on the cross. Even in heaven now the most prominent characteristic about Him is "as a lamb as it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6; 7:14; 13:8).

The believer's cross is not the little one hanging on a gold chain around a well-fed neck, not infirmities or burdens one is called to bear, but crucifixion with Christ into His death. This is a well-taught truth by Paul, running all through his epistles. Identification with Christ in death emphasizes the Headship of Christ. How can He be Head and the believer be head at the same time? He cannot be enthroned until you die. This is a three-fold death to the believer (a truth which will be explained thoroughly later):

- a. To self (Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:6)
  - b. To sin (Romans 6:6-11; Galatians 5:24)
  - c. To the world (Galatians 6:14)
2. Paul's Teaching About the Present High-Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ

It is briefly mentioned by John, when he calls Christ "an Advocate." But only Paul develops it in the book of Hebrews and calls Him "Mediator" in Timothy. This work of Christ is His eternal Priesthood after the order of Melchizedec. This includes His two-fold ministry of giving us access now to the Father and the throne of grace through His sacrificial work and His present High-Priestly work of intercession and cleansing of the believer's walk. There is, no doubt, vastly more that Paul could have told us about this High-Priestly work of Christ, but he could not because of the dullness of hearing of the Hebrew saints (Hebrews 5:11). Though they were Hebrews and well-acquainted with the ceremonial law, their spiritual immaturity forbade Paul's enlarging on the theme of Christ's High-Priestly work as he would have liked to do. It is even more difficult today. Christ today bears us on His heart. As the priest of old bore the names of the 12 tribes on his shoulders and on his heart, so Christ does today for love and support.

The Pauline authorship of Hebrews has been disputed greatly, though its inspiration was never denied by the Eastern early church, and only by the Latin Church because of lack of signature. Its authorship was accepted after the Eastern Church vouched for its inspiration, authenticity, and genuineness. Internally it dates itself as having been written while the temple and its services were still intact (Hebrews 7:25; 13:11-13). This is a much traveled pathway, with many intellectual and spiritual giants bringing their efforts to bear. We shall collect their results and add our own. It has always seemed very strange to me that another authorship than Paul's should be sought so assiduously upon the slimmest of pretexts, while very weighty evidences and testimony as to the Pauline authorship are denied, some of the very slimmest advocated are Aquila, Titus, Silas, Mark, and Timothy. Others are:

- a. Apollos: The Alexandrian Jew. Martin Luther was the first to advocate him. So did Alford, Lange, and Farrar, using the single basis of his eloquence. It was believed that Paul was incapable of such eloquence. But it is more than passing strange that Apollos' home church, Alexandria, held firmly to the Pauline authorship of Hebrews, without a one advocating the Apollos authorship.

- b. Luke: John Calvin was probably the first to advocate him, without any real historical or critical evidence, but using Luke's eloquence in the Greek. There is no comparison in the Greek of Hebrews and Acts or Luke.
- c. Barnabas: This derives from an obscure reference in Tertullian where he mentions a letter of Barnabas to the Hebrews. There is no external or internal evidence to back this up.
- d. Clement of Rome: His own testimony, however, is that Paul wrote it. The only proof used is the many quotations from Hebrews in his epistle to the Corinthians, but all Fathers, as now, quote the Bible without proving they wrote it.

What kind of evidence is this? Inferential and slim, but contrast the evidence of the Pauline authorship. The four main arguments advanced against the Pauline authorship are:

- a. No signature. Two early Fathers have answered that conclusively - Clement of Alexandria, in his "instructions," and Jerome, in his "Illustrious Men," and we follow them: "Paul's name was odious among the Hebrews." They also add: "Out of modesty he didn't sign his name, 'Paul, an apostle,' since he would after speak of Christ the High Priest." Almost all early church Fathers agree that it was written to the Jews in Palestine, then, to sign his name would have padlocked it in the first place.
- b. The difference in style in the Greek from the other epistles of Paul. Jerome had an answer for that. "He wrote as a Hebrew to the Hebrews, pure Hebrew; it being his own language; whence it came to pass that being translated it has more elegance in the Greek than his other Epistles"<sup>10</sup> (about 392 A.D.). Remember, Jerome didn't at first believe in the Pauline authorship of Hebrews until he visited Jerusalem and was convinced of it by Cyril of Jerusalem. Returning and making the Vulgate Translation, he convinced the Roman Church to accept the Pauline authorship. Ever since, all versions carry the appellation, "The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews." It seems to me that Jerome, with his access to the writings of the Anti-Nicene Fathers, should have been more able to determine this than the moderns.
- c. The silly argument of Lange in his "Introduction to Hebrews." "We can scarcely conceive of Paul having written to Hebrew Christians if we remember the agreement made at Jerusalem among the apostles in regard to their spheres of labor, i.e., that Paul was to go to the Gentiles, and the other three to the Jews."<sup>11</sup> But this would be against the Apollo authorship also. He forgets that Paul also wrote the epistle to the Galatians (Christian Jews in danger of reverting to Judaism); also that Paul usually preached to Jews first upon entering a city. Christ sent him to Israel as well as to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15).
- d. The most commonly used argument by later critics and even Calvin, from Hebrews 2:3, from this they try to prove that the author of Hebrews

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<sup>10</sup> Newell, William R., Hebrews, Verse by Verse (Chicago: Moody Press, 1947) 241.

<sup>11</sup> Trench, Richard C., Synonyms of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdman's, 1948) 168.

was one who never heard the voice of Christ. But this is not the import of the verse. The historical life of Christ must be communicated to the writer of Hebrews by the immediate followers of Christ, and the order is "First spoken by the Lord, then by those who heard him, then by the later called ones."

e. Positively the Pauline authorship proven (external evidences). Some of the ablest have defended the Pauline authorship of Hebrews: Dr. Lardner, Moses Stuart, Spanheim, Dr. Lightfoot, Lindsay, Wetstein, Beza, Wordsworth, Barnes, and most of the great reformers, as noted from their confessions of faith. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, and a great many like Origen, who said "Only God knows who wrote it," yet say the subject matter is Paul's, so also did Calvin. Now if this be conceded, then it is like all his epistles (with the exception of Galatians, maybe), penned by a penman while Paul dictated. Some have even theorized that as Paul dictated, Luke translated into Greek as he wrote; hence the eloquence and difference in Greek style. The Eastern Church, without a dissenting voice, to whom the epistle first came, including the church at Jerusalem under Cyril of Jerusalem, acknowledged the Pauline authorship. This should have the greatest weight among the external evidences from testimony. They should know more about it than the later Western Church which even refused it at first as inspired. In the very first century, Pantaeus of the Eastern Church affirmed it to be a firm tradition that Paul wrote it, as did the Alexandrian Church. It was only the Latin Church, which at first refused it because it came unsigned, and only received it after confirmation came from the Eastern Church as to its genuineness and authenticity by affirming its Pauline authorship. Is that weighty evidence, or not, and how does it compare with the theorizings of later writers against Paul? It is more than peculiar to me that such slim evidence of another authorship should be so convincing to so many. Adam Clarke names over 100 early Church Fathers who accepted the Pauline authorship of Hebrews (such as Ignatius, Polycarp, Clement of Alexandria, down to Chrysostom).

Let us look at an overwhelming number of internal evidences.

- a. The apostle Peter, writing to the "strangers of the dispersion," Hebrew saints, says that Paul had written them - II Peter 3:15: "Even as our brother Paul hath written unto you." Coupled with the "things hard to be understood," it would point to this epistle to the Hebrews.
- b. It was written from Rome by a prisoner, in bonds (13:3, 19-24; 10:34; 13:24).
- c. The author is a brother to Timothy in the gospel and a co-laborer (as in I Thessalonians 3:2; cf. Hebrews 13:23). When writing to Timothy, Paul's term is "son Timothy" all through I and II Timothy, but writing about him to others, it is always "brother" (Colossians 1:1; I Thessalonians 3:2-3; II Corinthians 1:1). He was in bonds at the same time as Paul, so a co-laborer.

d. The most overwhelming evidences are the very many identical phrases, peculiar expressions, illustrations and doctrines which form a part of Paul's gospel, revealed only to him:

- 1.) He alone uses the Greek games to illustrate the Christian life, since he was reared at Tarsus, a Greek university town (cf. two foot races, Hebrews 12:1-5 with I Corinthians 9:24-27, and the raised bema seat, II Corinthians 5:9-10).
- 2.) Compare 13:9 with Ephesians 4:14.
- 3.) Revelation of the saints' heavenly citizenship (Hebrews 11:13-16; 12:26-28; 13:12-14; cf. Ephesians 2:1-6), "in heavenlies" (Ephesians 2: 19 and Philippians 3:20; Colossians 3:1)
- 4.) His calling of our sainthood a "calling" (Hebrews 3:1). Paul uses it eight times in his other epistles. Peter uses it but once (II Peter 1:10, "calling sure"). See Philippians 3:14; I Corinthians 1:26; II Timothy 1: 9; Ephesians 1:18, 4:9.
- 5.) In fact, the name "saints" is Paulinism. He uses it 40 times in other epistles. Peter, James and John never use it, Hebrews 13:24.
- 6.) "Salute the saints" (13:24). In the way Hebrews is ended, so Paul ends most of his epistles, as in Romans 16, I and II Corinthians, Philippians, Philemon, Titus, etc., using either the term or names of the saints.
- 7.) The calling of Old Testament things "a shadow." Cf. Hebrews 8:5; 10:1 with Colossians 2:17.
- 8.) The terming of carnal Christians "babes in Christ." Cf. Hebrews 5:12-14 with Corinthians 3:1-4.
- 9.) The terming of the elementary things "rudiments" or first principles. This is a purely Pauline expression, cf. Hebrews 6:1; 5:12 with Galatians 4:3-9; Colossians 2:8; 2:20. Paul alone, outside of Hebrews uses it.
- 10.) Compare Hebrews 10:33 with I Corinthians 4:9 - a peculiar expression, "gazing stock," literally "theatre," same identical phraseology. It must be the same man writing both; he ascribes in both the same reason he used this, because of their persecutions.
- 11.) The name for God, "God of peace" (Hebrews 13:20-21). Only Paul uses it, outside of Hebrews, several times, always toward the end of his epistle, as Romans 15:33; 16:20; Philippians 4:9; I Thessalonians 5:33; II Corinthians 13:11. No other New Testament writer uses it. Is that a coincidence?
- 12.) Paul alone, outside of Hebrews, calls Christ a "Mediator" (Galatians 3:19-20, I Timothy 2:5; three times in Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24), nowhere else - coincidence?
- 13.) Paul's unique word, "to annul" - "katargew," "put out of business, render ineffectual," used 29 times by Paul and in Hebrews 2:14, used only one time outside (Luke 13:7) - "Cunibereth," (II Timothy 1:10). "Abolish death," etc.

14.) Paul asks prayer for himself in closing (Romans 15:30; Ephesians 6:18-19; Colossians 4:3; I Thessalonians 5:25; II Thessalonians 3:1) and so concludes Hebrews 13:18: "Pray for us;" and the good conscience he claims here he claims in Acts 23:1 and mentions in I Timothy 1:5, 19.

We could multiply these instances ten-fold, but note the conclusive one - Paul's signature, his autograph. He might just as well have signed his name, for those who have his other epistles: "His grace be with you all" (13:25). See II Thessalonians 3: 17-18 for a mark of the genuineness of his epistles. Since another penned them, Paul must autograph them. All 13 epistles end thusly, or with the shorter form: "Grace be with you;" coincidence? No! It is Paul's signature, Paul's epistle.

To me it is amazing that any person conversant with Paul's particular learning, calling, and message could read Hebrews and conceive of anyone else writing it, hence the preponderance of early Church Fathers of the Western church who denied the Pauline authorship, yet held to the truth that the subject matter was Paul's. The same man who wrote Galatians must have written Hebrews. The logic is Paul's - the dialectical method. Observe his asking a question in the first part of the book, to give the purpose of the book, yet not finally answering it until almost the end, but all through, weaving in follow-up arguments and contributing thoughts. You feel as though he has forgotten the subject and gotten sidetracked, only to find him bringing you back sharply and logically to a conclusion. A prime example is Hebrews 2:1-4; cf. 12:25-29. His personal applications we shall consider later - "let us," Paul's favorite habit of stating a position and entreating his readers to follow. The yearning love for his brethren after the flesh is Paul's. The unique revelations are Paul's. The rich Hebrew learning is Paul's. The knowledge of Greek is Paul's. The freedom of the believer, as not under Law but grace, is Paul's revelation. The exaltation of Christ is Paul's.

With regard to the Pauline revelation of the High-Priestly work of Christ, there is the revelation in I John 2:1 of Christ as our Advocate (the Greek is the same word Jesus used of the Holy Spirit: "parakletos," Comforter; here it is Advocate, as the idea of a Lawyer to plead our case). Peter, in I Peter 2:25, reveals Jesus as the Shepherd and Bishop (Overseer) of our souls, but Paul in Hebrews reveals how Christ advocates and how He oversees our souls. Paul is the only one revealing this ministry of Christ. Seventeen times, High Priest is used of Christ in Hebrews. In the Gospels, it is used only of the office in Jerusalem, Paul alone uses the word "Mediator" in Hebrews and in his other epistles (Romans 8:34: "who maketh intercession for us").

Paul presents two great revelations of Christ's Priesthood in Hebrews:

1. The Old Testament typology: He quotes from the 110th Psalm and applies it to Christ. This portion typifies the eternal and the royal Priesthood of Christ (Psalm 110:4). Here He sits at God's right hand waiting until His enemies become His footstool. But naught is said of

Melchizedec offering sacrifices. So the Aaronic Priesthood must also typify Christ. It took two priesthoods in the Old Testament to perfectly typify Christ (Hebrews 5:1-9). But Melchizedec's was better than the Aaronic, since it was an unchanging, eternal priesthood, not in the shadowy earthly tabernacle, but to appear in the presence of God for us.

2. The heavenly High-Priestly ministry of Christ now: The heavenly ministry of Christ in sprinkling the heavenly mercy seat with His blood opened a new and living way through the veil for us, giving us present access to the very Holy of Holies in heaven.(Read Hebrews 8:1-5; 9:21-24; 9:1-13; 10:19-20.) These all teach, without a doubt, that there is a literal tabernacle in heaven, from which the earthly was patterned and is but a shadow. (Read Revelation 11:19; 15:5-6; 16:1). Identified with Him in His death and resurrection and ascension, I can follow Him spiritually into the holiest of all now and later physically. Note Hebrews 6:18-20. Here Paul speaks of "the hope which is set before us" and "the hope which is sure and steadfast anchored to that which is within the veil." What is this hope? Hebrews 7:19 tells us: "It is Christ himself." In the Old Testament, the high priest going within the veil was the Israelite's hope; I Timothy 1:1, "Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope." The Greek has no "which is" in it: "Jesus Christ our hope." "So, then, our hope has entered into the holiest within the veil."

Note two things here:

1. Christ is our "Forerunner" (the Greek word is used only here in the New Testament and means "one who goes ahead for us to open the way for us to follow). The high priest in the Old Testament was only a representative - never a forerunner. The people couldn't follow him; but Christ goes nowhere that we cannot follow. Christ came from within the veil from God, took my nature, died for me, rent the veil for me to go with Him back to God. This is the whole gospel of Hebrews. "Let us draw near" and "come boldly unto the throne of grace."

2. It was "for us" He entered as our Forerunner for us to follow Him. How many rejoice in the phrase "for us?" He died on the cross, and "for us." He arose for our justification, but this means He ascended for us, entered the holiest of all in heaven for us. He rent the veil for us, to open the way, and gives us present access now to the holiest of all within the veil - an access to the presence of God, yea, to live there. Where the high priest on earth could go only once a year, with fear and trembling, I live all the time in "full assurance of faith." Paul gives this truth in other places, such as Ephesians 2:1-6; Hebrews 12:18-24, and his practical application in 10:19-24. If you haven't entered into the heavenly life, do not blame your Forerunner Who opened the "new and living way." Blame rather your slowness of following. Newell

well says: "For century after century the professing church has settled down in this world as an earth religion. People 'hope to go to heaven when they die.' The thought of being now, a heavenly people with a heavenly calling and with a heavenly High Priest in heaven conducting heavenly worship, has never entered their minds."<sup>12</sup>

We shall but outline the High-Priestly ministry of Christ. The total responsibility and qualifications are given in Hebrews 5:1: a high priest was "taken from among men," was "ordained for men," in "things pertaining to God." Here are the two sides of the Mediator's ministry, the daysman asked for by Job of old, for man to God and God to man, earthward and heavenward sharing God's and man's side. Christ partakes of both natures:

1. Toward God (2:18) - propitiation to remove the obstacles to reconciliation (5:1; 8:3-6; 9:25-28; 10:4-14); thus ratifying the New covenant (8:6-9, 15; 9:12). He intercedes before God for His own, while the Holy Spirit intercedes here on earth for and within us (Romans 8:26-27; Hebrews 7:25; 2:17).
2. For men (2:18), "able to succor the tempted"; (4:15), "able to be touched with the feelings of our infirmities"; (7:23-25), "able to complete the believer's salvation," "save to the uttermost" (to completion); (5:2), "bears gently with the ignorant and erring" (Greek "deals tenderly with").

So Christ's Melchizedek ministry now is to save the believer to the uttermost (completion) and to bring him nigh into the very Holy of Holies, into God's presence. So the message of Hebrews is "bring nigh unto God."

## II. Paul's Distinctive Doctrines about the Church

Taken in their sum total, these constitute the "mystery of the church" which was "not made known in ages past as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:1-6). Colossians 1:26-27 is more emphatic as to the difference in God's program now and in the Old Testament. That is the fact that the church's revelation upon the scene of history without former intimation constitutes a brand new institution and not an outgrowth of Judaism. Here again is needed the re-emphasis of the great truth of the church as a New Testament revelation and body, without former intimation in the Old Testament. Four times Paul reiterates this (Romans 16:25-26; Colossians 1:26; Ephesians 3:1-9; Titus 1:1-3). Read and study carefully these four references.

### A. The Definition of the Word "Mystery" and its Usage.

Paul is the only one outside of God Himself who uses the Greek word "musterion," translated "mystery" or "mysteries." Peter, James, John, Luke, Jude, nor any of the

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<sup>12</sup> Trench 269.

evangelists ever use it, except to record the one time Jesus used it. God uses it four times in Revelation. It is one of Paul's favorite words to collectively give the whole revelation God gave to him on any one subject. He uses it 20 times, a unique revelation indeed. The Greek word means "a secret revealed only to the initiated or those on the inside who have a right to know it." The common definition of many misses the point, "a former secret now revealed." This won't bear up under the one time Jesus used it, where He defines it for us as God intended it to be used. It is recorded in three of the Gospels - Matthew 13:11: "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given" (see the plain meaning). It is a sacred secret God intends only for those on the inside, i.e., His own. Rotherham translates it consistently, "sacred secret." Every heathen religion has its "mysteries only for the adepts, the initiated," so with all secret societies; as Thayer's Lexicon, page 420, on the word "mysteries": "religious secrets confided only to the initiated"; as Moulton and Milligan's Vocabulary, also page 420.

God's mysteries are for all His saints, as He sees fit to reveal them, those belonging to us in the church. Paul emphatically states that "they were hid from all ages and generations past, but are now revealed to us his saints" by Paul, who was the custodian, steward of them, and received them by "revelation" (Ephesians 3:1-10).

There are seven primary mysteries revealed in the whole of the New Testament - three which are not distinctive church truths, though Paul is the revelator of two of them, and Jesus of the other; then there are four which are distinctively church truth revealed only by Paul. The saint who firmly grasps these four will have the sum of Paul's revelation for the church, and will be one of the "spiritual ones" and "mature," able to stand "strong meat" and not just "milk" Hebrews 5:11-14).

### Three Mysteries Which Are Not Special Church Truth

1. The Mystery of the Kingdom (Matthew 13): The first mystery is summed up as the innermost workings of God's rule among men in mystery form; i.e., the unseen part not apparent to the beholder, mysterious - both of the "kingdom of heaven," the all-inclusive rule, and the "kingdom of God," the spiritual part, the true children of the kingdom. This mystery of the kingdom is consummated when Christ has summed up all under Him (Ephesians 1:9-10). It is no longer in mystery form, but is the kingdom of our God and of His Christ (Revelation 11:15-18), called "the finishing of the mystery of God" (Revelation 10:6-7), God's whole plan to rule over man, the creature made in God's image.

2. The Mystery of Iniquity (II Thessalonians 2:7): This is seen in parable form in Matthew 13:33, of the leaven hidden in the meal. This is the mystery of Satan's counterfeit religion. It started at Babel; hence, deriving its name ("mystery Babylon") and Babylon throughout the Bible in opposition to the people of God and His revealed system. It culminates in "mystery Babylon the great" (Revelation 17) and the "finishing of the mystery in the man of sin" himself, and open worship of Satan. It takes in all false religion: hence, "mother of harlots."

3. The Mystery of Israel's Blindness, during this church dispensation while God is "calling out a people for his name" (Romans 11:25): It is the common idea embodied in the oft-repeated prophecy from Isaiah 6:10: 44:18. It is quoted by Jesus in the same "mystery of the kingdom" statement in Matthew 13:14-15. Paul uses it as a proof of

the need to turn to the Gentiles in Acts 28:25-27 and Romans 11:8-10. We shall consider it in a separate chapter later, studying Romans 9-11. It includes the position of Israel now during this present church dispensation (II Corinthians 3:16), the veil over Israel's face.

#### Four Mysteries Which Paul Reveals Which Are For the Believer

1. The Mystery of Christ: His incarnation, person, headship, and position. We have already considered this mystery of Christ.
2. The Mystery of the Church: This is part of our present study - the new body of Christ which was hidden from all ages past, His bride.
3. The Mystery of the Believer: This involves his being a temple of the Holy Spirit, indwelt by Christ, and all the wonderful things God has freely given us in Him.
4. The Mystery of the Rapture (I Corinthians 15:50-51): This refers to Paul's unique eschatology.

Paul himself tells us the peculiar reason for his usage of the word "mystery" in relation to the believer (I Corinthians 2:7); note carefully "hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory" ("for the glory of us"). Here Paul ushers us into what the mystery of the church is. Christ intimated it in John 17:22: "the glory which thou hast given me, I have given them." In Christ, by identification, God has brought us into the same divine glory as Christ, sharing all His glory, so that all that God has for Him is mine. When He shall appear in glory, so shall I (Colossians 3:4). We shall be "glorified together" (Romans 8:17) with a body "like unto the body of his glory" (Philippians 3:21). There never was a hint in the Old Testament, as Paul plainly states (I Corinthians 2:7), of this glorified inner body of believers who would be joined into a living union with Christ to share His glory, one in body and destiny. The only promise to Israel was to "behold his glory." By no imagination could they conceive of sharing it. The Old Testament believer knew by prophetic announcements, quoted often by Paul himself, that God would take in the Gentiles and bless them, but what wasn't revealed was the new body and the glory into which both Israel and they would be taken - sinners saved by grace, redeemed by the blood of Christ, indwelt by Christ Himself, identified as one with Him, raised with Him to sit in the heavenlies, united with Him in one life : " beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, we are transformed into the same image (likeness) from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Corinthians 3:18); some day to be transformed into the body of His glory, to be "glorified together" as a joint-heir with Him, to share equally His glory forever, "so ordained of God before the world for the glory of us."

Here is the mystery kept secret for 4,000 years, but now revealed to us, upon whom this glory devolves. It is our secret. I wouldn't trade places with every Old Testament saint: Moses, Elijah, David all put together. What Israelite could possibly dream of such a position? And Paul says, "Princes of this world didn't know it"; also; "the natural man": "neither can the natural perceive them, but the Holy Spirit must reveal them to us" (I Corinthians 2:9-14). In I Peter 1:10-12, the Old Testament prophets revealed the truth of the grace that should come to us, but knew not its significance. Angels desired to look

into it, when they testified of the sufferings of Christ and "the glory to follow," but, according to Paul, not a one had this mystery revealed unto him - that man would be taken into that glory and share it (as co-glorification - Romans 8:17).

## B. The Mystery of the Church

God uses three allegories to show the mystery of the church. I call them "Paul's Three B's":

### 1. The Church as Christ's Building - "Temple of God" (Ephesians 2:21-22)

This refers to the fact that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, a part of the joint body and joint-partakers with the Jews in a brand-new body, "a new man." The breaking down of "the middle wall of partition" and the inclusion of the Gentiles was not just a Pauline revelation. God revealed to the apostle Peter at Joppa, by the vision that Gentiles were to share with the Jews in salvation through Christ. He said: "there is no difference between Jew and Gentile in the Church of Christ" (Acts 10:20). But it was left to Paul to closely define the abolition of the "wall of partition."

Scofield well footnotes Ephesians 3: "That the Gentiles were to be saved was no mystery. The mystery hid in God was the divine purpose to make of Jew and Gentile a wholly new thing - the church which is His body," and in which the earthly distinction of Jew and Gentile disappears (cf. Colossians 3:10-11 and Galatians 3:12) where even male and female distinction is abolished in the body. No distinctions of race, color, culture, sex, condition of life, denomination, but 'all one in Christ.' 'Plenty of new "middle walls of partitions" have been erected through the ages, but they are not of God's devising but man's inventions.

Under this division is the very name God gave the church, used mostly by Paul - "ekklesia," meaning "called out" or "called out ones." It is never used in the Bible of building, and indeed could not be. You do not call out a building. There are three usages:

- a. A local body of believers (Philemon 2: "The church which is in thy house")
- b. The group of churches in a locality - "the churches of Asia Minor"
- c. All the believers who together comprise the whole body of Christ from Pentecost to the rapture - "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" (Colossians 1:24: "His body which is the church"); "and there is but one body" (Ephesians 4:4).

There is the fact that this body is growing into a holy temple unto the Lord, as His habitation (Ephesians 2:20-22). God doesn't dwell in a building in this dispensation; no building is His temple, but the body of Christ is. Note the literal rendering of Ephesians 2:21: "In whom all the building properly jointed and connected (one word in the Greek, signifying 'God places the members in the church as it pleases him' (I Corinthians 12:18) is growing into a holy temple in the

Lord (one single complete temple for God's habitation)." "In whom ye also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." This is a separate distinct teaching from the fact that the individual believer is a temple of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 3:16; II Corinthians 6:16), which will engage our attention later.

God does not now dwell in a building on earth, as in the Old Testament; in this sense there is no holy building now (only as they are consecrated unto holy usage), but the church is God's holy temple. What a mystery! Certainly the social club posing as a church today, where Christ is denied and a social gospel substituted, is ignorant of this great truth; i.e., that the saved believers make up the only holy temple of God on earth, "an habitation of God in the Spirit"; that the church is not merely a doctrinal affiliation, subscription to some creed, or some particular communion, method of ordinance observance, or peculiar denominational slant. God is building it. Read I Corinthians 3:5-17, II Corinthians 6:16. Temple is for worship. Habitation is for walking in us. The great Architect of the universe is building Himself a temple, a habitation of living stones. Paul is the master-architect; Christ is the foundation; the church is "the building"; God is the Occupant.

## 2. The Church as Christ's Body

This is the second striking figure employed by Paul in the book of Ephesians, and certainly it is one of the most unique and distinctive of Paul's revelations. It goes far to prove our minor premise, since he alone even so much as mentions it, yet uses it the most in revealing the "mystery of the church." Sixteen distinct times Paul uses this figure of the church as "Christ's body." One-half of these, or eight, are in Ephesians, called "the book of body truth." The church, as the living organic body of Christ, rises higher than the previous one; i.e., that the church is a building. Peter caught the brief glimpse of the church as made up of "living stones" built upon the chief Cornerstone, but not of this great truth. Here is a union of life with Christ, not merely of structure. Read Ephesians 5:22-32, where Paul distinctly calls it a part of the mystery of the church. Verse 30 shows how closely knit to our heavenly Lord we are as a part of His very body. This verse further shows that it is more than a mere figure; it is a blessed reality. In a real vital sense I am incorporated into Christ, "of His flesh and of His bones."

a. How one gets into Christ's body: Since there is confusion among church folk as to what the church is, there is confusion as to how one gets into it. They confuse the body of Christ, which is the true church, with the professing visible group which names the name "church." They think it can be entered by "joining." They forget that "God adds to the church daily such as are being saved" (Acts 2:47, lit.). There are many unsaved folk in the professing church, but none in the body of Christ. Paul is very emphatic as to how we get into the body of Christ, and there is no other way: "By one Spirit were we all baptized into one body and have all been made to drink into one Spirit" (I Corinthians 11:13). It is something supernaturally done for us by the Holy Spirit. No human can, in reality, "take us into the church," either by "joining" or by "water baptism." We can join the local assembly, and should join one, but we

cannot join the church which is His body. It is a baptism by the Spirit of God (I Corinthians 12:13 - all in the aorist tense, showing a completed historical event. At one point of time we were all baptized; this is the one baptism Paul mentions in Ephesians 4:5). It was the baptism with fire by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit with fire welded the 120 into one body by the "baptism of fire." Now each sinner who accepts Christ and is supernaturally regenerated by the Spirit of God, that instant he is made a partaker of the "one baptism" and is baptized into the body of Christ by the Spirit. This is evidenced by the fact that each individual believer is indwelt by the Spirit, and therefore "is made to drink into one Spirit." By this anyone should see that no unsaved person can "belong to the church" or be in the body of Christ. The illustration used by Paul in I Corinthians 12:13 is graphic: "Drinking into one Spirit," so, "one body." As my body has many members, but all of the same body, because one spirit of life animates the whole, so with the body of Christ. We, being many members, yet are one body, because of the one Spirit of life animating the whole, and we all drink into one Spirit. Here also is seen the reason why there cannot be more than one body of Christ.

b. This body is growing. It isn't complete as yet (Ephesians 2:21; 4:16; Colossians 2:19, Conybeare's translation: "And not holding the head (lit. keeping in touch with the head) from whom the whole body, by the joints which bind it draws full nourishment for all its needs, and is knit together and increases in a godly growth."

c. The spiritual truths Paul deduces from this truth, of the church as the body of Christ. Each Christian should look up and study carefully all 16 times Paul mentions the body of Christ.

