

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST



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INTRODUCTION

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Romans 6:14).

“For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:19-20).

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?”(Romans 6:3).

“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God” (Romans 7:4).

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:27-28).

“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all” (Colossians 3:9-11).

The present volume may properly be considered as volume 3 of “THE ISRAEL OF GOD,” volumes 1 and 2 being “CHRIST IN YOU” and “DELIVERED UNTO SATAN” respectively. It is hoped that the books will be studied in this order in order to properly follow the author’s thoughts and to assure a better understanding of each volume individually as well as the entire presentation.

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CHAPTER I

THE JERUSALEM CHURCH AND THE LAW

The material of this first chapter was given in an earlier volume, yet since the Law will be discussed extensively and has a very significant bearing upon a great number of things, it is deemed wise to give it again here. The epistles of Paul all deal to some extent with the Law, and some of them speak at length on that subject. Practically every book of the New Testament has something to say on the Law question. It should therefore not be difficult for us to acknowledge that the proper understanding of the Law will have immeasurable value in view of a proper understanding of the entire Word of God.

A correct understanding of the Law will be of immeasurable help. An incorrect understanding of the Law will cause exceedingly great damage to a great many precious doctrines of God's Word. In view of this fact it is necessary that we have at least a limited understanding of the condition of the Jerusalem church to which the Holy Spirit first came and from which all other true churches have come.

Despite the fact that the Jerusalem church was the mother of all true churches, the one the Lord organized, the spring-board of the gospel, the center of activity for the first twelve apostles for many years, there were certain practices and teachings in that church that were very troublesome to Paul and a great percentage of his energies were spent fighting them. One time he himself was ensnared in these same things. These things are seen most clearly in the words of Luke in Acts 21:17-26 as follows:

“And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: And

they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore: the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them: Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing: but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for each one of them.”

After studying the books of Galatians and Romans it is hard to conceive of such a thing as this being a reality. In spite of the teachings that the Holy Spirit had given this church throughout her lifetime she stood in this awful condition. One may say, “What is so awful about it?” If we will carefully study what Paul had to say about the Law in Galatians and Romans and all of his letters, and compare it with this passage and the words, “many thousands of Jews there are which believe and they are all Zealous of the law,” the bold inconsistency of this church will be clearly seen.

Jerusalem was the center of Jewish worship and every year many thousands of Jews came there to worship and take part in the feasts. Many of these Jews were saved through the preaching of the Jerusalem church (Acts 2) after which they received at least some teachings from her and went back to their homes in other lands and many times contacted churches that Paul and others had established. They, of course, joined the company of these churches, and carrying the teachings and practices of the Jerusalem church with them they, many times, tried to force such onto the Gentiles and other Jews whom Paul had taught. One who understands

the condition and customs of the Jewish people at that time can easily understand how the example set by the Jerusalem church spread throughout the Roman Empire.

There are other illustrations of the above facts that we should make note of. The first is when Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem after having trouble at Antioch with certain teachers who claimed to be sent from Jerusalem (Acts 15). When Paul and Barnabas arrived at Jerusalem they were received by the church, the apostles, and the elders to whom they related the things that God had done through them, and also the matter of circumcision being forced upon the Gentiles. Then the Scriptures say, "there arose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses" (Acts 15:5). Even when the apostles and elders gathered especially to examine the matter it is said that there was "much disputing," (verse 7). On this occasion Peter made a grand defense in favor of the gospel in the following words: "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe, and God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost even as he did unto us; and putting no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."

The matter appeared to be settled by the apostles, the elders and the whole church, but we soon see otherwise. Let us look at Galatians 2:11-14, where Paul, after referring to the incident just mentioned, continues with the words, "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw

that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, who compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" Acts 10 and 11 should also be closely studied along with the above passages.

Now, let us make note of some very important facts that should be learned from these passages. The reader should not hurry through these notations for they are exceedingly important. Unless these observations are carefully studied, the books of Galatians, Romans and Hebrews particularly, will entertain much confusion, and the teacher of these books is apt to make many blunders.

(1.) In Acts 10 it is shown that Peter did not have full understanding that Christ had completely fulfilled the Law. Had he understood that the Law was fulfilled, he would not have argued with the Lord about eating the things the Lord told him to eat. The Law forbade the eating of certain meats and Peter still believed the Law was binding on such matters. Why should not Peter have been able at this time to teach the same things that Paul taught later about meats? It is certain that the mind of the Spirit was the same both times. The reason is that Peter was not willing to hear the teachings of the Spirit on some things even as he was not willing for the Lord to instruct him concerning His death, burial and resurrection before the time came for such.

(2.) He needed special preparations directly from God before he would consent to go preach the gospel to the Gentiles. Peter should have known that the Gentiles were to be received into the church for the instructions of the Lord were very plain on the matter. For instance, let us recall the words of the commission in which the church was instructed to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, then baptize and teach them (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-48; Acts 1:8). The sermon that Peter preached in Acts 2 when he referred to the words of the prophet Joel that the blessing of the Spirit was to "all flesh," should have taught him that people of all human flesh

(all races) were to be brought into the body of Christ.

(3.) From the two foregoing facts it is necessary for us to understand that Peter was still laboring under the Law. We will see this abundantly in the following enumeration of facts. There are many things that we need to learn of the history of the Jerusalem church and its leaders.

(4.) Acts 10 and 11 further show that the whole church would not have accepted the Gentiles into the church except that God gave to the house of Cornelius the gift of the Holy Spirit as soon as they believed. Peter was still in the front line of the apostles and the church. The apostles and the church were always influenced greatly by Peter and respected him as the foremost of the apostles. It is certain that if Peter did not understand the Law as being done away, the rest of the church almost as one man rested with him in the same ignorance. Observe how the church at Jerusalem (Acts 11) put Peter on the spot when he returned because he mingled with the Gentiles.

(5.) Acts 15:5-7 reveals that a great percentage of the Jerusalem church believed that not only the Jews, after they had believed in Christ, should continue to live according to the Law, but that the Gentiles also, after they had believed in Christ, should be circumcised and commanded to “keep the law of Moses.” From this passage we make note of two facts: (A) A great percentage (evidently, almost everyone) of the Jerusalem church believed that Christ was the true Savior and had trusted him as such, also accepting the teachings of the apostles and the ministry of the Holy Spirit as recorded in the book of Acts up to this time. (B) Although the above is true, they still held that a man must continue under the Law (evidently as Christ and the disciples had been during His personal ministry, yet without the understanding that Christ possessed, which he taught in the sermon on the Mount and many other passages). They believed that one must continue in the Law if a Jew, and must come under the Law if a Gentile, in order to obtain the promises (Romans 4:13-14; Galatians 3:18, etc.).

(6.) Mark carefully two things clearly stated by Peter in verses 8-10 of Acts 15. In the next passage, we will see how Peter flatly contradicted both of these. (A) Peter stated that the gift of the Spirit upon the house of Cornelius was a testimony from God that there was no difference (in the body of Christ) between the Jews and the Gentiles. (B) Peter further stated that neither their fathers nor they themselves were able to keep the Law of Moses and therefore they should not try to force it off onto the Gentiles.

(7.) From Galatians 2:11-14 we see that Peter still had not learned his lesson well, and was easily persuaded by the Law-keeping Jerusalem church to turn from the truth of the gospel. Let us look at the carelessness and inconsistency of Peter. (A) Here he, at first, mingled with the Gentiles as he ought to have done, but when certain came from James in the Jerusalem church, he separated himself. He had testified just before this that such a difference should not be made. (B) From these verses we will learn that Peter still, at times, could yoke himself with the Law, which he had just confessed that he could not bear. (C) Peter was certainly a Law-breaker with his on and off attitude toward the Law.

(8.) It is very evident from these verses in Galatians 2 that the church at Jerusalem was still not accepting the Gentiles on an equal basis. This is very important to remember. These Jews still boasted in the Law and in their ancestry. This is especially what Paul found in the letter to the Romans.

(9.) In Galatians 2:12, Paul says that “certain came from James.” It is clear that James was the leading elder of the Jerusalem church, and that he held strictly to the Law as we shall see in the following observations. The leaders of this church were not teaching the church the truth concerning the Law as they should have been doing.

(10.) Since the apostle Peter, the Jews of the Antioch church, and even Barnabas could be so easily persuaded to embrace the Law and disgrace the Gentile Christians, let us not think that saved people in other Gentile cities would

never do such a thing. One would have to be spiritually blind to argue against this fact. If such a great “dissimulation” as this took place in the very presence of Paul when he was there to stop it, and to the extent that it carried away Peter and Barnabas so soon after the round at Jerusalem, what shall we say concerning its repetition in many other churches when Paul was not there to stop it? Did not Paul say, “All they which are in Asia be turned away from me?” (2 Timothy 1:15).

(11.) In Acts 21:17-26, which gives the arrival of Paul on his last visit to Jerusalem, we find that this whole church is still “zealous of the law.” The condition had not improved in the least but had only gotten worse.

(12.) The matter of the Law was not straightened out on this visit, and from the lack of information in the Scriptures to the contrary, it appears that it was never straightened out in this church. History says that it continued to get worse. Some of this history will be given shortly.

(13.) Acts 21:21-24 reveals that the many thousands in the membership of this church had a very ill attitude toward Paul because he taught that the Law of Moses was done away. The adherents of the law (even those who were saved) were always ready to persecute those who were of the promise. Such is a natural and necessary outgrowth if the adherents of the Law are zealous and consistent in their stand.

(14.) Verses 18-24 of this same chapter tell us that, not only James, but all the elders (pastors) of this church were going right along with the multitude of its membership - advocating the Law. “We have four men which have a vow on them.” The other apostles were not present on this trip. There is very little, if anything, mentioned in the Word connecting the apostles with the Jerusalem church after Acts 15.

(15.) Here we learn that it is not a question as to whether or not it was possible for a person, after he was

saved, to put himself back under the Law, but an unquestionable fact that the whole Jerusalem church, including all its leaders, had either done that very thing, or else they had never come out from under the Law in the first place. The evidence is in favor of the latter. Jesus said the Spirit would come and guide “into all truth” (John 16:15), and we can rest assured such was the desire of the Spirit toward this church. He desired to lead them out from under the Law into the liberty of Christ, and there was Stephen who appeared to have followed that leading of the Spirit, but he was among the very few who made such willing steps. No doubt all the apostles did later. This church had not been ensnared into this thing as a momentary matter. It had been in this condition throughout all of its history. There is a great difference in being ensnared and overcome by a sinful thing only for a short time on the one hand, and being firmly set in the thing on the other.

(16.) From verses 21 and 22 we learn that the Jerusalem church was informed of the teachings and practices of Paul. The language of the verses clearly shows that there had been a great deal of discussion in the membership of the Jerusalem church over the teachings of Paul, and that many of them were very much dissatisfied over the matter. We can rightly conclude that the leaders of the church were better informed than the membership of the church. It would be a sad situation, indeed, for the leaders of a church to be less informed regarding such very explosive matters.

(17.) Observe carefully that these preachers did not give Paul the slightest opportunity to give the explanations and instructions that were so very needful here. They did not even ask if such things were true. This is a very careless and irregular procedure for brethren to follow. It is very clear that they were not even interested in discussing-what they had frequently heard regarding Paul.

(18.) Verses 21-26 prove beyond doubt that the leaders of this church were afraid of having trouble with the members over the matter, therefore they immediately began to work things around so as to pull the wool over the eyes of the members, and also to fix things up so that even Paul

could not say anything on the issue. We need not think that these brethren were acting innocently in this matter. Even the unsaved Jews said that Paul had turned the world up-side-down with his doctrines, and if the world were well informed of the teachings of Paul, we can be absolutely correct by saying that these brethren were even better informed. The brethren of the church had already suffered two humiliating defeats from Paul on the Law question, and we can be sure that they kept an eye on him - that man who had so awfully persecuted their church before he was saved, even though he did not walk personally with the Lord as the twelve did. By ensnaring Paul into this matter, they planned to shut his mouth and free their burdened consciences.

(19.) Thus, they prevailed upon Paul to prove himself to be a Law-keeper that they might glory in his obedience to the customs of the Law. They sought the glory of the flesh rather than the glory of the cross. By establishing in the eyes of the members (and also the unsaved Jews) that Paul was a Law-keeper, they would therefore salve the consciences of the people concerning the fact that he taught the Jews who were among the Gentiles that they should not circumcise their children.

(20.) From verse 25 we see that they still held the Gentiles in contempt. The Gentiles were still considered unequal to the Jews. The Gentile members were less honored than the Jewish members. They had very little understanding of the mystery of the body of Christ where there is neither Jew nor Gentile.

(21.) Paul, in his zeal for his brethren according to the flesh, was ensnared in this thing for which the judgement of God according to the words of the Spirit accomplished nothing by this visit to Jerusalem. We learn two important things from this fact: (A.) Even the greatest of God's servants commit great sins. (B.) God still uses these great servants when their chief purposes of life are to give themselves to Him, and we should be careful how we judge them.

(22.) If Paul, the most enlightened of God's servants; the one who received such a great "abundance of the revelations;" the one whom God chose that in him "first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting;" the one who fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith; the one who wrote the books of Romans, Galatians, and perhaps Hebrews; I say, if Paul could be swallowed up temporarily in a thing like this, who are we to say that the young Christians could not be swallowed up, not only temporarily, but throughout all their lives after they were saved?

(23.) Some may want to say that there was only a sect in the Jerusalem church who were in such a condition that they were not saved in the first place. Let us look carefully into the 21st chapter of Acts and try to find a single individual of that church who stood for the truth. Observe that it was the pastors of this church that prevailed upon Paul to prove himself a Law-keeper.

(24.) The leaders of this church were by no means passive on the issue of the Law. They were not instructing the people that the Law was fulfilled by Christ, and therefore was not binding on the people. Rather, to the contrary, they were teaching that the Law was still binding as much as ever. These preachers were very zealously instructing the people to keep the Law. The members were "zealous of the law," because their leaders were "zealous of the Law."

(25.) They considered themselves as much under the Law as ever before. Please observe: First, they took vows according to the Law. Second, they shaved their heads according to the Law. Third, they observed the cleansing procedures prescribed by the Law. Fourth, they paid expenses to the temple for the cleansing procedures, etc., just as unsaved Jews did. Fifth, they offered animal sacrifices according to the Law. Sixth, they practiced circumcision very rigidly. Seventh, they walked after the customs (all of them) of the Law. They said that those who did not do so had forsaken Moses.