1.) As members of His body, we share His life, the life of the body and so "drink into one Spirit" (I Corinthians 12:13). One body always has but one life; any other would be a parasite; so I Corinthians 6:17; I Corinthians 10:16.

2.) As members of His body and He the Head, we should always "keep in touch with the head" (Colossians 2:19, lit.). We should be under His control, always under His will (Ephesians 5:22-24); else there is anarchy in the body.

3.) Paul enjoins us to unity, since we be brethren and fellow-members of the same body (Ephesians 4:3-6); so there should be equality in the body (I Corinthians 12:12-37).

4.) The Holy Spirit's gifts are for the "edification of the whole body," not for personal gain, but "for the profit of all" (I Corinthians 12:7, lit.). The gifts are "given to every man, ""severally as he wills," and "he sets the members in the body as it hath pleased Him." Every believer has some "grace given" or some "measure of faith" as a gift of the Holy Spirit, for the building up of the body of Christ (Romans 12:3-8).

5.) The special gifting of men is that the Holy Spirit may give them as Christ's gift to the whole church. Gifted men are Christ's gift to the whole church (Ephesians 4:7-16; cf. Romans 12:3-8). The Holy Spirit

endues men with special gifts or "manifestations of the Spirit": then Christ gives these men to His body for its "edification" or "building up."

Now note these specially gifted men who are given to the body:

- 1.) Apostles (I Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11): These are always first in the catalogue, since first in time and importance. Unto them was entrusted inspiration, the giving of the Scriptures. It had to cease with the death of the last apostle, since a part of the qualifications was: "We have seen Christ in the flesh," and they had to be personally chosen by Christ (I Corinthians 9:1). With the prophets, they were to form the foundation of the church, Christ being the chief Cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20).
- 2.) Prophets: Paul defines the gift in I Corinthians 14:3. The prophets seem to have spoken under immediate inspiration, rather than being a repository (entrusted) of a revelation. As the occasion demanded, God gave them immediate inspiration to speak His word directly to the people, while the apostle seemed to have carried a permanent commission as "legate." It seems to have been the ability to declare the Word of God directly to the hearts of men so as to have them recognize its authority to Romans 12:6; So "secondarily, prophets," but "first, apostles."
- 3.) Deacons (Romans 12:7): "ministry" (Greek "diakonia"), personal ministry, as the seven in Acts 6. Qualifications: "Men full of faith and of the Holy Spirit," "honest report," "full of wisdom." Stephen was "a man full of faith and power" (Acts 6:3, 6:5, and 6:8). Paul gives more qualifications in I Timothy 3:8-13. It would be wonderful if deacons could measure up to that now!
- 4.) Teachers: Like Priscilla and Aquila, who took Apollos and "expounded unto him the way of God more accurately." It is opening the Scriptures, a gift of I Corinthians 12:8: "utterance of knowledge."
- 5.) Exhorters (Romans 12:8): Evangelists (Ephesians 4:11), swaying of the wills.
- 6.) Givers: Listed in Romans 12:8 as an office in the body of Christ. They are told to give with simplicity (disinterestedness): i.e. impartially.
- 7.) Rulers of the Church (Romans 12:8): Rotherham: "Those who take the lead." This is probably the "governments" of I Corinthians 12:28 (Greek lit. "Steerings, those who take the helm and guide.")
- 8.) Helps (I Corinthians 12:28): Greek "Those who seize hold and help or support, pillars in the church."
- 9.) Sympathizers (Romans 12:8): Those who show "mercy with cheerfulness."
- 10.) Workers of Miracles (I Corinthians 12:29): This refers to public miracles for specific occasions of need.
- 11.) Pastors (Ephesians 4:11): The Greek word is impressive: "shepherds"; so Acts 6:1-4: "Not to leave the word of God to wait on

tables." It divides the duties of deacons and pastors so that the shepherd can "give himself continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word," Literally, in Ephesians 4:11, the Greek demands us to read: "Teaching pastors" or "shepherds"; so Paul's admonition to the shepherds at Ephesus: "Feed the flock over which God hath given you oversight." All of this is for the express purpose that Paul states in Ephesians 4:12-15:

- a.) For the perfecting ("complete what is lacking" - Thayer) of the saints
- b.) For the work of the ministry (service)
- c.) For the edifying (building up) of the body of Christ; until the whole body of Christ:
  - (1.) Arrives at (attains) the unity of faith
  - (2.) Attains the knowledge (epignosis - full knowledge) of the Son of God
  - (3.) Becomes mature, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ
  - (4.) And each individual believer in the body, leaves spiritual infancy, leaves the unstableness of tempest-tossed waves, speaks the truth in Christ in love, grows up personally into Christ in all things, and the whole body increases unto its building up in love.

This is a big order, and certainly needs more than "programs" and "revival committees" for its accomplishment. How the body needs the full administration of the Holy Spirit sent by Christ, for the purpose of meeting the present need of a powerless church, filling its membership with Himself, shedding forth His gifts, and mightily enduing and enabling gifted men for the hour. Paul knew the mighty dynamic of the Holy Spirit in His own life and passes on to us the adequacy of the Holy Spirit to accomplish all of this.

### 3. The Church as Christ's Bride.

The revelation that the church, which is Christ's body, made up of all the true born-again believers in this dispensation, is the bride of Christ is the high-water level of divine revelation. It is the highest of the three figures used by Paul in the book of Ephesians. The revelation of the church as God's building, a temple for God's dwelling, is taken from architecture, but it could be cold, lifeless, and insensible. The revelation of the church as the body of Christ is higher yet, taken from physiology, and shows it to have life and warmth and growth. But the revelation of the church as the bride of Christ is the highest of all, entering into the higher, deeper life of love. As a member of His body, I share His life; but as a member of His bride, I share His love. This shows the very purpose for which Christ came into the world, suffered, and died. Paul says, in Ephesians 5:25: "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it."

Paul calls it a "great mystery" (Ephesians 5:32: "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church"). This is a very distinctive Pauline revelation and goes far to prove our minor premise, since Paul is the only one who reveals this great mystery. No other writer even intimates it; only God prefigures it with two types and one allegory in the Old Testament, which are seen to be types by the reality now revealed by Paul, i.e., Adam and Eve; Isaac and Rebekah; and the Song of Solomon. The primary places where this truth is taught are Romans 7:1-4; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25-33. In the Gospels, with regard to the marriage supper that God has prepared for His Son, the bride is never seen, nor is it revealed who she is; there is mention only of guests who are bidden to the supper (Revelation 19:9; cf. Luke 14:16-24). In Revelation 21:9-11, the angel tells John, "I will shew thee the Lamb's wife," But she is not seen; instead he sees the bride's new home, the New Jerusalem "as a bride adorned for her husband" (21:2). Revelation sees the marriage supper, as the Gospels do; it sees the attending guests, as the Gospels do; and it sees the eternal home of the bride, but none sees the bride and identifies her, except Paul.

Some truths related to this truth are:

- a. In Romans 7:1-4 Paul reveals the truth that we are severed from all other allegiance (spiritually) to be married unto Christ. Here we are free from the Law, because in Christ we died, and, therefore, were free to marry another, so the believer is not under the dead letter of Law and commandments, as a servant, but now as a son. In Romans 6 we are freed from sin; in Romans 7 we are freed from the Law, that we might be married to another, Jesus Christ, (Romans 7:4).
- b. In II Corinthians 11:2 Paul reveals the great jealousy that God has, and Paul had, over the church, "God's own jealousy," for fear the espoused shall lose the singleness of her love for the Bridegroom. Marriage by its very nature is exclusive. True love is jealous and possessive. Read James 4:4-5; and again, Paul is to give the bride away.
- c. From Ephesians 5:31-32 Paul quotes from Genesis 2:23-24 to show that Adam and Eve are types of Christ and the church. Out of the figurative death and resurrection of Adam, God made a bride for him, from his riven side, and the two became one flesh, forming the basis for his great love for her, Christ and the church.
- d. It shows more than any other figure the reality and closeness of our union with Christ, "bone of his bone and members of his flesh" (Ephesians 5:30).
- e. But greatest of all is the revelation of the depths of love Christ has for His church (Ephesians 5:25-32). Here the figure reaches its zenith; yea, and more than a figure. There is a literal reality here greater than figurative language. There is much of mystery attached to this mode of presentation of the church as Christ's bride. There is much of human passion, earthly presentation we must divorce from the figure; but there is a reality here afterwards, the very richest of all divine revelations. God picked the sweetest of earth's loves - higher than a mother's love or brotherly love, as with Jonathan and David, for

marriage is co-equal, mutual interchanging, intimate, the sweetest love on earth.

f. The wedding garments are furnished by the Bridegroom. It is His to purify the bride and furnish her with the robe of His righteousness (Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7-8). These verses show that the garments are furnished for her not of herself. "He presents his bride to himself freed of all blemish," and "grants unto her robes of his righteousness."

g. There is one more consideration - the bride's home. This is furnished to her by Christ: "I go to prepare a place for you." Paul, in Hebrews 12:22-23 and Galatians 4:24-31, contrasts this heavenly home with the Israelites' earthly one. Never lose sight of the fact that there are two great brides in the Bible. Israel is God the Father's wife, and shall be purged from her adultery (Isaiah 54:1-10; Hosea 2:1-17) and is earthly (Hosea 2:2-23); but the church's home is the heavenly New Jerusalem and Christ is the Bridegroom (Revelation 21:9-10).

How little we can comprehend of this great mystery, that the church comprises the bride of Christ! What does it all mean? What shall it be when He shall "present us unto himself a church of stainless glory" (Conybeare, Ephesians 5:27), all spot and wrinkle or any such thing gone forever, to enter into the fullness of our glorious union with Christ, to reign with Him and bask in His infinite love forever? Surely the fullness of understanding awaits the fulfillment.

#### C. The Church as the End or Purpose of All God's Dealings with Men and of Creation Itself

The church is both the end or purpose of God in creation and the prime vindication of the whole scheme of things planned by God. Through a number of texts Paul reveals the startling fact that the church is both the goal God had in mind in creation, and through all His dealings with men, and the prime justification of the wisdom of God's dealings. The average Christian fails to grasp the broad scope, dealings. The average Christian fails to grasp the broad scope, the eternity of the plan of God, which before the foundation of the world chose the church. God made man with a free moral will, knowing that he would fall, and that billions would go to hell, lost forever. God knew that there would be a vast torrent of tears flowing like a mighty river through the aeons of history. God knew the suffering, the sorrow, the failure of man, the raging of the nations, and the gnashing of teeth against God. God knew the blasphemy of man whereby they would defile His holy name; yea, God knew the end from the beginning. In the council chambers of God in the past eternity before God ever made one grain of matter or one angel, while He still mused, "Let us make man."

He saw the great white throne of judgment at the end of the whole plan, the last great assize, with the vast unnumbered throng of poor lost souls - the human dross poured off the refining furnace, that the pure gold might remain and shine the brighter forever. And, though He loved those lost multitudes with the same unlimited infinite love wherewith He loved the company of the saved, He saw the oh-so-little flock of the blood-washed, the body of Christ, partakers of His own nature, and said: "It is worth it all; let us make man in

our own image." He counted the cost and said: "It is worth it all." God wanted and He saw the church, the bride of His Son, sharing His own divine life, partaking of His nature, loving and choosing Him freely without compulsion, loving God only because they wanted to, and He instituted the whole scheme for that end. You can glimpse to a small degree this whole idea in the price God was willing to give to obtain this church: "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). To make a world or a universe, all God had to do was speak the word, yea, think the thought, and lo - there it stood. If He wanted a hundred billion universes or galaxies, it took but a word of creative power, but to save one sinful soul, win him from his sin, pay his debt, win his love, wash him clean, to take him into God's family and home and give him as part of the bride of His Son, Christ must come to earth, suffer, and die for him.

Let us see the way in which Paul presents this great truth in two aspects:

1. The church as the end or purpose or goal of creation and redemption: There are four primary texts:

a. I Corinthians 10:11: Paul illustrates some of the experiences of the Israelites, and then says: "All these things happened unto them for ensamples (types) and were written for our admonition (Conybeare, warning) upon whom the ends (Greek "telos" - climax, consummation, termination point) of the ages are come (Greek met, reached, to arrive)." All the former dispensations find their convergency and culmination upon the church, as the crowning work for which they were instituted, so Paul in many ways shows the supremacy of the present dispensation of grace to that of Law (Galatians 3:24; 4:1-7).

b. Hebrews 11:40: This text shows more clearly that Paul doesn't mean that there is a mere convergency of time upon the church, but a culmination, summation, and elevation: "God having provided some better things for us." He picks the most illustrious of all the saints of the old dispensations, and their exploits, but then intimates that the least now under this new covenant is far better, as "a son has a higher position than a servant."

c. Ephesians 2:4-7 (especially verse 7): After showing us the kind of grace God gave to such unworthy sinners as we, in quickening us together with Christ, raising us together with Christ, and seating us together with Christ in the heavenlies, he says: "That he might point out, openly shew, manifest thoroughly, openly, exhibit unto us (in the middle voice - so for His own glory, for His own benefit) throughout all the oncoming ages (without end) the surpassing wealth of his grace, in his kindness (benevolent acts) toward us through Christ Jesus." What does He mean? Simply this: all for His own glory, He gave His Son to die for us, saved us for His sake, and throughout all eternity, all the oncoming ages, He is going to exhaust infinity just to make me happy forever, exhibiting the surpassing wealth of His grace being kind to me. Forever He shall reveal new facets of His infinite nature to me. This makes all our talk of "sacrificing for God" ridiculous.

d. Ephesians 1:22-23: "The church is Christ's body, the fullness of Him, the plenitude of Him, the full development of Him, and the complement of Him."

As the bride is the complement of her husband, the other half of him, as the literal body is the complement of the head to complete the fullness of the whole man, so the church is necessary to complete Christ as He is incarnate and Saviour. Christ adds nothing to His eternal glory as God by the church, but is given opportunity to display that glory.

2. The church as the justification or vindication of that plan, the wisdom of it, or the church on exhibition forever: This is an enlargement over the previous texts. Those seemed to center our attention upon the church as the end or purpose within itself, but that is not only foreign to all Scripture, but to Pauline theology as well. God Himself must be the end or purpose of all things. Ephesians 1 carefully guards this great truth: "According to the good pleasure of His will"; to "the praise of the glory of His grace." So verse 9: "According to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself"; and verse 11: "according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will"; and verse 14: "Unto the praise of His glory. That last expression shows it is all that His doxa (glory) might receive all the praise. Glory seems to be all the virtues, all the Excellencies of His wonderful nature in one blaze of ineffable glory. The purpose is then wrought out by His own will and purpose and pleasure or desires, that His wonderful glory might receive all the praise. So must it always be. So this division proves, it all centers in Him and His glory, and the consummation of the mystery of the church will so prove.

a. Ephesians 3:1-11: Here in our text we have the grandest sweep of the whole plan and purpose of the ages ever penned. It grandly announces the very purpose of God for all time. It is the only text which plainly reveals this truth. Read it carefully, and then note verses 10 and 11. The context plainly shows the church as a new revelation and Paul as the revelator. Then: Verse 10 makes it plain that "God created all things by Jesus Christ to the intent (Greek "inahina" has the force of purpose, design, result - so most literal translations translate it, in order that for the sole purpose of), for one single purpose." All else is secondary and contributory. What is it? "That now unto principalities (governments) and powers (authorities) in the heavenlies (all the spiritual creatures fallen and unfallen) might be known by (through or through the means of) the church (note the singular means here or instrumentality), the manifold wisdom of God."

Here is the prime vindication to all spiritual beings of God's wisdom for taking the plan that He did to get the church. I have no doubt that spiritual beings have questioned the wisdom of God concerning the course of redemption, but in eternity God is going to put the church on exhibition as the prime vindication of His manifold wisdom, "the manifold wisdom of God" (one word in the Greek, "polupoikilos," literally "the richly variegated wisdom of God"; Diaglot: "much diversified wisdom of God"; Williams: "many phases of God's wisdom"; Berkeley: "the many-sided wisdom of God": Thayer: taken from "a cloth or painting of many colors" - found only here in the Bible). I call it "the multi-faceted wisdom of God" - not the singular wisdom we possess, but the infinite wisdom of God which could know to all perfection before He

started, the best possible course to pursue to obtain the desired end. And He is going to exhibit the church to prove it, Paul says. Verse 11 confirms this: "According to (Greek "in agreement with," "kata") the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," or more literally, "in agreement with the plan of the ages which he formed for the anointed Jesus our Lord" (Rotherham). How emphatic this is! God created all things because of, or in agreement with, a fixed eternal plan of the ages which He formed for His anointed Son, Christ Jesus. This plan devolves upon the church as the one body of His Son, and this church shall be put on exhibition throughout eternity, as "Exhibit A" to the richly variegated wisdom of God in taking the plan that He did.

Note the hymn or psalm of Paul - Romans 11:33-36: First. God's manifold wisdom - "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unreachable are his judgments and his ways past finding out." Then verse 36: "For of him (as to its source) and through him (as to the instrumental cause) and to him (as to its ultimate end or purpose) are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen." Let us consider the nature of this exhibition, not of any intrinsic worth in us, nor any human attribute, but of the internal Christ within us, His glory, the glory of the new creation, within us, which Paul calls, "Christ in you the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). What a wonder that God chose the redeemed personality as the vehicle to display His glory!

(b) II Thessalonians 1:10-12: Here we have both the time and the manner of the exhibition, "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints"; Rotherham: "to be made all glorious in his saints." It equals, to "adorn with glory" (Thayer). Keep this in mind as we proceed: Christ is to be glorified in the saints when He comes. His glory shall be seen in us: "And to be admired in all them that believe" (Greek "to have in admiration and to wonder at," Thayer). They will admire the Christ in us and wonder at Him. "Wherefore (to this end) also we pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you and ye (glorified) in him according to (in agreement with or because of) the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ;" "We shall see him as he is"; but, wonder of wonders, "we shall be like him (John 3:1-3). The hidden glory of God's new creation in the saints, which is Christ's own life, now veiled by the earthen vessel, will then be openly manifested for all to see, on public display, and all will admire and marvel at the Christ within us, when He is glorified within us.

c. Colossians 3:4: "When Christ who is our life shall appear (be publicly manifested for all to see) then shall ye also be publicly manifested for all to see in the same glory." Glory here is not heaven, like "gone to glory," but is the thing itself as manifested. When Christ shall appear in glory, manifesting forth His glory, He shall be glorified in us; we shall shine with His glory. This glory is hidden now: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of man." The vessel obscures the treasure, the glory (cf. II Corinthians 4:6-7). He has stamped His image of glory upon our spirits in the new creation within, "the face of Christ." This equals His life or image within, "conformed to the image of his Son," so II Corinthians 3:18: "We are transformed into the same image from glory to glory." Oh, how the earthen

vessel obscures the image and conceals the glory! It gets in the way so folks can't see Christ in us; but some day, when "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is," His glory shall shine out through us to give His image, and He shall be admired with wonder in all who believe.

The greatest admirers will be angelic hosts (Ephesians 3:10). Romans 8:17 states: "If we suffer with him that we might be glorified together." Romans 8:18-23 shows the time element, as does II Thessalonians I and Colossians 3:4, at His glorious appearing when He comes in flaming fire. So when creation's curse shall be lifted, and we come into "the manifestations of the sons of God," verse 18: "the glory which shall be revealed in us"; verse 19: "the manifestation of the sons of God" (lit. "unveiling"); verse 21: "glorious liberty of the sons of God" (lit. "freedom of the glory"); verse 29: all this "that we might be conformed to the image of his Son"; verse 30 sees our future glorification as an accomplished fact; so our very bodies shall display His glory: "we shall be like him," (I John 3:2: cf. Philippians 3:21: "who shall change our bodies of humiliation like unto the body of his glory" lit.). Read II Corinthians 4:6: "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined (become luminous) in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (the reproduction of Christ's image in us); so Paul says, that is the eternal plan He formed for Christ, to put on exhibition before all spiritual hosts, the church, to prove God's manifold, richly variegated wisdom.

#### D. The Mystery of Israel's Blindness

Space permitting, we could have dealt with several other church truths uniquely Paul's, such as church policy and pastoral responsibility. I and II Timothy have been a gold mine for the last two millennia for the young minister.

But there is one more subject needing discussion in this division. It was the moot question in the days of the apostles, and, though its interest for us does not lie along the same line, yet it does answer some very vexing prophetic questions of Israel's future in God's program. It is the question of Israel's position now during this present program of God of "visiting the Gentiles to call out a people for his name" (Acts 15:15), where there is neither Jew nor Gentile (Galatians 3:28). The question would naturally arise when Paul began to preach the great revelations given unto him of the church's unique position, of no national preferred place for Israel in the church, the abrogation of the Law. etc., questions like: What of the unconditional covenants and promises God made to Abraham and David? What of all the prophetic promises of Israel's restitution and future millennial blessings as an earthly nation? Are these abrogated also with the Law? Is Israel cast off forever? Does the church take Israel's place? Does she, as the spiritual seed of Abraham, supersede Israel and supplant her? Are the prophecies of Israel to be spiritualized to fit the church? And what is Israel's position now? Only Paul answers these, revealing the "mystery of Israel's blindness," but Israel's is not the only blindness. It would seem that many expositors have a veil over their faces when they read Israel's promises. See it in the great commentators, as they not only have Israel set aside, "the natural branch cut off," but cast away for good, a thought that horrifies Paul and calls forth his "God forbid." They then make the church the

spiritual successor and inheritor of all the promises and covenants that God made to Israel, spiritualizing all Israelite promises.

In Romans 9-11, Paul takes time out from his great treatise on justification to interject the inspired answer to the question of Israel's position now during the church dispensation. In verse 6 of chapter 9 he declares that the promises of God to Israel have not failed or fallen to the ground (lit). We can but outline the subject:

1. Paul's own burden for his kinsmen after the flesh (cf. 9:1-3; 10:1), like Moses of old (Exodus 32:32-33), thus clearing himself of their false accusation of not caring what happens to them, or of forsaking them - a common accusation (Acts 21:28; 24:5, 6).
2. He enumerates the eight prime advantages of being a Jew (9:4-5), answering his own question of 3:1 - no mean catalogue.
3. He is careful to warn them that no mere natural birth of the seed of Abraham automatically constitutes salvation and favored position in relation to the covenants, as their own leaders falsely taught (9:6-24), so Christ and John the Baptist warned them (John 8:37, 44 and Matthew 3:7-9). It is a heart circumcision, not fleshly (Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6). The remnant according to grace keeps alive the promises and covenant God made with Israel to keep them from falling to the ground until this dispensation shall end and the natural branch be grafted in again (cf. Romans 9:6 with 11:6).
4. The judicial blinding of Israel (Romans 9:25, 33; 9:13-21; 11:7-10 and 11:25). See Paul's usage of this for illustration in II Corinthians 3:6-18 (using Exodus 34:29-35).
5. The lapse of Israel is the riches of the Gentiles (11:11-22).
6. Israel is not cast off forever but shall yet be saved and the veil removed (Romans 11:1-2, 11-23). "God is able to graft them in again" (verse 24); God's "how much more so" (verse 25, "blindness until the fulness of the Gentiles come in"). Verse 26 is emphatic: "So all Israel shall be saved," and verse 29: "The gifts and callings of God are without repentance (change of mind)." See Isaiah 66:22 and Jeremiah 31:27-37, and, remember, this is "the God that cannot lie," so Paul breaks into singing with a Psalm of Paul (11:33-36).

#### E. A Warning against Hyper-Dispensationalism

There are two dangers or excesses to avoid in the study of dispensational truth. One is that of no dispensations, called either Amillennialism or Post-Millennialism. This we have considered under the idea of many, that the Old Testament saints are in the same body with the New Testament saints, that there are no dispensational lines at all between. The other danger is of going too far on dispensational lines, as do the hyper-dispensationalists and the ultra-dispensationalists. These would divide the Bible into water-tight compartments, disregarding and discarding all that is not written expressly about us, and making too many dispensations; that is, a finding of dispensations where the Holy Spirit never intended them.

There is a tendency on the part of some, because of the newness of idea of our course in Pauline Theology, to class us in a lump sum with the hyper-dispensational crowd. Against this we would guard with all the vigor we can muster. We cannot countenance for an

instant the stand of the extremists who would not only divide, as we do the Law dispensation from that of grace, but would make two or three different church dispensations from Pentecost to the millennium. All we declare for Pauline Theology is that God saw fit, in His infinite wisdom, to reveal to only one man the complete revelation of church truth, while giving many great lessons to the twelve. These other truths are for us, written in our dispensation, and about us, profitable and needing to be heeded. Yet to none of them, as to Paul, was the complete system of church truth revealed. So Paul had to communicate his gospel to them (Galatians 2:2; nothing could be plainer than this text). This is our stand, and is a far cry from ultra-dispensationalism. But hyper-dispensationalism is not content with such a moderate presentation. It would go way over and super-divide the church into at least three different bodies and would throw out all other Scriptures than Paul's epistles (and some would throw out all of his, but the prison epistles) as Jewish, and belonging to another gospel for another people.<sup>13</sup> All of these, whether they like to admit it or not, follow the error of E. W. Bullinger (1837-1913), who founded the system of subdividing the church into different air-tight dispensations. He was chief editor of the *Companion Bible* which teaches this and soul-sleeping of the dead. He taught three churches:

1. The Pentecostal Apostolic church of Acts, which was Jewish, and the bride of Christ
2. The mystery Pauline church of the prison epistles, which is the body of Christ
3. The Jewish remnant church of the future during the tribulation, which is the "my church" of Matthew 16 mentioned by Jesus

One proof (?) he uses to prove this contention is: "Before the prison epistles the church is called 'she,' while in the prison epistles the church is called 'the perfect man.'" But in Ephesians the church is called "virgin" and compared to a bride. Such are the lengths to which men will go to support a far-fetched theory when it lacks real proof.

#### The Prime Tenets of Hyper-Dispensationalism

1. Christ was born under the Law, taught and died under the Law (to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, Romans 15:8), which we ourselves teach. But their conclusions are: then do not heed or study aught that He said. All that He taught is not only not about us, but is not for us, but for His Jewish bride and kingdom. Thus, they smirk in derision when anyone quotes the great commission as our "marching orders." They say, "It is not for us; it is for the Jewish church." They seem to forget two great truths:

- a. That Jesus taught in great principles applicable for all time
  - b. The difference between interpretation and application (see I Timothy 6:3-5), "even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ" are for us
2. All of Acts, since it writes about the Jewish church and offers the kingdom all throughout to Israel, is a "transitional book" and was not written about us at all;

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<sup>13</sup> Morgan 43.

therefore, nothing in Acts can apply to us as the body of Christ. Everything in Acts is "kingdom truth" and written before the church as "the body of Christ" was founded in Acts 28, therefore, it is not for us all. All of these Ultra-dispensationalists make the church start not at Pentecost but in 70 A.D.

3. The epistles of Peter, James, John, Jude, and Revelation are all Jewish and written for the later Jewish remnant after the rapture; therefore, they cannot be for us at all.
4. Thus, all but Paul's epistles (and some would throw out all but the prison epistles), where Paul got the real revelation of the mystery of the "body," are to be discarded.
5. This dividing of the church dispensation, not at Pentecost, but years later with Paul's imprisonment in Rome, and making him the founder (not just prime revelator) is their primary error from which all others spring. Such a momentous division should be clearly indicated; but what are the facts? They labor to find one proof, but come up with Acts 28:28: "Salvation is sent unto the Gentiles," but if this be a new dispensation, then why not hyper the Hyper-dispensationalists and ultra the Ultra-dispensationalists. In chapter 13:46 we would have another dispensation: "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles." But in 18:6 we have another dispensation: "From henceforth I will go to the Gentiles."

These are not dispensational divisions, but Paul's loving yearning over his brethren after the flesh, which made him go to them first; but when rejected, he turned to the Gentiles, not to start a new dispensation, but to get more converts. This fundamental error of starting the church as the body of Christ, not at Pentecost (as all great dispensationalists through the ages have), but years later with a new revelation to Paul in prison, is the breeding-ground of all the attending errors of making the Acts church a Jewish kingdom church, throwing out baptism by water as not for this dispensation, and many discard the Lord's Supper. In fact, hardly a Scripture is not re-interpreted by them, and even the gospel is changed. They assume that the church for 2,000 years, all its great teachers, scholars, saints, have all been wrong until they got here with new light. They do not compare the complete system of Paul's gospel with the lesser revelation given to the others of the New Testament; they contrast his with theirs, and make theirs as not even for us at all, even making them to be in different dispensations. They say the division between Law and grace has been in the wrong place all this time (until they got here) and the church during this whole time has been on Jewish legalistic grounds misapplying the Scriptures of Peter, James and John, and Acts to the true body church and proclaiming the wrong gospel. (You may accuse them of much, but modesty or inferiority complex is not one of them.)

The Refutation of Their Prime Premise (which is the division of the church from the law, not at Pentecost, but much later with Paul's prison revelations):

We have seen the answer to much of this error in our former consideration of the "mystery of the church." They are ignorant of what constitutes the "body of Christ." The body and the bride are one and the same (Ephesians 5:22-23), as the wife in marriage is both the wife and of the same flesh as the husband. They are ignorant of what constitutes the "baptism of the Spirit" which places us into the body (I Corinthians 12: 13). This is the baptism with fire promised by Jesus Christ "not many days hence" (Acts 1:4-5). This is the one and only baptism with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:4). It never was changed. Every

born-again believer since Pentecost has partaken of that "one baptism" into the body of Christ and that body is the bride of Christ (II Corinthians 11:2). Much of this "body truth" is in other than the prison epistles, such as Corinthians and Romans and Galatians. In fact, nowhere is there any intimation of a change of dispensation later in Acts. You cannot read Acts candidly without a dispensational axe to grind and get that conception. There is too much unity throughout. One of the prime proofs of the starting of the church at Pentecost is the singular name for it throughout. For illustration, Paul calls it "church of God" even before he was himself converted (Galatians 1:13: "I persecuted the church of God"). In I Corinthians 15:9: again he refers to it and says he was not worthy to be called an apostle because he persecuted "the church of God." In I Corinthians 15:9: again he refers to it and says he was not worthy to be called an apostle because he persecuted "the church of God." In a prison epistle he uses the same name for it (I Timothy 3:15, "church of God which is the pillar and ground of truth"). Any change yet? No; same in name, so same in kind. They pose a mystery: they would have that church purely Jewish. But Paul, in Galatians, before his imprisonment, says: "Neither Jew or Gentile in the body of Christ" (Galatians 3:27-28).