(26.) We might well observe that the church at Jerusalem does not appear to be undergoing any persecutions at this time. It appears that there is not anything said of this church undergoing persecutions from the Sadducees and Pharisees after the conversion of Saul. Herod killed James, the apostle, and put Peter in prison at a later date. This means that what Acts has to say about persecutions of the Jerusalem church were included in the first five years approximately, after the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. It was shortly after this that the “one accord” of the church was broken by “contentions” (Acts 11:2; 15:5-7).

Why did the persecutions decrease and almost completely stop in this church? It certainly was not because the unbelieving Jews had lost any hatred toward the whole truth of the gospel. It did not take them but a few minutes after they learned that Paul was there to turn the whole city into an uproar. Paul gives us the understanding of this matter in the book of Galatians - “And O, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased” (Galatians 5:11). Also, “As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ” (Galatians 6:12). The “offence of the cross” was not present with the Jerusalem church because they preached circumcision and the keeping of the Law.

It appears that the persecutions which came through Saul were so bitter that we do not find others like Stephen boldly speaking against the keeping of the Law. Not only did some of the saved church members refrain from teaching against the Law, and further, to fall back under the works of the Law themselves in order to escape persecutions, but they began to earnestly persuade others wherever they went to be circumcised and keep the Law in order to escape “persecutions for the reproach of Christ” (Galatians 6:12-13). When circumcision was taught, the offence of the cross ceased. Circumcision was taught in order that the teacher of such could glory in the flesh. Paul teaches that at such a time that teacher ceases to glory in the cross (Galatians 6:12-15). How long will the Holy Spirit strive with those who cease

to glory in the flesh? If a person so persists in such a thing till the Spirit is withdrawn, it means that that person has crucified to himself the Son of God. He is the salt that has lost its savor. It is my judgment that this church was very near to the point of rejection as the churches of Ephesus and Laodicea were later (Revelation 2 & 3). The Lord is longsuffering, yet fearful judgment does come (Galatians 5:4).

It appears quite clear that the destructions of the city of Jerusalem, foretold by the Lord in Matthew 24:1-3 and other places, was held back as long as that city had within it those who were considered salt with the savor still in it. As this salt proceeded to lose its savor, the destruction of this city drew nearer; and finally when the Spirit was withdrawn leaving no savor, the prolonged judgment came upon the whole inhabitants. The rebellion of this church and that of the city as well had become full.

At this time I would like to make some lengthy quotations from Edward Gibon's history of "THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE." In volume I, beginning on page 382, he has a chapter entitled, "THE PROGRESS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION—SENTIMENTS, MANNERS, NUMBERS, AND CONDITION OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS." Here he gives some interesting material concerning the Jerusalem church, some of which I want to quote. Please remember this man was a historian, not a theologian.

"The enfranchisement of the church from the bonds of the synagogue was a work, however, of some time and of some difficulty. The Jewish converts, who acknowledge Jesus in the character of the Messiah foretold by their ancient oracles, respected him as a prophetic teacher of virtue and religion; but they obstinately adhered to the ceremonies of their ancestors, and were desirous of imposing them on the Gentiles, who continually augmented the number of believers. These Judaising Christians seem to have argued with some degree of plausibility from the Divine origin of the Mosac law, and from the immutable perfections of its great Author. They affirmed, that, if the Being who is the same through all eternity had designed to abolish those

sacred rites which had served to distinguish his chosen people, the repeal of them would have no less clear and solemn than their first promulgation: that, instead of those frequent declarations which either suppose or assert the perpetuity of the Mosaic religion, it would have been represented as a provisionary scheme intended to last only till the coming of the Messiah, who should instruct mankind in a more perfect mode of faith and of worship: that the Messiah himself, and his disciples who conversed with him on earth, instead of authorizing by their example the most minute observances of the Mosaic law, would have published to the world and abolition of those useless and obsolete ceremonies, without suffering Christianity to remain during so many years obscurely confounded among the sects of the Jewish church. Arguments like these appear to have been used in the defense of the expiring cause of the Mosaic law...

“The history of the church of Jerusalem affords a lively proof of the necessity of those precautions, and of the deep impression which the Jewish religion had made on the minds of its sectaries. The first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem were all circumcised Jews; and the congregation over which they presided united the law of Moses with the doctrine of Christ. It was natural that the primitive tradition of a church which was founded only forty days after the death of Christ, and was governed almost as many years under the immediate inspection of his apostle, should be received as the standard of orthodoxy. The distant churches very frequently appealed to the authority of their venerable Parent, and relieved her distresses by a liberal contribution of alms...

“The Jewish converts, or, as they were afterwards called, the Nazarenes, who had laid the foundations of the church, soon found themselves overwhelmed by the increasing multitudes that formed all the various religions of polytheism enlisted under the banner of Christ: and the Gentiles, who, with the approbation of their apostle, had rejected the intolerable weight of the Mosaic ceremonies, at length refused to their more scrupulous brethren the same toleration which at first they had humbly solicited for their own practice. The ruin of the temple, of the city, and of the public religion of the Jews, was severely felt by the

Nazarenes; as in their manners, though not in their faith, they maintained so intimate a connection with their impious countrymen, whose misfortunes were attributed by the Pagans to the contempt, and more justly ascribed by the Christians to the wrath, of the Supreme Deity. The Nazarenes retired from the ruins of Jerusalem to the little town of Pella beyond the Jordan, where that ancient church languished above sixty years in solitude and obscurity. They still enjoyed the comfort of making frequent and devout visits to the Holy City, and the hope of being one day reenthroned to those seats which both nature and religion taught them to love as well as to revere. But at length, under the reign of Hadrian, the desperate fanaticism of the Jews filled up the measure of their calamities; and the Romans, exasperated by their repeated rebellions, exercised the rights of victory with unusual rigor. The emperor founded, under the name of *Amelia Capitolina*, a new city on Mount Sion, to which he gave the privileges of a colony; and denouncing the severest penalties against any of the Jewish people who should dare to approach its precincts, he fixed a vigilant garrison of a Roman cohort to enforce the execution of his orders. The Nazarenes had only one way left to escape the common proscription, and the force of truth was on this occasion assisted by the influence of temporal advantages. They elected Marcus for their bishop, a prelate of the race of the Gentiles, and most probably a native either of Italy or of some of the Latin provinces. At his persuasion the most considerable part of the congregation renounced the Mosaic law, in the practice of which they had persevered above a century. By this sacrifice of their habits and prejudices they purchased a free admission into the colony of Hadrian, and more firmly cemented their union with the Catholic church...”

“In a few years after the return of the church of Jerusalem, it became a matter of doubt and controversy whether a man who sincerely acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, but who still continued to observe the law of Moses, could possibly hope for salvation. The humane temper of Justin Martyr inclined him to answer in the affirmative; and though he expressed himself with the most guarded diffidence, he ventured to determine in favour of such an imperfect

Christian, if he were content to practice the Mosaic ceremonies without pretending to assert their general use or necessity. But when Justin was pressed to declare the sentiment of the church, he confessed that there were very many among the orthodox Christians who not only excluded their Judaizing brethren from the hope of salvation, but who declined any intercourse with them in the common offices of friendship, hospitality, and social life. The more rigorous opinion prevailed, as it was natural to expect, over the milder; and an eternal bar of separation was fixed between the disciples of Moses and those of Christ..”

In a footnote the following was added: “There were some who were not content with observing the Mosaic law themselves, but enforced the same observance as necessary to salvation upon the heathen converts and refused all social intercourse with them if they did not conform to the law. Justin Martyr himself freely admits those who kept the law themselves to Christian communion, though he acknowledges that some, but not the Church as a whole, thought otherwise.”

(27.) Let us look at James for a moment. This is not James the apostle, for he was killed by Herod many years before this (Acts 12). This James was the half brother of the Lord. It is certain that he was saved (Acts 1:14) and was the leading elder (pastor) of the Jerusalem church. The epistle of James was written by this same man, and from it we learn that he certainly was saved and had great spiritual understanding in some things. He confessed Christ to be what He really is as surely as any of the apostles. Yet from Galatians 2:12 and Acts 21:17-26 it is perfectly clear that he was zealously seeking to keep the law.

(28.) Now, let us sum up some of these things to make certain facts clear. It is certain that most of these people were saved. There is no possible way to argue against this fact. We may say that it was possible that some of them were not saved, but in the very least, the greater percentage of them were saved. We might well ask ourselves why they did not know the truth about the Law. It is certain that the Holy Spirit was greatly desirous to teach them. Here

is where we must acknowledge that the Spirit does not force us to understand the will of God. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned and we must give the consent of our wills before the Spirit will give that spiritual discernment. God created us with the right of choice and He honors that privilege. Of course, the Holy Spirit must bring us to the place where we are able to make a choice, yet if we resist Him anywhere along the way, He will not force us further. God has chosen not to throw us into a right relationship with Himself against our voluntary submission.

It is also possible for us to be willing to be taught by the Spirit, be taught by Him, and then not accept His teaching as truth. That is exactly what Paul did concerning this last trip to Jerusalem (Acts 21:4, 11). The Spirit warned Paul not to go to Jerusalem, but He always did it through the disciples. There were two elements included in the warnings. One was that he should not go to Jerusalem. The other was that if he went he would suffer greatly. Paul believed the latter, but evidently did not believe the former. He evidently thought that it was the Lord's will for him to suffer at Jerusalem, but that the disciples did not want him to suffer therefore they tried to persuade him not to go. Paul then said that he was willing even to die for Christ's sake at Jerusalem. The apostle Peter was found doing similar things many times (Matthew 16:21-25; Acts 10; etc.). It is evident that many of these people were so zealous of the Law that they were not willing to be taught otherwise. This is seen in the fact that the elders had knowledge of Paul's teachings in Asia, yet they did not give him an opportunity to discuss the matter at Jerusalem. It is also true that they were not willing to accept what teaching they had received which concerned the doing away of the Law as a governing force in their lives (Acts 15:10; Galatians 2:11-14; etc.)

CHAPTER II

THE JERUSALEM CHURCH IN THE LIGHT OF GALATIANS

The main thing that necessitated the writing of the book of Galatians was the influence of this Law-keeping Jerusalem church. It should be quite needless to repeat that the influence of this church penetrated all parts of the Roman Empire as far as the gospel traveled. In many respects, this was very necessary. It was necessary to point to the Jerusalem church as the one through which all other true churches had come. The first twelve apostles spent many years in the Jerusalem church. This church was the one that the Lord had Himself instructed while on the earth.

Therefore, for many reasons the Jerusalem church was greatly respected. Most all the early churches had many Jewish members, some of whom would often make trips to their homeland. Also, many Jews of the Jerusalem church made frequent trips from Jerusalem, while others migrated into the regions of the Gentiles where they became members of churches in those areas. Certainly the influence of this church was felt in all the areas included in the epistles of Paul. This is particularly clear in the letter to the Galatians. Therefore, let us observe some of the things that associate the Jerusalem church with the churches of Galatia as given in the epistle to the Galatians.

1. In the beginning of this letter to the Galatians, there are a number of things that are directly associated with the Jerusalem church, all of which are included in the occasion of this letter. The first matter of special significance is that Paul received his apostleship directly from the Lord. This is repeatedly emphasized throughout chapter 1. At least four facts are associated in this matter:

A. Paul was an apostle - "not of men, neither by men." His apostleship was not of human origin. The church at Antioch outwardly separated Paul and Barnabas as apostles (Acts 13), but the true separation was long before this, for Paul said, "But

when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace..." (Galatians 1:15).

B. His apostleship was of divine appointment - "but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father." This was a necessary factor.

C. His apostleship was of a special nature, for when God was pleased "to reveal his Son in" Paul, He sent him into Arabia (into seclusion) for special instructions. These special preparations were very necessary for the gospel's sake. God was very careful to see that Paul did not receive the lopsided gospel of the Jerusalem church.

D. His appointment as an apostle was set in the purpose of God long before he was saved (even before he was born). All these things were stated to establish that his apostleship was not inferior to that of Peter, John and the rest of the twelve. Paul was under no obligation to the first apostles, therefore no man could discredit his gospel by saying that his apostleship was inferior to that of the twelve.

2. Furthermore, Paul argued that he did not receive his gospel through the first apostles, nor the Jerusalem church. Read Galatians 1:15-24 carefully. We may well ask ourselves why the chosen apostles to the Gentiles were not sent out from the Jerusalem church. Since the commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles was originally given to the Jerusalem church and its apostles, it would appear that that church should have been the one to separate men to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles. Why were the apostles to the Gentiles commissioned from first base rather than from home plate? This matter needs very careful consideration.

It is the work of the Spirit to provide unity in the body of Christ, and harmony between all true brethren and churches. Why did the Lord work in such a special way with Paul? Why did Paul use almost all this first chapter

of his letter to the Galatians showing his independence of the Jerusalem church and its apostles? Why was Paul taken down into Arabia and taught personally by the Lord rather than being sent to the first apostles or to some other brethren to receive his gospel? Why did Paul so frequently speak of HIS gospel?

These questions make wonderful understanding when we are able to correctly acknowledge the true condition of the Jerusalem church throughout its history. Had Paul received his gospel through the Jerusalem church and its apostles, he could never have written the blessed and powerful letters that he wrote. He could never have had the assurance, freedom and boldness in the gospel that he had. It was necessary for him to receive his gospel directly from the Lord. Such made it possible for him to withstand Peter to his face in the presence of a large group of brethren at Antioch.

In Galatians chapter 1, Paul made the following facts clear, and we find that all of them are directly associated with the Jerusalem church.

- A. . He received his gospel by revelation from Christ-not through the Jerusalem church or its apostles.
- B. He did not receive it through any man, certainly not through his former Jewish teachers.
- C. After his conversion, he did not confer with flesh and blood, except that he immediately received water baptism and the indwelling Spirit through Ananias (who was a member of the church in Damascus).
- D. He was immediately taken into Arabia where the Lord personally taught him the mystery of the pure gospel.
- E. It was not for three years after he was saved that he went up to Jerusalem. He had already

received his gospel directly from the Lord and had preached for some time at Damascus.

F. He spent only fifteen days in Jerusalem and saw only Peter of the apostles and James and a few members of the church. This period of time was far too short for him to have been taught much by Peter even if that had been the purpose.

G. He was still unknown by face to the churches of Judea. This further speaks of his independence of the Jerusalem church and the first apostles. He was under no obligation to them in any way concerning his gospel, and furthermore, neither his gospel nor his apostleship was inferior to theirs.

3. In Galatians 2:1-11 Paul spoke of a very important and very bitter battle which he had with the brethren at Jerusalem. This battle had its beginning actually at Antioch in Syria (recorded also in Acts 15). Some of the members of the Jerusalem church had gone down to Antioch and had begun to teach a perverted gospel. Paul and Barnabas were not in the least pleased over the matter and “had no small dissension and disputation with them;” These perverted gospel teachers claimed that they had been “sent” from the Jerusalem church. The church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas and certain others up to Jerusalem to settle the matter for it was very important. This action of the Antioch church was either motivated or confirmed by a revelation from the Lord. Let us look at certain important matters made clear by this collision at Jerusalem.

A. The two leading churches Of the time were associated in this eternally important battle. (1) The Jerusalem church out of which all other' churches had come, but which was setting forth a perverted gospel. (2) The Antioch church out of which the first Gentile churches sprang. This church was setting forth the pure gospel of the Son of God.

B. The trouble had arisen as a result of the

Law-keeping Jerusalem church. This is very clear in Acts 15, and we can see it also in Galatians 2:3-7 “neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.” Furthermore, “they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me.”

C. There was a furious battle that took place. At Antioch there was “no small dissension and disputation.” At Jerusalem there was “much disputing” (Acts 15). In Galatians 2:5, Paul said, “To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” Paul’s language, as well as Luke’s, shows that it was a prolonged dispute.

D. This whole debate was over the matter of the perverted gospel of the Jerusalem church-circumcision and the Law mixed with the pure gospel, particularly in view of the Gentile believers. Many of the leaders of the Jerusalem church said that “it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.”

E. Paul and Barnabas won a glorious victory in favor of the pure gospel. Titus was NOT “compelled to be circumcised,” and those “who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing” to Paul (Galatians 2:3, 6). It was not until there was “much disputing” that Peter cast his lot with Paul and Barnabas and put a stop to the fiery dispute by calling to their minds that incident at Caesarea when God displayed unmistakable proof that the Gentiles were to be received without distinction, and further acknowledged the foolishness of seeking to put the yoke of bondage on the Gentiles which even they nor their fathers could bear.

F. The whole Jerusalem church was brought to acknowledge the divine origin of Paul’s gospel -

“But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)” (Galatians 2:7-8).

G. It is made clear that the first apostles were not the staunch advocates of the perverted gospel, yet it is unquestionable (as we shall see in the next few verses) that they were going along with the multitude of the members in the perverted gospel. Though James sided in with Peter and John in favor of Paul’s gospel in this incident, we have learned that his stand for the pure gospel was only for the time Paul was present (see Galatians 2:11-14 and Acts 21:17-26). It cannot be said that the “Judaizers” were all lost people, though no doubt some of them were. It is necessary, however, that we understand that the Lord was successful in leading the first apostles out of this awful condition. After Acts 15 there was nothing further said about the apostles at Jerusalem.

4. In Galatians 2:11-14 Paul spoke of the second round he had with the brethren of the Jerusalem church over the matter of the Law. Paul continued to show the inconsistency of the Jerusalem church and its apostles. Those who were bewitching the Galatians had very evidently come out of the Jerusalem church. To say the least, they were well acquainted with the teachings and practices of that church, and were using such as a weapon against Paul and his gospel. It was therefore necessary for Paul to show his equality with the other apostles, and the superiority of his gospel over that preached and practiced by the Jerusalem church. Paul was not trying to exalt himself by writing of how he withstood Peter and blamed him for a terrible sin. He did such in the defense of the gospel of the Son of God. Peter “was to be blamed,” but he was pressured into the sin by the influence of “certain” who “came from James” in the Jerusalem church. The following observations are significant.

A. The same persons were included in this collision as in the last one. The same two churches were included, only this time the scene was at Antioch.

B. Peter “was to be blamed,” yet if his blame was greater than “James” and the others in the Jerusalem church, it was only because of his position as the leading apostle to the Jews. Peter walked uprightly according to the truth of the gospel till certain “came from James” in the Jerusalem church. At that time he flopped and led a landslide back into the perverted gospel. He separated himself from the Gentile believers as though they were unclean. By this action, he demanded that all the other Jews do the same, which further demanded that the Gentiles must conform to the Law in order to be counted on an equal basis with the Jewish believers. This stirred up fiery indignation in Paul’s heart, for he had a godly jealousy over the pure gospel. Therefore, he withstood Peter to his face in the presence of everyone.

C. Paul was not in the least afraid to show that this great sin of Peter’s had its origin in the Jerusalem church, and especially in James who was one of the ring-leaders among the Law keepers. James was the leading elder of the Jerusalem church. The very presence of these who “came from James” put such a scare into Peter that he led the whole number of the Jews at Antioch, including Barnabas who had also stood firmly for the true gospel till now, into a most horrible disgracing of the Gentile members of the Antioch church. The true and pure gospel was thrown into utter confusion for a time. “They walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel.”

D. It is evident that Barnabas and Peter and no doubt others very humbly received the rebuke of Paul and acknowledged their sin. Paul and

Barnabas are very soon seen together again in the best of spirits (Acts 15:36), and Peter later wrote an epistle in which he commended Paul. Whether or not those who “came from James” received the severe rebuking and acknowledged their sin, we are perhaps not able to fully determine. However, it appears that they returned to “James” quite unhappy about their defeat. To say the least, “James” and the “elders” of the Jerusalem church with the “thousands” of its members continued stedfastly in the perverted gospel.

E. Without even a break, Paul goes into the very important discussions of the great epistle. We may say that all of chapter 1 and almost all of chapter 2 serve as an introduction to the epistle. We must not think that Paul’s discussion this far in the epistle is without relationship to the rest of the epistle. We must not think that these very repeated references to the Jerusalem church and the first apostles were not directly needed to combat the trouble in the Galatian churches.

Those who were subverting the Galatians were using all these things (only perverting them) to bring the Galatians into the bondage of the Law. They were using the Jerusalem church and its apostles to support their contentions. They could easily prove that the Jerusalem church was endeavoring to obey the Law with all its customs. It was very easy to associate the twelve apostles with the Jerusalem church in the same practices. From there they were endeavoring to show that Paul was inferior to the twelve, and therefore his testimony was not as significant as theirs, and actually was not even trustworthy. As a result, Paul went right to the heart of the whole matter for the gospel’s sake. His gospel had been attacked. His apostleship had also been attacked in order to discredit his gospel. He did not seek to exalt himself, but related the whole truth “that the truth of the gospel might continue with” the Galatians and on out from them.

5. The Jerusalem church was not walking “uprightly according to the truth of the gospel” (Galatians 2:14). They were still compelling “the Gentiles to live as do the Jews.” They were not doing this by commandment, but by making a distinction between the Jews who kept the Law and the Gentiles who did not keep the Law, Peter was well aware of the continued practices of the Jerusalem church (even after their first round with Paul), therefore he was very easily persuaded to make this awful discrimination between the Jews and the Gentiles in the very presence of Paul, and so very soon after this matter was supposed to have been settled at Jerusalem.

6. The Jerusalem church was seeking to be justified by a mixture of the works of the Law and the faith of Christ. This is the conclusion that must be drawn from this whole letter to the Galatians. This is very clear from the way Paul proceeded into the matter of justification apart from the works of the Law after so extensively showing the contrast of his gospel with that of the Jerusalem church.

7. The Jerusalem church had persisted in walking according to the Law which meant they were not walking according to “the faith of the Son of God” (Gal, 2:20). One cannot walk according to the Law and according to the faith of Christ at the same time. By receiving one of them we reject the other. This is demanded by both Galatians and Romans. Thus the Galatians were being influenced to turn from the faith of Christ to the works of the Law.

8. The Jerusalem church was frustrating the grace of God by their Law-keeping (Galatians 2:21). Anyone who seeks to walk according to the Law in this age frustrates the grace of God. This was a great grief to Paul, especially as it related to these Galatians for whom he had suffered and labored so much.

9. The Jerusalem church had made a good start in the Spirit, yet by their turning whole-heartedly to the Law, they were rejecting the office and work of the Spirit. This also was the very thing that was being brought into the churches of Galatia (Galatians 3:3).

10. The Jerusalem church was not standing fast in the liberty of Christ, but had entangled themselves again with the yoke of bondage. They had chosen the bondwoman rather than the free woman. They preferred the old covenant rather than the new covenant. Those who stand fast in the liberty of Christ (the body of Christ) will be made joint heirs with Christ in His kingdom. Those who do not stand fast in the liberty of Christ will be servants to the joint-heirs. Again, these Galatians were being influenced to make such a foolish choice (Galatians 5:1).

11. The Jerusalem church was ready to lose all the benefits of the body of Christ. “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing” (Galatians 5:2). How careless it is to overlook the fact that this book deals with our relationship in the body of Christ. Paul is speaking of saved people in the body of Christ (5:9), and the force of the statement is that Christ would profit them nothing in His body relationship, which does not effect their salvation from hell in the least. The whole Jerusalem church practiced circumcision, and vigorously taught that every Jew must do so. What shall we say regarding the Jerusalem church in view of this verse (Galatians 5:2)? God is very longsuffering, yet fearful judgment must come.

We must conclude that the Jerusalem church members were at the very point of being spewed out of the Lord’s mouth (Revelation 3:16). It could very easily be that they had already been so judged, which would give further reason for the Spirit so earnestly pleading with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. Such would also further explain why there was not the slightest mention of the Spirit in relation to Paul’s last visit to Jerusalem (except the warnings for him not to go). Certainly Paul was at the point of sweating blood in behalf of the Galatians.

12. The Jerusalem church members were debtors to do the whole Law, and were under the curse. “For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law” (Galatians 5:3). “For as many as are of the

works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” (Galatians 3:10).

The Jerusalem church was unquestionably striving to keep the Law, and therefore, they were under its curse. The curse of the Law did not mean death in hell. Rather, it meant separation from the special people of God. Within the realm of saved people, there is a special people—a people above the others (Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9, Exodus 19:4-6; Deuteronomy 7:6-10). True Israel is the special people of God. Gentiles are grafted into true Israel by faith; however, those who do not continue in the goodness of God are “cut off” from true Israel (Romans 11:16-22; Matthew 18:15-18; John 15:1-11; etc.).

13. The Jerusalem church members were ready to be severed from their body relationship to Christ. In Galatians 5:4 Paul said that the person who persists in being justified by the Law will be severed from Christ (the body of Christ) The Greek text shows that the one who is severed from Christ was joined to Christ prior to that time. We cannot sever a thing from another thing except that they be joined together in the beginning. A branch that has no union with a vine cannot be severed from that vine. There must be union if there is to be severance.

Again, we see that the Jerusalem church either had already been spewed out of the Lord’s mouth, or else they were at the very border line of that fearful judgement. Such was the inevitable judgment resulting from their determination to perform the works of the Law. The “castaway” (1 Corinthians 9:27) is a man who has been severed from the body of Christ. The salt that has lost its savor (Matthew 15:13; Luke 14:25-35) has been severed from the body of Christ. The branch that is severed from the vine (John 15:1-11) is severed from the body of Christ. The Gentile that is grafted into the stock of Israel “by (the) faith” but is “cut off” (Romans 11:16-22) is severed from the body of Christ. Christ will profit them nothing in His body relationship. In Christ there is neither Jew or Gentile (Ephesians 2:11-19; Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:9-11), but these have become Gentiles (Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 11:16-22; Revelation 21:23-26; 22:2; etc.).

14. The offence of the cross of Christ had ceased in the Jerusalem church. “And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of die cross ceased” (Galatians 5:11). The offence of the cross was not present in the Jerusalem church, for they rigidly taught and practiced circumcision (and all the customs of the Law). There was no stumbling block to the unsaved Jews, therefore no persecutions.

15. The Jerusalem church had traded the glory of the cross of Christ for the glory of the flesh through circumcision. “As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the Law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified into me, and I unto the world” (Galatians 6:12-14). It was impossible to glory in the cross of Christ and also the flesh through circumcision at the same time. When one was chosen, the other was rejected.

16. The Jerusalem church was not being led by the Spirit. “But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law” (Galatians 5:18). The whole book of Galatians teaches that those who seek to walk according to the Law are not led by the Spirit (3:1-5; etc.). In the body of Christ we are made free from the Law. Outside the body of Christ, the Law lays hold on all. We must understand that the Law was given to the special people of God to direct their LIVES. All some brethren can see in the Law is that it was given to direct people in the way of salvation from hell. That was merely the starting point. Shall we say that the Law was of no more benefit to the Jew in the Old Testament after he was saved?

What folly it is to say that the saved Jew could not come under the curse of the Law. The saved Jew could lose his standing in true Israel just as an engrafted Gentile can lose his standing in the same Israel. This is exactly what Paul

meant in Galatians 3:10. When reading the books of the Law we repeatedly read the words “cut off,” “cut off from Israel,” “cut him off,” etc. Even the saved Israelite who did not obey the Law as prescribed was to be “cut off from Israel.” Such warnings have the same application as Romans 11:16-22; Matthew 18:15-18; Galatians 5:4; 1 Corinthians 9:27; Luke 14:25-35; John 15:1-6; etc.

17. The Jerusalem church members were fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. “This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16). This must be associated with 5:18; 3:2-5; etc. We cannot separate the works of the flesh from the works of the Law. Those who seek to do the works of the Law, walk after the flesh. The Law is spiritual and perfect, and it challenges men to be spiritual and perfect. This means that a man must defeat sin. He must conquer his sinful nature. Yet the battle is no more than begun until his evil nature is the victor and leads him away captive.

In this we can see that the man who seeks to keep the Law fulfills “the lust of the flesh.” Therefore, those who persist in the works of the Law shall not inherit the kingdom of God. There is a great difference in inheriting the kingdom and in being saved eternally from hell.

18. The Jerusalem church was ready to lose its body relationship to Christ. It is clear that the Jerusalem church was walking after the flesh and fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. Galatians 5:24 says, “And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” The term “they that are Christ’s,” does not refer to all saved people, but to those in the body of Christ.