Worst of all is the dangerous result of Ultra-dispensationalism: throwing out the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper as legalism and carnal ordinances of men. They quote Colossians 2:20-22; but read the context and see if the Lord's Supper and baptism fit this definition of man's ordinance. Many of them call the Lord's Day observance pure legalism. It has led many of them into the same error of Bullinger - soul-sleep, annihilation, and division within the church. Dr. Knock's "Concordant Version" is an illustration in point. But the worst error of all is the utter ignoring of vast amounts of Scripture and the confining of the soul to a few short epistles of Paul.

Remember in our syllogism we are not contending for the exclusive rights of Paul to all inspiration for the church, nor of Paul as an antagonist to the rest; but the superlative place to which God called him, to commit only to him the whole system, and to make him the trustee of this dispensation.

### III. Paul's Distinctive Doctrines about the Believers

Taken in their sum-total, they constitute the "mystery of the believer" (Colossians 1:27: "to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory"). All of these things that belong to us count as "riches of the glory" or literally, "glorious wealth," and are ours by virtue of the indwelling Christ Who inhabits the believer. I am saved by partaking of His life, or by His entrance ("He that hath the Son hath life," I John 5:12). I have victory, or triumphant Christian experience, by having His life fully manifested in me ("For me to live is Christ," Galatians 2:20). Someday I shall be transformed into His very image when He shall appear (I John 3:1-3). I have all when I have Him indwelling me. Paul sums it up in the entirety in Colossians 2:9-10: "For in him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him" (Greek "filled up"). All of the great doctrines of the fullness God has promised are ours because of this "great mystery," "Christ in you the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). Certainly this is a "mystery" to the world, as "none of the princes of this world know," and it is all too seldom recognized, if known at all, by the believer himself, because of ignorance of "those things freely given us of God.

## A. Paul's Doctrine of Free Grace

This is probably his most distinctive, if not then his most elaborate, for he devotes more time and space and argument to it than any other subject except Christ (Who is the Subject of it also). Out of 130 times the word "grace" occurs in the New Testament, Paul used it 98 times. It is not in Matthew, is used only once in Luke and three times in the Gospel of John. It is the doctrine for which he wrote Romans and Galatians to defend his gospel from admixture of Law by Judaism and in Colossians against heathen philosophy and human boasting of wisdom. Paul links it with every subject as the motivating force behind all that God has ever done, is doing, or ever will do for us. To give a complete study of grace would be to give a commentary on all of Paul's epistles.

If Paul had one string on his theological violin upon which he "harped," it was free grace; and he got heaven's melody from it. It forever robs man of any grounds of human boasting, either of his salvation, sanctification, or perfection at glorification (Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast, for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus.") Saint of God, shout it out, write it over all your life, the basis of all you have of God, all you are, and all you shall have for all eternity; say with Paul, "I am what I am by the grace of God."

It places man as a perfectly helpless, hopeless, worthless beggar before God's great free grace. No wonder proud, arrogant man hates it, and all man-made religions miss it entirely. This great doctrine of free grace Paul defends from the ceremonialists who would mix "as a means of grace" some observance, some rite, some human addition or ritualism as a basis for salvation with it, or the Galatians who "having begun in the spirit think to be made perfect in the flesh" or help complete salvation. Each is pernicious and if allowed of God would "frustrate grace" (Galatians 2:21: "I do not frustrate the grace of God - render it useless, make it void - for if righteousness came by the Law then Christ is dead in vain - died unnecessarily"). How jealously we saints should defend the pure doctrine of free grace, both for salvation and the life of the saint! With all your getting, get hold of free grace; it will free you of all self-dependency and boasting. You may say with Paul, "I am what I am by the grace of God."

### The Definition of Grace

Like so many words in the Bible used by Christians, and so little understood, the word grace carries little meaning to most saints, and yet it is one of the very richest words in the whole Bible. It is the love of God in action pouring out itself upon the unlovely recipients, without stint or reward, and endowing those recipients with its own riches. 'God so loved' is the origin, but grace is the channel of His fullness, pouring itself out in unbounded kindness, just because "God is love."

Let us put a few verses of Paul's together to get a definition:

1. Titus 3:4: "But after the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared" (the Greek for kindness, "philanthropia," is where we get our English word philanthropist and equals "love of man"); but it is more than that: it is "love

in action"; kindness always equals that - not just sentiment or love in word only, "but in deed", "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:5) Then, "which he shed on us abundantly (without stint) through Jesus Christ our Saviour (the only channel)." Then verse 7: "That being justified by his grace." From this verse we note the two aspects of grace, as in all Paul's writings. First, the positive aspect, God's abounding mercy, poured out in kindness and love toward us, just because He is what He is. Second, it is because of nothing in us, no merit or works of righteousness which we have done. Read again the verse with this in mind and see it clearly.

2. Ephesians 2:7-9: "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast." Here again are the same two elements of grace: first, the riches, yea, "exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us," and "through all the oncoming ages, God's philanthropia." Second, there is nothing in us to merit or earn it: "Not of works," but this "gift of God." (Sometime look up how many times Paul calls salvation "the gift of God," as in Romans 5:15 to end; 3:24, etc.). Grace, then, according to Paul, is God's abounding kindness poured abundantly upon us without limit as to quantity or quality or time limitation; and all unearned, undeserved, apart from all "works of righteousness which we have done." It is always God's free gift because of what Christ did. Read carefully Romans 4:4-5 and 11:6 to see that the two cannot mix. If it is works, it is no more grace, and vice versa. So theologians have called grace "unmerited favor." Trench defines grace as "the absolutely free and spontaneous loving-kindness of God toward men."<sup>14</sup> He gets both negative and positive ideas in. Grace always carries these two elements - positive and negative: on our part, nothing; no works or merit; on God's part, abounding kindness as a free gift. Read Ephesians 1:7-9: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to (in agreement with) the riches of his grace (the opulence, or wealth of his grace) wherein he hath abounded toward us (overflowed or bestowed overflowing kindness)." In its negative aspect it is always unmerited, unearned, the free gift of God. Put one iota of legalism, works, Law principle, or human merit and it ceases to be grace, and grace is frustrated. Romans 11:6 again shows that grace and works preclude each other.

This definition must be kept in mind, as it runs throughout all of Paul's epistles as the basic foundation for all his distinctive doctrines. Deep-rooted in the very grain of all humans, unless they get grounded in the grace of God, is the legalistic tendency to try and add to Christ's finished work their own efforts. They find it impossible to accept, without any qualifications. Christ's statement, "It is finished" (John 19:30). Before salvation, they will struggle for years to be good enough for God to save them, to become worthy, to clean up their lives first, to reform themselves, before handing the job over to God. They will even cry a lot to try to wash away the guilt, throw themselves into religious work and worship. They forget that bad people are the only kind God saves; i.e., "the ungodly" (Romans 4:5). And the unworthy are the only

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<sup>14</sup> Trench 357.

worthy recipients of grace, since any other kind is merited, earned, and therefore not grace, but debt (Romans 4:4). If they can finally see this, then in abject self-abnegation, they finally hand the job over to God's grace to save them.

After salvation the believers, seemingly, all become Galatians. Having begun in the spirit, they think to be made perfect in the flesh (Galatians 3:3). They seek sanctification and Christian perfection by means of all kinds of Christian works, legalism, keeping of Law principles, observance of religious days and rites and duties, even Sunday-keeping for merit, and churchgoing. The truth of the matter is that man wants a part in his own salvation, and, if he can't have that, at least in his own sanctification (or perfection, completing), he wants a finger in the pie at least. His self-righteousness and pride wants to help God, so as to share the glory, the boasting. But God would exclude all human boasting (Romans 3:27; Ephesians 2:9; I Corinthians 1:29-31; Romans 4:2). Man would like to walk down the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, saying, "Look what we did, the Lord and I. I did the best I could; He added what was lacking; and between the two of us, here I am." Is it to be wondered at, that of such a one Paul says, he "frustrates the grace of God"? There will be no discordant voice in the heavenly choir, but only one name in Emmanuel's land: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," to receive the seven-fold doxology, all with the definite article in the Greek, "the power, the honour, the glory, the blessing (eulogy), etc., and equals "all," so "all the glory" (Revelation 5:12).

### The Relation of Grace to Law

From our definition we can plainly see that there can be no mixture of the two, law and grace, as they are diametrically opposed the one to the other. But at least half, and maybe more, of the church today is under bondage to the law in one form or another. Paul enumerates many of them of his day: Galatians 4:10 - "Ye observe days (Sabbaths) and months (new moons and seventh months) and times (feasts, periods) and years (such as jubilee)." Then, in Colossians 2:9, 16-17, he tells them that all these are but shadows and not the body which is Christ.

The Seventh-Day Adventists frighten many timid saints with the bugaboo of Sabbath observance and say, "You have the mark of the beast if you keep Sunday," and "Where is the verse which changes Saturday to Sunday in the New Testament?" There isn't any, so the faint-hearted legalist keeps Sunday with a weak conscience and defiled. Ask the Adventist to show a verse in the epistles to keep Saturday. But it shows they keep Sunday bylaw and not of grace at all. They are just as bound to a day as the Jews were in Christ's day and are condemned by Christ for it even under law because their hearts are not in it.

#### 1. The Definition of Law:

First note the definition of law throughout Paul's epistles. When Paul says, "We are not under law but under grace," (Romans 6:14) what law is he talking about? The Adventists and most believers say, "It is the ceremonial law of Moses that is meant - not the moral law in the decalogue." And then they get all tangled up with the fourth commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy"

(Exodus 20:8). It is right there, buried in the middle of the moral Ten Commandments. Who has the right to say, "We are to keep nine of them, but not the other one, the fourth?" These folks forget that the ceremonial law can be kept, and, in fact, was kept religiously by Israel. But it had nothing to do with making them righteous, nor did it reveal sin. It was the moral Law in the Decalogue which demanded holiness comparable to Jehovah's and complete love and devotion and which made sin exceedingly sinful and showed up the hopeless disparagement between the Holy God and unholly man. Paul shows, in Romans 7, that the tenth commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," slays, since all covet. There are a lot of considerations to keep a man from stealing (upbringing, fear of getting caught, social shame) but no law can keep him from coveting. So James says: "Every man is led astray of his own lusts." So, in II Corinthians 3:6-17, Paul shows that the abrogated, less glorious, law was the one "written in stone." The ceremonial law was not written in stone, but the Ten Commandments. No, when Paul speaks of the believer as "not under law but under grace," he is speaking of the principle of law or works as a means of acceptance before God, the seeking of righteousness by law (cf. Romans 9:30-32). For 2,500 years the believers had lived under grace before the Law was given to Israel (Galatians 3:17-18), under the various dispensations especially of promise to Abraham. In Exodus 19:8 Israel entered into solemn obligations to keep the law and do it as a covenant of works, but they failed miserably; that is why the law of the sacrifice was instituted. One may ask, "Why was the Law given then?"

- a. To show sin as exceedingly sinful (Romans 7:13)
- b. To give the knowledge of sin (Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:19)
- c. Because of the transgression (Romans 5:12); i.e., to give to sin the character of a direct transgression of a known law, that men might see its sinfulness, and sin may be laid to their account
- d. To fill the interim, "until the Seed should come" (Galatians 3:19)
- e. To act as a "schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" (Galatians 3:24-25: See Scofield's Footnote No. 1, Scofield Reference Bible, 1919 ed., p. 1244).

## 2. The Inadequacy of the Law:

Not that the law was defective or evil, but holy and perfect (Romans 7:12-14) and good and spiritual, and the end of it life (7:10), but the inadequacy of man as "carnal, sold under sin," needing not a perfect standard to imitate, but an all-sufficient Saviour Who could impart the very life demanded; for the carnal mind cannot subject itself to the law of God nor keep it (Romans 8:7)? It was not given to give life, to make righteous, to make us love God, but to show our lack of it and to "bring us to Christ," Who could do all of that?

- a. The law couldn't give life (Galatians 3:21), but contrariwise, it slays (Romans 7:10; II Corinthians 3:6-18, which shows the killing letter is Moses' law.) The dead man needs life - not an example

- b. The law made none righteous (Galatians 3:21; see 2:21 - then Christ would be dead in vain)
- c. The law justified no one (Romans 3:20; Acts 13:29; Galatians 2:16, Galatians 3:11 - since justification is only by faith and the law is of works, as Paul in these portions so plainly shows);
- d. The law made nothing perfect (Hebrews 7:18-19); and neither did the ceremonial law of sacrifice (9:9), since it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin (Hebrews 10:4), but Christ's sacrifice did (10:14)

Why then should a Christian deliberately put himself back under such an inadequate "yoke of bondage, which neither we nor our fathers could keep"? Is it to be wondered at that Paul stood amazed at such a one in Galatians and rebuked them harshly both in the epistle to the Galatians and in Hebrews. It would constitute such a one as "fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4), and "frustrate grace" (Galatians 2:21), and "make Christ of none effect" (Galatians 5:4).

### 3. To Whom Then Was the Law Given?

Was it ever given to the Gentiles? To these questions Paul answers with an emphatic "No," and in as plain a speech as it was possible to give. God never gave it to the Gentiles at all, but as a sign and covenant with Israel. Note carefully Romans 2:14: "The Gentiles, which have not the law" ("The Gentiles, these having not the law"). When, then, did the Gentiles ever have the law laid upon them? Paul says, not in his day, and Moses said, not in his (Deuteronomy 4:7-8). The Psalmist said, "Not in my day" (Psalm 147:19-20), which text shows emphatically, as does Paul's, that God never gave the law to any other nation. It was a definite covenant (Deuteronomy 5:1-3), only with Israel. Ezekiel in his day further testifies to the same facts, with the very interesting addition which the Adventists and all legalists need to heed; the Sabbath never was given to any other nation but Israel, and that as a definite sign to them (Ezekiel 20:1-12). It was not given before Moses gave it to Israel at Sinai (Galatians 3: 17), and we shall see that it ended when grace came in for this dispensation. But the Old Testament abundantly testifies to the fact that it will be kept universally in the millennial kingdom of Christ, as Israel teaches all nations the law of God (as, Isaiah 2:2-3). But remember, Paul says "the Gentiles have not the law."

### 4. Law and Grace Contrasted:

This further shows the law's inferiority to grace. Paul in many ways shows to the Jew the inferiority of the law to grace. The law was but a schoolmaster (child-trainer conducting the pupil to school) to bring us to Christ; it was but a tutor and governor until we were of age; it was but a servitude until the proper age is reached. Then the heir inherits the promises.

- a. The law says. "Do and live"; grace says, "Believe and live." The law brought a work to do; grace brought a Word to believe. Law was the best man can do; grace was the best God can do.
- b. Law was the ministration of death and judgment (II Corinthians 3:7-9); but grace brings life.
- c. Law says. "Cursed is everyone who continueth not in all things written in the law to do them": under grace Christ took the curse of the broken law for us (Galatians 3:13; 4:5-7),
- d. Under the law man was a servant; under grace we know the adoption of sons and "the liberty of the sons of God" (Galatians 4:4-7).
- e. The law required perfection and holiness, but could not impart it; grace gives it through Christ Jesus and rewards us for having it (Romans 8:3-4).
- f. The law justified none (Colossians 3:11; 5:4); grace through Christ Jesus "freely justifies us from all things" (Romans 3:20-21-24; Romans 3:28; Acts 13:39).
- g. The law made nothing perfect and "it could not take away sin" (Hebrews 10:3; 9:11); but the bringing in of a better hope did (Hebrews 7:19; 10:1).
- h. The law was a yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1; Acts 15:10); grace brings us into the "glorious liberty of the sons of God" (Romans 8:21).
- i. The law was but the shadow; grace is the substance (Colossians 2:16, 17; Hebrews 10:1).

Several more contrasts could be added, such as, the law could not give life (Galatians 3:21); the law made only servants - not sons (Galatians 4:21-31); and many more. See Scofield's footnote, *Scofield Reference Bible*, p. 1244, and in the Index under "Law." He says in his pamphlet, "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth," p. 40 and 41: "God's appointed place for the tables of the Law was within the ark of the Testimony with the manna, and type of Christ our Wilderness Bread, and the Aaron's rod that budded, a type of resurrection, both speaking of Grace, and all covered from sight by the golden mercy-seat, upon which was sprinkled the Blood of the Atonement. The eye of God could see His broken Law only through the Blood that completely vindicated His justice and propitiated His wrath (Hebrews 9:4-6). It was reserved to modern nomolators to wrench these holy and just but deathful tables from underneath the Mercy-Seat and the atoning blood and erect them in Christian churches as the rule of Christian life."

##### 5. The Annulling of the Law under Grace (the believer not under law, but grace):

In dozens of places the apostle Paul emphasizes emphatically: "You are not under law but under grace." In Romans 3:21 we have "righteousness without the law." In Romans 4, we have "righteousness without works" (verses 4-6 - Greek "part from law"). In chapter 6:14: "Ye are not under law but under grace." In chapter 7, Paul shows by the law of freedom from marriage that death gives the widow, that those in Christ are freed from the law to be married to another. The widow is loosed from her dead husband in two ways. First, as dead, he can exercise no more claim upon her. Secondly, not only is he dead to her, but she is

legally dead also to him, to be free to marry another. The law legally recognizes that, as a wife she, or her wifeliness, dies when he dies. She is no more a wife, but is single again. Naught could be plainer than that the believer is dead to the law and the law to him.

In chapter 10:4 he states: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." Is it to be wondered at that the Adventists and legalists all leave Romans out of their curriculum? In Ephesians 2:15 Christ "abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances." Galatians 5:18 states: "If ye be led of the Spirit ye are not under law." Paul shows that to go back under law as a principle of works for justification is to "frustrate the grace of God" (Galatians 2:21) and to make "Christ dead in vain"; and to go back under law as a rule of life and as a saint is to "fall from grace" and to be "loosed from Christ" (Galatians 5:1-4). It is "to tempt God" and to "put a yoke of bondage no one could bear" (Acts 15:10).

Many have the same fear the opposers to Paul had, which Paul answered completely in Romans 6:14-15: "If under grace, shall we continue to sin?" They say today, "If you say law is done away and the Ten Commandments are not in force upon us, does this give license to sin?", showing they know not real grace nor the Spirit who works in us. No law ever kept a man from sinning, but the Holy Spirit does. Grace does for us what law could never do. Paul answers them in Romans 6 and in Galatians 5:13-26, where three primary checks are given to a flesh-liberty under grace, which leads to license and occasion for the flesh. Check one - love fulfills the law; check two - walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; check three - if we are led by the Spirit, we have His fruits, and not the works of the flesh.

The standard is not lower, but higher, under grace. Every law of the Ten Commandments, but the one, is reiterated in the New Testament under grace, after Christ's resurrection:

- Commandment 1: Fifty times in the New Testament
- Commandment 2: Twelve times in the New Testament
- Commandment 3: Four times in the New Testament
- Commandment 4: None at all (Sabbath observance)
- Commandment 5: Six times in the New Testament
- Commandment 6: Seven times (with many more against the murderer)
- Commandment 7: Twelve times in the New Testament
- Commandment 8: Six times in the New Testament
- Commandment 9: Four times in the New Testament
- Commandment 10: Nine times in the New Testament.

Now, as saints of God, we are to live under the grace of God, not under law (Galatians 3:1-4). And we work not to be saved or to improve our standing before God, for that is as perfect as Christ with His righteousness, since we died and rose in Him; but we work because we are saved. See Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:3-8: "created unto good works" and "maintain good works."

## B. Paul's Distinctive Doctrine of Justification

This is the second in importance of Paul's doctrines and grows out of the first, "salvation by grace alone," "apart from any works of righteousness which we have done." He alone, of all the New Testament writers, unfolds the great revelation of our standing before God, not in our righteousness, but in the righteousness of Christ alone, called "the righteousness of God" in Romans, all on the basis of the principle of justification by faith. Paul uses the word "justify" and "justification" ("dihaioo") 29 times - 17 in Romans alone, the great book of justification and eight times in the short epistle to the Galatians. No other New Testament writer even uses the word at all in the true sense of the word as "justified before God." James uses the word three times in his second chapter, where he gives no explanation of it, but uses it not as the basis of acceptance before God, as Paul does, but of justification before man by him seeing his works (James 2:14-26). Paul is dealing with our standing before God; James, before man. The key to James is "show me," and "if a man say"; i.e., "a religion of words only." No man can see your faith if all you do is say so, but works show him that you have faith. But Paul is showing us our standing before the God Who knows the heart and is giving the basis of our acceptance before God, as only by justification. I do not think that James ever had revealed unto him personally by the Holy Spirit the great doctrine of justification by faith. It came only through Paul.

The wonderful revelation of justification by faith alone, giving us a perfect standing before a holy God, free from all condemnation of past guilt and present unworthiness, yea, more, "made the very righteousness of God in Christ," is one of Paul's chief themes. He builds the whole book of Romans upon it, as we shall see (17 times using the word) as the only grounds of the sinner's peace with God. So Paul's conclusion is, "Having been justified by faith we have peace with God" (Romans 5:1). How could it be otherwise? If my acceptance with God depended upon what I could do, where would be the assurance I had done enough? Where is the peace? Hence, justification is by grace through faith alone (Romans 4:1-8) - not faith and works. How shall you help God redeem your soul, help Him provide a satisfaction for His justice and a substitute for His grace? Stand at the foot of Calvary, see His wrath and love meet, as Christ's stainless soul is made an offering for sin. See infinite grace and love and wrath mingle, to bruise His Son and smite Him. Can you help God here? You might as well go out and help Him make a world, or bind the sweet influence of the Pleiades and to bring forth mazzaroth in her season. See how Paul opens this wonderful doctrine immediately after his conversion in his first sermon (Acts 13:38, 39): "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man (Christ) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe (by faith alone) are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Here Paul strikes the keynote of all the grace of God, which he shall continue to preach until Nero silences him over thirty years later - forgiveness of sins and justification by Christ's work; this justification is to come unto all who believe, and not by any works as of the law which could never justify. And to climax all this, this justification is to be absolutely complete, "from all things." Naught is to be left uncovered. (Catholics just cannot accept that. They have Christ forgiving prebaptismal sins, but not postbaptismal sins. But it seems most Protestants cannot accept it either, thinking their works have somewhat to do with their acceptance before God.)

## A definition of Justification

1. Negatively defined: some errors taught concerning justification - what it isn't.
  - a. It is not forgiveness of sin, since forgiveness is the cancellation of a real debt owed, while justification positively places us in a new relationship with God as though we had never sinned and more. All Methodist theology errs here to define justification as only forgiveness of sin, denying any imputation of the righteousness of Christ. Seventh-Day Adventists also err along the same line; they first coined the word used erroneously by many saints. "just-as-if-I'd-never-sinned" for the word justify. That is only a minor part to justification, the negative part. Do not ever use it as a full definition of justification. Paul makes them two separate things.
  - b. Neither is it regeneration, which is the impartation of the very life of Christ in the believer at the new birth; regeneration takes place right here on earth within the believer, while justification is a legal transaction by God, taking place in heaven.
  - c. For the same reason, it is not sanctification, nor any other work within the believer: it is not something done within him, but for him.
2. Positively defined: The Greek word for justify and righteousness is basically the same word, hence it is a positive declaration by God of the sinner as righteous, since He sees him as "in Christ." Therefore, as soon as he becomes "in Christ," God imputes unto him (reckons over) the whole value of Christ's infinite work of redemption and holiness, and He declares that sinner righteous because he and Christ are one. The whole standing, therefore, of Christ before God is that believing sinner's standing.
3. In this respect, justification is both negative and positive, based upon my identification with Christ in His death and resurrection (a doctrine of Paul's to which we shall give separate consideration).
  - a. Negatively: "We are justified from all things" (Acts 13:38) as pertaining to self and sin. By my identification with Christ and dying with Him, all that I am by being a child of Adam is dead. When Christ died, I died "that I should no longer live in the flesh." In this sense, we are "justified by his blood," so Paul cries, "Who can lay any charge to God's elect; it is God that justifieth" (Romans 8:33). Just believe it - "no charge." It is "from all things."
  - b. Positively: We are justified unto all things as pertaining to God. When Christ arose from the dead, I arose with Him also in "newness of life" (Romans 6:1-6). In this sense, Paul says "He was raised for our justification" (Romans 4:25) that we might be identified with Him in resurrection life, to live in Him a new life, where all His infinite holiness can be imputed unto me.

Note how Paul teaches this side of justification - the positive ascription to the believer of all the infinite righteousness of Christ; negative righteousness, or innocence wouldn't fit one for heaven: "without holiness shall no man see the Lord," so "that we

might become the righteousness of God in him" (II Corinthians 5:21). This equals the very righteousness of God. As Christ is before God, so am I. I stand complete in Him as holy as He, as complete as He, declared righteous in Him since God doesn't see me, but Him. "My life is hid with Christ in God." Note both of these two aspects - not imputing sin and imputing holiness - Paul gives in two verses. In Romans 4:8, no imputed sin; and in Romans 4:6, imputed righteousness.

### The Basis or Grounds for Our Justification

Paul distinctly denies that it is grounded in any works of righteousness which we have done (Titus 3:5; Romans 4:5), but Paul completely grounds our justification in the whole atoning work of Christ and His precious blood (Romans 5:9: "Being now justified by his blood"). Read and consider Romans 3:20-26.

Romans 4:25 states: "delivered for our offences but raised for (because of) our justification." In death He laid a prisoner of execution, but in resurrection, I have testimony that God has accepted my surety and cancelled my debt, and I, in Him, stand before God in Christ my righteousness. I Corinthians 1:30: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption."

This justification, Paul further affirms, is by God's grace and is freely bestowed without cost to us: "Being justified freely by his grace" (Romans 3:24). Under our study of Paul's doctrine of grace, we have seen the absolute essential nature of grace, that it must be free. Note this text further. The Greek word for freely here is "dorean," and it means "gift-wise," as contrary to working to earn something. See how Paul uses it of his ministry among the Corinthians as being "without charge" (I Corinthians 9:18); so Christ used it: "They hated me without a cause" (Greek "dorean"). They did not find the cause of their hatred in Christ, so Paul is saying, "Being justified without any cause in us, but by his grace"; so it is being justified freely, gift-wise, without earning it, and further, without any cause in us, but only from the bounties of His grace. We need not look within us for any cause or merit or conditioning element to justification - some spiritual life in us, some religious exercises, or even of our faith as earning it. There is no internal cause in us of justification.

This text shows us that it is justification from all things (Acts 13:39, nothing is excluded). No charge can be laid to God's elect; it is God that justifieth. This text shows us that the cost was all with God - no cause in us. This text shows us that there is no remembrance made of sins of the past, so Paul says, if so, then it is no more justification. This text shows us that God has taken upon Himself to freely, without respect to anything in us, absolve us of all indebtedness, if we but believe on Him that justifieth the ungodly, and not to limit us in heaven for any past transgressions as to our standing before Him. What you have been cannot possibly mitigate against you as an obstacle in your standing before the holy God.

### The Method of our Justification (or how we may become justified)

Since it is something I cannot do for myself, but it must be done for me; since it is based only upon the finished work of Christ on Calvary; since it is by grace alone, and must be freely given of God, apart from any works on my part; since God does it in heaven legally for me, then it is only reasonableness, Paul so often declares, it is ours by faith

alone. We saw it in our first text - Acts 13:39: "To all that believe." Read Romans 3:26; 4:5; 5:1; Romans 3:28, and many more. Here then, in grace and justification, are the grounds for Paul's entire gospel; the sinner's complete acceptance and standing before a holy God is not in his merit or righteousness of works of law, but we are "Complete in him."

### Paul's Great Treatise on Justification (The Book of Romans)

Here we shall give but a very brief outline to show that Romans is Paul's great book of justification. It is the theme of the book.

1. In the first three chapters Paul puts the whole human race on trial before God and proves that the Gentile "without the law" and the Jew "under the law" both failed God and have no righteousness of their own. The Gentile became utterly abominable and the Jew blasphemed God (3:9-20).
2. Starting with 3:20, "the righteousness of God" is revealed apart from all human effort of any kind, but grounded upon the principle of grace, completely bought by Christ's redemptive work, obtained by us only on a basis of faith and putting us in a new standing of justification, like Titus 3:5.
3. In chapter 4, Paul goes on to illustrate these truths of justification by grace through faith apart from any works or law, by citing Abraham "who believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness," where justification "without works," without ordinances, and without law is illustrated.
4. In chapter 5, he concludes his great doctrine of justification by faith with his famous, "Therefore," and gives us the ten great benefits of justification. "Therefore being (having been, aorist tense) justified by faith we have"; then he names the ten things we have as now standing justified by faith:
  - a. We have peace with God (verse 1)
  - b. We have access to the grace wherein we stand (verse 2); (access—introduced into a standing of grace)
  - c. We have an exultant hope of the future glory of God (verse 2)
  - d. We can glory (exult) in tribulation (verse 3), for it worketh for us
  - e. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts (verse 5)
  - f. The Holy Spirit is given unto us (verse 5): He can indwell the justified;
  - g. We are saved from future wrath through Him (verse 9)
  - h. We have a much more salvation through sharing his life (verse 10)
  - i. We joy (exult) in God through Him (verse 11)
  - j. We have abounding grace over augmented sin (verse 20)
5. Romans 6-8 shows the conflict in every believer between the newly created Holy Spirit in us and the old man, and complete victory by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:13, 8:12, Galatians 5:17, Ephesians 4:21-24).
6. Romans 9-11, outlines the present position of Israel rejection until "the fullness of the Gentiles" (Romans 11:25, Acts 15:12-14).

7. The rest of Romans (12-16) is the working out in the believer of all the things pertaining to salvation, seeing that chapters 1-5 are true of him, and he is now justified and made the righteousness of God in Christ. We are to walk as the justified (6-8), with victory over the bondage of the flesh (12-16), the daily life of the justified.