Those “within” the body of Christ are the only ones who have the indwelling presence of the Spirit. The brethren who are “without” true local churches are in the power of Satan (1 Corinthians 5:1-13). They do not have the indwelling Spirit, therefore they cannot walk according to the Spirit. They walk according to Satan’s deceitful purposes and deceptive devices. The Jerusalem church had either already suffered the necessary judgment, or was ready to be spewed

out of the Lord's mouth at any moment. Certainly it did suffer such judgment before (or at the time of) the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

CHAPTER III

THE PERVERTED GOSPEL OF THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

It should be clear by now that the gospel of the Jerusalem church was a perverted gospel. This is not to say that it was so in the beginning. It might be well to call to mind that during the earthly ministry of our Lord the Law was still binding upon Israel. Christ had not yet died. He had not yet blotted out the “handwriting of ordinances” by “nailing it to his cross” (Colossians 2:14-17). He had not yet redeemed “them that were under the law” (Galatians 4:1-7). Christ Himself lived in obedience to the Law, however, it was never able to lay hold upon Him for He fulfilled its righteous demands to the jot and tittle. Christ taught His disciples that not one letter of the Law could pass away until it was all fulfilled, yet He pointed them to the cross as the time of its fulfillment (Luke 24:44-48; Matthew 5:17-18; Luke 16:16-17). After the cross He gave them the commission to go into all the world and be His witness of a fulfilled Law and a new economy (Matthew 18:15-18; 28:18-20).

The Law demanded perfection, but man could not measure up to that perfection. The Law then commanded the Law-breaker to rush forth and bring a sacrifice to atone for his sin. That sacrifice spoke of the perfect One who would come, fulfill the demands of the Law, and then receive upon Himself the judgment due to the Law-breakers. Being fulfilled, the Law could no longer lay hold upon those who were redeemed from under it. They were under no obligation whatever to its demands, for they stood within the shelter of the perfect One who had fulfilled all its demands. Christ stood in the place of the condemned Law-breaker, therefore the Law laid hold upon Him and He endured all its wrath. Now those in the body of Christ stand in the place of the perfect Christ, and being there, it is impossible for the Law to lay hold upon them.

Just how much the first apostles understood of these

matters cannot be determined. We can rightly judge that their understanding was very small comparatively. Stephen manifested fairly clear understanding of the matter in Acts 7:53, however, we find Peter still laboring under the customs of the Law in Acts 10:9-18. Throughout the early chapters of Acts it appears that the apostles and the Jerusalem church had no trouble over the customs of the Law. Their hearts were aflame with zeal toward their risen and glorified Lord who was now exalted to the right hand of the Father. They were filled with the new and special presence of the Spirit, through whom they boldly faced all opposition, even having power over the unseen hosts of Satan. They had little thought for the things of the flesh, for they were so full of the Spirit, and were so filled with the testimony of the risen, glorified and exalted Christ, that there was ever a constant agitation between them and the Christ-hating Jews who dominated the temple and the synagogues. With such sore agitation constantly alive, the disciples had little opportunity for the burdensome customs of the Law.

The matter of the Law had almost no opportunity to invade the busy Spirit-filled apostles and the early members of the church. However, since converts were being made by the thousands, the membership of the church very quickly soared to a very great multitude. These new converts were staunch Law-keepers fresh out of Judaism. All their lives they had been rigidly taught the customs of the Law, with warnings of the gravest consequences if they forsook that Law that was given "by the disposition of angels." Their entire lives were built around the Law - it flowed through their lives as blood does through the body. Though these "thousands" of converts fully accepted the testimony of the apostles concerning the promised Messiah - that Christ was truly that long prophesied Messiah, yet they found no occasion for relaxing their obedience to the Law.

The example of Peter in Acts 10:9-19 shows that the apostles were not prepared to instruct these "thousands" regarding the Law being done away. As a result, with the steady and rapid increase of the membership of the church,

the activities of the Spirit in the church were slowly crowded out. Also, as the apostles were so frequently' needed in other parts of Palestine, there arose a great need in the church for specific leaders that particular church. This gave rise to the appointment of "elders" which are mentioned first in Acts 11:30. Everything recorded in the Word regarding the elders of this church points to James as the chief one among them. This James was the half brother of the Lord. He lived in complete unbelief toward Christ till His earthly ministry was finished.

The first mention of James as a saved, man was in Acts 1:14, though he is not then mentioned by name. Having been saved at such a recent date, and thereby not having received the abundance of instructions and preparations that the others did who walked for more than three years with the Lord personally during His earthly ministry, we can even more easily understand his readiness to go along with the "thousands" who were never correctly taught that it was wrong for them to continue in the works of the Law.

This, however, was certainly no excuse for James nor for them, for they could have (and should have) had clear understanding of the whole matter. Had they had a proper understanding of the teachings of the Lord they would have had perfect knowledge of its being fulfilled in the death of Christ. By all means the Spirit was more than eager to lead them into the truth in this matter, for His work was to lead them "into ALL truth" (John 16:7-15).

There was absolutely no excuse for ignorance in the matter. To say so is to show disrespect toward the office and work of the Holy Spirit who was fully capable and ever eager to bring this church to the full knowledge of the truth. Therefore the very fact that they continued in the works of the Law shows that there was direct and willful rebellion against the instructions of the Spirit. Let us observe some of the facts regarding the perverted gospel of this church.

1. The gospel of the Jerusalem church was perverted because it mixed the faith of Christ with the works of the Law.

A. Perhaps it would help to clarify matters if we note some of the incidents which manifest that James was the chief of the leaders in the Jerusalem church. In the beginning, the apostles were of course the chief leaders of this church, however, since their work was more general, that is, they were not restricted so much to one individual church, but were engaged in the supervision and establishment of many churches over a wide area, it came to pass that they were very frequently called away from Jerusalem to various other cities and areas (Acts 8:14; 9:32-43; 10; 10:30; Galatians 8:18; etc.). Therefore it was necessary for the Jerusalem church to appoint leaders who would be with them constantly and would be responsible for that particular church. That was evidently when the elders (pastors) were appointed who are first mentioned in Acts 11:30. This is evidently the time that James began to be recognized as the chief one in the church.

The first mention of him in the place of prominence in the church was by Paul in Galatians 1:19. He was already recognized as a chief leader in the church when Paul made his first short visit to Jerusalem after his conversion. The second time James is mentioned as a chief one in the church was when Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem and won a great victory in favor of the pure gospel. Both Luke and Paul mentioned him regarding this occasion. Luke mentions only Peter and James (Acts 15). Paul mentions both of them and also John as being pillars in the Jerusalem church, but mentions James first (Galatians 2:1-10). Paul seems to indicate that the Jerusalem church held James equal or even a little above Peter and John. The third mention of James seems very definitely to do this (Galatians 2:11-14). To say the least, the

Jerusalem church by this time rated James equal to all the apostles and above many. The fourth mention of James added another consistent testimony to the same fact (Acts 21:18).

B. James and “all the elders” of the Jerusalem church were in full sympathy with the Law-keepers in the church (the whole church in the later years of its history in Jerusalem). Two passages make this abundantly clear (Galatians 2:11-14 and Acts 21:17-26). He was not merely following along with a Law-keeping element in the church, but was their leader in the whole matter.

C. It is clear that James and at least the majority of the church confessed Christ to be what He really is. (1.) They confessed Him as the Messiah (the Christ-Acts 11:18; 15:6-9; 21:20, 25). They fully accepted the testimony of Peter and the apostles concerning the Christ. They believed that Christ was the one of whom the prophets prophesied (Acts 10:43; 11:17-18; 15:7-29). James had very evidently seen the glorified Lord (James 2:1; Acts 1). (2.) They preached repentance toward God and faith in Christ (Acts 11:17-18; 15:7-29; 21:20, 25). What the apostles preached concerning Christ was the same that the church preached. Had this not been true there would have been plenty said about it not only by Paul but all the apostles. (3.) They acknowledged the authority of Christ (same scriptures). They acknowledged His authority to establish and commission the church, to set apostles in the church and also other officers, to establish a government in the church, and many other things not included in the Law of Moses. (4.) They acknowledged the office and work of the Spirit (Acts 10; 11; 15; Galatians 2:8). It is certain, however, that they did not correctly understand the office and work of the Spirit. (5.) They confessed Christ as “the Lord Jesus Christ” (James 1:1). (6.) They counted themselves as His servants (James 1:1). (7.) They confessed Christ as “the

Lord Jesus Christ, THE GLORY” (Gr. James 2:1). (8.) They preached the “coming of the Lord” (James 5:7). (9.) They confessed Christ as the “judge” who “standeth before the door” (James 5:9). (10.) They confessed “that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy” (James 5:11). (11.) They acknowledged that it was God’s purpose for the Gentiles to be saved, and therefore glorified God because of the effectual working of His Spirit through Paul and his co-laborers (Acts 15; 21; Galatians 2).

D. The perversion of the pure gospel entered into the picture through the fact that they were steadfastly teaching that the Law was still to be rigidly obeyed. CIRCUMCISION AND ALL THE CUSTOMS OF THE LAW were being taught and practiced (Acts 21:17-26; 15; Galatians 2). They were still OFFERING ANIMAL SACRIFICES IN THE TEMPLE (Acts 21:26), which was, as were all their other Law-keeping, a direct denial of all they confessed about Christ. They taught that Christ had come, had suffered and died for the sins of the world, had been raised from the dead and glorified, had been exalted to the right hand of the Father, was soon to come and to judge the world, etc., yet by their Law-keeping, animal sacrificing, and other things that go with the Law, they were denying all these things. This is exactly what Paul taught in the epistle to the Galatians, as we shall see by the following discussions.

The gospel of the Jerusalem church was perverted because it made a distinction between Jew and Gentile in the body of Christ.

A. At first the Jerusalem church excluded the Gentiles completely from participation in the body of Christ (Acts 10 and 11). Peter was so set against the Gentiles being admitted to the church that the Lord had to give him special instructions, repeat those instructions twice, and then direct him by

special means to a house full of very eager Gentile? whom God had fully prepared for his testimony, before Peter could say, "Of a truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons; But in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him" (Acts 10:34-35). In addition to this, God made a special demonstration of the giving of the Spirit to fully convince the Jerusalem church that the Gentiles were also to have a part in the body of Christ and the work of the gospel.

B. Though they consented to the foregoing fact, yet they insisted that "it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses" (Acts 15:5). This matter was seemingly corrected by the great struggle at Jerusalem recorded in Acts 15 and Galatians 2:1-10, however, though nothing is recorded of the Jerusalem church definitely continuing to openly demand Gentile obedience to the Law, yet the Gentile believer had to render such obedience or else he would not be counted fit for fellowship by that church (Galatians 2:11-14; Acts 21:17-26).

C. The Jerusalem church continued throughout its history to make a distinction between the Jew and the Gentile in the body of Christ (Galatians 3:28-29; Colossians 3:9-11; Romans 10:12; Ephesians 2:11-19). The distinction this church made between the Jewish church members and the Gentile church members was in proportion to their zeal to keep the Law. To keep the Law was counted as meritorious. The Law-keeping church members were counted as righteous and holy. Not to keep the Law was counted sinful, and rendered a church member unrighteous and unholy. The Gentile Christians who did not keep the Law were unrighteous and unholy. They were looked upon as being unclean. James and his followers at Jerusalem concluded that they must keep separated from the Gentile Christians. Thus we

have the great “dissimulation” and collision at Antioch as a result (Galatians 2:11-14).

The very fact that the Jerusalem church members continued to keep the Law themselves made it necessary for them to make this distinction between the Jew and Gentile Christians. The Law demanded that such a distinction be made between circumcised and uncircumcised people. The Gentile Christians ate certain meats that the Law said were unclean, and further, that the one who ate them was unclean. Christians who kept the Law and Christians who did not keep the Law could not possibly live in the same church without a great host of distinctions being made between them every day in practically every habit of life, whether it be the food they ate, the clothes they wore, the company they kept or a thousand other things. The Law-keeper was either forced to separate himself from the one who did not keep it, or the one who did not keep the Law was forced to be circumcised and begin practicing the customs, of the Law. There was positively no way to escape this necessary conclusion.

3. The gospel of the Jerusalem church was perverted because it frustrated the grace of God.

A. It frustrated the grace of God by teaching that righteousness came partly by the faith of Christ and partly by the works of the Law. They frankly acknowledged that “God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18), and that the giving of the Spirit to them proved that God had “put no difference” between Jew and Gentile “purifying their hearts by (the) faith” (Acts 15:8-9). However, the zeal of this church to keep the Law necessitated an absolute (but hypocritical) denial of these same things. The faith of Christ set the Jew and Gentile on equal grounds in the body of Christ, but the Law

demanded the same distinction between Jew and Gentile that had always existed. The Law taught very rigidly that the Gentile was unclean. His food, his clothes, his habits of every day life were all pronounced unclean by the Law.

The Jewish church member who endeavored to keep the Law was forced by the Law to separate himself from every uncircumcised Gentile Christian, or any Jew who did not conform to the Law. This is exactly what brought about the collision at Antioch. The Jerusalem church was still frustrating the grace of God by continuing to count the Gentile Christians as unclean. Their zeal to keep the Law forced them to do so.

Peter was well aware of this attitude and conduct of the Jerusalem church, therefore when “certain came from James” “he withdrew and separated himself.” This withdrawal and separation from the Gentile Christians declared them to be unclean. It said they were unfit for fellowship. It said that they were not accepted of God. It said that they did not stand justified in God’s sight. Paul said, “But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews;” Peter’s action described exactly what the attitude and conduct of the Jerusalem church continued to be toward the Gentile believers. THE GENTILE CHRISTIANS WERE STILL COUNTED TO BE UNCLEAN - IN ORDER TO BE CLEAN (holy, righteous, acceptable, justified) THEY HAD TO CONFORM TO THE LIFE OF THE LAW-KEEPING JEWISH CHRISTIANS -----
CIRCUMCISION AND ALL.

B. Observe briefly how they frustrated the grace of God by denying their own testimony. (1.) They excused Peter for eating and keeping company with uncircumcised men in Acts 11, yet they

condemned him for precisely the same thing later in Galatians 2:11-14. (2.) They acknowledged that the Gentiles by receiving the Holy Spirit had been accepted of God and counted pure by Him (Acts 11:15-18; 15:7-9, 28-29), yet they continued to count them unclean and unacceptable because they did not receive circumcision and endeavor to obey the Law (Galatians 2:11-14). (3.) They accepted Peter's testimony that neither they nor their fathers were able to keep the Law (Acts 15:10-11), yet they continued in the works of the Law, professing to be keeping it (Acts 21:17-26; Galatians 2). There are other examples like these which will be seen in the following discussion. The chief way in which they frustrated the grace of God can be seen in the next heading.