### C. Paul's Distinctive Doctrine of the Believer's Standing and State

Failure to discern Paul's great treatment of the difference in the believer's standing as perfect before God, as grounded in grace, justification, and identification with Christ, from the believer's state as imperfect and capable of improvement as he grows in grace, has led to two extremes, according to which of these two truths is alighted upon and stressed to the exclusion of the other.

On the one hand has been the group of teachers who emphasize only our position in Christ, to the exclusion of the believer's state. They are for the most part Calvinistic in theology. They many times deny any possibility of improvement in state above a mere modicum of religious experience. They deny any real practical sanctification of the Spirit, any real holiness of life. They continually talk of "the necessity of sinning every day in word, thought, and deed," confessing "our much sinning and shortcomings." They accept all the wonderful Scriptures which teach our faultless standing before God in Christ without question. They believe emphatically in the truth of imputed holiness, including justification, while denying any imparted holiness. They reject as fanaticism, emotionalism, and false doctrine, or whittle down, any teaching of real Christian victory in a life lived above sin.

On the other hand there are many who have never seen the glorious truth of a perfect standing before God, grounded in the finished work of Christ and complete without my efforts - a rest from all human merit, works, and imperfection. For the most part, this is Arminian Theology. Theirs is a peace built upon self-effort, not upon Christ's finished work. Theirs is a continual striving to be worthy, to hold on, and to hold out, to make it through successfully to the end. All they can see in the Scriptures are the many portions exhorting us to Godliness and practical Christian living, while they whittle down the passages dealing with our standing. Their complete view is taken up with our present state, its fluctuations, vicissitudes, imperfections, strivings, stumblings, and failures. The anchor seems to be cast within the boat instead of into that which is within the veil. Theirs is a continual fearing rather than trusting - striving rather than resting.

Both of these have the burden of a great part of the Pauline theology on their side, but each is one-sided, incomplete, and therefore faulty in interpretation in relation to the whole truth of the believer. A complete knowledge of Paul's great two-fold revelation of the believer's standing and the believer's state leads to a sweet assurance and peace, a resting in the accomplished work of Christ "perfecting forever them that are sanctified" before God on the one hand; and on the other, a God-given dissatisfaction with all low attainment, all "coming short of the promises" with a determination to have God's best. The two truths balance each other and both are needed to make a well-rounded saint.

So the two verses, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (all the room in the world for denying all self-complacency and our full co-operation to finish all unfinished work within us) and "for it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure" (here is His monogistic workings guaranteeing our standing) - Philippians

2:12-13. The exclusive emphasis upon our standing leads to cold, staid orthodoxy and sometimes to the holding of a "form of godliness but denying the power thereof." The exclusive emphasis upon our state leads to fanatical emotionalism and complete preoccupation in introspection and self-accomplishment. The first lets only the head rule, and the second, only the heart. I am perfectly satisfied with what Jesus has done for me, but never with what I have done for Him.

### Definitions

Of necessity they shall be brief; for to give all Paul taught on them would again be to teach all his epistles, for he is always either dealing with one or the other of these two great truths, as we shall illustrate in the last division of this doctrine.

1. Our standing before God is God's responsibility in grace as soon as I accept the "report he gave concerning his Son" and believe or accept His Son as my own Saviour. There was naught that I, a bankrupt sinner, could do or pay to help Him save my soul. Here all of God's saving grace is displayed, saving me, forgiving me, redeeming me, regenerating me, justifying me, sanctifying me, adopting me, making me a son of God, baptizing me into Christ's body, and glorifying me. What could I do to help Him here? Where shall I begin? Believing is not a work or effort, but the opposite; it is a cessation of my effort and the trusting in His finished work. Paul shows that faith is not a work in Romans 4:5. Here it is all God's responsibility as soon as I become "in Christ," and He is the One Who alone can place me there. In my position as being "in Christ," I am justified in the sight of God, as perfect as Christ is perfect, as holy as He is holy; all that He is, I am. Leave off all qualifications here and let faith stand trustfully in awe accepting the wholesale verdict of God: "Ye are complete in him" (filled up), Colossians 2:10. What can you add to that?
2. Our state before God has to do with how deeply we have let the grace of God progress in our lives. Here we find the many Scriptures which teach the necessity of our co-operation with God. There are literally hundreds of them, calling us to a deeper life of consecration; asking us to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18); asking us to obey God in cleansing our lives, etc. Here is the secret of why so many fail to find God's life of victory for them; they are waiting for God to do it all for them internally, as He has in their standing, while God is waiting for them to meet His conditions and to do what He asks them to do. If God has asked you to "yield your members, present your bodies, put away lying, put off the old man and put on the new man, perfect holiness in the fear of God, cleanse yourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," He is not going to do it for you, but awaits your obedience in co-operation to perfect your state.
3. In summary, your standing is your position before God in Christ, your acceptance, your access (Ephesians 1:6: "Accepted in the beloved"). Your state is your present walk before God, acceptable or well-pleasing unto Him (II Corinthians 5:9: "We labour to be acceptable (well-pleasing) unto him"), accepted versus unacceptable. Most of our standing is summed up in one word, "wealth" or "riches" in Christ. "All things are yours," whether you possess them or not. Christ has purchased

them for you. Most of our state is summed up in the one word, "walk," which speaks volumes of the vicissitudes, changes, progress, and manner of living.

We may instantly see the utter folly of trying to improve upon our standing or position in Christ. It is instantly perfect, as Christ is perfect, the instant the sinner believes and is born of the Spirit; God sees him right then, as "in Christ." No matter the holiness of life, works of righteousness which we have done, faith, praying, church work, etc., can possibly add anything to that standing in Christ. We are "sanctified forever" or "once for all" (Hebrews 10:10-14). But that our state may be improved constantly, and indeed we are admonished continually to do so, is abundantly testified to by every exhortation to spirituality and consecration.

### Standing and State Compared

1. Standing: There are seven things God does for us the instant we are "introduced into a standing in grace" (Romans 5:2). All of these, therefore, are based upon the perfect redemptive work of Christ.

- a. Justification: to give me a new standing before God "in Christ," no guilt, and declared righteous
- b. Regeneration: to give me a new standing before God "in Christ," no guilt, and declared righteous
- c. Habitation: to give unto me the indwelling of new personality, the Holy Spirit, to indwell me as His temple
- d. Sanctification: to give me the impulse of a new holiness, Christ Himself "being made unto me sanctification," "and to perfect forever them that are sanctified," hence our high calling, "called saints (holy ones--"hagios")"
- e. Adoption: to give me a new family relationship, sons of God, my place in the very family of God (Colossians 1: 13; I John 3:1-3)
- f. Preservation: to give me a new care and keeping. "Present us faultless" (Jude 24): so He shall present us "to himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27)
- g. Presentation: to give me a new destiny, name, and home forever; this is my place in Christ's body and bride. None of these can I do for myself; but they are entirely His work.

2. State: There are seven exhortations or goals the Holy Spirit marks out for us to improve our present state. They are progressive and, therefore, unlike our standing, they fluctuate and can be improved upon.

- a. Our progress from spiritual infancy to maturity (full age, Paul calls it) - as to spiritual meat and the exercising of our spiritual faculties
- b. Our walking after the Spirit and not after the flesh - as to the deeds or practices of the body: Paul calls it "godliness"

- c. Our putting off the old man and putting on the new man - as to self or Christ, since the new man is made synonymous with Christ
- d. Our becoming spiritual ones instead of carnal or soulish ones - as to the knowledge and enjoyment of spiritual things
- e. Our entering into God's rest instead of disobediently drawing back into a wilderness experience of mediocrity - a progression from the wilderness of our own works into God's rest and spiritual fruition, fruit of the Spirit
- f. Our presentation of our bodies as a living sacrifice - a yielding of our members as instruments of righteousness unto holiness, our completing of holiness in the fear of God as to consecration
- g. Our being filled with the Spirit, instead of fleshly gratifications - as to the complete rulership of the heavenly Indweller, the Holy Spirit, to complete our present sanctification, to become spiritual instead of carnal

All of these are by grace and not our works: but they result from our co-operation with the Holy Spirit, Who indwells, inworks, inspires, and enables. We do not "begin in the Spirit, and then are made perfect in the flesh."

#### Some Illustrations of How Paul Teaches the Standing and State of the Believer

1. One of the most notable is in Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Note carefully I Corinthians 1:2-10 - by Him enriched in all things, called saints, confirmed by Him, to be blameless in the day of Christ. Yet read I Corinthians 3:1-3: carnal, walk as men, strife, divisions, errors, immorality. Yet then read I Corinthians 6:11 (in the aorist tense): "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, etc." So compare I Corinthians 6:15: "bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit," but "shall you take the members of Christ and join them to a harlot?" See I Corinthians 1:31: sanctification imputed, as 6:11; but note I Thessalonians 5:23 and I Thessalonians 4:3-4 as compared with Hebrews 10:10.
2. You will often find both standing and state in the same verse, as Ephesians 5:8: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord (that is present standing), walk as children of light" (that is state). Ye are; now walk like it. This is Paul's constant method, to tell us what we are and have in Christ by virtue of being in Him in our standing, then to exhort us to live like it, walk like it, and live up to it.
3. Note: "Who shall lay any charge to God's elect, it is God that justifieth" (Romans 8:33). But read I Corinthians 6:1-7, concluding: "There is utterly a fault among you," and regarding Peter, a justified man, so no charge in standing, Paul says, "He stood condemned because he walked not uprightly" (Galatians 2:11). And Galatians 6:1: "If a man be overtaken in a fault"; James 5: 16: "Confess your faults one to another," yet "He shall present us faultless before his glory" (Jude 24).
4. Note Colossians 1:12-14. 22, compared with Colossians 2:6-7: "So walk ye in him": Colossians 2:9-10, compared with Colossians 3:8, 9: "complete in him" versus "now put off anger, etc."
5. Note, positionally: "For by one offering hath he perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14); yet, "Not as though I were already perfect or had already attained" (Philippians 3:12).

Without undue enlargement of illustrations, it is well to note that all of Paul's great doctrinal epistles are built upon this format. He will first enlarge upon the believer's standing, all that he has in Christ, his exalted perfect position; then he will glide into the practical application of it all, to the believer's present state as needing improvement to bring it more in line with his standing. Note Ephesians chapters 1-3 contain the highest revelation of what we have in Christ. Then he starts chapter 4 with "I beseech you therefore that ye walk worthy (Greek has the meaning of equivalent in weight) of the vocation (calling) wherewith ye are called" (cf. 5:1). And the last three chapters of Ephesians deal with the Holy Spirit's working out in the believer his salvation. Romans, the greatest doctrinal book in the Bible, give the first five chapters to our position as justified saints. Then Paul, in chapter six, divides the chapter into standing (verses 1-10) and state (verses 11-22). The remainder of Romans is devoted to the practical working out in the believer of his state.

#### D. Paul's Doctrine of the Believer as Being "In Christ"

Paul uses this expression 130 times - 14 times in chapter 1 of Ephesians. There are three truths Paul emphasizes along with this truth. We have continually mentioned some of them, but they call for further treatment.

##### 1. Identification with Christ:

This is the wonderful truth that when I accepted Christ as my Saviour and believed on Him to the saving of my soul and received His life for salvation, God united me in a vital living union with Christ. This Paul consistently terms as "being in Christ." This is identification with Christ. As He is, so am I. When He died, I died. God now counts my life in the flesh as crucified with Christ. I have been baptized into His death and buried with Him (Romans 6:2-4); Romans 6:5 likens it to the "grafting in of a plant into a parent stock." But, more, when Christ arose I arose with Him (Colossians 2:11-13); I was "quickened together with him" (Ephesians 2:1), "raised together with Him and seated together with him in the heavenlies" (Ephesians 2:5-6). God now forever sees me as "in Christ" a "new creation." (II Corinthians 5:17).

Paul links this glorious truth with every important doctrine of the believer's possessions in Christ. It gives us the most precious confidence before God, of the burial of all the past, the complete sharing of Christ's life for the present, and glorification together with Christ for the future. Note how Paul links this up with present victory in Colossians 3:1-5. There is no idea of "if" in the Greek, but "since": "Since ye be risen with Christ, ye are dead (aorist tense, "ye died") and your life is hid with Christ in God." A glorious truth indeed! Paul could not have been more emphatic than this. Note Galatians 2:20. This is not poetic language, but glorious fact: "I am crucified with Christ"; like Romans 6:6: "Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be annulled." Believe it, enter into the victory of it, and reckon it as so. "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God" (Romans 6:11).

"I am crucified with Christ," literally "I have been crucified with Christ." This is a literal historical fact accomplished in the past. When Christ hung on the cross, I hung there. When God's wrath fell on Him, it fell on me. When He died, I died. Yes, I died to everything Bragg stands for, everything he is in the first Adam, to the Law and its curse, to the guilt and death and wrath I inherited from him, and to the world and its system. Write over everything I am by natural birth, "Crucified with Christ." God begins my biography from my second birth in the second Adam, Christ Jesus, "a new creation." See how completely it is so: "It is no longer I that lives." No, nothing could be plainer as to the cessation of all the old life. "If I am crucified, I no longer live." Positionally it is true and, we shall see, we must believe God and reckon with Him, and put off the old man, to make it the new state.

## 2. The Habitation of Christ within the Believer:

Galatians 2:20 goes on: "But Christ liveth in me"--"I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This truth is too large for analysis or comprehension, but is only a matter of revelation and faith to accept. God says it; I believe it; that settles it. Colossians 1:27 is a part of the mystery among the Gentiles: "Christ in you the hope of glory." John 14:19-20 states: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you, yet a little while and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me; because I live ye shall live also. At that day, ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 17:23) - the double abiding as in John 15:4-7. II Corinthians 13:5 states: "Know ye not your own selves that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobate."

Physically Christ sits at the right hand of God, but in the Person of the Holy Spirit, Who is called "the Spirit of Christ," indwelling the believer, Christ is said to be "in us." This is one of the most colossal truths to be found in all the Word of God, as to what God is doing within man. God Himself indwells the believer, "Christ liveth in me." Note the practical application of this doctrine in I John 2:6: "Ought also so to walk even as he walked." Oh, the care, lest we offend Him by our walk, talk, actions, or activities.

See how Paul uses it in I Corinthians 3:16; I Corinthians 6:13-20; II Corinthians 6:16. Paul calls us to a "newness of life," setting our affections on things above, etc., because we are risen from the tomb, alive in Christ; yea, He lives in us. The new life I received at regeneration is not a life separated from Christ, but is the very life of Christ Himself. "He that hath the Son hath life." See the consuming desire of Paul, since all this is true; in Philippians 3:10-11, he wants not only to know that all this is true positionally, as "in Christ," but experimentally, "that I might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship (partnership) of his sufferings, being made conformable (sharing his likeness) to his death if by any means I might arrive at the out resurrection from among the dead ones." "This resurrection" must agree with the death about which he has been talking. Paul was not doubting that he would finally make it to a general resurrection, but he wanted right now to know "the power of his resurrection," the likeness of His death, the sharing of His sufferings, and arrive at a resurrection experience now. See Ephesians 1: 19-20. The same mighty energy that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at the Father's

right hand is indwelling us as believers to raise us from the dead at salvation and to fill us with all the fullness of God.

### 3. The Heavenly Citizenship of the Believer in Fellowship with Christ:

By our present identification with Christ we receive a new citizenship as having now our very life in heaven, seated together with Christ in the heavenlies. The heavenlies is the sphere of the believer's new life. The expression "in the heavenlies" occurs five times in Ephesians and nowhere else (1:3; 1:20; 2:6; 3:10; and 6:12), from "blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies," through "seated with Christ in the heavenlies," to warring against "the spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus."

The truth of the believer as a citizen of heaven and not of earth any longer, runs like a thread of gold through Paul's prison epistles in particular. Paul is in jail, death as his only prospect; but rather than be gloomy and downhearted, he just didn't care. In fact, in his epistle to the Philippians, he debated whether to depart and be with Christ, which was far better, or to remain, which was more needful for them (Philippians 1:20-24). In other words it was immaterial what they did to him; he was a citizen of the heavenly country and to kill him was to give him a passport to his own home country. It was to do him a favor.

In Ephesians 2:1-19 Paul delineates on the basic theme of this heavenly citizenship of the believer. After giving several basic contrasts of what we were "by nature," and what we are "by grace," he gives this great contrast of what he calls, in Colossians 1:13, "delivered (rescued for Himself) us from the power (dominion, kingdom of darkness), and hath translated us (transplanted; Greek has the idea of changing from one stewardship to another) into the kingdom of his dear Son (Greek "Son of his love")." Note the contrasts here in Ephesians 2, Paul delineating upon what we are "by nature" and what we now are "by grace":

- a. We were dead, but are now "quickened" (made alive). What greater contrast could there be?
- b. We walked in times past according to the course (career) of this world, according to the prince (ruler) of the power of the air. Our conversation (mode of life) was in the lust of the flesh, etc. Note the contrast in verse 10: "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God marked out ahead of time that we should walk in them."
- c. Two masters. We used to be under the ruler of power of the air, under the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience; now "in Christ," God's workmanship, and creation.
- d. Two great families. Where the "ruler of the power of the air" had his spirit in us as "children of disobedience" (verse 19 - we are now "of the household of God").
- e. We were without Christ, without God, and without hope; now we have "access to the Father through the Spirit."
- f. We were at enmity; (verse 15, He made peace).

g. We were afar off, but are now made nigh (verse 13). But the one we wish to note in particular is;

h. We were aliens and strangers (verse 12), but now (verse 19), we are "no more strangers and foreigners (sojourners), but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God."

Spiritually, when I died with Christ and was buried with Him by baptism into His death, and arose with Him, and was seated with Him in the heavenlies (Ephesians 2:5-6), I lost my earthly citizenship and gained a new one, a heavenly citizenship. Galatians 6:14: "Crucified unto the world and the world unto me."

Note Philippians 3:20: "For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven (and, just in case someone thinks he is talking of some spiritual condition) from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." There are two Greek words in our texts so far translated in the A.V. by the one English word "conversation," yet the words in the Greek are different and mean absolutely different things. In Ephesians 2:3 (and 4:22), the Greek word is "anastrophe," literally "to busy oneself," "to walk about"; hence, "manner of life, mode of living, behaviour." In Philippians 3:20 the Greek word is "polituma," from which we get our English word, almost transliterated, "politics." It means literally "the enfranchisement of one as a citizen"; so the right to vote, perform the functions of a citizen, hold office, protection of the laws of that commonwealth, etc. Note the context in verse 19: "Those who walk as enemies of the cross of Christ, whose God is their bellies, who mind earthly things (Greek is "who are engrossed with earthly things"), but our citizenship is in heaven." So Paul says in Romans 12:2: "Be not conformed to this world," "don't be fashioned after the pattern of it." Make up your minds to it; when you were saved you changed your citizenship, literally earth's for heaven's. This world is not your home, and you have been naturalized for heaven.

There are two important truths Paul links to this great truth of our heavenly citizenship:

a. The weaning influence it has upon the saint. It throws all the glittering things of earth into the shade. Its wealth, honors, fame, pleasures, etc. are but baubles. They pave the streets in my home town with solid 24-karat gold cobblestones (see Colossians 3:1-8).

b. It gives the right perspective to evaluate all our time, talents, and tribulations. All we see is to dissolve. Only our heavenly citizenship is of eternal value. (See II Corinthians 4:16, 18:5, Romans 8:18). Note a few verses on this subject from Hebrews: Hebrews 11:8-16; 12:18-24; 26:28; 13:11-15 (note the three "withouts"). Our present place is "without the camp" with Christ. This world is not our home; we have been naturalized for heaven.

#### E. Paul's Distinctive Doctrine of the Believer's Victory

The preponderance of our consideration of Paul's distinctive doctrines for the believer so far has been concerning the believer's standing before God, all that he is by virtue of his

being "in Christ." It has been mostly what God has done for him. We wish now to consider what God wants and can do in and with him. What does Paul teach in regard to the believer's victory? Here is the heart of Paul's gospel for the saint. What a vast number of God's born-again children have never found the victory that is rightfully theirs as a part of their blood-bought inheritance of the saints in light! The most of them do not even so much as know that victory is possible; in fact, they have been taught that we cannot expect victory in this life. It is the common belief that we must live as slaves to the old nature, live lives of defeat, "sin every day in word, thought, and deed;" while again others have located our victory in an emotional experience, a great feeling, grounded within the believer himself, or some ecstatic upheaval obtained by much effort, praying, seeking, tarrying, striving, and crying. I have known honest, misdirected saints who have sought "the blessing" for thirty years and still are seeking. Something is wrong: "He is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him than we are to give good things to our children." It is good, then, to hear what Paul, our own apostle, has to say on this subject. He alone outlines the complete work of the Holy Spirit within the believer, from illumination, strengthening with might the inner man, filling, engifting, and fructifying. Without Paul's epistles we would know nothing of the great work of the Holy Spirit in Christ's body.

There are two great preliminary basic Pauline doctrines to consider before we outline Paul's doctrine of victory for the believer. There can be no real understanding of his teachings along those lines without these two fundamental truths. An ignoring or ignorance of them has padlocked his other teachings.

1. The first of these two doctrines is the threefold classification of mankind into natural, carnal, and spiritual. In prophecy he divides all into Jew, Gentile, and Church of God (I Corinthians 10:32). In relation to salvation, it is dead or alive, saved or lost, or children of wrath or children of God, but, in relation to the understanding of spiritual things he divides all mankind into natural, carnal, and spiritual. All three are found in I Corinthians 2:9-3:3).

a. The Natural Man ("psuchikos"): Note I Corinthians 2:14:

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." See three things said of the natural man:

- 1.) He receives not the things of the Spirit of God
- 2.) They are foolishness unto him
- 3.) Neither can he know them. Just believe it.

The Greek word for natural man is "psuchikos," literally "of the senses" or "soulish man." Many versions translate it "animal man." Trench, in *Synonyms of the New Testament*, defines it: "The psuchikos of Scripture is one from whom the psuche (own soul) is the highest motive power of life and action; in whom the pneuma (spirit) as the organ of the Divine Pneuma (Holy Spirit) is suppressed, dormant (so dead): for the Divine is a good as extinct (so dead) whom the operation of the Divine Spirit have never lifted into the region of

Spiritual things" (so no new birth of the Spirit). Thayer says of it: "Having the nature and characteristics of or belonging to the principle of animal life which man has in common with the brute."

With these definitions in mind, note: it is the natural unregenerated man who has only the Adam life and nature, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," in whom the Holy Spirit, the "Hagion Pneuma" of God, has never bred the life of God to make him "pneuma," lifting him into the things of God. Note how James uses it in James 3:14-15 in the context of "earthly sensual (psuchikos) wisdom," only natural, earthly, human wisdom. Note how Jude uses it in verse 19, and explains it hermeneutically: "These be those who separate themselves, sensual (psuchikos) having not the spirit." That last phrase is the Holy Spirit's commentary or definition of psuchikos, not born of the Spirit, they are not spirit. Jesus said so. They are just the natural man born only of the flesh. In verse 10 Jude further defines these same men as "brute beasts" (Greek "irrational animals") because they speak evil of spiritual things of which they are "naturally ignorant" (says Paul). See also II Peter 2:10-12. Since man fell from his spiritual life in God, which was connected to God in vital connection of life, he sank to the same level as the beast. Divorce man from God, sever him from the life of God, and he is no better than the animal, for all his civilization and culture; He but carries on the same functions as the animal kingdom. He possesses a rich soul, capable when anointed by the Holy Spirit, and guided by the new Pneuma created within the believer, of fellowship with God and knowing and loving the things of God, but it lies wholly sunken to an animal level, earthly, sensual (only of the senses) which Paul emphatically states, cannot know the things of God: "Ear cannot hear nor eye see nor the natural heart think what God has prepared for them that love him," but he has revealed them by His Spirit. So Jesus said: "Except a man be born again he cannot see (comprehend, understand, perceive) the kingdom of God." The natural man cannot know them. It is clear here; there is no obscurity. Not a case of improbability, but impossibility.

The two primary characteristics of the "psuchikos" (natural man):

- 1.) Since he is only soulish, having not the spirit, he lives for time and sense alone. He is "engrossed with earthly things" (Philippians 3:19). He lives for the satisfaction of his appetites alone (even though they are religious or aesthetic) possessing only natural life with its functions; this life is the all.
- 2.) On the other hand, the natural man is entirely oblivious to the things of God or spiritual things. This is only natural since he cannot know them nor receive them, and they are foolishness to him. The unsaved preacher not only cannot understand the spiritual things of the Bible and give them to others, but he laughs at them (foolishness to him). He interprets everything in the Bible soulishly, after his wishes, opinions, and viewpoint: "I think so and so, or this is the way I look at it, or I feel this way about it." No wonder he fails to reach out to God's revealed will. I

Corinthians 2:11 states: "What man knoweth the things of man save the Spirit of man," and so, only the Spirit knoweth the things of God and to whomsoever He will reveal them. But He cannot reveal them to the natural man. The natural man will stay that way forever and can never reach up and become spiritual by his own efforts: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). The Spirit must reach down and make that natural man a new creation in Christ Jesus, with new faculties to "see God" and "receive the things of God."

b. The Carnal Man ("sarkikos"): Again read I Corinthians 3:1-3.

The Greek word "sarkikos" means a fleshly, carnal Christian. Here in this text it must be a Christian, a babe in Christ. Paul uses the word ten times. Thayer defines it: "Having the nature of the flesh, under the control of the original appetites, governed by mere human nature, wholly given over to the flesh, rooted in the flesh;" Paul says, "walking after the flesh." It is a Pauline word. Peter is the only other writer who uses it, writing to Paul's converts and borrowing it from Paul (I Peter 2:11: "abstain from fleshly lusts").

Paul uses another word, "sarx"--"the flesh" - to mean the same thing 64 times to show it is the "old man," the "old nature." So Paul uses it: "fleshly minded, living after the flesh, walking after the flesh, minding the things of the flesh, making provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof, warring after the flesh, glorying in the flesh and the filthiness of the flesh, sowing to the flesh, satisfying the flesh, works of the flesh," etc. "Sarx," or flesh, is all that we are by nature, our whole psychological makeup from Adam (we shall prove this in our next subject: the two natures). God intended that the "sarx" should be under the dominion and control and complete regulation of the "pneuma" (spirit) or highest part of man's tri-partite being, but when he fell and the spirit entered a state of death, the "sarx" took over and rules in the fallen man, making a "psuchikos" out of him. In regeneration the Holy Spirit breeds a new "pneuma" or spirit into the believer and as in the original intention for it to rule completely over the "sarx," making him spiritual. Sadly enough, most saints are still ruled by the "sarx," the old nature and so are carnal, "sarkikos."

Note: the "sarkikos" are those (Christians) born-again of the Spirit of God all right, who have received the new life of God, are made partakers of the divine nature, but instead of walking after the new nature (the "pneuma"), they walk after the old nature, the "sarx." In our primary text, Paul defines his meaning of the "sarkikos" by two definitions:

- 1.) "Babes in Christ" (in Christ all right, but still spiritual babes)
- 2.) In verse 3: "Walk as men" (lit., "after the manner of men"); all spiritual things are brought down to the level of the human senses, and the "sarkikos" walks in the "sarx" instead of the spirit

This is the unsanctified believer, the preponderance of the church. He majors still in the flesh and minors in the things of Christ. Salvation to him is a sideline, a hobby; God comes last.

Since this is but an outline study, note some characteristics of the "sarkikos":

- 1.) The first is in our text--"no spiritual appetite." He cannot stand strong meat. He must be milk-fed on the "first principles of Christ" (Hebrews 6:1-2; I Corinthians 3:2). He will enjoy a simple gospel message, but, if presented any of the "deep things of God," any message on entire consecration, and "wholly sanctified" and "the infilling of the Holy Spirit," he resists it; he gets spiritual indigestion, and doesn't think much of, or enjoys not, your preaching. He considers you fanatical.
- 2.) As being spiritual babes, they have tantrums - envyings, strife, as in Corinth. They cling to nursing mothers, saying, I am of this leader or that one, etc. As babe, they cannot stand alone (I Corinthians 1:3-4).
- 3.) They are dull and insensible of hearing in spiritual things (Hebrews 5:12, 14: "Unskillful in the word of righteousness"). They have neither command of the Bible nor understanding of its riches.
- 4.) There are many more, but here is a summary of one: Paul calls them "weak brethren" (Romans 14:1); "weak in conscience" (I Corinthians 8:10); "weak in faith" (Romans 4:19; 14:1); "weak in liberty, as still bound in law" (Romans 14:21); and "weak in service" (Acts 20:35; Romans 15:1). It is summed up by his own testimony, "I'm serving the Lord in my own weak way" - serving the Lord weakly and weekly.

c. The Spiritual Man ("pneumatikos"):

Thayer calls him: "One who is filled with and governed by the Spirit of God." It means "a spiritual man" as contrasted with a carnal one - so, "a noncarnal or non-fleshly one." It is a Pauline word. He alone uses it in this sense. Peter uses it in one verse twice, but not in this sense (I Peter 2:5: "spiritual house" and "spiritual worship"). Paul uses it 24 times. It is the Spirit-filled, sanctified saint, who has "gone on to perfection (maturity or full age)" (Hebrews 6:1-2). It stands in antithesis to the babes in Christ (I Corinthians 3: 1), hence it is full age (Hebrews 5: 14). It is a believer who has so crucified the flesh and been so filled with the Spirit, until the "pneuma" now controls his whole life, instead of the "sarx" (flesh). This is God's whole and perfect will for you; nothing short of it can suffice. Note I Corinthians 2:15: "He that is spiritual "pneumatikos") judgeth (examineth, "anakrinei," to search by looking through a series of objects to distinguish) all things, yet himself is judged (condemned) of no man." Note I Corinthians 2:13: "Which the Holy Spirit teacheth, comparing (unfolding to explain) spiritual things (neuter gender) to spiritual men" ("pneumatois" - spiritual men; it is the dative masculine plural); so verse 14, "Spiritually discerned."

All saints start as spiritual babes in Christ, with infant spiritual life, needing the Word of God to grow thereby (I Peter 2:2). Some stay babes all through their lives; others "grow up into Christ in all things" in a deeper, richer life of full surrender, where the Holy Spirit can "strengthen them with might by His Spirit in the inner man" (Ephesians 3:16), "fill them with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19), and "fill them with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). Now they do not "walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit," minding "the things of the Spirit" (Romans 8:4-14). Note Galatians 6:1: "He is to restore the weak brother overtaken in a fault."