4. The gospel of the Jerusalem church was perverted because it ultimately said Christ died in vain.

A. The Jerusalem church taught that righteousness came by the Law. That entire church "zealous of the Law" (Acts 21:17-26). The Law solemnly pronounced all uncircumcised people unclean and unacceptable. The Jerusalem church was obligated to follow the matter through, which meant that they looked upon all uncircumcised Gentile Christians as unclean (Galatians 2). They counted themselves righteous but the uncircumcised Christians unrighteous. They counted themselves clean but the uncircumcised Christians unclean (impure, unholy, unrighteous, not acceptable, not justified). Thus they taught that righteousness came by Law.

Paul said that this doctrine finally said (of necessity) that Christ died in vain (Galatians 2:21). This is a horrible frustration of the grace of God. This is why Paul said, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are (try to be) justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4). The Jerusalem church taught that the faith

of Christ alone was not sufficient to render men clean and acceptable, but that they had to receive circumcision and endeavor to keep the Law in addition to the faith of Christ. This was to teach that righteousness came by the Law, which was to teach (if not by word of mouth, then by practice) that Christ died in vain. It is not possible to frustrate the grace of God much more than this. The next thing would be to publicly deny and renounce Christ.

B. Furthermore, to continue to do the works of the Law after the Law had been fulfilled in the death of Christ, was to say that Christ did not satisfy the demands of the Law. Christ put the Law out of operation by His death on the cross. He rendered it inoperative. For a member of the body of Christ to revive the Law in his life was to render the death of Christ inoperative as it concerned his life as a Christian. Paul said that Christ blotted out the “handwriting of ordinances (the Law) that was against us, which was contrary to Us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross” (Colossians 2:14). The Jerusalem church proceeded to take that “handwriting of ordinances” back down from the cross and hang them about the necks of its members. By this they taught that the death of Christ was not sufficient - actually in vain.

C. The Law was a “ministration of death” (2 Corinthians 3:7-11), but the Jerusalem church taught (if not by word of mouth, then by practice) that it was a ministration of life. The Jerusalem church members continued in the works of the Law as though they were giving full and satisfactory obedience to it. The penalty of the Law was death (accusation), but the attitude of the Jerusalem church was that they were so fully obeying the Law that death could not lay hold upon them, but rather that their keeping the Law rendered them righteous while the poor Gentile Christians

were still unclean. Such an attitude said that the death of Christ was not necessary for such people. If they were able to keep the Law, then the death of Christ was not needful as far as they were concerned. By their practice of the works of the Law they said that Christ died in vain.

5. The gospel of the Jerusalem church was perverted because it sought to mix the works of the Law with the works of the Spirit, which was actually a setting aside of the Spirit in favor of the Law, which further produced the lusts of the flesh instead of the fruits of the Spirit.

A. Paul makes it clear that the works of the Spirit and the works of the Law do not mix, therefore to receive the Law was to reject the Spirit, and to receive the Spirit was to reject the Law. "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the Law" (Galatians 5:18). Also read Galatians 3:1-5; 5:4-5; etc. The Jerusalem church chose the Law which means that they rejected the Spirit. They chose the works of the Law rather than the work of the Spirit.

B. Paul further showed that obedience to the Law cultivated the lusts of the flesh and produced the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:16-18; Romans 7:5-13). This meant that the Jerusalem church chose the lusts of the flesh rather than the fruits of the Spirit.

C. Again Paul showed that those who endeavored to obey the Law rejected the faith principle in their lives (Galatians 3:2-5; 2:16; Romans 3:20-31). The man who endeavored to keep the Law depended upon his Law-keeping rather than simply believing. He depended upon his own works rather than the works of the Spirit in him. He trusted the flesh rather than the Spirit.

6. The gospel of the Jerusalem church was perverted because it sought to mix the glory of the flesh with the glory of the cross of Christ.

A. Those who taught and practiced circumcision did so in order to glory in the flesh. “As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. But neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh” (Galatians 6:12-13).

B. The glory of the flesh cannot be mixed with the glory of the cross, and to accept one is to reject the other. “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” (Galatians 6:14). “And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution; then is the offence of the cross ceased” (Galatians 5:11). The Jerusalem church was certainly preaching and practicing circumcision, therefore it was frustrating the grace of God, perverting the gospel, and rendering the cross of Christ without offence, which ultimately said that Christ died in vain.

7. The gospel of the Jerusalem church was perverted because it sought to please men rather than God.

One of the chief reasons why circumcision was taught and practiced was to escape persecution. “As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ” (Galatians 6:12). The persecuted sought to please his persecutor by submitting to circumcision and the Law. He then sought to fully convince his persecutor by constraining others to be circumcised. When they had constrained others to be circumcised they could glory in the flesh of the constrained one and thereby please his persecutor rather than God.

All this should be associated with Galatians 1:10 where Paul said, with a view to such perverting of the pure gospel, "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet please men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Peter's conduct as described in Galatians 2:11-14 was in order to please man - "fearing them which were of the circumcision" who "came from James," he sought to compel "the Gentiles to live as do the Jews."

8. This perverted gospel brought separation from the Spirit (Galatians 3:2-5; 4:16-18), from Christ and His cross (Galatians 5:1-5, 11, 24; 6:12-14), and consequently from the Father (Galatians 1:10).

this separation has nothing to do with hell. It deals entirely with the body of Christ and all the blessings included in that relationship. This separation is very similar to that in 1 Corinthians 5:5. It is exactly the same as described in Matthew 5:13; Luke 14:25-35; John 15:1-6; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 10:1-13; Romans 11:16-22; Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:25-39; etc. Such people are delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. In the day of the Lord their spirits will be saved but their flesh will not be saved till the end of the Millennium.

This separation has two avenues of execution: (A.) The action may be taken by the church (Galatians 5:9-12; 1:6-9). In this case the man who is cut off may be restored (Galatians 6:1). (B.) The action may be taken by God as seen in John 15:1-6; Romans 11:16-22; Matthew 5:13, etc. In this case the man who is cut off may not be restored under any circumstances (Hebrews 6:4-6, etc.) His eternal salvation from hell is not effected in the very least, but he is eternally separated from "the Israel of God." He shall abide eternally in one of the Gentile nations that shall enter the Millennium, and also inhabit the new earth (Revelation 21:23-26; 22:2).

The conclusion of the whole matter is that the membership of the Jerusalem church, being so instructed by its leaders (Acts 21:17-26), believed and taught part of the truth of the gospel, namely, that a person must believe in Christ for salvation from hell; yet they believed and taught that a

person must, by a mixture of the faith of Christ and the works of the Law, seek to obtain the promised inheritance and the abundance of blessings that go with it. This is very similar to the condition that many brethren are in today. They preach with great carefulness that a person is saved from hell eternally by the grace of God through faith in Christ as the only and all sufficient Savior, whose birth, life, death and resurrection were in all points satisfactory according to the perfect laws of our righteous God. And all this is necessarily true. But then, when they come to the promised inheritance they begin to mix their own works up with the grace of God and the faith of Christ.

We must be fully persuaded that in the sight of God there is absolutely nothing that we can do through our own wisdom and energies that can in the very least please God. There is not the least favor, gift or reward that we may obtain from God through our own works, whether great or small in our eyes and the eyes of men. It is just as true when we think of mixing our wisdom and our energies with that of God. Our good works will not aid us any more after we have once completely trusted the Lord then they did before we so trusted Him. We cannot perform the work of the Lord through our wisdom, nor can we work the wisdom of God through our own energies. Since our wisdom is foolishness according to our natural man, then we cannot mix our wisdom with the wisdom of God.

God does not need and He will not use our energies before or after we are saved. We are entirely helpless and must trust God to accomplish His will through us now in the same capacity in which we trusted Him to save us from hell in the beginning.

Then by the same grace of God, and by a continual exercising of the same dependence (trust, faith) on Christ, we permit God through His Spirit to work His righteous will in and through us (1 Corinthians 15:10; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:16-20; Philippians 2:12-13; Hebrews 13:20-21).

We must understand that there are two positions from which we must stand and view the conduct of God's people. (1.) The first view-point is the true one, and is from the position of God. Paul gives us a view from this position particularly in Galatians and Romans. Observe Romans 11:33-35. Verse 35 says, "or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" The Weymouth translation makes it clearer, "Who has first given to God anything, and thus earned a recompense?"

Look also at Job 35:7 and 41:11. Job had been insistently pleading his righteousness, then God asked him "Who hath prevented (given to) me, that I should repay him? whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." Job was truly a righteous man. In the first chapter of Job God testified that there was not a man in all the earth like Job and was so confident of Job that he measured his stability against the power of Satan. The fact that Job was an exceedingly righteous man is unquestionable, yet the thing that caused Job to be severely rebuked by the Lord later was that he began to look upon his righteousness as being obtained through his own energies - he boasted of HIS righteousness.

Now what should Job have done? He should have recognized that his righteousness was not a result of his energies, but was a work of God. It is God's air that we breathe. It is God's water that we drink. It is His earth that we walk upon. It is His sunshine that we enjoy and must have. It is by God's laws of nature that we are able to live for one moment. Every minute of our lives is a gift from God. Every move we make is dependent upon God entirely. "Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine," was God's rebuke.

The act of receiving a gift from God is not meritorious on our part to obligate God to reward us. Every movement of our bodies and every thought of our minds that is honorable is a gift from God, thus rendering us incapable of placing God under obligation to reward us. How shall we, who are so utterly dependent upon God, present Him with a gift, or even with a word of praise, that will earn us a reward from him? God, through His Spirit, works His

will in us. Do we through the working of His Spirit in us earn a reward from Him? Certainly not. Thus, there is not one thing that we shall ever receive from the hand of the Lord when He returns that can be counted as a reward from God's position of viewing the matter. The one who gets there by fire (1 Corinthians 3 & 5), and the abundant entrance of the faithful (2 Peter 1), are both a gift from God.

(2.) The second position from which we must take our view is that of man. From the view-point of man, that abundant entrance of the faithful is many times spoken of as a reward. This is merely to accommodate man's inability to think with God. Hebrews chapter 11 tells us of the great giants of faith who in ages past have walked the earth and were so pleasing to God that the Scriptures speak of them as those "of whom the world was not worthy" (Hebrews 11:38). Many times the Scriptures speak of men in very complimentary language, but what was the thing that was so pleasing to God! Simply the fact that they believed God. They accepted God's testimony of Himself. They reckoned that God was worthy and capable of doing what He promised. And even their faith itself was a gift from God.

How could we have faith in God except that He make Himself known to us, prove to us His righteousness, power, love, mercy, grace, etc.? Since we hate God by nature, and since we love sin by nature, and since we are the bond-slaves of sin by nature, how could we possibly love God except He bring us to that place by His unmerited favor? It is all by grace through faith. If we could repay Calvary, then we could earn rewards.

Philippians 2:12-13 gives us a look at both of these positions. Paul said, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." This does not have the slightest reference to being saved eternally from hell for such salvation has absolutely nothing to do with the endurance of faith (the existence of Gentiles on the new earth is eternally unanswerable proof of this fact). Nevertheless, Paul hurried to explain that, even in this matter, it is still "God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Paul further said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself from me" (Galatians 2:20).

Yet again he said, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10).

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

The above quoted passages do not refer to the grace that is operative in the matter of eternal salvation from hell, but to that grace that is given with regard to an honorable life as a servant of God. As an apostle, Paul labored more abundantly than all others. He reverted to his labors - his works, yet he said that this was actually the working of God's grace (through the Spirit) in him. We must work out our salvation with fear and trembling, but it is actually God's grace - His Spirit that is working in us. God has prepared these works for us in the body of Christ (the church). We are to walk in them, yet it is by the Spirit's power. Our works as God's servants are therefore actually not ours, but the works of the Spirit - they are of God's grace. This grace is available only in the church and when a person is put "without" the church, he is put "without" the sphere of God's grace for his life as a Christian.

God has prepared no works for the Christian "without" the church. Even baptism is not a work on our part but an operation of God. A person may be baptized a million times, yet only one time is accepted by God (therefore a work of His). Ten million baptisms by the wrong church will not even one time reach the acceptance of God. Good works are the works which God alone has prepared, which His Spirit alone performs, and which exist only in a true church. Here only is God's grace for the Christian life. When a man is put "without" the church, he is put "without" this grace. When a man resists obedience in such a church, he resists this grace.

CHAPTER IV

A BRIEF ANALOGY OF THE LAW AND GRACE ECONOMIES

We come now to think briefly upon two great economies, or administrations which have proceeded from the hand of the Almighty—that of the Law on the one hand, and that of grace on the other hand. It has been said that the Law was a miserable failure, but such is far from being the case. It did precisely what God intended for it to do, and though Paul spoke strongly against the Law, it should be kept in mind that the Law fulfilled its purpose in its appointed time. When we come to properly understand the purpose and work of the Law, our hearts will forever look up to God in praises for such a momentous work.

I. THE LAW VERSUS THE SPIRIT

No one can carefully read the New Testament, particularly the epistles of Galatians and Romans, without observing that the works of the Law and the operation of the Spirit stand greatly contrasted. Though the Law was “holy, and just, and good” (Romans 7:12-13), it cannot stand in the presence of the work of the Spirit in sinful men (Romans 8:2; Galatians 3:2-5, 14; 4:1-6; 21-31; 5:1-26; 2 Corinthians 3). Furthermore, the Law forbade the gift and free operation of the Spirit (Galatians 3:2-5, 14; 4:1-6). Without the fulfillment of the Law, and its curse being satisfied, the Spirit could not have been given (Galatians 3:13-14; 4:1-6).

It is very important to remember that the Spirit was not given until the Law was fulfilled and taken out of the way by the life and death of Christ (Galatians 3:13-14; 4:1-6). It is true that certain individuals in the Old Testament possessed the Spirit but this was always to qualify them to perform a special office or duty such as that of a prophet or king. The people under the Law economy did not possess the indwelling Spirit. They received the Spirit only after they had been redeemed from under the Law (Galatians 4:1-6).