Some characteristics of the spiritual ones ("pneumatikoi") are:

- 1.) There is spiritual strength, maturity, full age, establishment, as contradistinctive to the "weak brother" (Hebrews 5:11-14; I Corinthians 3:1). They have their spiritual faculties exercised by reason of usage and can stand strong meat. Best of all, they stop acting like babies (a blessing in any church).
- 2.) They have the Holy Spirit reveal to them the "deep things of God" - the "things the Lord hath prepared for them that love him," which "eye nor ear nor heart of man hath entered into," which the carnal man cannot have spoken unto him (I Corinthians 3:1).

We shall see all through Paul's doctrine of victory for the believer the characteristics of the "pneumatikoi": "blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies," enriched with spiritual gifts, singing spiritual songs in the heart; yea, filled with the Spirit Himself. "It is not I that lives, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20).

2. The second of these fundamental doctrines is the two natures in the believer (which grows out of the first, the fact of two kinds of saints - carnal and spiritual). This is one of the most important Pauline revelations, and you will never understand Paul's gospel for the saved, his doctrine of Christian victory, until you grasp this teaching of his. Neither will you ever understand the psychology of your own Christian experience. It explains so much that is inexplicable without it. It shows so graphically why we as saints act the way we do. It also forms the very basis for Paul's teachings of the believer as crucified with Christ, now needing to put to death the old man and walk in newness of life. It was left to Paul alone to teach the fact of the believer as being indwelt by two natures. The unfolding of true trichotomy is Pauline alone.

The only other intimation is the Spirit-inspired warning of James against the "double-minded man" (lit., double-souled man - James 1:8; 4:8). Paul teaches that every born-again believer is indwelt by two complete contrasting natures - one wholly bad, incapable of improvement; the other wholly good and righteous and incorruptible: that these two natures are diametrically and antagonistically opposed to each other, warring against each other, lusting against each other, hindering us from doing the things we would do (Galatians 5:17).

Now it is this inner conflict which perplexes the average believer, uninstructed in this great doctrine of Paul's. Satan even uses it most of the time to discourage the "weak brother" into thinking he must not even be saved, saying, "See there, you call yourself a Christian? If you were really saved, you never would have thought that thought, said that word, or acted like that." He has tripped up his millions with this lie. The conflict, rather than being an evidence you are not saved, is an evidence you are saved. Next to the Spirit's witness, it is the very best evidence, naturally speaking, of your salvation. There can be no conflict in the sinner until the Holy Spirit enters and breeds a brand new creation of God, imparting a new nature. Then the warfare starts between the old nature and the new. Before that, the peace of universal death reigned within the soul; it was the peace of the cemetery. Here is why the weakest saint cannot sin any more with the same old enjoyment, and why the sinner can sin with complacency. The sinner has no inner rebuke of the new nature; but the believer has this holy new nature, made in the image of God and "delighting in the law of God," which condemns the old nature, which is "at enmity with God and not subject to the law of God."

Thus, the believer finds himself with a true split personality, with two egos; and oh, the havoc this plays with his peace, until the victory through the Holy Spirit is found; oh, the inner conflict, and so often the defeat at the hands of the "old man," then comes the whiplash of conscience, the self-recriminations, the tears before God for failure, and the recoil of the "new man" from tolerated sin and sinful habits. James, in his two references to the "double-souled man," bears record with Paul to the bondage of the carnal Christian in Romans 7: "He is unstable in all his ways, tempest-tossed, not receiving from the Lord," and needs a "heart-purifying" (James 2:6-8;4:8).

The truth of this conflict within the saint is testified to not only in the Scriptures, but is abundantly attested to by Christian experience. "When I would do good, evil is present with me," and "the things I would do, those things I do not, and the things that I would not do, those things I find myself doing." We shall leave to a later consideration under sanctification Paul's mode of victory over the old man. Here we are interested in proving the fact of its existence - we should say, co-existence - alongside the new man, the new creation, or "the two natures in the believer." We use the word "proving" or "proof," for many solve the perplexing problem of the old man by a simple expedient of denying its existence, or so mutilate the texts which state its existence as to rob them of all their real intent. They would teach the annihilation of the old man, or any principle of sin in the believer at salvation, but that is contrary both to Christian experience and the Scriptures.

The primary divergence we wish to refer to here, which denies any real nature to the old man, but would make him but a bend or inclination, is the eradication theory. This illustration will help you to see how a difference of opinion as to the very nature of the old man can make a marked difference in the mode of victory over it. It is very obvious that if the old man, the old nature, is your old Adamic nature, your real self, your ego, all your soulish life received by natural birth, then it could not be eradicated in this life, and you still be you. If you believe, with the eradicationist, that the old man, the sinful nature, is nothing but a warp, a bend, a kink within, needing nothing but straightening, then you can see that when the Holy Spirit straightens it, it is eradicated, and, if, as they teach, "the old man is eradicated root and branch," you are

forced to believe in "sinless perfection," since naught but the new man, "created in the likeness of God in righteousness and true holiness," remains, and it cannot sin; then sinless perfection is the natural sequence.

The fundamental difference is in the definition of the "old man." One eradicationist, John R. Church, a very excellent preacher on holiness and sanctification, states his idea thus: "My conception of carnality (which he makes synonymous with the old nature) is a warp, twist, bend or perversion of our mind, affection, and will." Then his idea of sanctification is: "The warp or bent is taken out, eradicated." Then in sanctification, God just straightens out the kinks. But, if that is all the old man needed, why did God have to bring in a new creation and make all things new - bring in the new man, created in the image of God? This is not Pauline. God sets aside for death, crucifixion with Christ, the old man - not reformation, but transformation and re-creation is God's method (Galatians 6:15). We shall see that the old man is more than "an inclination," or a "warp of our humanity." or a "perversion of soul," but is all that we are by natural birth, inheriting the image and nature of Adam and his fallen nature.

### Definitions

Martin Luther: "St. Paul uses it (the flesh) of the whole man, body and soul, reason and all its faculties included, because all that is in him longs and strives after the flesh."

John Calvin: "Under the term flesh. Paul ever includes all that the human nature is everything in man, except the sanctification of the Spirit."

Melancthon: "Note that flesh signifies the entire nature of man, sense, and reason without the Holy Spirit."

This, then, is the definition we shall see proven from Paul. "The old man and the flesh" is all that we are by natural birth, the inheritance of Adam, his fallen nature, the old pre-conversion life still in the believer, co-existing with the new man. This we shall attempt to prove from Paul. The believer has two natures within him: he is both "born of the flesh and is flesh, and born of the Spirit and is spirit" (John 3:6). And these are contrary the one to the other.

- a. A concise statement of the two natures is deduced from the epistles of Paul. According to Christ, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," and cannot be ought else without a birth from above. It is the natural life and all its faculties received by natural generation. When the Holy Spirit comes within and breeds the new life of God, He doesn't reform or utilize this old life, but creates a brand new one: "If any man be in Christ he is a new creation... all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15). God sets aside the old life and all its faculties for death, and creates a wholly new nature within. But Paul teaches that this old man is still within, for he tells the Ephesians to "put off the old man." Paul's favorite name for him is "flesh," But there are a number of other names which identify him and mark his

nature, such as: "tiesh," "old man," "outward man" (II Corinthians 4:16): "carnal man," "carnal mind," "by nature the children of wrath," "sin" (Romans 7:20; I John 1:8); "law of sin" (Romans 7:23), "Body of death" (Romans 7:23); "body of sin" (Romans 6:6): and "I," the very ego of Paul (all through Romans 7).

Its characteristics are: "a will opposed to God, a mind at enmity with God," "a mind attentive to earthly things," "not subject to the law of God,;" its tendency is "death," its "works" are the lusts of the flesh and bad, its principle or law is to bring the saint "into captivity to sin and death." The totality is summed up by Paul in the decree of God of condemnation against it: "In my flesh there dwelleth no good thing." It carries the condemnation of Christ: "The flesh profiteth nothing," and leads Paul to the conclusion "to put no confidence in the flesh."

But at salvation: The Holy Spirit doesn't reform the old man, straighten out a few kinks, but creates a new nature within me. Like the old man, this new nature has many names, leading to an understanding of its character. It is variously called "the new man," "the inner man," "the inward man," "the divine nature," "spirit," "the mind of Christ," and "Christ Himself" (Romans 13:14); "the mind of the Spirit" (Romans 7:6); and, according to Christ: "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit;" hence it is called spirit after the One Who created it.

Its characteristics are: It "serves God," "it delights in the law of God," it continually "minds the things of the Spirit," it "cannot sin" (I John 3:9), it is "created in the image of God in righteousness and true holiness." Its fruits are righteousness and eternal life (Galatians 6:7), and it bears the nine fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:21-22).

b. With these statements in mind, let us see the Pauline proofs of the presence of the two natures in the believer. These also prove that these are more than some predisposition, some bend of character, or kinks of personality. (As some have denied the reality of the old nature in the believer, it is interesting to note that many have been confused about the concrete reality of the new nature within the believer.)

1.) Our first proof centers around Paul's usage of the word flesh ("sarkos" and "sarkikos"). They are used in places for meat or the body. But Paul uses them by metonymy for the whole natural life of man as distinguished from the spiritual. By a simple check of its usage, as in I Corinthians 3:1-4, we see that he isn't saying of the Corinthians, "Ye are not spiritual, but meaty." He defines carnal as "walking as men," with human nature, soulish life.

The prime proof is the way he uses the word "sarkos" of the Lord Jesus Christ, where it cannot be an "evil kink, bend, or perversion," for Christ had none. II Corinthians 5:16 states: "Though we knew Christ after the flesh, henceforth know we him no more" (after the flesh). Note two things from this text: Flesh here could not be the meat or body of Christ, since Christ still has "flesh and bones" (Luke 24:39). Also, it couldn't

mean, as the eradicationists teach, an evil bend or disposition to evil, since Christ had none. Hence, it must mean the natural soulish life of the God-Man, Christ Jesus, through which He manifested Himself while on earth. Paul is saying, "Though we knew Christ after His human life, with all its limitations and humiliation, we do not know Him thus anymore, but now after His exaltation, as divine life and unlimited power." John, after Revelation, could have testified to that (Revelation 1).

2.) Our second proof that flesh is a nature, as used by Paul, and just as much so as spirit is a nature (so there are two distinct natures in the believer) is the very term used: the "old man" as distinguished from the "new man," showing them to be real entities, separate and individual natures. So Christ said: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh (the old man) and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit (the new man)." These show each to possess personality. Peter calls the new nature "in incorruptible seed," and the old nature "corruptible seed" (I Peter 1:23). Now seed is a nature.

3.) Continuing this thought, that both of these natures, the new man and the old man, have all the attributes of personality ascribed to them, we see that the essential attributes of personality are intellect, sensibility, and volition, and all of these are ascribed to both natures in the believer: There are two minds. In fact, the very Greek word for mind used in Romans 7 has the meaning of the intellect and the affections. This is the double-minded man of James 1:8. There is the old mind, not subject to the law of God, which cannot know the things of God (I Corinthians 2:14), minding the things of the flesh (Romans 8:5). Then there is the renewed mind of Ephesians 4:23, not a patched-up mind; but Young says: "To make all over again a new creation." It is called "the mind of Christ" (Philippians 2:5), while the natural mind is called "the fleshly mind which is vainly puffed up" (Colossians 2:18). Read Romans 8:5-7 where the two minds are set over against each other.

There are two wills, volitions (Romans 8:7). The flesh is not subject to the law of God. See these two contrary wills in Romans 7:15-25: The one "I" that would do the will of God and the contrary "I" that would not. So Galatians 5:17 (Berkeley Version): "It comes to this: behave in a spiritual way and you will not fulfill or carry out your fleshly cravings, for the longings of the flesh are contrary to the Spirit and those of the Spirit are contrary to the flesh. They are in opposition to each other so that you will not do just as you like." Romans 7:15 tells us that you can walk after either one as a saint. This inner conflict of two opposing wills is inexplicable under any other thesis than that of two natures.

There are two men - old man vs. new man (Ephesians 4:22-24). Both are born, begotten after the image of the begetter: of the flesh, flesh corruptible, opposed to God; of the Spirit, incorruptible, delighting in the law of God. With two principles, life and death, there are two sets of fruits: "works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16-21) and "the fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23).

So there are two natures - flesh and spirit. They are diametrically opposed the one to the other. They cannot be reconciled to each other, and one cannot walk after both at the same time. Positionally, the believer in Christ is not in the flesh as far as God is concerned (Romans 8:9), but in state he must reckon with God that it is so (Romans 6:11). It will help you to further see this if you study a few texts: Galatians 5:1 6-26; Ephesians 4:17-29; Colossians 3:5-14, and all of Romans 7 and 8.

### 3. Paul's Distinctive Doctrine of Sanctification as the Believer's Life of Victory

The pathway of victory over sin and the old man through the Holy Spirit is fully outlined by the apostle Paul. He leaves no doubt as to the possibility of victory, but more, he commands it. It is not optional, but imperative. The Holy Spirit as the Agent and the content of the believer's victory is fully delineated by Paul.

Note carefully two texts which plainly declare what the will of the Lord is concerning our victory: I Thessalonians 4:3-7 - "This is the will of God, even the sanctification of you," and "God hath called us unto holiness" (two terms which frighten the modern saint into the dithers); and Ephesians 5:17-18 - "understanding what the will of the Lord is" and "be filled with the Spirit." These texts, spoken to saints, show that one may be saved and not filled with the Spirit and sanctified in life. He is sanctified in position, but unsanctified in life, as I Thessalonians 5:23, but they also speak with divine authority, whatever the opinion of man may be as to the subject that God's will for the saint is complete victory. Paul says: "Sin shall not have dominion over you (rule as king)" (Romans 6:14). See verses 9, 12, and 18. Also, "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37) and "Now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (II Corinthians 2:14). See the God-given possibility in Ephesians 3:19: "That ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." There are two aspects of the saint's victory that we shall consider:

#### a. Our Part (what God has explicitly asked me to do)

Man's part: all those things which God asks of us and which He will not do for us. All too many are waiting for God to do for them what He commands them to do, take some habit or habits away from them, cleanse them, etc. If God has asked you to "cleanse yourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," "present your bodies a living sacrifice," "mortify your members which are upon the earth," "yield your members as instruments of righteousness unto holiness," "put off the old man," etc., He will not do these for you, but asks you to do them.

First, we need to consider the negative which is comprised into two prohibitions which would negate the whole work of the Holy Spirit in the believer. These must be put right here at the threshold:

- 1.) "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (Ephesians 4:30-31). The Greek has the idea of "offending" or "making sorrowful." This is only

committed by a saint: the sinner "resists the Holy Spirit." He is grieved by our stubbornness in resisting His influence, by our indifference, ignorance, and sinfulness. The context states many ways He is grieved. Being the Holy Spirit, He is grieved by all the uncleanness in our lives - lying, stealing, and rotten speech. Being the dove-like Holy Spirit, He is grieved by all the anger, wrath, malice, and bitterness of the saint. Being the Holy Spirit, He is grieved with all the fleshly manifestation. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8).

2.) "Quench not the Spirit" (I Thessalonians 5:19). The Greek for quench is to extinguish a fire, by water or smothering. In the saint, it is to stop or extinguish the Holy Spirit's fire. It is to put an end to His holy work - drawing a line and saying, "Thus far and no farther shall He go in my life": stopping His mighty God-sent work of purification, sanctification, perfecting. Here is the primary reason for stagnant saints. He was sent as "another Comforter" to complete the whole image of Christ in the believer, to represent Christ and make real all His whole redemptive work and claims in the believer. This He constantly strives to perfect, but we throw cold water on the Holy Fire by our refusals, drawing back, etc.

How can we creatures of earth possibly conceive how much our luke-warmness, half-heartedness, indifference to His pleadings, worldliness, grossness of spiritual perception, carnality, grieve the Holy Spirit. How much we quench His holy fire! He knows what He could do for us and in us, but we won't let Him. We offend, make sorrowful, and quench Him. Now we wish to note at the very outset of our consideration of what God asks of us, that these are not primarily conditions, steps, but rather they are hindrances to the infilling of the Holy Spirit. This is the very nature of the case. Since the Holy Spirit indwells us, is seeking to perfect or complete His work, is pressing on us to fill us, all that keeps Him from this are hindrances, dikes which wall off His perfect work. When these hindrances are removed, naught can keep Him from filling. So our part is concerned with the removal of these hindrances.

The very first hindrance needing removal is that of ignorance. As in salvation, as there could be no saving faith until the facts were known to be believed, so here the plaintive response of the Ephesians is heard everywhere: "We have not so much as heard that there be a Holy Ghost." Saints seem to be in ignorance that God has victory for them. They excuse their carnality with, "We are but weak human beings, and God must make allowances for our frailty, for we must sin every day in word, thought, and deed and ladened with sin, and ask forgiveness at the close of the day." Give chapter and verse for that! God hasn't made excuse or allowance, but a cure for that. Just the opposite is promised: "That ye might be filled with all the fullness of God": "That ye might know the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to energizing of his mighty strength which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead." Is that human frailty? Note carefully the two prayers of Paul: Ephesians 1:16-19 - three "whats" to know:

and Ephesians 3:14-20 - three "thats" to be. Paul, in Romans 6, considered it unadulterated ignorance to think a saint who died to sin should live any longer therein. Read I Corinthians 2:12: "That we might know."

The second hindrance needing removal is closely akin to the first. It is the hindrance of indifference. Paul uses the illustration in Hebrews of the Israelites' failure to enter into Canaan, God's rest for them, to illustrate the believer now not entering into God's rest, so I shall use them. It was the report of the spies which was to create the hunger in the hearts of the Israelites to enter the land. They brought the fruit out to prove "It is a good land." There are so few faithful spies today whose lives display all the good fruit of the good land, until most saints believe the wilderness is all there is in this life, and only dream of Canaan as a far-away heaven to be reached at our pilgrimage-end. This real hunger after the Spirit-filled life is a God-given dissatisfaction with a life of defeat and bondage to sin and the old man, of powerlessness and indifference. There is given of the Holy Spirit a sudden glimpse of the life on wings, of victory and fullness, and a contrast of our present low attainment. Here is the need of preaching on these portions of the Word of God. How few sermons are heard these days on the life of victory! There are only a few lonely solitary voices crying in the wilderness.

Let us look at a few portions: John 7:37-39. Note three words - thirst, drink, rivers. Note the need - thirst: the condition - drink; the result - rivers. Matthew 5:6: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Hebrews 4:1-11: a godly fear of coming short, failing, not entering into God's rest. You will never pay the price for the Spirit's filling until you get desperately hungry and thirsty. You will never consign the old man to Calvary or put your all on the altar. Oh, for a real heart-hunger after God. Can God ever turn a hungry soul away empty? Give a stone for bread? But the Holy Spirit will not fill an unwilling vessel.

The third hindrance to the Spirit's filling is that of sins or uncleanness of life. It may be some besetting sin, some pet habit. There must be a full, frank reckoning with those things in our lives about which God has spoken again and again through the years. We thought we could bypass them and take up something else, but the Spirit keeps reiterating them for cleansing. How often has conscience been whipped about it, God has shown His displeasure over it, the Holy Spirit has pleaded for its removal, but you have always said, "No, I like it, and it isn't really bad, and the Bible doesn't say anything about it, etc.," and even quote Scripture to show it is alright? But it God says, "I don't like it;" it is a sin; give it up. This, to all too many saints, is the one paramount hindrance, dike off the Spirit's fullness, stalemating their advance in the Lord, and defeating them. We would have the greatest Holy Spirit revival in the history of the church if every saint would quit pussy-footing around known sin in their lives. Note carefully Hebrews 12:1. It is folly to speak of progressing any further with God in service or life with known unconfessed sin in your life. Note carefully II Corinthians 7:1 and the preceding context: compare with Titus 2:12 and II Timothy 2:19-21. All too many are waiting for God to sovereignly take away some habit or pet sin, while they continued to

encourage and make provision for it, while God is asking them to "Cleanse themselves" of it. How can we expect the Holy Spirit to "complete holiness" and finish purification and sanctification while we give nourishment and encouragement to sin in our lives by "making provision for the old man to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Romans 13:14). This is the same kind of praying David did: "Search me and try me and see if there be any wicked way in me." It is an honest praying for the Holy Spirit to expose to the light of His holiness all hidden corruptions. He will do it and surprise you with the revelation of your own heart. The Holy Spirit will not fill a dirty vessel.

The fourth hindrance needing removal, so that the Spirit might fill, is that of an unyielded life. It is the lack of an honest, full, irrevocable consecration. The Holy Spirit must have all of us before we can have all of Him. How many fail here; having passed every other milestone, they fearfully fall short, afraid to turn over to God their all, but you and God cannot rule and completely own the same temple. If He is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all. Many are willing to give their sins to God - their bad points, but not their good points. Like Jacob of old, when fearful of his life and the wrath of his brother, he first sent over the river his possessions; then Leah and her children; then his beloved Rachel and her sons, but not until he wrestled with God all night and was touched in his strongest attribute, did he cross over and commit himself to God's care and keeping. God doesn't want yours, but you; then He has you and yours. There is a Peniel for every saint. The old Jacob nature will make any sacrifice if only allowed to live.

Note Romans 12:1-2: God's perfect will for you cannot be proven or ascertained or obtained until presentation and then His transformation. Note the beautiful illustration of this in our previous text, John 7:38-39. The rivers of living water of the Holy Spirit awaited the glorification of Christ, but when He was glorified, the Holy Spirit was poured forth in living freshets (Acts 2:33). If there is no ascension and glorification of Christ, there can be no Pentecost; so, in the believer, until Christ is glorified and crowned Lord, there can be no Pentecost, no rivers of living water. We shall note the wonderful illustration which Paul must have had in mind in Romans 12:1-2, from Leviticus 1: the access offering. It is a type of Christ, our only access to God, but, also, as He was sanctified, so must we be sanctified. The offering must be willing; the offerer must himself kill it; it must be skinned; each piece must be offered separately; and the legs and inwards must be washed with water (heart and life cleansing). It was an acceptable, well-pleasing offering, then God's holy fire completely consumed the sacrifice. Romans 6:13: "Yield yourselves unto God." The Greek for yield is the same used in the Septuagint for giving the offering to God. It means to hand over. It no longer belonged to the offerer. The altar sanctified it first, hallowed it as God's, no longer to be used for profane purposes. The Holy Spirit will not fill an unyielded vessel.

The fifth hindrance is the lack of appropriating faith - unbelief. Paul, in Hebrews 4, declares that the primary reason Israel didn't enter into God's promised rest was unbelief (Hebrews 3:17-18; 4:6) and warns us lest we "fall after the same example." There is a vast difference between claiming and

asking. I ask for a largess, but I claim what is rightfully mine by inheritance. If God says the infilling of the Holy Spirit is His will for me, then I can claim by faith; I need not beg. This is the final failure of so many (Galatians 3:13-14; Hebrews 4:6). Theirs is the experience of the elder brother of Luke 15: "Thou never did kill a calf for me." But the father put the blame where it belonged, on the lack of appropriation of the elder brother: "Son, all that I have is thine." "You could have had all the calves in the stalls; they are yours. You just never took one."

Others are waiting to grow into the fullness of the Spirit. They forget that they never grew into salvation, but, by a definite step of faith, they believed the promises and were born of the Spirit, so, believe God and the Spirit will do the work. How long would Israel have had to grow in Moab to grow into Canaan if they had not by faith obeyed God and taken the land? This Paul calls "the obedience of faith." As illustrated by Israel at Kadesh-Barnea, unbelief takes three forms, in a progressive order:

- a.) A disbelief in the promises: "Yea, hath God said?" Does God actually promise the filling with the Holy Spirit and real victory over sin? It is all too wonderful for unbelief to believe, too warm here; so weak faith would water and whittle down the promises to their own experience.
- b.) A disbelief in God's ability to perform what He promised: "We cannot take the land." The promises are there alright, but there are too many obstacles. The flesh is too strong. Weak faith looks at all the obstacles and says, "We cannot do it; God cannot give us the land."
- c.) A disbelief which fulfills itself with disobedience: A turning back from the revealed will of God as Israel did, as the Greek in Hebrews 3:18 indicates. It is a different word from unbelief; it is disobeying; but portrays a positive lack of reliance upon another. Weak faith looks at the price-tag, the surrender of self, the crucifixion of self, self-abnegation, and says, "Too high a price," and turns back into the wilderness short of the whole will of God. It deliberately disobeys God. Unbelief is not just a mere deficiency, but deliberate disobedience.

Claiming faith is two-fold: First, it is to enter into judgment with God against the old man, called by Paul "putting off the old man and mortifying your members who are upon the earth." We have seen that positionally we are dead, and the old man is put off, but in reality in our personal lives he is very much alive. See Romans 6:1-11. In the first part we are positionally dead. The old body of sin is destroyed (annulled), but in verse 11: "Now we are to reckon it so." Right here we would like to include the six-fold way, in outline form, that Paul would have us use to deal with the old man. They are six progressive steps in the complete crucifixion of the old nature.

- a.) As God reveals the knowledge of the old man, his reality, activity, works, lusts, laws of his life, and the fact that judicially and positionally

he is already dead in God's sight, we are to, by faith, reckon him dead indeed (Romans 6:11). This is a definite attribute and act of faith. It is siding with God against myself. The old man will look out of every window and call you a liar, but God said it, and I believe it.

b.) By the Holy Spirit who in dwells us and who is the great antagonist of the old man, the opposite principle of life and holiness to him, we are to mortify, put to death, cut the life off of the deeds or practices of the body (Romans 8:13), and to mortify my members which are upon the earth (Colossians 3:5), called crucifying the flesh (Galatians 5:24). In Romans 7 the believer is in bondage, wretched, defeated, but in Romans 8:2: "It is the Spirit of life in Christ who frees from the law of sin and death."

c.) By a definite act and attitude of faith, we are to put off the old man which is corrupt (going on the ruin) in its manner of life (Ephesians 4:22). In Colossians 3:9 it is called the "old man with his deeds." It is a "renouncing of the hidden works of darkness." It is an act of faith whereby we renounce all that we are by nature - our life, our deeds, our ambitions, etc.

d.) By a definite act and attitude of faith, we put on the new man which Colossians 3:9 says is "renewed continually after the image of its Creator" (Ephesians 4:23). This new man is the very life of Christ (Romans 13:14). This is the "newness of lift" we are asked to walk in because we are dead with Christ (Romans 6:4).

e.) The saint, walking by faith, is to no more make any provision for the flesh to fulfill its lust (Romans 13:14). He is to cut off all occasion of the flesh, to quit feeding it.

f.) Very important; he is then to walk in the Spirit continually (Romans 8:4). So Galatians 5:25: "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." It is the daily momentary living and conducting of all of life in the sphere of the Spirit, as in Romans 8:5: "We are debtors not to the flesh, or to live after it," since we are risen with Christ (Colossians 3:1-6). In this relationship note that there are six negative attitudes of faith we should take in relationship to the old man, the flesh life:

- (1.) We are to put no trust in it (Philippians 3:3; Romans 14:17-18).
- (2.) We are to make no provision for it (Romans 13:14).
- (3.) We are not to sow to it (Galatians 6:8).
- (4.) We are not to mind the flesh (Romans 8:5: Greek equals prefer, delight in).
- (5.) We are not to walk after it (Romans 8:4).
- (6.) We are to stop serving sin, yielding our members as instruments of the flesh (Romans 6:6, 12:13, 14-22).

Note carefully, this putting to death of the old man is not suicide, self-crucifixion, for even Christ didn't offer up Himself in death, but was "offered up through the eternal Spirit" (Hebrews 9:14). In Romans 8:13:

"It is "through the Spirit that we put to death the deeds of the body." As we enter into judgment against the old man and take God's side, the Holy Spirit will make real his death and the life of Christ in us.

Secondly, this appropriating faith is a simple asking and taking from God, the Spirit's fullness. As at salvation, when you met all the conditions, you had to rest upon His word of promise to save and believe that He does. Here, emptied of self, with self on the cross, the vessel searched and cleansed and handed over to God, I take Him at His word of promise, and yield to His will to fill me with the Holy Spirit. I count it done. You may ask. "What about tarrying?" Remember the commands to tarry were before Pentecost, to wait the coming of the Holy Spirit, but He has come now. All the tarrying and waiting before God now is not to beg the Holy Spirit to come. He indwells us. It is not to make God willing: "He is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him than we are to give good things to our children." All the waiting upon God is to prepare us, the vessel, before the infilling, but how we need those hours spent in God's presence, in heart-searching, dying out to self, yielding to God's will. Time spent in His presence will reveal every hidden corruption. The sacrifice will lie skinned, dissected, consecrated, and washed upon the altar, waiting His holy fire.

If any one of us would set aside ten days, as the 120 did, to spend them "continually in prayer" in line with the expressed promises of God, as they did - would we ever be the same? As God told Abraham, "Every foot of ground the sole of thy foot shall tread upon I have given thee." So Israel must take the land and so must you. Everything God has promised is to be taken by faith, definite in point of time and substance - not vague and general. "If you ask a fish, he will not give you a serpent."

This is as far as we can go. This is the completion of man's part. He must then fill with His own wonderful Self. I am not worried that He will fail on His part, after I have done mine. He could no more fail here than He could when I trusted Him for my salvation. As one saint has so aptly said, "What I give, God takes: what God takes, He cleanses: what God cleanses, He fills; what He fills, He uses."

b. God's Part: (what God must do for me, where I cannot help Him), all those things which only God can do for us. We might just as well say, "I'm going out and help God make a world" as to try to help Him here. It is the Holy Spirit Who actually "puts to death the deeds of the body," frees from the law of sin and death in our bodies, transforms and renews the mind, yes, fills the believer, and manifests Christ unto and in and through the believer.

Throughout this whole section, we shall see that God has asked us to do some things and will not complete His work until we do ours, but we shall see also all the limitations to our work where the Holy Spirit, by faith, must complete holiness - not that there is any place along the line where He is not working, but where our wills must be exercised or His work is finished, as in salvation. He worked first. He convicted, drew, convinced the mind unto

repentance, warmed and melted stubborn resistance, until the soul in contrition and repentance, yielded and believed unto salvation. Here, it is all His gracious influence, presenting the claims of Christ, the need, convicting, drawing, melting, warming, convincing, and pleading, but He cannot go but so far and meets the stubborn human will, which must comply. There is a part that is mine that God will not do, and there is a part that is God's which I cannot do.

If what we have considered so far were all of which the believer's victory consisted, then certainly a life of victory over sin would be but an idle dream, an impossible idea, but at our extremity, after we have obeyed every injunction of God, come to the utter end of self, in simple rest of faith, we find the infinite fullness of God. God must supply the holy fire of the Holy Spirit to consume and purify, sanctify and fill, anoint and empower, to outfit and use the yielded vessel. It is the Holy Spirit Who does the finished work. He is the Agent and the content of the filling. It is the Spirit Who enables us "to put to death the deeds of the body;" it is the Spirit Who "quickens these mortal bodies;" it is the Spirit Who illuminates the "eyes of our understanding" to know all that is ours; it is the Spirit Who "strengthens with might our inner man" to enable us to "thoroughly seize hold of the whole cube of the love of Christ." Yea, it is the Spirit Who fills us with all of His precious fullness. Jesus said just before His crucifixion, to His own: "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come" John 16:7). The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, to complete the whole work of salvation in us is better than the personal physical presence of Christ Himself.

### Definition of Terms

At the very outset we must define some of the terms used of the Holy Spirit's work (since these are so confusing to many).

1. The indwelling of the Spirit, as recorded in Romans 8:8-14: By the Spirit's indwelling is meant that every child of God, in this dispensation, who is born of the Spirit, is a temple of the Holy Spirit, Who has then taken up His residence within the newly created spirit in the inner man of that believer. This is the "Spirit of adoption." This is how Christ is said by Paul to indwell each of us.
2. The sealing with the Holy Spirit: Ephesians 1: 13 shows us that the sealing is the Holy Spirit Himself (so 4:30). The presence of the Holy Spirit within the believer is the stamp of ownership of God, but it is more. The seal has the superscription of the Owner, His image. The Holy Spirit is creating the image of Christ in us as God's seal (II Corinthians 3:18; II Corinthians 1:22). This seal shows that we belong to God (II Timothy 2:19).
3. The earnest of the Spirit: Paul links these first three together as the initial inheritance of all saints - His entrance, His sealing, and giving us an earnest of our complete inheritance (as in Ephesians 1:13-14, and II Corinthians 1:22). The earnest is also mentioned in II Corinthians 5:5. Another name is "the first fruits of the Spirit" (Romans 8:23). All that the Holy Spirit accomplishes in us

from salvation through His whole ministry in us, to the fullness of the Spirit, is but an earnest of our complete inheritance "until the redemption of the purchased possession." To illustrate: an earnest in legal phraseology is a small part of the whole inheritance for the heir to live on until he gets the whole. If all of the Spirit's wonderful work in us now is but an "earnest," what will the whole be like? His regenerating, quickening, resurrecting, anointing, sanctifying, empowering, and filling is but an earnest. What will it be when He shall transform these bodies of our humiliation like unto the body of His glory and we "shall in an instant be transformed?"

4. The gift of the Spirit verses the gifts of the Spirit: By the gift of the Spirit is meant that on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended as the fulfillment of the promise of the Father to send the Holy Spirit upon the believers in Christ. On the day of Pentecost, as a gift, the Holy Spirit was once and for all given to the church, not to be repeated. See Acts 1:4 and John 7:38. At the glorification of Christ, He shed forth the Holy Spirit. Four times in all, Christ promised the Holy Spirit as the gift of God, and in the last, in Acts 1:4, He points to its fulfillment on Pentecost. In Acts 2:33 Peter points back to Pentecost as the fulfillment of those promises. When the Jews asked him what they should do, he answered: "Repent and you shall receive the like gift of the Holy Spirit"; partake of the same gift. The only other time the gift of the Holy Spirit is mentioned after Pentecost is when Peter used the keys to open the way of salvation to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:45; 11:17), but never again to Gentiles or Jews. As a gift, He has been given once for all. We are not asked to pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit. At our salvation, we were baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ: but more, we were made to drink into the original gift of the Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13). In contrast, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are His bestowals upon Christ-indwelt, and especially Spirit-filled, believers for specific service. They are special "graces," allotments of faith, and endowments for the "edification of the whole body of Christ."

5. The witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:15-16): That inner revelation to the heart, to our spirits, by the Spirit, that we are the sons of God, the awakened cry of "Abba, Father," revealing to the soul the new relationship with God, of sonship. I John 5:10 shows it is internal: "hath the witness in himself." No one needs to tell the new convert that he is saved; the Holy Spirit will do that.

6. The fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:9): The fruits of the Spirit are the out-flowings of the Spirit-filled life; they are the natural fruit or manifestations of the indwelling, infilling Spirit of God. They are as natural to the Spirit-filled saint as the works of the flesh are to the natural man.

7. The intercession of the Spirit: This is explained only by Paul in Romans 8:26-27. Though praying in the Spirit is alluded to in Jude 20, what Paul calls "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit" is the subject of Ephesians 6:18. This is the help of the heavenly Helper or "Parakletos" helping our infirmities in praying, especially the infirmity of ignorance: "For we know not what to pray for as we ought," and of our weaknesses

(infirmities). Since He "knows the mind of the Lord," He can "make intercession for us with groanings unutterable according to the will of God."

8. The anointing of the Spirit: This is mentioned by Paul but once (II Corinthians 1:21). That is in relation to believers now. It is mentioned twice by John (I John 2:20-27 - rendered by A.V. "unction"). Here it shows His teaching ministry to the saints: "Unction teacheth you all things." It is taken from the Old Testament anointing with the holy oil for service. The anointing carried with it special graces for service, and Paul seems to use the gifts of the Spirit to mean the same.

There are two terms yet to be considered. They are used by many as synonymous and interchangeable, but they are not so used in the New Testament: the baptism and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. We recognize that great men of repute have used the terms interchangeably, but it is more than significant that Paul nowhere commands us to be baptized with the Spirit, but he does command us to be filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 shows emphatically that a believer may or may not be filled with the Spirit; but I Corinthians 12:13 shows just as emphatically that all saints are baptized with the Spirit (even carnal Corinthians). There must be a difference in the terms!

a. The Baptism with the Spirit: In the Gospels, the promise of the baptism is always future: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 3:11). In Acts 1:5 it is still future, but narrowed down to the near future: "Not many days hence" (Pentecost). The only other time the term is used in Acts is in the house of Cornelius to show that they partook of the same baptism promised in the Gospels (Acts 11:16, where Peter uses the key to the Gentiles as he did to the Jews on Pentecost), but there is no future promise. When we get to the Epistles, we find every reference to the baptism with the Spirit as past for the believer. There are only two references by Paul to the baptism with the Spirit, and neither as a future blessing: Ephesians 4:5, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." What that baptism is he tells us in I Corinthians 12:13 -"By one Spirit were we all (once and for all in the past) baptized into one body," and this he said to the carnal Corinthians. The Gospels look forward; the Epistles, back. Where do they meet, at Pentecost? The fiery baptism with the Holy Spirit, symbolized by "cloven tongues of fire on each." baptized the 120 individual believers into one body. That is the baptism with the Holy Spirit once and for all accomplished. Now every time a sinner accepts Christ and is born of the Spirit, he is made a partaker of the one baptism, and the Holy Spirit right then "baptized him into the body of Christ," hence there is no command to tarry now, or wait for, or ask for, the baptism of the Spirit for the Christian. He is already baptized and made to drink into the one Spirit. He is commanded, however, to "be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). Though great men like R. A. Torrey and A. B. Simpson used the term to denote another crisis in the life of the believer, synonymous with the infilling, yet it is better to be Scriptural in our terms to avoid confusion.

There is one clear fact that emerges. Before Pentecost a person could be filled with the Spirit without the baptism with the Spirit (as John the Baptist, Zacharias, and Elisabeth), but since Pentecost a saint may be, and is, baptized with the Spirit without experiencing the infilling of the Spirit. So Ephesians 5:18 shows that a Christian can be saved and not filled or the command is pointless. But I Corinthians 12:13 shows that all saints are baptized with the Spirit. The definition of the filling with the Spirit belongs too much of our future study, so we shall but briefly define it: The filling with the Spirit is the filling with the Spirit. It is exactly what it says; it is to be completely filled by and with the mighty third Person of the Trinity. He fills with Himself, His own personality revealing Christ to us, in us, and through us.

### b. The Filling with the Spirit

All of God's part of the saints' victory is comprised in the filling of the Spirit, not that we are unaided in all that He asks us to do. We must continually be mindful as we "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling" that it is "God that worketh in us both to will and do of his good pleasure." The Holy Spirit is the heavenly Helper. All too often, however, He is either shoved into a minor role or is ignored entirely. Just as the Father was rejected and spurned in the Old Testament and Jesus Christ in His dispensation, so now in His dispensation the Holy Spirit is either ignored or spurned and quenched.

#### 1.) The Fact of the Spirit's Filling (answering the question, "Is there a work of grace in the believer subsequent to salvation?")

There is the case of the apostles of Christ. They were saved first on Old Testament grounds when He said, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3). After His resurrection, they certainly were saved in the New Testament sense of the word in John 20:22, when Jesus "breathed on them and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost." This is before Pentecost, so not for infilling, but when the Holy Spirit took up His residence within them and regenerated them. They were not filled yet; but on Pentecost, these saved people were "all filled with the Holy Spirit." Here is a subsequent crisis.

There is the special case of the Samaritans in Acts 8:4-17. They must have been saved, since the people received the word preached, demons were cast out, and they were baptized by Philip (who certainly wasn't like so many moderns who baptize sinners), but since this was a new category with which the apostles must use the keys, they were not partakers of the promised gift of the Spirit until Peter and John should lay hands on them; then the Spirit fell upon them (signifying copious outpouring). Leaving the dispensational aspect, now it is our purpose to note only the fact of a lot of saved people baptized in the name of Christ, yet with no outpouring of the Spirit until later after salvation.

There is the case of the first deacons in Acts 6. The prime requirement was that they should be men "full of the Holy Ghost." It is interesting to note that their lives must have evidenced the fact or how could they have been chosen? There is the case of the house of Cornelius in Acts 10: "While Peter yet spake unto them, the Holy Spirit fell on them," and "on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." There is the case of Barnabas in Acts 11:24. He was "a good man and full of the Holy Spirit." There is the case of Paul in Acts 9:17, Ananias said unto him: "The Lord, even Jesus, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

There is the marked case, which clinches the whole question, of the saints in Ephesus (Ephesians 1:1), to whom Paul writes the command: "Be filled with the Spirit," and expressly calls it "the will of the Lord" (Ephesians 5:17-18). If all saints are filled already, then we have a tautology here. The fact that there is a filling with the Holy Spirit is plainly taught and the fact stands out that a person can be saved, be indwelt by the Spirit, live a long life of mediocrity and powerlessness, more or less defeated, die and go to heaven, and never know in his life the fullness of the Spirit and the attending victory. Only God knows the wasted years, fruitless labor, defeat and, worst of all, the souls who have stumbled over Him into a Christless eternity. A man may preach the gospel for years with some success and never know the fullness of the Spirit and His enablement. Jesus said unto His saved disciples: "Wait, tarry in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high," and "ye shall receive the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). Don't whittle down the promises to your poor experience, but search the Scriptures, sound out the promises; then seek the face of God until the Spirit opens the way, then walk ye in it, unto the "fullness of God."

## 2.) The Method of the Spirit's filling (answering the question, "Is the filling of the Spirit a progression or a crisis?"):

Note well, since the filling of the Holy Spirit is the filling with a personality, not a blind force, He acts with sovereign freedom. "The wind bloweth where it listeth": "The Spirit divideth to every man severally as he wills," etc. One cannot set his own experience up as an infallible prescription for the Holy Spirit's activity. As diversified as was the Spirit's activity at salvation, will be the reaction to His filling. All too many have made the great mistake of trying to prescribe the direction in which the wind must blow, and have marked out the channels through which "the rivers of living water" must flow. In answer to our question, it is well to note the three tenses the Holy Spirit has used in Acts, related to the filling with the Holy Spirit. He inspired the very words used with the tenses.

The first to note is the aorist tense, which denotes a sudden act completed in the past, done and finished. It is used six times of the filling with the Holy Spirit in Acts:

- a.) Acts 2:2: "it filled the house" (the sound of violent, roaring wind)
- b.) Acts 2:4: "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit."
- c.) Acts 4:8: "Peter filled with the Holy Spirit." He had an aorist filling with the 120 in Acts 2:4.
- d.) Acts 4:31: Peter is in the whole group who were filled again with the Holy Spirit. Peter had here in Acts, at least three separate, complete aorist fillings with the Holy Spirit. As there was a sudden demand, there was a sudden complete filling.
- e.) Acts 9: 17: "And be filled with the Holy Spirit." Saul was not to commence his great work as "apostle to the Gentiles" until he had this crisis filling with the Holy Spirit. "He must first be clothed with power from on high."
- f.) Acts 13:9: "Paul filled with the Holy Spirit," to meet a present emergency

Every one of these six times was, of necessity, a crisis experience, and not progressive. The tense forbids any idea of a gradual rising tide of filling.

The second tense to note is the imperfect tense. This is used once in the New Testament in relation to the Spirit's filling and has the same idea as the English imperfect - Acts 13:52: "And the disciples were filled (lit., were being filled) with joy and with the Holy Spirit" - not the aorist, but the imperfect action in progress in the past. In the context, as they were being chased out of town by "devout and honorable women"; as there was an outflow of need, there was an inflow of supply, as Paul calls it, "The supplial of the Holy Spirit."

The third tense is the present tense (the same connotation as the English). It has the idea of present condition or action:

- a.) Acts 6:3: "Look ye out among you seven men of good report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom."
- b.) Acts 6:5: (one of the deacons) "Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit." This denotes a normal condition of everyday life, as one constantly "full of the Holy Spirit."
- c.) Acts 7:55: (again, Stephen, at his stoning) "He being full of the Holy Spirit." Every time you read of Stephen - first and last - he is full of the Holy Spirit. Not only at Pentecost did he receive the fullness in a sudden, complete crisis of an aorist filling, but he stayed that way.
- d.) Ephesians 5:18: "But be filled with the Spirit" (lit., "be ye being filled with the Spirit"), thus this text enjoins a continued filling of and by the Holy Spirit. After the Holy Spirit fills with His own

fullness in an aorist past filling, He continually supplies His fullness:

"A man full of the Holy Ghost."

e.) Acts 11:24: (of Barnabas) "A good man and full of the Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit, by these three tenses, teaches emphatically that there is a crisis experience when suddenly, for the first time, the Holy Spirit fills with a complete initial filling. He also teaches that afterwards, as there arises any need, the Holy Spirit will give fresh inflowings. He also teaches that the believer is to have, as the normal constant blessing of his life, the filling of the Holy Spirit. There is all kinds of room for growth and progression within the sphere of the Spirit's fullness, and a believer may lose the fullness (I Corinthians 9:27; Philippians 3:12-14).

From Ephesians 5:18 we may learn three other great truths: The verb here is in the imperative mood. This is an urgent command. God not only provides, entreats, wills, but commands us to be filled. The verb is in the passive voice. I cannot fill myself. I could no more fill myself than Solomon could fill the temple with the glory of God. I must put myself in the way of the Spirit's filling. The verb is in the present tense. It is right now as a present urgency: "Be ye being filled right now," not after wasted years.

### 3. The Results of the Spirit's Filling (answering the question, "How may I know that I am filled with the Spirit?")

It is well to keep in mind that a great mental assurance of the fact of His filling, or some great physical demonstration, is not necessary. Many times there is no conscious result of His filling until the need arises, when joy under persecution, courage under fire, needed power in witnessing or preaching is the very first conscious demonstration of His fullness within. Sometimes there must be many leaves before there appears the fruit. "Faith is the title-deed of things hoped for." Paul says in Hebrews 11:1. It puts us into present possession of the desired blessing of God.

Sometimes there is an immediate witness of the Holy Spirit Himself to His fullness, as there was when He regenerated us, when He brings transports of joy, fullness of glory flooding the soul, and sometimes ecstatic promises. Remember, however, all these are not the essence of His fullness, only by-products, for He is a Person, not a blessing. He, Himself is the fullness, not some manifestation. He, as a Person, may or may not see fit to give some manifestation of His fullness. "He divides to every man severally as he wills." He is a sovereign personality, bound by no necessity or limitation. Every revival throughout church history testifies to the perfect liberty of the Holy Spirit to manifest Himself as He wills. Being a Person, and not an electrical shock, nor blind force, He has perfect freedom to suit the blessing to the individual's need. He may, or He may not, give some physical demonstration to His fullness, but the believer is nonetheless filled

when faith meets all the conditions. How often a loud profession of sanctification, accompanied by physical demonstrations and speaking in tongues, is not followed by a life of love and purity or power in witnessing! We shall go mostly to Paul for the results of the Spirit's filling. We could study the apostolic experiences in Acts to see the wonderful results in the personal lives after Pentecost, but our doctrine should be built primarily upon Paul's epistles, not apostolic experiences.

First note the results in Ephesians 5:19-33. Immediately after the command to be filled with the Spirit, Paul shows the results:

- a. A melodious heart (verse 19), a singing heart. This takes all the drudgery out of the service of the Lord, puts a lilt into it. The infilling of the Holy Spirit puts the whole personality into harmony with itself, and, best of all, with God - in tune with God; His music fills the soul. This is expressed here in three kinds of singing:

1.) Psalms: These are primarily the Holy Spirit's inspired sacred Psalms in the Bible. They were the hymns of the early church and have been the very Garden of the Lord to the Spirit-filled through the ages. Every longing of the soul, every lilt of praise, is here expressed by the Holy Spirit.

2.) Hymns: The Greek idea is extemporaneous effusions of praise to God, as in Acts 16:25, like Paul and Silas in jail at midnight "sang praises unto God."

3.) Spiritual Songs: The Greek here has the idea of studied compositions, premeditated compositions, "odes," such as the Spirit-illuminated hymns of the church, expressive of the soul's longings.

- b. A thankful heart (verse 20), completely thankful for all things.
- c. A humble, submissive heart (verse 21-6:9).

The second result of the Spirit's filling I would note is that of the fruits of the Spirit. Paul is the only one who enumerates them, in Galatians 5:22-23. These are the real evidences that one is filled with the Spirit. A person may have one or more of the gifts of the Spirit and never be filled. Paul so states in I Corinthians 13:1-3, showing that tongues is not evidence; one can speak with the tongues of men and angels and not have love, the primary evidence.

Every gift of the Spirit can, and has been, imitated - tongues by wild, fanatical groups (even most tongues groups will so recognize); healing by Christian Science, etc.; prophecy by Saturday Adventists, Russellites, etc.; miracles by even the Antichrist and false prophet in the last days; but the fruit of the Spirit of love, Satan cannot imitate, since it doesn't grow in that kind of soil. If a man claims to be filled with the Spirit, let him not prate to me of speaking in tongues, nor of how he can preach, nor of his miracles,

nor gifts, etc., but let me see the sweet fruits of the Spirit growing abundantly in his life. Jesus said: "By their fruits ye shall know them." In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul doesn't say "fruits," but "fruit," singular. The various fruits are but different manifestations of the one fruit of the Spirit; that is, love, hence, Paul gives the great treatise on love in I Corinthians 13:

- a. Love - Note the singular, "fruit" not "fruits" is love. Love is the prime fruit of the Spirit - the sum total - since "God is love."
- b. Joy is love overflowing, love exulting.
- c. Peace is love in repose, love resting.
- d. Longsuffering, or forbearance, or "longmindedness" is love forgiving, bearing with the affronts and bad manners of others without itself adding up the injuries and holding them against them. It is love in competition, "beareth all things."
- e. Gentleness is love under fire and not backfiring; "is not easily provoked (exasperated)." The Greek doesn't have "easily" in it. The Greek "parexynetas" equals "fits." Love doesn't have fits of temper or tantrums (Philippians 4:5).
- f. Goodness is love in action, pouring itself out for others.
- g. Faith is love in perfect trust in the object of that love - God.
- h. Meekness is love's perfect balance wheel. It is love perfectly abandoned to the will of God; love's governing, dominion, love in control
- i. Temperance, the crowning, governing fruit, is love's perfect balance wheel. It keeps the Spirit-filled saint on an even keel emotionally, intellectually, doctrinally, and spiritually.

All of these are not special gifts bestowed on only a few, but the natural normal fruitage of all Spirit-infilled, controlled saints. What a need we have of all these!

The third result is the gifts of the Spirit. Paul alone enumerates these gifts of the Spirit and the regulation of them. The two primary placed are Romans 12:3-8 and I Corinthians 12-14. In Ephesians 4:8-15 we have already considered the gifted men Christ has given to the church. All but one of these gifts is for service; only one is personal - namely, tongues. Paul says these gifts of the Spirit are "for the profit of all." And he divides them into three groups:

- a. Diversities of gifts, but one Spirit (verses 29-31); all do not have the same gifts.
- b. Diversities of administration (verses 28-29), ministrations and services named
- c. Diversities of operations, workings, energies, effects; the idea is of miraculous effects.

Note further, the Holy Spirit is to determine which you should have: "He divideth to every man severally as he wills." Verses 29-31 shows that all do not have the same gifts, and he illustrates by the analogy of a body with only one kind of members. This chapter throws out any idea of any one gift as an evidence, or that we must all have the one gift of tongues.

Before going into the enumeration of the gifts or their meanings, it is well to note the present-day tendency of many fundamentalists to discard the so-called "sign gifts" by dating them as only for the apostles and apostolic age. Were they in a separate age from us? They make bold statements that they were given only for the founding of the church and were to cease after inspiration was completed. Scofield so states in footnote No. 1, p. 1224 of the Scofield Bible. I want chapter and verse on that. We are still in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. He is still here and certainly must still have all His power and gifts. You will note carefully among the gifts enumerated, inspiration was not one of them for general usage, but of those "divided to every man severally as He wills." Who is bold enough to say, "That one is to cease," or, "This one is only for the apostles," etc.? The day of miracles is not past but for those who believe, as Mark 16:17-18.

There are two extremes here to avoid: the fanatics who would take one gift and make it supreme, to the exclusion of others; and those who would deny all the miraculous. (I Corinthians 13:8 is often quoted for "proof.") Tongues shall cease, but so shall prophecy and the gift of knowledge. Are these two also done away? When shall these cease? The context is plain - when the perfect is come in, not "the whole of the New Testament," as they say. That is poor exegesis. It will be when we become a man, when we shall know as also we are known. It will be the consummation of our redemption. Until then, all the gifts of the Holy Spirit are His to give to the Spirit filled.

The gifts of the Spirit are:

- a. The word of wisdom. "Word" here is "logos," which can either be word, doctrine, or utterance, so many render it "utterance of wisdom." This is the ability to give forth the wisdom of God to others. It is not man's wisdom, which Paul calls "foolishness with God," but it is the wisdom of God, especially in Christ, Who has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Himself? It is the "hidden" wisdom which none of the princes of this world knew" (I Corinthians 2:6-7). In Ephesians 1:17 Paul calls it "the spirit of revealed wisdom in the knowledge of him." This is not just stored-up wisdom, to make you smarter than anyone else, nor to make you wise above what is written, but wise in what is written. This gift, and the following one, is seemingly related to the "gift of teaching" (see I Corinthians 1:5).
- b. The word of knowledge. This means "utterance of knowledge." Remember, this is not for personal benefit, though in passing through our hearts it will water the channel route, but it is for the "edification of the body." This is the ability to communicate to others knowledge of the Bible, not some wisdom given miraculously to you so that you

will not need to study any more. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan well says: "God doesn't make up by miraculous intervention what we lack by laziness." The Holy Spirit, however, will so illuminate the Holy Word to your own heart, until it will become a new Book, and you will bless others. These first two gifts seem to coincide with the three offices mentioned in verse 28: "God hath set some in the church, first apostles and secondarily prophets (with the utterance of wisdom) and thirdly, teachers (utterance of knowledge)" (I Corinthians 12:28).

Note, there are three distinct classifications of gifts, as there are fruits. This is plainly taught in the Greek, but is lost sight of in the English. There are two distinct Greek synonyms used for "another." The usage of either one here clearly teaches three types of gifts: some as ministries, some as miraculous effects, and some as the plain charismata of the Holy Spirit. The first two gifts are joined together with the Greek "allos," another of the same kind. This is illustrated by Christ's usage: "I will send another ("allos") Comforter" - Same in kind. But with verse 9 the Greek word for another is changed to "heteros," which means diverse, another of a different kind (compare Galatians 6:7). For the force of the two words for "another," see Trench's *Synonyms*.

c. The gift of faith (Greek, "heteros," different in kind from the former two). This is not "saving faith," as all saints have to have that to be saved, nor is the ordinary disposition of a faith, since we are all enjoined to "walk by faith," and God condemns us for not having that kind of faith, which is a simple believing of the Word of God. Nor is this the "fruit of the Spirit" of faith, since the fruits belong in common to all Spirit-filled saints, and faith is the natural attitude of the heart of all Spirit-filled saints, as Galatians 2:20 states: "The life which I now live. I live by the faith of the Son of God." The Spirit-filled saint will constantly have the very same disposition of faith as was in Christ, since Christ is now living His life out through them.

It must be a special gift, since it is listed here among the supernatural charismata of the Holy Spirit, and since it is for "the profit of all," and since it is listed in this same category with the other "public gifts." It is certain that it is a greater faith in degree than ordinary faith. It must be similar to what most saints have found out; when the Spirit breeds a firm conviction in the soul, that the answer is on the way when we "pray through." It is among the miracle gifts, so must be miraculous faith, maybe like George Mueller had. It is a faith which goes beyond mere reliance, or simple trust, but unwaveringly, implicitly, completely, irrevocably, against hope, believes in hope, staggers not at the promises of God; but since it is Spirit-born, and Spirit-given, it will go to death in faith (Hebrews 11).

d. The gifts of healing (to another, "allos"). This is more than the ordinary course enjoined by James; i.e., "the calling for the elders of the church." It is more than the simple trust of the believer, asking God

for help in time of physical infirmity and trial. It is public, miraculous laying-on of hands in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, on the part of the gifted individual, and miraculous effects are wrought, as in Mark 16:17-18.

e. The working of miracles (to another, "allos"). "Working" here is the same as verse 6, "operations." or "energies." or "miraculous effects," so this gift is that of miraculous effects produced by the Holy Spirit in the accompaniment of His Word, to impress their minds with the truth of the utterance. This is other than healings, such as the smiting of Elymas with blindness, the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, healing of Paul on Melita. etc. This is illustrated by the accompanying signs in the great revivals, such as Charles Finney's. (Note that these are in the same list as prophecy.)

f. Prophecy (to another, "allos"). Chapter 14 explains this gift: 14:3 - "He that prophesieth speaketh unto man, to edification (building up) and exhortation (the swaying of the wills of action and warning) and comfort (consolation)." This is not just the foretelling of the future, as we mostly think, but the ability, under the special gift of the Spirit, to so present the Word of God to men, as to have them feel it as not the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the very Word of God. It is God speaking directly through the speaker. See I Corinthians 14:24-25. It is the immediate control of the speaker by the Spirit (I Corinthians 2:1).

g. Discernment of spirits (to another, "allos"). Here the usage of "allos" plainly shows that it is the discernment of the Spirit speaking in the prophets (literally, "discrimination of spirits"; i.e., in the prophet who is speaking, as I John 4:1: "Try the spirits."), as Paul in Acts 13:9-10. So the regulation in I Corinthians 14:29: "Let the prophets speak, and let the others judge"; i.e., if they have the gift of prophecy. See I Thessalonians 5:20-21. See the urgent necessity for this gift in the midst of the miraculous gifts, of healing. etc., to be sure it is from God, and not the arch-deceiver, who "transforms himself into an angel of light." Remember, the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. This gift would put a lot of quacks out of business today.

h. Kinds (diversities) of tongues (to another, "heteros") and interpretation (translation) of tongues (to another, "allos"). We shall consider these two together, since they are "allos" gifts, belonging to the same kind, but both of them are "hetro" (i.e., diverse) from the others. There can be no doubt that they were distinct gifts in the early church and much misused in the church at Corinth, as in many churches today. The most carnal church then sought the most occult gifts, and ran riot with them, calling forth Paul's correction in chapter 14 of I Corinthians.

Note: In order to keep our material together, we wish to name the other two gifts listed here in chapter 12, making eleven in all here, and the other four distinct gifts in chapter 12 of Romans. (It would seem as though the Holy Spirit has not confined Himself to only these gifts, but

as sovereign Giver may give any gift He sees the church may need at any time He desires.)

i. Helps (I Corinthians 12:28). This means literally, "Those who seize hold and support." as Paul calls Peter and James "pillars," the special gift of support. They are the members of a local group who are specially gifted to take the lead and help.

j. Governments (I Corinthians 12:28). R.V., "wise counsels": lit., "steerings, or those who hold the helm and guide." This is the gift of administration to rule the church, identical to Romans 12:8: "He that ruleth." The elders must have had it, as I Timothy 3:4-5, since he was to rule the church. In Romans 12, we must add four more to this list of special gifts of the Spirit. Note verses 3-6 as following the transformed, renewed saint.

k. Ministry (verse 7) or serving. It is the word for deacon. So the deacons in Acts 6 must be "men full of the Holy Ghost" and other gifts.

l. Exhortation (verse 8). It seems to be the special gift of evangelists in particular and was one of the gifts Barnabas (son of consolation) had. It is the special gift of the Holy Spirit to sway the wills of the hearers to action (Ephesians 4:11).

m. Giving (verse 8). "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity (singleness of heart, disinterestedness, or impartiality of purpose)." God gives money to some in the church as a gift of God, to be used not as belonging to one's self, but unto God. They shall give an account to Him some day, even as all we who have any gift of the Spirit shall do.

n. Sympathizing (verse 8). For so is the Greek: "He that sheweth mercy with cheerfulness" - the gift of sympathizing.