1. Bondage Versus Liberty

A. The Law and Bondage. It therefore remains that without the indwelling Spirit the people of Israel (whether saved or lost) were in bondage. This is exactly why the Law was called a “yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1-5). Paul’s allegory presents the Law as that “which gendereth to bondage” (Galatians 4:12-31). But he spoke more clearly than of an allegory, however, for in Galatians 4:1-7 he pointedly said that under the Law the seed of Abraham “differeth nothing from a servant” (slave). Through the death of Christ they (the saved ones in the body of Christ) were redeemed from that slavery. We must keep in mind that this slavery pertained only to the body, not to the spirit.

B. The Spirit and Liberty. The bodies of those saved seed of Abraham, having been redeemed from slavery, were set at liberty (Galatians 5:1-5). This liberty was effected by the indwelling presence of the Spirit, as we read in 2 Corinthians 3:17, “Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.” We further read in Romans 8:2, “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

We will do well to keep in mind that this liberty exists only in the body of Christ (a true local church) for the Spirit dwells nowhere else. This is also why Christ will profit a man nothing (concerning the results of this freedom and body relationship) who puts himself back under the yoke of slavery after having been set free from it (Galatians 5:1-9).

2. Death Versus Life

A. The Law and Death. The Law is referred to as “the law of sin and death” and is called “the ministration of death” (Romans 8:2; 2 Corinthians 3:7-11). The slavery to the Law may be correctly called a death, as Paul said, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death” (this body of death - Romans 7:24). “For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me and by it slew me” (Romans 7:9-11).

We must acknowledge that the bodies of the Israelites under the Law were “carnal, sold under sin (Romans 7:14). Apart from the indwelling Spirit there is only a slavery to the law of sin and death. Under the Law economy saved people were dead in trespasses and sins. Sin had dominion over them (Romans 6:14-15). Their bodies were alive to sin but dead toward God (Romans 6 & 7). Having only “the spirit of bondage” “to fear” (Romans 8:15), and being without the Holy Spirit (Galatians 4:1-6), they could not produce the fruits of the Spirit. Being under the Law, sin had dominion over them (Romans 6:14), and worked in them “all manner of concupiscence” (Romans 7:8). Their bodies were slaves of the Law of sin and death, and brought forth “fruit unto death” (Romans 7:1-6, 25).

This is precisely what Paul had in mind in Romans 8:1-13 where he spoke repeatedly of a walk after the flesh bringing death. Though we have the indwelling Spirit, if we do not “mortify the deeds of the body” we shall die - that is, we shall fall back into the state of death which existed under the Law, and this means severance from the body

of Christ, the loss of the indwelling Spirit, falling from the sphere of grace for the life, etc. The latter end, however, is much worse than the former in such cases.

B. The Spirit and Life. Paul states quite clearly that those who are not in the Spirit are in the flesh (Romans 8:1-13; Galatians 5:16). Since the Spirit was not given until after Christ was glorified (John 7:37-39; Galatians 3:13-14; 4:1-6) it remains that saved people under the Law economy were in the flesh. And being in the flesh they brought forth “fruit unto death” as we read in Romans 7:5-6, “For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”

The Law “held” them in slavery to the flesh. The “motions (passions, lusts) of sins, which were by the law” brought forth “fruit unto death.” The “commandment, which was ordained to life,” was “found to be unto death” (Romans 7:10) “in that it was weak through the flesh” (Romans 8:3). Even as “the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he lives,” so also the Israel of God was held in slavery to the Law as long as the Law stood active (Romans 7:1-4). But if the woman’s “husband be dead, she is free from that law: so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ (the church); that ye should be married to another (Christ), even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God” (Romans 7:3-4).

Under the Law the elect were held in slavery to sin by the Law (Romans 6:14), and therefore brought forth “fruit unto death,” but the sending forth of

the “Spirit of life” set those in the body of Christ “free from the law of sin and death. For what’ the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the Righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walked not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 7:25; 8:1-4).

Under the Law saved people were dead to sin, for sin had dominion over them (Romans 6:14). Sin came to life by the Law and brought under its dominion those who were under the Law (Romans 7:7-11). Only by the indwelling of the Spirit can the saved man throw off the dominion of sin (Galatians 5:16; Romans 8). Here is where scriptural water baptism comes in with such exceedingly great force in Romans 6; Galatians 3; Colossians 2; and 1 Peter 3, in the midst of the Law and sin question as regards the body. Saved people do not receive the indwelling of the Spirit until they have received- scriptural water baptism (Acts 2:38; 19:3). It is at the time of water baptism that “our old man is crucified with him (Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Romans 6:3-5).

It is the Spirit that puts the old man to death, but the Spirit dwells only in the body of Christ and water baptism is a prerequisite to both. The body of a saved man is dead in sins until the Spirit takes up His dwelling there, at which time He quickens the body together with Christ. This is why scriptural water baptism is called “the circumcision of Christ” (Colossians 2:11-13). It is not water baptism but the Spirit that is active “in putting off the body of sins of the flesh,” yet the spirit does not become active in crucifying the flesh until scriptural water baptism is received according to the command of the Lord. The man who refuses this circumcision mocks at God, but he shall not escape.

Upon the completion of water baptism, the Spirit takes up His dwelling in the body (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) of the saved man (see former book entitled, "CHRIST IN YOU"); and since the saved man cannot be expected to "walk in newness of life" until he receives the Spirit into his body, it therefore remains that we associate this "walk in newness of life," not before but after water baptism (Romans 6:3-5). Only after we have entered the body of Christ, having died to the Law by the indwelling Spirit that we should be married to another (to Christ), are we able to "serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter" (Romans 7:4-6).

Does all this mean that a man could not walk by faith under the Law? By no means! Because the Law, though it promised life, brought all its subjects into a hopeless state of death (as concerns the body-Romans 7:7-11), and drove them to Christ that they might be justified by faith (Galatians 3:24). The Law did not release its subjects for a moment, but "held" them in bitter "bondage." The Law that "promised life," they "found to be unto death." They found no hope in the works of the Law, for it was far too "holy, and just, and good." Yet the Law held forth the sacrifice of bulls and goats, which, though their blood could never for a moment take away sins, pointed them to the Lamb of God whose blood would take away sins. By this the Law, though it held the people in bitter slavery, faithfully directed its dead slaves to the one and only Hope-that one unique Seed, the Son of God, Anointed Savior. By constant acknowledgment of the deadness and unfruitfulness of their bodies, and by faith counting Him able and faithful to give life to the dead, the elect under the Law economy were justified before God.

The example is beautifully given in Abraham

whose body was dead regarding the seed of life,* yet he counted God able and faithful to His promise to cause the dead to come to life and produce the fruit of life. By this faith he was justified. The curse of the law held the elect in a state of death with a view to death-and they brought forth “fruit unto death” (Romans 7:5), but by faith they looked forward to Him who would be “made a curse” for them to redeem them “from the curse,” then send forth the “Spirit of Life” into their bodies that they might “walk in newness of life” and “bring forth fruit unto God” (Galatians 3:10-14; Romans 7:4-6; Colossians 2:11-13).

3. Flesh Versus Crucifixion.

A. The Law and the Flesh. The Law was a “yoke of bondage”-a prison of bitter slavery. All its subjects were in a death house. But what was that bondage? How may we define it? Even in Paul’s allegory we may clearly see that it was a slavery to the flesh (Galatians 4:21-31). Paul said, “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16). But the Spirit was not provided under the Law economy. He was not given until the Law was taken out of the way (Galatians 3:13-14; 4:1-6). How then could the elect under the Law economy walk in the Spirit? The answer is that they could not and did not. In Romans 6, 7, and 8, Paul effectively pressed the argument that the yoke of bondage was a slavery to the flesh. Under the Law sin had dominion over the elect (Romans 6:14-15).

The Law was not sinful but it brought lust and sin to life because of the weakness of the flesh. “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the Law: for I had not known lust, except the Law had said, Thou shall not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law

sin was dead” (Romans 7:7-9).

The hopeless state of the elect under the Law and without the Spirit may be seen in Romans 7:14-25. Their fight against their carnal nature was ever a losing battle. Without the Spirit they had no power to overcome their flesh nature. The Law excited the passions of sin and sin had dominion over them (Romans 6:14-15). Sin shall not have dominion over us in the body of Christ because we are “not under law, but under grace.” But they were under the Law, therefore sin had dominion over them. Their flesh was given up to serve the law of sin and death (Romans 7:25). Their flesh was NOT crucified with Christ.

B. The Spirit and Crucifixion of the Flesh.

Under the Law economy the elect might attempt a bitter warfare against the flesh, but the final analysis could reach no further than the words of Paul in Romans 7:24-25. “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the MIND I serve the law of God; BUT WITH THE FLESH THE LAW OF SIN.”

Under the Law the flesh was alive in every capacity. It was not crucified. The elect were not dead to the Law of sin and death, but alive to it. That Law ruled supreme over the flesh. The conclusion of the elect under the Law economy was that with the flesh he served the Law of sin and death. But this is not the conclusion of the elect under the grace economy (new covenant). “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace” Romans 6:14). Under grace we have the indwelling Spirit, and having received the Spirit, Paul could say, “For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live to God” (Galatians 2:19).

Under the Law the elect were slaves to the Law, but by means of the indwelling Spirit we are now dead to the Law, therefore no more in bondage, for where the Spirit is there is liberty. Under the Law they could only bring forth “fruit unto death” (Romans 7:4-6). Through the Spirit we “walk in newness of life” and “bring forth fruit unto God” (Romans 7:4-6; Galatians 2:19).

Through the indwelling Spirit Paul could say, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). The Spirit has crucified the flesh by His indwelling presence. He has set the elect free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:1-4). Under the Law they could only say, “I am carnal, sold under sin” - “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” But now we no more serve the law of sin with the flesh, for the flesh has been crucified. This crucifixion took place at the time the Spirit took His residence in our bodies, and this was when we received scriptural water baptism (Romans 6:3-6; Galatians 2:27; Colossians 2:11-13; 1 Peter 3:21; 4:1-6). The reader should carefully study Romans 6, 7, & 8, not according to the devil-inspired traditional (Protestant) interpretation, but according to Paul’s emphasis and contrast between the Law and Grace economies.

The slavery of God’s elect down in Egypt is a very striking and vivid picture of God’s elect under the slavery of the Law. God did not look upon the Israelites as a bunch of lost people down in Egypt. He counted them as His son, even His firstborn (Exodus 4:22-23). They were His people - His chosen. By covenant with Abraham, they were His. Long before, He had revealed to Abraham

that it was His good pleasure for the Israelites to be slaves in a strange land (Gen. 15:13-14). God had promised to redeem them from that slavery, and bring them out of that land with “great substance.”

With the mind the Israelites served God, but with the flesh they served the Egyptians. Under the Law, the Israelites served God with the mind, but with the flesh the Law of sin and death (Romans 7:25). Israel’s deliverance out of Egypt speaks of Israel’s deliverance from under the Law. The passover feast celebrated that deliverance. Christ is our passover Lamb, and the Lord’s Supper is our feast to celebrate our deliverance as the Israel of God from under the Law. Egypt represented a bondage to the forces of the world. In the body of Christ we have been delivered from the power of Satan and sin in our lives through the indwelling Spirit. This is true only for those in the body of Christ, however, for when a brother is excluded from the church, he is delivered back to Satan and sin as concerns his life. All saved people who are “without” true churches are in the same condition.

4. Old Man Versus New Man.

A. The Law and the Old Man. The old man is the one enslaved to the flesh whether by the Law or otherwise. He is the one that is “sold under sin,” and is “corrupt according to the deceitful lusts” (Romans 7:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:23; Colossians 3:9; etc.). As a Gentile he “walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries” (1 Peter 4:2). As a Jew he did the same as he served the Law of sin and death (Romans 6, 7; Galatians 5). Lusts and sin brought to life by the Law (Romans 7:7-11) reigned supreme over the “mortal body” (Romans 6:12; 7:14-25), and subjected that old man to “will of the Gentiles” (1 Peter 4:3).

B. The Spirit and the New Man. The new man is the man that is neither male nor female. Jew' nor Gentile (Colossians 3:10-12).

He is incorruptible and immortal (1 Corinthians 15:51-54). He is a new kind of man - "old things are passed away; behold, all things are new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). He is created only in the body of Christ by the indwelling Spirit, the old man having been crucified (Ephesians 2:15). We have not actually received the new man yet, but Christ has, and therefore we know Him no more after the flesh (that is, of the male sex), but as an entirely new kind of man that is neither male nor female.

In water baptism we put on Christ (that is, this new kind of man - Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:11-13). God counted it so, and sent forth His spirit into our bodies to experimentally effect this crucifixion of the old man (Galatians 2:20). Having therefore received the adoption God looks upon us as though we had already received that "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). Thus we are often admonished to "put on the new man," which is done by renewing of the mind (walking in the Spirit - Ephesians 4:21-24; Romans 12:1-3; Galatians 5:16-25; etc.).

Nowhere do the Scriptures speak of the elect crucifying the flesh and putting on the new man under the Law economy. Such things belong only to the "ministration of the Spirit."

5. The Necessary Result and Application.

We have already arrived at the results and applications of these things in an indirect manner, but now we may speak more to the point. We have already learned that the purpose of God is to prepare for His glory. A special people zealous of good works, and that this chosen people is the Israel of God - the one elect nation which shall inhabit the new Jerusalem as a kingdom of king-priests and rule over the

nations (Gentiles) which God has also prepared (Revelation 21, 22; 1 Peter 2:9; Exodus 19:4-6; Deuteronomy 7:6-11; 26:16-19; Gen. 12:1-3; etc.).

It remains therefore that the nations shall be servants of the Israel of God. This is the very application Paul makes in all his epistles. In Galatians he said, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law, do ye not hear the Law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman" (Galatians 4:21-22). The son of the bondwoman was a servant because his mother was a servant. The son of the freewoman was free because his mother was Free. This was according to natural law. But Paul said these things served as an allegory.

The application of that allegory is that those who prefer the slavery of the Law economy to the freedom of the Grace economy will in the end receive exactly what they have chosen. That slavery of the Law economy was a slavery to the flesh. The liberty of the Grace economy is a crucifixion of the flesh by the indwelling Spirit. The saved man under the Law economy who was content to walk in the lusts of his flesh shall receive in the resurrection exactly what he has sown (Galatians 6:7-9). The Saved man under the Grace economy who prefers the lusts of the flesh to the crucifixion of the flesh shall be severed from the body of Christ (Galatians 5:1-5; Romans 8:13; Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:25-39; etc.), and shall also receive in the resurrection exactly what he has sown (Galatians 6:7-9; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 9:24-27; 10:1-12; 2 Peter 1:4; etc.).

The saved man under the Law economy who, though he was held in slavery to the flesh, looked daily by faith to the promised Seed to bring deliverance from that horrible slavery was redeemed by the death, burial and resurrection of that promised Seed (Galatians 3:13-29; 4:1-6; Hebrews 2:14-15; 11:39; etc.). All those in all ages who in spite of the circumstances walked by faith with their eyes upon "him who is invisible" shall receive the promises and the special resurrection - a resurrection to perfect freedom (Hebrews 3:14; 6:11-20; 10:32-36; 11:35, 39-40; Philippians 3:9-21; Romans 4:23-25; 8:11-25; Galatians 6:7-9; etc.).

Though there will be no corruption nor sin of any kind on the new earth, yet the nations shall never partake of the blessings that are peculiar to the Israel of God. Let those who love the lusts of the flesh and the things of this life hear the Law. What does it say? It “gendereth to bondage.” It speaks of eternal servitude to those who are free. Only those of the adoption are free. Those who are of the works of the flesh, whether under law or without law, “shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:16-25). They shall not receive “the adoption, to with the redemption of our body” (Romans 8:23), for they “shall die” (or, are dead - Romans 8:13). Only in the body of Christ where the Spirit of promise dwells will we receive “the redemption of the purchased possession” (Ephesians 1:13-14). The saved man “without” the body of Christ does not have the forgiveness of his sins as regards his body (1 Corinthians 5:5; 9:24-27; John 20:21 23; Matthew 18:15-18; 1 John 1; etc.), therefore he must reap for what he has sown for the duration of the Millennium (2 Corinthians 5:10; Galatians 6:7-9; 1 John 2:28; Hebrews 10:26-39; etc.).

II. PARADOXICAL LANGUAGE CONCERNING THE LAW

Many times there are statements made regarding the Law which appear to be contradictory to each other. A brief discussion of some of these paradoxical statements will greatly aid in properly understanding the purpose and work of the Law.

1. The Law Was Perfect Yet Faulty.

In Romans 7:4-6, Paul spoke of the Law as that which caused the elect to bring forth fruit unto death. This naturally brings up the question, “Is the law sin?” In answer to the question Paul said, “God forbid,” and went on to show that the Law was “holy, and just, and good.” It was perfect. It manifested the perfect righteousness of God (Romans 3:19-21). However in Hebrews 8:7, we are informed that the Law was faulty. On the surface this appears to be a contradiction, but not in reality. The Law was referred to as faulty only in that it did not produce perfection in its subjects (Hebrews 7:19). The Law itself was absolutely perfect

in every respect, yet because it could not bring the elect to perfection to which they are appointed, it was called faulty.

2. The Law Was Spiritual Yet Carnal.

Paul stated clearly that the Law was “holy” and “spiritual” (Romans 7:12-13), yet in Hebrews 7:16-19 it is inferred to as a “carnal commandment.” Within itself the Law was spiritual in every respect. It is only because the Law pertained to the flesh that it was called carnal. The Law dealt with the flesh (Romans 8:3). The Law challenged the flesh. It laid hold upon the flesh and demanded perfection. It promised life, but when the flesh endeavored to meet the challenge, it inevitably suffered defeat at the hands of sin. That which promised life brought death.

But the Law was not satisfied with only one conflict, for as often as the flesh was defeated, the law speedy presented the same challenges. The inevitable result was that the flesh was brought under slavery to sin (Romans 7:25; 6:14-15). The elect were therefore slaves both to the flesh and to the Law. The Law held them in slavery to the flesh. Because the Law was thus associated with the flesh, it was referred to as a carnal commandment. Because it produced death rather than life, it was called faulty.

3. The Law Forbade Sin Yet Produced It.

Paul said, “I had not known sin, but by the Law: for I had not known lust, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet” (Romans 7:7). The Law pointed to lust and challenged the flesh by saying, “Thou shalt not covet.” The commandment forbade sin, but the result was just the opposite, and this without exception. This Paul further explained by saying, “But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead” (Romans 7:8).

Though the Law was spiritual, yet the elect were “carnal, sold under sin,” and the more the Law challenged them the more bitter became their slavery to the flesh, for sin, taking

opportunity by the commandment worked in them all manner of lust. In their minds the elect under the Law cried out to God daily, yet they were fully conscious of the fact that with their flesh they could only serve the Law of sin (Romans 7:25). They would not crucify the flesh, for without the indwelling Spirit no man could crucify the flesh (Galatians 5:16). The slave master therefore pointed its slaves to Christ who would redeem them from that slavery - that dead - that curse (Galatians 3:13-14; 4:1-6; etc.).

4. The Law Was Strong Yet Weak

The Law was strong enough to kill, and was therefore called a "ministration of death" (2 Corinthians 3:1-11). It forbade sin with the penalty of death. The reward of sin is death. Sin inevitably brings death. The Law held its subjects in slavery to a state of death. In this it was strong. On the other hand it was weak in that it could not possibly produce life in any of its subjects. It was strong enough to bring death but too weak to give life (Hebrews 7:16-19). The Law within itself was not weak, but was made weak through the flesh (Rom, 8:3). The Law was not weak but the flesh was, and therefore the Law was weakened.

5. The Law Was Profitable Yet Unprofitable.

In Hebrews 7:16-18 the Law is referred to as being unprofitable, but this was said regarding its inability to produce perfection in its subjects. It could not bring them to perfection. It could not produce righteousness in its subjects, therefore could not give them life (Galatians 3:21; 2:21). But then this was not the purpose of the Law. It was not given to produce righteousness but to magnify sin (Romans 8:12-13; Galatians 3:19), and in this respect it was very profitable. The Law being "holy, and just, and good" revealed sin in its real character. It made sin to "become exceedingly sinful."

6. The Law Was Against the Elect Yet For Them.

It was against the people in that it held them in slavery to the flesh, therefore in a state of death (Colossians 2:14-17; 1 Corinthians 3:1-11; Galatians 3, 4; Romans 6, 7). The elect under the

Law were not free, but were slaves. On the other hand the Law was for the elect in that it taught them their sinfulness and the absolute necessity of depending upon the promised Seed for the fulfilment of the promises.

Perhaps the chief purpose of the Law was to reveal to man the deadness of his own body. Man by nature believes that he can establish himself before God by his own righteousness. He believes he can produce works worthy of God's pleasure. He believes he can by his own energies bring forth fruit unto God. Even saved people have such a foolish and incorrect conception of themselves and their abilities. The Law was given to reveal to man (whether saved or lost) that he cannot possibly bring forth fruit to God's glory and pleasure.

Only through the indwelling Spirit are we able to crucify the flesh and bring forth fruit unto God. Saved people under the Law economy were held in a state of death. Saved people in the Body of Christ are provided with a state of life as concerns the body. The indwelling Spirit has quickened our members together with Christ. This is the circumcision of Christ. It cannot be separated from water baptism (Colossians 2:11-13; Galatians 3:17; Romans 6; etc.)

CHAPTER V

OUR POSITIONAL RECKONING

I. TWO MEN (The Old Man Versus The New Man)

1- A. The Old Man Is Corrupt.

The expression “old man” does not refer to a lost man but to the condition of the body of any person outside the body of Christ. This includes even the most faithful of the Old Covenant saints. The old man is the one who has not been crucified with Christ. No one was counted crucified with Christ until Christ was crucified. Furthermore, only those in the body of Christ who have the indwelling Spirit are counted crucified with Christ in the present age. The old man is the natural or outward man. He is described as being “corrupt according to the deceitful lusts” (Ephesians 4:22). Colossians 3:5-9 describes him as being worthy of God’s fiery wrath.

1- B. The New Man is Glorified.

The expression “new man” signifies actually a new kind of man - a new species of man (Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 3:10-11;

Male and female is never to be associated with the spirit world, whether the spirits of men, demon spirits, or righteous angels. Only in the material creation is there male and female, parents and children, etc. The fact that God is called the Father and Christ the Son does not signify that there is male and female in the God-head. The idea that there are male and female Gods is strictly pagan and not founded on Scripture.

The body which Christ now has is neither male or female but a new kind of body, therefore, though Christ was known after the flesh before His resurrection, we are no longer to think of Him as such, for He now possesses a new kind of creation (body). The old has passed away and the new has appeared. We put on this new kind of man when we put

on Christ in baptism. This new man is alive from out of the grave. He is glorified.

2- A. The Old Man Has Sin.

The old man is a slave of sin. He is dominated by the sin nature. He stands condemned before God - destined to receive fiery indignation when God who is a consuming fire rolls back the heavens.

2- B. The New Man Has No Sin.

The body of sin (Romans 6; Colossians 2:11-13) was destroyed when Christ died on the cross for all who stand within His body, therefore when we were baptized our old man was counted crucified with Christ. That crucified man died. He was then buried. But then he was raised a new kind of man. He is now a glorified man separate and apart from any sin whatever.

3- A. The Old Man Has Lusts.

The old man is “corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.” Being dominated by the sin nature is filled with every kind of vile passion and evil device. Lusts naturally spring forth out of that body of sin.

3- B. The New Man Has No Lusts.

The new man is “created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:24). He is “after God” (like God). He “is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” (Colossians 3:10). The glorified Christ cannot lust, therefore since the new man is the glorified man he of course cannot lust. We have that man only in that we are a part of the body of the glorified Christ.

4- A. The Old Man Has Evil Deeds.

Since the old man is dominated by the sin nature and is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, it remains that his deeds are also evil. This is why we are told to “mortify the deeds of the body” (Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5-9).

4- B. The New Man Cannot Sin.

Since the new man is glorified, being created after God in righteousness and true holiness, it remains that he cannot possibly sin. He is separated eternally from any defilement of sin, whether from within or from without.

5- A. The Old Man Is Governed By Flesh.

The old man is restricted to the limitations of mere flesh. He is in subjection to the elemental forces of the universe. He is in the flesh according to Romans 8 and Galatians 4, on the earth according to Colossians 3, and of the earth according to 1 Corinthians 15. He is male and female. He is subject to the necessity of food, exercise, and rest. He is liable to injury, subject to hot and cold weather, etc.

5- B. The New Man is Governed By The Spirit.

The new man is not in any way governed by flesh and its limitations. The new man is free as the glorified Christ. He can be visible or invisible. He has perfect power over all the elemental forces of the universe. If it is the law of gravity, he climbs to the heights of the heavens at his own will. If it is distance, he is wherever he wishes to go as soon as the mind decides. If it is material objects, he can pass through the walls without injury to them or to himself. If it is the secrets of men's hearts, he knows them fully. This new man is of heaven. He is like God.

II. OUR BODIES (Positional Reckoning Versus Literal Condition)

1- A. Positionally, Our Bodies Have Been Crucified With Christ.

This is the teaching of Paul in Romans 6; Colossians 2; and other passages. The use of the word "positional" speaks of our position in the body of Christ as members of Him. As the branch is in the vine, so are we in Christ (this applies only to those in true churches). This is our position. As Christ

is, so are we reckoned to be. Being united with Him as members of His body, we are reckoned (counted) as being crucified with Him.

1- B. Literally, Our Bodies Have Not Been Crucified.

We have no scars in our hands and feet, nor on our brow. We have not literally been crucified. Our being crucified with Christ is a positional reckoning. These words are not intended to minimize our association with Christ in His body by the indwelling Spirit, but rather to emphasize facts in order that we may better appreciate our position.

2- A. Positionally, Our Bodies Died With Christ.

When Christ was crucified He died. Our association with Christ in crucifixion produces our association with Him in His death. We are counted as being members of His body, therefore as He died we died with Him for we are members of Him. This is true, however, only of those in His body which is a true church.

2- B. Literally, Our Bodies Have Never Died

Even as we have not been literally crucified, so we have not literally died. In this case death comes only after crucifixion. Without crucifixion there cannot be death of this nature.

3- A. Positionally, Our Bodies Were Buried With Christ,

When Christ was crucified, and had died, he was buried. Positionally, we are members of His body and therefore must be associated with Him in His burial as in His crucifixion and death.

3- B. Literally, Our Bodies Have Never Been Buried.

Our bodies have not been crucified, nor have they died. Since burial naturally follows a death, and since we have not actually died, it only remains that we have not been literally buried.

4- A. Positionally, Our Bodies Were Raised With Christ

The resurrection of Christ followed His crucifixion, death and burial, and the testimony of baptism is that our bodies were positionally raised with Him. By keeping in mind that we are members of His body, we naturally arrive at this necessary conclusion.

4- B. Since there has been no death and no burial, then of course there has been no actual resurrection of our bodies. We were not yet born when Christ was crucified, buried and raised, therefore of course we were not literally buried and raised with Him. Our association with Him in His death, burial and resurrection is a positional reckoning and is effective only as we belong to His body.

5- A. Positionally, Our Bodies Have Been Glorified With Christ.

When Christ came out of the grave He possessed a glorified body. Glorification was the necessary result. Here is where we must be careful to follow the procedure through to its necessary and blessed state. We must acknowledge that as members of His body we are associated with Him not Only in His crucifixion and death but also in His burial, resurrection and glorification. Positionally our bodies are glorified with Christ. Hebrews 10:14-20 deals directly with this positional reckoning which we have under the New Covenant in the body of Christ.

5- B. Literally, Our Bodies Are Not Glorified.

This is certainly an unquestionable fact, however, it is needful to emphasize the different associations of the fact. The very fact that we have not been crucified is sufficient evidence that we have not been literally crucified with Christ, nor did we die with Him, nor were we literally buried, raised and glorified with Him. Though the foregoing facts are quite evident without much discussion yet they are quite necessary to provide the proper understanding of some of the following matters.

6- A. Positionally, Our Bodies Have No Sin.

Here is where we must begin to give the more earnest heed to Romans 6:2-8; 8:10-13; Colossians 2:11-13; and all related passages, particularly in preparation for the following progression of thought. Let us keep in mind that it is through crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection in glory that destroys the “body of sin.” Positionally our bodies have been raised and glorified together with Christ, and since the glorified Christ has no sin, our positionally glorified bodies also have no sin. This is what is meant in 1 Corinthians 5:7 when it says “ye are unleavened.” Only in this positional capacity could those “carnal” Corinthians be said to be washed, sanctified, justified, etc. (1 Corinthians 6:11). The sin nature (the body of sin) is positionally destroyed for all who are members of the glorified Christ.