And here to all, keep in your own sphere or gift or allotment of faith; be not puffed up, but humble in your gifts, and discharge all for the benefit of the whole body of Christ. Now, in I Corinthians 12:29-30, Paul is very emphatic in his declaration. All do not have the same gift, and all do not speak with tongues, in spite of the tongues folks' statement that all must to be filled, "but to earnestly desire the best gift, but rather that ye prophecy" (14:1). The rule of Greek grammar is, if it starts with "me," it has to be negative, "all do not have the gift of healing; all do not speak with tongues." It is not for all, so is not an infallible evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Now to define the two gifts of tongues and their interpretation, and then the regulation of them in Chapter 14, contrasted with prophecy. There is the common, accepted definitions of tongues found almost universally among those who wish to oppose the excesses of the modern tongues movements. I held to it at one time, until a further study of I Corinthians 14 showed me the absolute untenability of the position. It is the idea, "Tongues is the ability to speak in a foreign language, and on the day of Pentecost, the 16 languages represented there were the gift of tongues." This definition will

not fit I Corinthians 14 in any point at all; it will not fit Acts 2 of Pentecost, nor will it in any wise explain the "gift of interpretation."

Let us start with the last of these four arguments against the theory that tongues is the "ability to speak in an earthly foreign language."

- a. Under this theory, there is no possible explanation of the "gift of interpretation." Why should the Holy Spirit inspire or en gift one to speak in a foreign language in the church, where there was no one who could understand it, then have to en gift another to interpret it? Why not give it with the gift of prophecy, all at once, and needing no translation? Why give it in a foreign language and then have to interpret it back into English? Certainly none there understood it, or needed no special gift of interpretation, since he could interpret it. So, if there was no one there of that language, it is foolish to give it in that language in the first place; but if, there were, then it needs no interpretation. There is no explanation of "the gift of interpretation" under this theory.
- b. How is this theory true, under the circumstances of only speaking it to yourselves and to God in chapter 14 (1 Corinthians 14:2-28)?
- c. How can this theory fit into Acts, where tongues is mentioned again and again? In Acts 2, it is described as "When this noise was heard," literally. In no single instance was it talking to man at all, or preaching to others, but the soul's complete occupation with God and His praise. Why then in a foreign tongue? It was never used to preach or talk to others. Paul is very emphatic here, "He that speaketh in a tongue (glosson) speaketh not unto man, but unto God" (I Corinthians 14:2).
- d. It will be the whole argument from the exegesis of I Corinthians 14 that closes our whole treatise on these two gifts. That theory just won't fit into I Corinthians 14. Try putting it in everywhere tongues occurs.

We might present a fifth argument against the theory that tongues is the ability to miraculously speak in an earthly tongue. Why hasn't God ever given it to missionaries? What a boon it would be and a saving of years of painstaking study and wasted opportunities! I have never heard, however, of any missionary who ever had it and never had to learn the language through years of study and many times never really learning the real idiom of the people. The only serious argument ever advanced in proof of the theory, is the 16 languages there that day in Acts 2, when "every man heard in his own dialect the wonderful works of God." This is not the same as the "diverse tongues" of Acts 2:4. It was another miracle, and probably was the gift of "interpretation."

Now, what is the gift of tongues? There is a slight hint from the word used -"glosson." Though the word is used for tongue by metonymy, for speech, and different peoples by languages, it is primarily used of this

supernatural gift of the Spirit, in several ways: "new tongues" as a sign (Mark 16:17); "other tongues" (Acts 2:4); "kinds of tongues" (I Corinthians 12:10-28); "tongues of angels" (I Corinthians 13:1); "a tongue" (I Corinthians 14). The idea is inherent in the most of these, another language never being learned, but supernaturally imparted of the Holy Spirit, which no man on earth understands without the gift of interpretation (I Corinthians 14:2). This word "glosson" is the Greek word from which we get our word "glossary," meaning "a dictionary of obsolete words and phrases," while the common word for languages is "dialekton," dialect. In I Corinthians 13:1 Paul defines "tongues" as "speak with the tongues of angels." In Zephaniah 3:9 God says: "I will restore to the earth a pure language." Evidently earth used to have one, and I think "tongues" was that language. It was taken away at the confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel.

In I Corinthians 14:2 it is not speaking to man at all, but to God, and "no man understandeth him, in the pneuma, he speaketh mysteries." And verse 14: "The spirit is built up, but the understanding is unfruitful"; i.e., of the one using it. In Acts 2:11: If interpretation, it is "the wonderful works of God." In Acts 10:46 it is described as "magnifying God." In I Corinthians 14:14-16: It is "blessing and giving of thanks" in the Spirit.

Now with all the foregoing in view, let us arrive at the sum of what the gift of tongues is. There are three elements involved:

- a. The subject is taken completely out of himself "into the Spirit" or "ecstasy," called "glossolalic ecstasy," which the early Church Fathers, such as Tertullian, called "supernatural prayer," so Paul, as he had the seeing ecstasy in II Corinthians 12: "Whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell." In Acts 2: "These men are drunk." and in I Corinthians 14:23: "say you are mad."
- b. The soul is in abeyance as controlling the being, and the new pneuma created of the Holy Spirit is elevated into control directly by God. The mind is unfruitful and doesn't understand, nor does any man.
- c. The subject of the "supernatural prayer" is elevated, exalted, in supernatural, adoring praise to God. Instead of the Holy Spirit only helping our infirmities in prayer, by inward groanings "which cannot be uttered," He uses our pneumas and tongues to utter them directly to God. Here is the need of an interpreter in the church. He says naught of interpreting at home, since it is not for the psyche (soul) at all, but the pneuma (spirit). The understanding is suspended while the spirit is in rapport with the Holy Spirit and His communication. In this ecstatic state, the Holy Spirit impelled the tongue to pour forth the inner praise in the "gift of tongues."

With this short definition in mind, let us study together I Corinthians 14. The definition of the gift of tongues and interpretations of tongues and

the comparison of tongues with prophecy, with the decided inferiority of tongues to prophecy, is because of the very nature of the two gifts. Of course, in spite of all Paul's warnings and regulations, many will seek the lesser gift of tongues because of its occultness, its physical blessings, and make shipwreck as far as obtaining the greater gifts which build up the church of Christ.

### Outline of I Corinthians 14:1-6

Verses 1:6: The transcendency of the gift of prophecy over the gift of tongues because tongues as a personal gift only edifies the speaker, while prophecy edifies the whole church. The only exception is where there is interpretation. Then, and only then, is it approximating prophecy.

- a. Prophecy is greater than tongues, since tongues is spoken directly to God, and "no man understandeth him" (verse 2), not even the speaker but all understand prophecy (verse 24).
- b. In the Spirit he speaketh mysteries, while the prophesier speaks with the understanding to illuminate the minds of men (verse 2).
- c. Prophecy is greater since it edifies (builds up) men. Edify is the key to the chapter (verses 3 and 4).
- d. Prophecy is greater since it gives exhortation (warnings, pleadings, etc., vs. 3).
- e. Prophecy is greater because it gives comfort (verse 3).
- f. Prophecy is greater since Paul twice says he would rather that they prophesied (verses 1, 5). He didn't say, "I would rather ye spoke with tongues," but he wished they would speak thus to show the workings of the Spirit at least in them, so five words are better than 10,000; of which does he think the most, and he had both?
- g. Prophecy is greater, for he says: "Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues" (unless there is interpretation: then the understanding is benefited. but it is benefited most by prophecy: and five words to 10,000 is a pretty good ratio).
- h. Prophecy is the greater since it comes with revelation and knowledge (verse 6) and doctrine. It brings the Word of God, "that ye might grow thereby." Note: the tongues folks hastily add, "If interpretation is as good as prophecy." Oh no, it isn't! Paul says. "Five words in a known tongue in the congregation are as good as 10,000 in an unknown tongue." He says nothing of interpretation there, for three reasons:
  - 1.) What is the use of a tongue which is unintelligible having to be interpreted, when it could have been in English all along and not waste time?

2.) Tongues is not preaching or teaching others at all; it is only talking to God in mysteries, so it is not exposition of the Word, as prophecy is.

3.) I have never heard an interpretation yet, showing anything unusual or marvelous. There is too much lost in interpretation, evidently, since others are not in the ecstasy.

Verses 7-13: The transcendency of the gift of prophecy over tongues because of the unintelligible nature of the sound (Phonos) of tongues

- a. Like tongues, a flute or harp, except it observe the intervals and qualities of the notes, is a hopeless, unintelligible garble of sounds. Conybeare: "Who shall understand their music?" It's like a kid banging on a piano. That is no way to run a service, "clanging brass and tinkling cymbal" (I Corinthians 13:1).
- b. Like tongues, if a trumpet gives an uncertain sound who is warned? Where is the exhortation? There may be profound mysteries in the Spirit, but where is the edification?
- c. Tongues is speaking into the air (verse 9), since it is unintelligible, empty of edification. He shows the unprofitableness of tongues as unintelligible, so where is edification?
- d. Tongues make each a foreigner (barbarian) to each other (verse 11).
- e. Since they were zealous of gifts, Paul says: "Seek the ones that edify: that is prophecy, but if you have to have tongues, be sure to seek interpretation, since it is worthless to the church without it" (verses 12-13).

Verse 14-17: The transcendency of prophecy over tongues because prophecy makes the understanding fruitful

These verses go far to define tongues.

- a. If I pray in a tongue, the spirit prayeth, but the understanding is unfruitful. There is no increase in one's knowledge of the Word of God. Note: glossai is praying in the spirit, the new nature. It is singing in the spirit. Rotherham: "Striking the strings of the heart." It is blessing (praising) with the spirit. It is giving of thanks. "Thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified" (verse 17).
- b. The unlearned (the one filling the place of the private one, the uninitiated, the ungifted one, the one taking no part, not the ignorant one) can't say "Amen," since he doesn't know what you are saying. He is unedified and unblessed. How can this compare with the gift of prophecy, the exposition of the Word of God?

Verses 18-26: The transcendency of the gift of prophecy to tongues in the church, since prophecy is the sign to the believer and tongues to the blasphemous unbeliever

Tongues is a condemnatory sign to the unbeliever. This is a very important portion, much misunderstood and wrongly quoted by the tongues folks as a proof of their premise. They use it to try and prove that tongues is the infallible sign, or evidence, that you have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. The very opposite is the truth, as we shall see.

- a. The utter superiority of prophecy to tongues is emphatically stated without any equation at all. In verse 18 Paul is contrasting private tongues with public prophecy. The Greek demands this kind of translation: "I am glad that I speak in private in tongues more than ye all, but in the congregation, I would rather speak five words with my understanding that my voice may teach others, than 10,000 words in the gift of tongues." That settles it on the transcendency of prophecy to tongues.
- b. Further it is childish to seek the gift of tongues rather than prophecy. Furthermore, you can bear him witness to that as you see folks today feverishly seeking it, verse 20: "Don't be childish in understanding, but be mature."
- c. The transcendency of prophecy over tongues is further seen in the two kinds of signs they are. Prophecy is a saving sign to the believer, both of his experience and doctrine (the truthfulness of them). Tongues, however, is a condemnatory sign to the unbeliever, leaving him in his sins. Note: Here we need an accurate translation of this important text. We shall give Conybeare's, as it is nearest the Greek text: "I offer thanksgiving to God in private" (as the next verse and verse 28 prove) "speaking in tongues more than any of you" (this is to show Paul knew firsthand what he was talking about) "yet in the congregation, I would rather speak live words with my understanding so as to instruct others than 10,000 words in a tongue. Brethren, be not children in understanding, but in malice be children, and in understanding be men" (grow up about this tongues business, since it will never build you up into men). It is written in the law (Isaiah 28:11), "With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people, and yet for all that they will not hear me, saith the Lord." (This is Paul's free rendering of the Septuagint.) Rotherham renders, it: "With a jabbering lip and an alien tongue will I speak to this people," so the gift of tongues is a sign given rather to unbelievers than to believers: whereas the gift of prophecy belongs to the believers (as a sign). "When

therefore the whole congregation is assembled (opposite to being in private) if all those that speak in tongues and, if any who take no part in your ministrations or who are unbelievers should enter your assembly, will they not say that you are mad? If all exercise the gift of prophecy, then if any man who is an unbeliever who takes no part in your ministrations should enter the place of meeting he is convicted in conscience by every speaker, he feels himself judged by all and the secret depths of his heart are laid open: and so he will fall upon his face and worship God and report that God is in you of truth.

This absolutely throws out forever the idea that tongues is an initial sign or evidence that you are filled or baptized with the Holy Spirit. It is not a sign to the believer at all, Paul says; and don't let anyone ever tell you so again. As a sign, it is for the unbeliever, and Paul's quotation from Isaiah 28:11 fixes the whole. It was a condemnatory sign to the unbelieving Jews of Christ's day. They had rejected the testimony of God's own Son, and crucified Him: therefore, God would not honor them by having supernatural communication given them in their own tongue, but an alien tongue and jabbering lip. (See Christ's usage of the same idea in Matthew 13: 14-15, and Paul, in Acts 28:26, 27.) On the day of Pentecost there were two kinds of Jews present. To the ones who "crucified the Lord of glory," who had "blasphemed the Holy Spirit," the only sign was to be "jabbering lips and alien tongue." In Acts 2:4 the word is "heteroglosson," and in I Corinthians 14:21, "cheilesin hetro." Altogether different and other lips will God use to speak to this people, but, there were "devout men out of every nation." They heard "the wonderful works of God, every man in the tongue wherein he was born."

Turn with me to Acts 2 and you will meet these two kinds of Jews - the one superciliously saying, "These men are drunk"; the other, "hearing the wonderful works of God." This feast brought strangers to Jerusalem from all over the known world. In verse 14 you have both addressed by Peter: "Ye men of Judea and all ye that dwell (sojourn) in Jerusalem." Note then that tongues and prophecy are both signs, but neither of His fullness. Tongues are definitely not a sign of His fullness, not to the saved at all, that he is full, but to the unbeliever of those days to show the rejection of God (Isaiah 28:11). Prophecy is the real sign to the saved; as he hears the Word, and as prophecy is exercised by any in his presence; he finds the witness inside to the truthfulness of both the promises of God and the fulfillment of them in himself. Prophecy, as the greatest of the gifts, leads the uninitiated and the unbeliever, to be convicted, judged, examined, and converted, and to bear record that the truth is in you; this tongues

can never do." "Earnestly covet the best gift," "earnestly covet the best gift II Corinthians 12:31).

Verses 26-33: The regulation of both the gifts of prophecy and tongues and still showing the transcendency of prophecy over tongues

Conybeare: "What follows then, brethren?" Verse 26 is the conclusion of the whole matter. It seems to intimate that Paul knew that these Corinthians would still seek tongues and would need many regulations. They loved the occult, etc.

- a. No matter what kind of gift or material you bring to the assembly, bring it with the idea only. "Let all things be done unto edifying" (v. 26).
- b. If they must have tongues in spite of all he has said, "Limit the number of them (so more time is given to prophesiers). Let not more than two or at the most three" (v. 27). That is the limit; remember that - not a whole church full, at the altar, all shouting in tongues at once.
- c. God is the author of order, not confusion, "so one at a time, in order, or turn" v. 27).
- d. Let the interpreter interpret again in order. (v. 27).
- e. If there is no interpreter, "Keep silence in the church" (v. 28). Good advice in any age.
- f. Let him speak to himself and "to God" (v. 28). Here we see two things. This is not any uncontrollable wildfire. You fear, as from the devil, any of that so-called emptying of all thought, etc., and coming under some unregulated spiritual influence. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (v. 32). There is not a spiritual or mental vacuum. It further shows that tongues do not necessarily have to be audible or loud - like some who beat their heads against the floor and walls and scream to the top of their voices and do all kinds of silly and indecent things.
- g. Let the prophets speak in order (v. 29).
- h. Let the people judge or discern the spirit in the prophet (v. 29).
- i. Let everything be done decently (becomingly in appearance) and in order (arrangement). God is not the author of confusion, but of peace (v. 40).
- j. As before, Paul says, "Covet prophecy and forbid not to speak in tongues" (v. 39).

The fourth, and most important result of the Spirit's fullness, is the enthronement of Christ in the believer's life. It is the most important, for it is the purpose of all the rest. His fullness is not given to bless you, though He will do that; He is not given in fullness to thrill you, though He puts the thrill into Christianity; He is not given in

fullness unto you to exalt you, though some day He will do that at the rapture, "in due time." If He is not to speak of Himself, He certainly will not exalt you. No, His fullness is not for personal aggrandizement at all, but to exalt Christ in your life. As Christ came to reveal the Father, so the Holy Spirit came that He might reveal Christ and magnify Him.

Let us look at a few texts which show this great result: John 16:12-15; Ephesians 1:17-19; Ephesians 3:16-17; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 1:21. The Spirit-filled life is the Christ-filled life, the Christ-enthroned life. The fruits emanating will not be ours, but the true Vine's, in Whom we abide. Paul says, in Romans 13:14: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." If you do not have a real compelling, all-consuming love for Jesus Christ, if your life doesn't radiate the Lord Jesus Christ, you are not filled with the Spirit. I care not how many varieties of tongues in which you may have spoken, nor how loud your profession. When the Holy Spirit fills, He brings the full life of Christ within, self is crucified, and Christ is enthroned and made real unto you as never before. As He strengthens with might the inner man, there is an inner revelation of the length and breadth, depth, and height and the love of Christ's, passing knowledge. This is the supremacy and centrality of our Lord Jesus Christ, "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence" (Colossians 1:18, the absolute coming first in and over all things).

#### IV. Paul's Distinctive Doctrine of the Believer's Freedom or Liberty in Christ

Paul alone elaborates on the law of Christian liberty in Christ, and in truth, as one reads Acts, we see that he is the only one who could. James mentions "the perfect law of liberty," but doesn't identify it; he seems to have in mind the same thing Peter did in Acts 15:10, the removal of the yoke of bondage of the Law of Moses. Under grace, we have the perfect law of liberty. He doesn't have in mind Paul's great truth of Christian liberty: the utter freedom of the believer as being in Christ "married to another," free from all carnal commandments and ordinances of men, yea, free from all duty as a command; free from slavish observance of ordinances, ceremonies, ritualisms, keeping of days, abstinence from certain meats, touch not, and handle not, even fishy Fridays and meatless Tuesdays and Lenten fasts. There continually arise new sects, interpreters of the law, and self-appointed cataloguers of what we can and can't do who would put the believer back under the "yoke of bondage." How we need to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free!"

In this same relation, Paul states in Galatians 5:9: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Just a little bondage, a little ordinancing, a little prescribing and in no time at all the "yoke" is fastened tight. Then read 5:13: "For brethren we have been called to liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion (Conybeare. vantage ground) for the flesh, but by love serve one another." This is a good text for the whole doctrine here:

- A. Our calling - liberty, not bondage; grace, not law;
- B. Do not abuse this liberty - by using it as an excuse to gratify the flesh instead of mortifying it.
- C. Love is the real fulfilling of the law and keeps us from harming our weak brother with our liberty, and gives loving compliance with Christ's will instead of slavish servitude.

Keep it ever before you: you are not under any law principle, contained in any long lists of prohibitions and commandments of do's and don'ts. Such a yoke galls and takes all spontaneity out of our love and service for Christ. It is the "heir differing naught from the servant." There are too many saints who have never grasped Paul's great doctrine of Christian liberty in Christ, that one is "not better by eating nor worse for not eating" (I Corinthians 8:8); nor that "meat commendeth us not unto God," nor fish on Friday, nor any other physical observance, without the "worship and service of God in the Spirit" (John 4:23; Philippians 3:3). "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink" (Romans 14:17), and "bodily exercise profiteth but a little (Greek, hardly at all)" (I Timothy 4:8; John 6:63).

The primary portions where Paul teaches these great truths are Colossians 2:14-23: I Corinthians 8:1-13; I Corinthians 10:23-33; I Corinthians 6:12, 13; Galatians 4:9, 10; 5:1-14; and most important of all, Romans 14. We shall use this latter text for a basis and the other texts for comparison. Here in Romans 14 Paul runs the whole gamut: the spiritual versus the weak brother, eating or not eating of meats, Sabbath observance, judging of the brother's actions, unclean and clean things, the happy saint who condemneth not himself in the things allowed, and the obligation of the strong to the weak brother. Look carefully here at the one whom Paul calls "weak brother." We can but outline the subject here and have a brief exposition of Romans 14.

- A. Verse 1: Receive the weak brother (that is, the strong are to), and don't reject him because of his doubtful reasoning. Don't refuse him fellowship in the assembly (that would certainly extinguish the little weak life he has). Take him in spite of his weakness and doubtings about prohibitions (lit., don't harshly judge his doubtful thoughts).
- B. This occasions the whole chapter on the "doubtful reasoning of the brother who is weak in the faith," with the obligations of the stronger brother toward him, with the faith of the strong brother, to eat or not to eat (verses 2-3). The strong brother "believeth that he may eat all things." The weak eats herbs. Verse 14: "I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus Christ that there is nothing unclean in itself." The only place in the Gospels where Christ so taught, and Paul must have it in mind, is Mark 7: 15: "There is nothing" (Rotherham shows that "nothing" in the Greek here is emphatic, so all-inclusive and absolute) "from without a man that entering into him defileth him." It is from within outward that the defilement comes. So I Corinthians 6:13: "Meats for the belly and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them," and verse 12: "All things are lawful for me even if not beneficial," and I Corinthians 8:8: "Meat commendeth us not unto God, for neither if we eat are we better: neither if we eat not are we the worse." This has to do with drinking also. So Romans 14:17: "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink (externals), but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Today wine would be in that category. Some think one will go to hell if one drinks an ounce of wine. "Nothing that goeth into a man defileth him." As Paul says, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess." In this same relation, the near East folks and those in the Bible drank wine, as do those in France; in Germany, beer; Scotsmen, "spirits"; the American is horrified. In I Corinthians

8:8 we read: "believes that he may eat all things 'especially' meat offered to idols, knowing an idol is naught."

Then you have the weak brother, who thinks it is a sin to eat meat on Tuesday, or pork, or meats offered to idols, or drink wine in the communion service, or have lamb stew, or coffee, or coca-cola, so he eats herbs. He is a vegetarian since he is afraid to eat anything else for fear of sinning, forgetting that God fed "flesh and bread" to Elijah twice a day (I Kings 17:6). This weak brother is "grieved" (pained, offended) in his conscience by the strong brother's liberty, since he has never seen it himself. He is bound slavishly to ordinances: "touch not, handle not." Remember, it is the weak brother that is bound, that eateth herbs; the strong brother is "persuaded of Christ that nothing is unclean of itself." The weak brother "esteems it unclean, and to him it is unclean."

C. On the question of liberty, we are not to despise (set at naught the herb eaters) or judge one another (The weak brother condemning the eater.) Note carefully here in Romans 14, it is the weak brother who does most of the judging, the condemning, for he thinks the strong brother is sinning, and, according to his own conscience, he is. So verses 4-13. We are not to judge another man's domestic servant (so is the Greek). You wouldn't go into his house and begin to berate his household servants, so "to his own master he standeth or falleth, and he is able to make him to stand." (Thank God. God knows even what to do with an herb-eater, and herbivorous brother, or weak brother, to safely get him into heaven). We shall "all appear before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account unto God." In verse 13 the only judgment allowed is self-judgment: "not to cast a baited trip stick in the brother's path to cause him to fall."

(D) The keeping of a day. This is the other great bondage and restriction put upon the child of God today, aided and abetted by the modern Scribes and Pharisees and lawyers, the Seventh-Day Adventists, and their unsettling advocacy of Saturday. Many consciences are defiled thereby. It ranks with the question of eating and drinking among the "weak in faith." Millions upon millions of saints are keeping a Jewish Sabbath on Sunday and are so taught by their pastors. You can see it by the fact that they even call Sunday, "This beautiful Sabbath day." It is not. They think it is a converted Jewish Sabbath and the fulfillment of the fourth commandment of Exodus 20. It is not. I want chapter and verse for the changeover, from the seventh to the first day of the week. There is not a single commandment in the New Testament after Pentecost to keep a day and especially according to the law of Moses.

Note carefully here in Romans 14:5-6, that Paul here emphatically teaches utter indifference as to whether to observe a day or not. As in I Corinthians 2:16 he says: "Let no man judge you (sit in judgment over you) in respect of feast days (holy days), new moons or Sabbaths (weekly Sabbaths)." These were only the shadow of things to come, "but the body is Christ." In verse 5 Paul leaves it to the individual's own decision and choice, according to his own persuasion he has from the Lord: "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day (leave out the lame "alike"). Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Is that the way the Lord commanded Israel on the Sabbath? If Sunday were the converted Sabbath and binding as an holy day with obligation to keep it, would Paul have left it up to the individual's persuasion, choice, and conscience?

It is true that God has graciously separated and hallowed the first day of the week in memory of Christ's resurrection, by the early observance of the disciples, not by duty or restraint, or constraint, or commandment, but by their weekly communion "in memory"

(Acts 20:7-8) and their systematic setting aside of their gifts to God on that day (I Corinthians 16:2); thus they set us an example, and the church has well-nigh universally followed it ever since. But it is by no commandment, remember; we are not to "esteem" the day by rigid prescriptions or slavish duties, but in loving worship and service. (See Psalm 118:22-24: "the day the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it."; Acts 4:10-11 shows that this day is the resurrection day of Christ, the first day of the week.) The strong saint has no one holy day a week: "He esteemeth every day." As a temple of the Holy Spirit, every day is a holy day to him. The Lord's Day is not holier, but a day for worship and communion with the fellow saints.

E. The strong brother is the happy saint, since his conscience condemns him not in eating and drinking, or day observance (verses 22-23), but the weak brother is condemned if he eats, for he esteems it sinful, so verse 14: "And to him it is sin," and verse 23: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and "He that makes a distinction is condemned if he eat." (See I Corinthians 8:7-10.) The weak brother is continually offended in two ways: first, by seeing the strong brother "sin" as he calls it, in drinking coffee; and then secondly, by his own "transgressions" when he eats doubting, or "breaks the Sabbath day," like having to take a trip on Sunday.

F. The restrictions placed upon our liberty are because of two things: first, the weak brother; and secondly, our own flesh.

1. The self-imposed restrictions to crucify the flesh (I Corinthians 10:23: 6:12: and Galatians 5:13), not expedient (beneficial); not brought under the power of any (enslaved by any as habits): nor as "advantage-ground for the flesh." Since my liberty would let me drink wine, shall I be a drunkard? Since my liberty doesn't forbid meats, shall I be a glutton? Since my liberty doesn't impose a day upon me, shall I not observe any? Since my liberty imposes no tithe upon me, shall I rob God of all? There is a vast difference between liberty and license; between being free from law and an outlaw; between liberty and the libertine.

2. The second self-imposed restriction upon our liberty is lest our liberty cause a weak brother, for whom Christ died, to stumble and fall and perish. Wouldn't that be wonderful liberty - one that would send a soul to hell? See verses 13-21 of Romans 14:

- a. Our liberty as a baited trap to trip the weak brother
  - b. He is grieved
  - c. He is destroyed
  - d. Your good is blasphemed;
  - e. It is evil to eat with offence, to cause to stumble. Read verses 21-22 carefully, as well as 15:1. Now read I Corinthians 8:9-13; 10:23: "All things do not edify," even though lawful. Then note again I Corinthians 8:13 as the standard: "Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend (cast a stumbling block in my brother's path), I will eat no meat while the world standeth, etc."
3. The third restriction (I Corinthians 10:31: "Eat and drink to the glory of God.") (But note the happy saint in verse 22 - strong and uncondemned by himself.) The Holy Spirit will regulate your life.

4. The fourth restriction, "Use not your liberty for an occasion in the flesh," an opportunity for the flesh life to usurp the Spirit of Christ within you.

Before taking the last of our great unique Pauline doctrines, we wish to note here some others we have not had time to consider. These are for your future private study. There are a great number of other great Pauline truths which time forbids us to enlarge upon in this course, such as:

A. God's great judicial pronouncement of universal guilt of the world before God and shutting up of the whole world under sin, so that salvation is by faith in Christ alone. This was to rescind all previous conditional covenants and to shut up the whole world by divine decree of judgment, so that the righteousness of God should be revealed by faith in Christ alone. Both the Jew under Law and the Gentile without the Law, "are all under sin" (lit., "locked up under sin" as in a prison; Moule says, "being brought under sin"). See Rom. 11:32, literally: "God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that He might have mercy upon all." Galatians 3:22 (the conclusion there is the same: "shut up all things under sin"). This is to make salvation to come to the individual only by faith in Christ (so Acts 4:12).

B. The great doctrine of reconciliation, linked with the doctrine of propitiation. God is rendered propitious by the death of His Son, to reconcile us unto God. Propitiation is looking Godward from Calvary; reconciliation is looking man ward. The curse of a broken law and an outraged holiness of God stood in the way of a holy God's mercy toward us and of our reconciliation to Him. God can be now both "Just while justifying the ungodly." In propitiation, all hindrance on His part, of His holiness and justice, is removed by the death of His Son, and on our part all obstacles to reconciliation are removed. I Corinthians 5:19: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." Now "God hath committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation" (II Corinthians 5:18, 19). See Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:20; Romans 5:10-11. Our message to lost men and women is not for them to plead with God to be merciful, or propitious; He is already, for Christ's sake and His sacrifice, but "Be ye reconciled unto God for Christ's sake."

C. The distinctive Pauline doctrine of our adoption as sons, which he alone propounds. This is not our becoming children of God by legal adoption. We are made or constituted the sons of God by the new birth, "born of the Spirit." It is the Roman custom of declaring the son's majority. At legal age the son was brought to the public forum, the *textus preteritus* was removed, and the *textus virilis* put on him (the child's coat removed and the man's coat put on him). The father invested him with all his name and honor, possessing his name with all its meaning, his heir. Such awaits us in the morning. See Galatians 4:1-7; Romans 8:14-17 (the time when we "shall be glorified together" with Him).

D. Paul alone tells us where our departed loved ones are after death. He places Paradise (the place of the departed saved dead now) in the third heavens (II Corinthians 12:1-5), and as where Christ is: "absent from the body, present with the Lord" (II Corinthians 5:6; cf. Philippians 1:23: "To depart and be with Christ"). Without these portions we would not know where they are (I Thessalonians 4:13: "Those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him when he comes.")

E. Paul alone explains the underlying principles of Christian giving, as this "grace" also (cf. I Corinthians 16:1-2; II Corinthians 8:1-15; II Corinthians 9:1-15):

1. Give cheerfully (II Corinthians 9:5-7; 8:1-2).
2. Give systematically (I Corinthians 16:2).
3. Give personally and universally ("every one of you" - I Corinthians 16:2).
4. Give proportionately ("as God hath prospered you" - I Corinthians 16:2; cf. II Corinthians 8:12-15).

F. Paul explains church polity, pastoral theology (how to behave in the church of God - I Timothy 3:15) and the various offices and qualifications of the officers (I and II Timothy, Titus, etc.).

G. The relation of marriage to the gospel (as I Corinthians 7 and Hebrews 13:4).

H. The relationship of women to the church, their true place in relation to teaching and usurping the authority of the man (I Timothy 2:9-15), and also their submission to the husband; this also when they prophesy, as in I Corinthians 11:2-16, in those days shown by the veiled head in the presence of men in the congregation. In I Corinthians 14:34-36, they wrote not to make the church a scene of confusion by their gift of tongues or their asking of public questions, interrupting the doctrinal discussions. Paul alone shows why women are called also "sons of God," in Galatians 3:28, as on equality in the gospel with men, since "there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

I. Paul alone explains the nature of the unpardonable sin, in Hebrews 6:4-8 and Hebrews 10:26-30. This is very important, since Christ distinctly said that the unpardonable sin can be committed in this age of grace: "No forgiveness in this age (the age of Law) or the age to come (grace)" (Matthew 12:32). Without these two portions in Hebrews, the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit would be a great enigma, since, in the Gospels, Christ doesn't go into any explanation of it, only the condemnation of those who committed it.

J. Paul explains the details of the Christian's obligation to civil authority and the duties of home life in relation to the gospel (Romans 13: Titus 3:1: I Timothy 2:1-3, etc.). Peter, writing to Paul's converts, gives somewhat the same language as Paul (I Peter 2: 12-17) as Peter says four times "that it is to put them in remembrance"; "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance" as II Peter 1:12, and adds, "though you know them." They had heard them from Paul.

K. Paul alone defines real Christian love as "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5:5) and not our human love (I Corinthians 13).

L. He alone defines for us both the definition and illustration of what faith is in Hebrews 11: "Now faith is the substance (assurance, basis, and satisfaction) of things hoped for, the evidence (proving, conviction) of things not seen." (Substance, "hypocatastasis," equals title-deed.)

More could be given, on the walk and warfare of the believer, his high or heavenly calling, etc. I Corinthians 3:24, "And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" making all things ours.

## V. Paul's Distinctive Doctrine of the Eschatology of the Church

As our last consideration in Pauline Theology, we wish to look into Paul's doctrine of church eschatology. It is of more than passing interest to note why Paul is silent about so many great Israelite and Gentile prophecies. As the revelator to the church, he is not concerned with the great prophecies of Gentile power, nor of Israel's future (except where the question of Israel's relationship to the gospel dispensation is in view - Romans 9-11). He is silent about the Antichrist (except where the Antichrist stands in relation to the church as coming after the church is gone - II Thessalonians 2:1-9). He is silent about the great tribulation, the millennium, the day of the Lord, and all its attending signs and events. This is marked as John's great book, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," which is silent about the church from chapter 4 through chapter 19, but abounds in Israelite references.

Paul comprises the eschatology of the church in his fourth great mystery for the believer, the Mystery of the Rapture (I Corinthians 15:51). We wish to head up all of our discussion of his eschatology for the church under three headings: The Rapture of the Saints; The Judgment Seat of Christ; and The Nature of our Resurrected, New Spiritual Bodies.

### A. The Rapture of the Church, the Body and Bride of Christ:

Again we wish to emphasize the great truth of our opening syllogism, that "Paul is the great revelator to the church, and that only unto Paul was committed a complete system of church revelation." Only unto Paul was committed the great distinctive features of the rapture, such as: not all the saints would fall asleep in Christ, but a vast throng would be alive when He comes and would never die: that there would be a great outgathering of the saints from the rest of the world; that the dead in Christ would arise first; that we would be raptured (caught out away) to meet the Lord in the air before the "revelation of the man of sin." Paul uses care to show that this truth is a part of the direct revelation he had received, as I Thessalonians 4:15: "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord" (Berkeley, "We tell you this on the Lord's own saying;" i.e., His personal, direct revelation to Paul: cf. Galatians 1:11-12).

Also, by two forceful methods in I Corinthians 15:51: First, by the use of the word "behold" (Thayer says: "When at the beginning of a sentence, it is the utterance of one who wishes that something should not be neglected, or the bringing forth of something new and unexpected"); secondly, by his usage of the word "mystery" - "I show you a mystery" (the sacred secret revealed only to the initiated), something never before revealed, a new truth: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be transformed." The rapture as a rapture was only revealed to Paul. You may hastily say, "What of John 14:1-4?" There was made by Christ before He left the wonderful, sweet truth which has kept our longing, loving hearts full of hope; but without Paul's two portions dealing with the rapture, there would be no knowledge of the secret meeting in the air, a catching away, and the resurrection of the dead in Christ.

God never revealed to His great seer of the New Testament, John the apostle, the distinctive features of the rapture (as far as any of his writings show). John is the New Testament prophet. He it was who stood on Patmos' lonely shores and saw the long aeons of the church stretching out through seven periods: the last great throes of the tribulation period; the golden age of the millennium, with Satan bound: and the last things of eternity.

God reserved for His apostle to the Gentiles, the secret, or mystery, of the rapture in the air. Neither did Peter see it (nor at least God didn't permit him to write any of it). Like every other writer of the New Testament, Peter mentions the personal return of Christ and some obligation or attitude of ours concerning it. But, where are the distinctive features? Read carefully II Peter 3 and see if you find there the distinguishing features of the rapture, which really comprise the mystery of it. What Peter sees is the same subject of all Old Testament prophecy, beginning with Enoch - Christ coming in flaming fire, the changing of the groaning creation by the recopying of the earth, using heat, the great day of God Almighty. Where are the distinctive features of a secret outgathering of His own, into the air, unto Himself before the coming wrath? Take I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and I Corinthians 15:51 out of the New Testament and how much more than the Old Testament do you really know of the rapture?

Here is one of the prime mistakes of the post-tribulationary rapture folks in building a doctrine of the church going through the tribulation, on the book of Revelation, instead of Paul's epistles. Such a doctrine should be built upon Paul, if it is true, but he teaches the opposite in II Thessalonians 2:1-9. Let us then note briefly the glorious facets of the mystery of our coming rapture, as revealed only by Paul.

1. The primary revelation of the mystery in I Corinthians 15:51 is that "We shall not all sleep (die), but we shall all be changed," (with the instantaneousness of it, in a moment. lit., in an atom of time: this is the only time the word atom is in the Bible, and it means the smallest divisible portion of time) "in the twinkling of an eye." There will be saints living when Christ comes for His own who shall never taste of death, but they must also be transformed even as the dead, the living to put on immortality, the dead to put on incorruption.
2. Add to this the detail in I Thessalonians 4:13-18: the sleeping saints are over in the third heaven with Christ - "Those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him when he comes," and they arise first.
3. After that, then comes the startling crowning revelation of the mystery which gives us our name for this meeting, "rapture," the catching away of the saved "into the air." Christ doesn't come to earth at all in this aspect of His return, but we are caught up (as by force) to meet Him in the air, with those who sleep in Christ. Paul calls this, in II Thessalonians 2:1, "our gathering together unto him" ("gathering," "episynagoges," is used only here and in Hebrews 10:25: the prefix "epi" equals complete, "sun" equals together, and "agoges" equals assembly). This is against any partial rapture: it is a complete gathering together of all His own in the air. So Paul says: "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord." What glory here; yea, what comfort (verse 18), not the burning heat, nor the flaming fire, withering sword, crushing rod, but the loving Bridegroom coming personally, "the Lord himself," for His very own loved bride, to catch her away into the air "out of the coming wrath," before He pours out His full cup of wrath upon "the earth-dwellers." This is the rapture.

## B. The Judgment Seat of Christ:

The judgment seat of Christ, the judgment of the believer's works, shall take place immediately after the rapture; this we shall prove as we progress. Paul is the only apostle who reveals this important future event; that needs reiterating in these days of laxity, hypocritical living, and lackadaisical service. Saints seem to think God's service unimportant, to be carried on only if it doesn't inconvenience them, or if they have the time to spare. There is a tendency to give Him the leftovers of our money and to regard lightly the strivings of the Holy Spirit as He entreats us to holiness of life. We blithely sing, "Jesus paid it all," which is true as to the purchasing of our salvation, but the saints seem to imply it means our godliness of life and money as well, so that we do not have to live the life or give at all of our efforts or money. How we need the burning light of that day, when "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ," focused upon us!

Paul says: "That ye might be sincere and without offence until the day of Christ" (sincere has the idea of "judged in the sunlight," transparent from the habit of the ancients of taking cloth out into the sunlight and holding it up to the light to let it shine through it to check the quality). All our lives and service need to be done in the blazing light of that day when we shall stand shorn of all pretense, sham, and covering, with the piercing light of the One "with eyes as of a flame of fire" exposing our every thought, act, yea, our whole lives. Twice Paul repeats the warning: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (II Corinthians 5:10 and Romans 14:10) and again. "Every man's works shall be tried by fire." His "all" here does not include sinners in this judgment, but every saint; his "we" includes Paul himself. There will be no sinners at this judgment, and we shall see why. It takes place after the rapture, in heaven. No unbeliever will be in the rapture.

There are four specific references by Paul to this judgment seat of Christ. Twice, where he names it such; each is linked with some specific reference to a warning or exhortation concerning it. However, there are numerous other references to the "day of Christ" and "that day," which clearly refer to the same judgment seat of Christ. A careful study of each of these will be rewarding to the Bible student. To illustrate - Philippians 1:10: "Sincere and without offence till the day of Christ," and Philippians 2:16, the day of Christ as the time when Paul expected to be rewarded: "Rejoice in the day of Christ." In Philippians 1:6 he looks to the day of Christ as the consummation of His, performing in us of His good work. I Corinthians 1:7-9: "Confirmed unto the end, that ye may be blameless in that day of our Lord Jesus Christ." (John intimates that some will be ashamed before Him at His coming - I John 2:28.) Then note the several times Paul uses "in that day," or "the day," II Timothy 1:12, II Thessalonians 1:10, II Timothy 4:8, I Corinthians 4:5, Ephesians 4:30, etc.

Now note the four references to this judgment seat of Christ. There is a judgment awaiting the child of God. Peter says: "Judgment must begin at the house of God" (I Peter 4:17). It is not for sin; that is answered in Christ's death: "Who shall lay any charge to God's elect, it is God that justifieth," but for works and reward. There is no doubt, it is the results of allowing sin to remain in our lives that will "rob us of our prize," i.e. we ourselves must deal in judgment with the old man, the body of sin in us, the Adamic nature (Galatians 5:17) which wars with the new man. From these four texts, we may determine the time, the character, the method (the basis of it), the features, and the exhortations concerning this judgment of the saints (Romans 14:10-12; I Corinthians 3:10-15; I

Corinthians 4:5; II Corinthians 5:9-11). All believers are in the race, but all do not win the prize; only if "by the Spirit you put to death the old man." The primary text is in II Corinthians 5:9-11, where the outline is given. We shall use it and compare the others with it.

1. The Time Element: When does the judgment seat of Christ occur? The context of II Corinthians 5:9-11 gives the time element. Verses 1-8 show that it is when we shall receive our new bodies, and Paul is clear as to when we get those (I Corinthians 15:51-52). Also in I Corinthians 4:5 he sets the time: "Judge nothing before the time until the Lord come. Then he will bring to light," etc. In I Corinthians 3:13: "The day shall declare it." This is evidently "the day of Christ," since that is when Paul expected to receive his reward (Philippians 2:6). The very illustration from which Paul borrows his "judgment seat," the raised "betamos," tells us the time. See I Corinthians 9:24-27 and Hebrews 12:1-4. There is the strenuous training for the race, then the actual contest, running lawfully according to the rules, all for a corruptible crown of bay or laurel leaves "that fadeth away;" but we run for an incorruptible crown. After the race is over, the contestants are all gathered before the "betamos," seat, to get their rewards. What a vivid metaphor this is! Paul is saying, after the race of this life is over for the saints, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." What loss some shall suffer in that day, as the "day declares it," for shabby running, indifferent living, wasted opportunities, poor service! Many will be robbed of their prize; others will get the "victor's prize." The time is right after the rapture to be with Christ.

2. The Method of Judging: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (II Corinthians 5:9). The Greek word here for "appear" is "phanerothenai," and signifies to make something manifest which was before hidden, as it really is. Conybeare: "Be made manifest without disguise." Bengal paraphrases it: "Stand revealed in our true character before the judgment seat." Berkeley's version reads: "Be shown as we are." Twentieth Century New Testament states: "For at the bar of Christ we must all appear in our true characters." For the Holy Spirit's own commentary on the word, see how John uses it, in I John 3:3: "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Here the meaning of "appear" is explained; no longer with the veil of flesh obscuring His deity, as when on earth, but as He really is in truth.

There will be no disguise then, no sham, hypocrisy, no hiding. Note, in I Corinthians 4:5, we have the same idea, and Paul uses the same Greek word: "Judge nothing before the time until the Lord come (the time again), who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest (the same word) the counsels of the heart, and then every man shall have praise of God" (counsels equals "purposes" and "shall receive due praise of God"). In I Corinthians 3:13-15, we have the same word again and method of judgment, with the addition, "by fire." "Every man's works shall be made manifest, and the fire shall try every man's works what sort it is." Fire burns away the dross, that the gold may remain. In I Corinthians 4:5, it is the secret motives manifested for all to see; here in I Corinthians 3:13-15, it is the results, or works, manifested.

3. The Bases of Judgment: Our works, "the things done in the body, whether good or bad, what sort they are." II Corinthians 5:10-11: "That everyone may receive the things done in his body" (Greek here is "to receive to himself in his own hands his just due"), as Matthew 25: 27. Romans 14:12: "Every one of us shall give account of himself unto God." I Corinthians 3:9-15 enlarges beautifully on the "hypocatastasis" of our building upon Christ. It shows the kinds of material, or works, which receive the reward - hay, wood, and stubble, which won't stand the fire test; precious stones, silver, and gold, which do. Only those works built upon Christ, for His glory, abide.

4. The Results of the Judgment: Rewards. I Corinthians 4:5: "Due praise of God." II Corinthians 5:10: "Receive the things done in the body." Compare Ephesians 6:8; Colossians 3:25 - the very same things, proportionate rewards. So Galatians 6:7-8: "Sowing to the Spirit or to the flesh." There must be a definite relationship between what we sow and what we reap. I Corinthians 3: 14-15 is the most graphic to show the loss in that day, the same: "If any man's work abide which he hath built he shall receive a reward." Who can estimate it? "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, but his life shall be saved; yet so as by fire." Who can estimate the loss? What excuse shall one give in that day?

5. Paul's Exhortation Attached to Each:

- a. II Corinthians 5:8-11: "We endeavor, are ambitious, that whether present in the body, or absent, we may be accepted by him" (Greek, "acceptable and well-pleasing").
- b. Romans 14:10-12: Judge no man's domestic servant: leave that to God, for our accounting is of ourselves unto God, since we must all appear.
- c. I Corinthians 4:5: Do not judge another's motives, since you are not capable; He will do that when He comes.
- d. I Corinthians 3:9-15: What, how, and with what material will you build for eternity - for fire shall try and the day declare and make manifest our works, and eternal loss or gain is at stake?

### C. The New, Spiritual Body We Shall Have at the Rapture

John tells us in a striking sentence that "We shall be like him" (I John 3:2), but it is Paul who tells us wherein that likeness lies, and, in the same portions, tells us the answer to many objections to that resurrection. He pierces as much as possible the "darkening veil between" us and death to tell us "what we shall be." Our salvation is not as yet complete. Its purchase is complete - the complete price has been paid on Calvary - but there still awaits "the redemption of the purchased possession" (Ephesians 1:14) - called in Ephesians 4:30, "The day of redemption," and in Hebrews 9:28. In Romans 8:21-23, Paul shows that all of creation is in bondage, groaningly awaiting "the redemption of our bodies." And in II Corinthians 5:1-6 he shows we also groan, awaiting our new bodies; in Philippians 3:21, he shows what power will be used to "transform these bodies of our humiliation like unto the body of his glory," literally. It is the "same powers whereby he is able also to subdue all things unto himself."

Our prime text we shall use is I Corinthians 15:35-50. Here is the sunrise chapter. Here we are in eternity, on the other side of the rapture and transformation, with bodies like to

the "body of his glory." Here is the clearest light in all the Scriptures on the resurrection. There were two prime objections raised by the scoffers, and still held by them today, against the resurrection of the body - like the Sadducees of old to whom Christ said: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God." Verse 35 gives these so-called objections: "How are the dead raised?" and "With what bodies do they come?" They see the decay and dissolution of these temples of clay: sometimes the remains are scattered to the four winds. Some are cremated and the ashes strewn over the seven seas. Some are eaten by sharks and their remains lie on the bottom of the ocean. Some have lost a leg in France, an eye in England, and an appendix in Miami, Florida. Does God have to gather up every atom that ever went to make up this body of mine, element for element, the very same? He could, but does He have to, to have a real, literal bodily resurrection? (I do not have the same body now I had a year ago.) Paul answers, No! Paul reveals, here in I Corinthians 15, that the primary error lies in not distinguishing between the bodies we now have, as gross, opaque, humiliating, limited, corruptible, and soulishly controlled, and the bodies we shall have in the resurrection. Most folks think so, only more so, just some additions or reconditioning. In verse 36 Paul says that is the reasoning of a fool, who "is ignorant of the power of God," as Christ said. The new body we shall have is altogether different in kind, as we shall see: "Thou sowest not the body that shall be," and then he lists a long list of differences.

Paul considers it the reasonings of a fool, to think God is limited in His ability to make bodies, so that He must give us the same kind of material, earthly body of "flesh and blood," needing food to replenish, and oxygen for fuel, and sleep to rebuild. All of this body is a badge of our present incomplete state and limits us, called by Paul "bodies of our humiliation" (R.V. Philippians 3:21). Paul uses three ways to answer the two objections raised by scoffers:

1. By illustration - the sown seed given a different body (35-38)

This is one of Paul's rare illustrations drawn from nature. Most of his illustrations are from architecture or life, such as marriage, athletics, or warfare. The scoffers had asked, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Paul says. "Fool. If it doesn't die it won't live again; there must be death to have life." There must be disorganization before there can be organization, as you see from the seed you plant in the ground. If the seed just remains a seed, it ends there; but if it is planted and dies, it brings forth fruit and new life (John 12:24). So the body in death is like the seed; the seed as it dies, ceases to be a seed in disorganization, and forms the basis for a new body. Death is never annihilation, but disorganization and preparation for new organization. Paul says, "A man is a fool to think that this death is annihilation the end of it all; and disorganization, instead of being an argument against the resurrection is an argument for it." The objector will probably answer, "But the seed remains in the same place; it germinates with the seed life remaining in it, transmitted to the new body, but the human body may be scattered over the earth, its food elements taken by new plant life, and eaten by a cow, and man eats the cow, and it is organized into another person. The plant germ experiences no interruption or removal, but the human is interrupted by aeons and distances, etc."

Who knows where the soulish germ life resides in the human body, animating it, making it alive? Certainly, the soulish life itself, which is eternal, cannot be confused with the organic life which animates each cell. If they amputate a finger from my hand, I haven't lost a part of my soul. There is a continuity and completeness of my ego so long as life itself lasts in the body, as observable to us even. Though the soul animates the whole body evidently and lives through it, who can localize it? There seem to be three centers of life in man (especially the redeemed man). He is linked with three worlds. There is a vegetable life he has in common with creation, "of the earth, earthy," but there is a soulish life, comprised of soul and spirit, wherein he has conscious life self-ward and toward the world of men."No man knoweth the things of man save the spirit of man which is in him." and he has a new "pneuma" or spirit created within him, "born of the Spirit and therefore spirit," with which he can see God. To say that this soulish life is synonymous with the organic or vegetable life of the cells, is to fall into the error of all the Sadducees and annihilationists (when the body dies, the soul dies also).

As the seed of the flower can fall into the ground and gather from it the materials to reconstruct the parent flower from which it came, unto untold generations, so Paul by these illustrations is showing that there is an identity between the body we sow into the ground and the resurrected body, but he doesn't tell us wherein the identity lies. Look at this illustration: In what sense is the great oak the same as the tiny acorn? Certainly not in shape or appearance, nor is it the same in substance. There is no identity of substance, atom for atom. Yet it is the same organic life; it is an oak all the way. It is sown in one body - not the body it shall be - and it is raised another body. Yet it has the same principles of life; it is an oak.

To draw a comparable illustration from modern science, our living bodies, scientists tell us, change every seven years, or some say every 30 days. Every cell in it is different. The old cells die and are replaced by absolutely new ones, so that this body is absolutely new from the one we had a month ago. Every atom in it is changed, yet it still is our body, with, as for me, the same Bragg life animating it. Wherein lays the sameness? Every atom is different. The identity is certainly not in the substance or even in appearance as we advance with age. Yet, organically, it is the same body, since the same spirit of life animates it. In the resurrection, atom for atom, there need be no identity of substance for a real bodily resurrection, though God could certainly resurrect every atom, but it isn't necessary, nor is it revealed that He shall. Paul is illustrating here that it is the same body, yet different; different, yet the same. No wonder Paul calls a man a fool to disbelieve in the resurrection just because he cannot understand the nature of it.

Paul goes a little further with his illustration. The body you sow is not the body you get when it germinates. You put in the bare seed, with no resemblance to the body of the stalk and leaves it shall become. "But God giveth it a body as it pleaseth him" - not some unforeseen body, an accidental one unfitted for any eternal purpose, so, as God hath pleased, shall be the body we have. You cannot know from observation the kind of a body the seed shall have - only by past experience. Looking at the seed gives no indication unless you have planted one

before and seen it grow. You cannot, by looking at the mundane body we lay in the dirt, possibly tell the body it shall be, as pleasing to God. He knows ahead of time the kind of body it shall be. There are but two exceptions. We know from the body Christ had and what Paul reveals here. The first gives an illustration of our resurrection; the other, the doctrine of it. "We shall be like unto him, for we shall see him as he is."

## 2. By application - differences even in earthly bodies (39-40)

Paul further applies his illustration to the differences in bodies here on earth: "All flesh is not the same flesh" (a verse rather hard on the Catholics who won't eat meat because it is flesh on Friday and Lent, yet will eat fish. But Paul calls fish meat or flesh. To say that fish isn't flesh because it isn't cow, is like saying a dill pickle isn't a vegetable because it isn't a tomato). God has fitted different animals here with different bodies and different kinds of flesh to fit their environments; fish in the water, birds in the air, and animals on land, but each with a body suited to their environment. By this Paul means that God hadn't exhausted His ability to make bodies. He can make one suited for our celestial life in the New Jerusalem. How different life will be there, both physically, in a city 1,500 miles cubical and in the presence of God and the heavenly hosts. Since God gave me such a wonderfully constructed body for life here on earth, I know He will give me one exactly suited for the new nature and the New Jerusalem.

## 3. By explanation - He delineates on the differences between our present body and the new one we shall get (41-49), the body terrestrial, "earthly" or "soulish" and the body celestial, "heavenly" or "spiritual".

Here Paul goes as far as he can go to explain by contrast what we shall be like in our new bodies. Again Paul shows there can be no limitation upon God's ability to make bodies to suit the tenants and environments. He is the God of infinite variety. Our eternal, glorified, spiritual bodies do not have to be as gross, unwieldy, and materialistic as they are now, limited by walking or conveyance for locomotion, breathing for energy, eating for replenishing, etc. "There is a body terrestrial and there is a body celestial." God, who can make a body from a germ 25-millionths of an inch across, and for an hippopotamus of 5,000 lbs. in weight, and a body to live under water, in the air, and on the earth, can make a body for me suited for the glory awaiting me. "As we have borne the image of the earthly, so we shall bear the image of the heavenly."

- a. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." It is of vast interest that he didn't say, "buried," but "sown." If we bury wheat, we never expect to see it again, but if we plant it, we do sow in hope of a harvest of the same. Loved ones are sown, not buried. It is sown in corruption, a decaying, dying body, subject to disease, death, and dissolution, a "body of humiliation;" but

it is raised a new incorruptible body, imperishable, undying, "eternal in the heavens."

b. "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory." The dead body we put into the ground is now bereft of the short glory it did have in verse 40: "There is a glory of the terrestrial." Whatever of attractiveness, wonderfulness of construction, and utility, beauty, and honor it might have had is now gone completely; but it is raised in glory. The same glory which illuminated the resurrected body of our Lord shall be in our new bodies: "A body like unto the body of his glory."

c. "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power." There is nothing as weak and powerless as a corpse, or, for that matter, as these earthly bodies in which we now live; (a little germ one cannot see can lay it low). When one contemplates the forces of nature, what is our strength, physically speaking; but it is raised by the same power of the Holy Spirit which raised Christ from the dead. There is the promise of the ending of so many limitations which now fence in our new natures, limitations of body to space and time; limitations of mind to "think as a child;" limitations of spirit because of our present soulish control of our bodies. Someday the chained new creation shall be free to express itself fully in the glorified, powerful, spiritual body.

d. He sums it all up: "It is sown a natural (animal) body; it is raised a spiritual body." As far as our bodies are concerned, they are the same as an animal - flesh and bones, subject to the same five primary functions of life: birth, assimilation, excretion, reproduction, and death; and subject to the same limitations of environment, adapted only to live on this earth. The new body will be a "pneumatikos soma," a spiritual body, fitted for the celestial life in the New Jerusalem, with the new "pneuma" or nature as the life principle of it instead of the soulish life. Blood will not be the life, but "pneuma," so Paul says here: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Corinthians 15:50).

For illustration, we shall have the new body Christ had after His resurrection, since "we shall be like him." It will be a glorious, powerful, complete, unfettered, effortless, incorruptible, a special body fitted for our eternal life we have in the "new creation." But Paul is careful to guard against any misunderstanding here, that this body will not be a will-o-the-wisp ghost. It will be just as real and literal as the body I now have. "There is a natural and there is spiritual body." One is as real as the other. This is not the "astral bodies" of the spiritualists, which are no bodies at all, nor the mind-body of Christian Scientists, as Christ said: "Spirit hath not flesh and bone as ye see me have and He ate broiled fish to prove it.

Thus ends our course in Pauline Theology. I believe we have established our syllogism. Paul is the unique revelator to the church. He taught the complete system of church truth. Only unto Paul was committed a complete revelation of church truth. Therefore, we must go to Paul to build our church doctrine. Remember, he said: "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any

other gospel unto you than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema" (Galatians 1:9). So he said, "I am what I am by the grace of God: and his grace which he bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was in me" (I Corinthians 15:10).

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## About the Author



Ervane C. Bragg, born in Jacksonville, Florida on July 6, 1912, was raised in, what was then, a rural area of Miami. He grew up under the influence of Christian parents and the Christian Missionary Alliance Church. He was led to the Lord at the age of six by a godly Sunday school teacher of whom he spoke fondly all his life. At the age of 12, in an old-fashioned tent revival, Ervane felt the call of God upon his life for fulltime Christian service in the ministry. From that time forward, his life was dedicated to following, like Caleb, His Lord wholeheartedly without wavering.

In 1932 Ervane was led by the Lord to a small Bible college in Temple Terrace, Florida. The new school was known as the Florida Fundamental Bible Institute, its first year in existence. Ervane graduated in 1934 as the

first president of the graduating class of the college that would later, through several transitions, become known as Trinity College of Florida. While there he served as part-time pastor in several churches one of which was a mission church in Largo, known as the Gospel Tabernacle of Largo, under W. T. Watson, the founder of Trinity. At that mission church he met and later married the pianist, Pauline Bragg. They had four children, Kenneth, Mary, Donald, and Peggy.

Ervane was ordained under the Christian & Missionary Alliance in 1934 and began his first full-time pastorate at the Daytona Beach Alliance Church. For about ten years, Ervane pastored churches in Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia. In 1943 the Lord led Ervane back to Trinity College, which, at that time, was located in St. Petersburg, where he began his lifelong ministry of teaching Bible college students. During that time, he also began to learn watch and clock repair. Like Paul, Ervane was a "tentmaker," supporting his family by opening and running a jewelry store while continuing his ministry of teaching at Trinity. He also furthered his education by acquiring a B.A. and an M.A. Trinity later granted him an honorary Doctor of Divinity.

Dr. Bragg taught at Trinity for 55 plus years, being the only professor to have actually been on all five campuses of the school. He is also said to have been the longest standing professor of theology anywhere in the United States. He taught subjects ranging from Systematic Theology, Pauline Theology, Prophecy, Christian Apologetics, History of Missions, Christian Psychology, Hermeneutics, Harmony of the Gospels, and Comparative Religions. Dr. Bragg spent hours in the Word of God, was a constant learner from the Lord, and studied his entire life for the ministry to which the Lord had called him. Dr. Bragg served as Vice-President of Trinity College for a number of years and served on the Board of Trustees from 1949 until his death.

Dr. Bragg touched the lives of hundreds of students during his tenure as a professor at Trinity College. Thousands of them are now in fulltime ministry around the world using the knowledge that God gave them through his teaching. He estimated that he taught around 23,000 students during his many years as a professor. Through an endowed scholarship in his name, he continues to impact students at Trinity. He also published articles in well-known Christian magazines, served as interim pastor in churches in the greater Tampa Bay area, taught Bible classes to adults in the evening hours, preached at evangelistic services and youth rallies, spoke on the radio, and preached many different times around the United States in Bible conferences. The Lord greatly used Dr. Bragg for His service for he never wavered from His call to fulltime Christian ministry. The Lord can do great things through a surrendered life like that of Dr. Ervane C. Bragg.