6- B. Literally, Our Bodies Still Have Sin.

It is because of the presence of sin that our bodies are wrought down to the grave to end this life. The wages of sin is death. Our bodies will die because of sin. John said, “if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). The sin nature has not been eradicated - positionally it has, but literally it has not.

7- A. Positionally, Our Bodies Cannot Lust Nor Sin.

Positionally we are glorified with Christ. The body of sin has been destroyed and we are unable to lust and sin. A glorified body does not lust. As glorified members of Christ we are unable to sin. Paul pleaded with the saints at Rome on the basis of this positional reckoning when he said, “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”

7- B. Literally, Our Bodies Do Lust and Sin.

We must ever be careful to keep the positional reckoning and the literal condition separated in our minds, else great and evil teachings can quickly arise. Those who teach salvation by water baptism and others who teach the

eradication of the sin nature by a second blessing have missed the mark at this very point. Positionally we are utterly unable to live any longer in sin for we have died to sin and are glorified with Christ. Literally we are able to live in sin and this is why Paul pleaded with the saints at Rome to yield their members as instruments of righteousness rather than instruments of unrighteousness (Romans 6:2-16). It was with a view to the literal condition of our bodies that Paul said, “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth” (Colossians 3:5). The same is true when he said, “but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live”(Romans 8:13). Positionally our members are in heaven for we are members of Christ and our lives are hid with Christ in God. Literally, our members are upon earth and must be put to death.

8- A. Positionally, Our Bodies Have Been Made Alive Together With Christ.

The words “quicken together with Christ” must always be intimately associated with the resurrection and glorification of Christ. Carefully examine each passage and see if this is not so. When we speak of being quickened together with Christ we mean being raised and glorified together with Him.

Only those in the body of Christ have been quickened together with Him, and are therefore members of His glorified body. It was with a view to this fact that Paul said, “therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die” (Romans 8:12-13). If we walk after the flesh we shall die positionally, but if we walk after the Spirit we shall live literally in the resurrection and positionally now (Romans 8:11; 6:3-5; 20-23; Galatians 6:7-9).

8- B. Literally, We Have Not Been Made Alive With Christ.

We must carefully determine and keep in mind that it is the body that is raised up and quickened (glorified) together with Christ, and that this is a positional matter. It is in

the resurrection at the return of the Lord that our bodies shall be literally quickened together with Christ (Romans 8:11; 6:5). Positionally our bodies have already been made alive to God and glorified. Literally our vile bodies shall not be “fashioned like unto his glorious body” until He returns (Philippians 3:21). Because of the vileness of our bodies we must put to death its deeds and beat it black and blue and bring it into slavery to the will of God (Romans 8:13; 1 Corinthians 9:27). There is, of course, an experimental application of our position which is very important. This is the matter that we are proceeding toward and will arrive at shortly.

9- A. Positionally, We Have Been Forgiven Forever of All Sins Pertaining To The Body.

By one offering Christ has perfected for ever them that are sanctified (Hebrews 10:14). Positionally we have already been perfected (glorified) forever. Positionally our sins will be remembered against us no more. We are unleavened. At the time of baptism our bodies were made alive (glorified) together with Christ and we were positionally forgiven of 11 sins (Colossians 2:11-13; Ephesians 1:7). Positionally we do not need to confess our sins for we have none, indeed we cannot sin for we are glorified (dead, buried, raised and glorified). God will never charge a glorified man with sin. The glorified man has been fully accepted into the Beloved and therefore has perfect freedom before the Father (Ephesians 1:6-7; 2:18; Hebrews 10:14-22).

9- B. Literally, We Must Always Be Confessing Our Sins Till The Lord Returns.

It will be understood, of course, that this confessing of sins pertaining to the daily life is available only for those in the body of Christ. Those who are “without” are in rebellion against God and are not heard for their confessing. We are to strive against sin (Hebrews 12:4) yet when we do sin we have an advocate to represent us, even Him whose members we are (1 John 2:1-2). Though our sins are many yet God has promised that He will be faithful and just to forgive us who are in Christ when we confess our sins as we walk in the light. Thus we continue to pray “forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Matthew 6:12).

10- A. Positionally, Our Bodies Have Been Redeemed-

This redemption is to be associated with our being glorified. This redemption of our bodies is the redemption that is “in Christ,” and is provided for by the new covenant (Hebrews 9:11-17). Positionally this redemption is a present possession for all who are members of Christ. We have been redeemed from all things that are earthly and our lives are in heaven. Thus we are not to mind the earthly things (Philippians 3:19-20; Colossians 3:1-3).

10- B. Literally, Our Bodies Are Not Redeemed.

Though the redemption price has been paid our bodies have not yet been redeemed, and will not be until the “day of redemption” when they shall be “fashioned like unto his glorious body” (Philippians 3:21; Ephesians 4:30). At the present time we are “waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies” (Romans 8:23). Though positionally we have already received that Holy Spirit-sealed inheritance, yet literally we “are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:5).

11 - A. Positionally, We Have Received The Adoption.

The adoption must necessarily be associated with the once for all forgiveness of sins and redemption of our bodies. Adoption pertains to the body, therefore our adoption at the present time is only a positional one. The adoption and the indwelling Spirit belong together, and though we have already received the Spirit yet it is called “the first fruits of the Spirit,” given on the basis of our positional adoption (Romans 8:14-23; Galatians 4:1-7). It should not be difficult to see that all these things go together - from the crucifixion to the adoption and glory.

11 -B. Literally, We Have Not Received The Adoption.

The Word does not entertain contradictions, therefore when it says that we are “waiting for the adoption, to wit, the

redemption of our bodies” (Romans 8:23) we must accept it to mean what it says. We have only positionally received the adoption. We will not literally receive it until the resurrection. The adoption and the glory necessarily go together, therefore when we have received the one we will have received the other. We have received both positionally but neither literally.

Again we may be assured that there is an experience of our position, and that this experience is so real that when one of the positionally glorified members of Christ refuses the experience he crucifies to himself the Son of God and so draws back to destruction that he is eternally without repentance concerning that position. He becomes hopelessly without any further sacrifice for sin, and therefore there is left for him only “a certain fearful looking for of fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries” (Hebrews 10:25-39; 6:4-8; 12:17; 1 Corinthians 9:27; Luke 14:25-35; John 15:1-6; etc.). This fiery indignation” has no relationship to judgment in hell.

12- A. Positionally, All Flesh Distinctions Have Been Erased.

In Christ there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11; Ephesians 2:11-22). As members of Christ we are no longer male and female, parents and children, etc. Positionally we are a new species of man, “which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

12- B. Literally, We Still Possess Our Flesh Distinctions.

Wives are commanded to be in subjection to their husbands, and the husbands are commanded to love their wives as their own selves. Children are to obey their parents and the parents are to admonish and correct the children. Servants are to obey their masters, and the masters are to be kind to their servants. Perhaps there sits in the service of the church as members of the same church a master and his slave. Positionally there is no master and slave, literally there is. Both the master and the slave will prove to be better

slaves of God if they understand these facts. These-very matters aid us to understand why Paul in both Ephesians and Colossians, after discussing at length the mystery of the body of Christ (our positional reckoning), did not dare close the epistles without giving the brethren to understand that there was also a literal condition to be taken into consideration. This is true every step of the way in this present discussion. Positionally there is no male and female, yet the pastor of the church is to be the husband of one wife and the wife will be saved in the day of the Lord by child-bearing and child-training (1 Timothy 1 & 2).

13- A. Positionally, We Are In The Spirit.

To say that we are positionally in the Spirit does not mean that we do not literally possess the Spirit. Being in the Spirit and being filled with the Spirit are two different things. The person who is filled with the Spirit is of course in the Spirit. Yet we must acknowledge that God is ministering the Spirit to us daily (Galatians 3:5-Gr). Some who are in the body of Christ are not filled with the Spirit, yet as long as they are members of the body of Christ they are in the Spirit positionally. We are all to pray for the filling of the Spirit, and it remains to be seen that we possess the Spirit in accordance to our submission to the written Word. Therefore some are fuller to the Spirit than others, yet all in the temple of God are positionally in the Spirit - positionally they are lively stone. All in the body of Christ (temple of God, church, etc.) are positionally alive to God. It is when one persistently refuses the working of the indwelling Spirit that he "dies" (Romans 8:13; Hebrews 6:4-6). This death must be associated with the positional reckoning.

13- B. Literally, We Are Not In The Spirit.

Again, let us note, that being in the Spirit and possessing the Spirit are two different matters. Being in the Spirit must be associated with our glorification. The Spirit was not given until Christ was glorified (John 7:37-39). Even the actual possession of the Spirit must be associated with glorification. Being in the Spirit and being in the body of Christ go

together. The Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9), and only those in Christ (His body) possess the Spirit (Romans 8:2). It is actually impossible for a truly glorified man to die, yet when we think of our positional reckoning the picture is different. The man who is in the body of Christ is in the Spirit - but when such a positionally glorified man persists in walking in the flesh he dies (Romans 8:13) - he positionally crucifies to himself the glorified Christ whose member he is (Hebrews 6:4-6).

14- A. Positionally, We Have Received the Kingdom

The word "Christ" means "Anointed," and must be associated with our Lord as the King. And when was He anointed with the oil of gladness? It was upon the completion of water baptism by that one appointed to announce the kingdom and introduce its King. The reader may study Isa. ¹ 1:1-11; 1:1-3; Luke 4:18; etc. The Spirit belongs to the kingdom and was given to the appointed King as His anointing upon the completion of water baptism. John preached repentance for the kingdom was at hand, and when people repented, he baptized them and then told them to be looking for Him who would quickly come and baptize them with the Spirit. Those who "put on" Christ (the King) and continued with Him soon received the "first fruits of the Spirit." Thus they positionally received the kingdom and are entrusted with its keys and power (Matthew 16:16-20; 18:15-18; 1 Corinthians 4:18-20; Hebrews 6:5; etc.). Positionally we are already in the kingdom (Colossians 1:13-14; Revelation 1:9).

14- B. Literally, We Have Not Received The Kingdom.

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15:50). Our literal entrance and the literal establishment of the kingdom is yet a future matter that will be accomplished only upon the King's return (2 Peter 1:11; Acts 14:22; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-6; Luke 12:32; Matthew 6:10, 33; etc.) Our present positional experience of the kingdom and its authority and power is only a testing and preparation for our literal entrance into the kingdom when the King returns.

III. THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR POSITION.

1. Our positional reckoning became effective at the time of water baptism.

When Paul asked, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" He continued by saying, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we had been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Romans 6:2-5). Keeping in mind that our crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and glorification are not literal but positional we can better associate the ordinance of baptism with them. We were baptized into Christ's death - not literally but positionally.

(In Galatians 3:27 Paul said, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." This putting on Christ that is accomplished at the time of water baptism speaks of putting on the new man that is neither male or female, etc. (Galatians 3:27-28; Colossians 3:5-11). This new man is the glorified man which we have positionally as members of the glorified Christ. We "put on" the glorified Christ that is neither male or female. We did not literally put on Christ, for if we did we would not yet be male and female, husband and wife, master and servant. However, by scriptural water baptism we did positionally put on that new man, the glorified man, and God deals with us therefore on the basis of our position. Our positional adoption is therefore necessarily associated with true water baptism. By putting on the Christ we put on the Son (HUIOS), therefore the Sonship (HUIOTHEIA) as Paul shows in this letter to the Galatians. Our present adoption is positional. Our having put on Christ (the Son - HUIOS) is positional. Our crucifixion death, burial, resurrection and glorification are all positional. And all these matters are so associated with baptism that we cannot fail to see that our positional reckoning began at the time we received baptism.

In the Colossian epistle Paul calls this “the circumcision of Christ” (Colossians 2:11-13). In Romans 6 Paul said that “the body of sin” is destroyed by death and associates it with baptism. In Colossians 2 he said that “the body of the sins of the flesh” are put off “by the circumcision of Christ” and again points to baptism as the “operation of God” that gets the job done. We must continue to keep in mind that this is a positional reckoning, however, for the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh means a state of sinless perfection - even members of the glorified Christ. Referring to the literal condition of the church at Corinth Paul said, “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump” (1 Corinthians 5:7), yet in the same verse he referred to the positional reckoning by saying, “as ye are unleavened.” At the time of water baptism this unleavened, sinlessly perfect dead to sin and alive to God position was reckoned by God on behalf of these Corinthians and everyone else in the body of Christ though we yet possess a “vile body” that we must beat black and blue and bring into subjection (slavery) to the will of God.

2. Our positional reckoning became experimental upon receiving the indwelling Spirit.

By all means it is a heresy to teach that a person receives the indwelling Spirit the moment he first believes upon Christ. The indwelling Spirit belongs to the Son, therefore to the adoption. This is exactly why the Spirit was not given until we were positionally adopted. Having received the adoption, the Spirit was given (Galatians 4), yet the adoption is not received until Christ is “put on” (Galatians 3:27), and Christ is put on by receiving scriptural water baptism. It might be added that the expression “positional reckoning” and the adoption become practically synonymous.

Our positional reckoning becomes experimental by the indwelling Spirit. Our positional adoption becomes experimental by the receiving of the Spirit. The circumcision of Christ becomes experimental in the same way. Our association with Christ as His members becomes experimental in this same way. Our association with Christ in crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and glorification becomes experimental also by the indwelling Spirit.

All these things aid us to more clearly understand why the Spirit is given only to those who receive true baptism, the circumcision of Christ, for only then did we positionally become members of the unleavened passover Lamb who was sacrificed (but now glorified) for us. Let no man who is leavened, or who is not a member of the glorified Christ, eat of that Sacrifice.

3. The experience of our position did not (and does not) eradicate the sin nature.

Neither the position nor the experience of the position literally destroy the body of the sins of the flesh, for if they did there could be no death of our bodies. Death is a result of sin, and apart from sin there is no death (James 1:15; Romans 5:12; 6:23; etc.). We are positionally dead to sin. Positionally the body of sin has been destroyed. If the experience of our position brought about a full experience of our positional reckoning we would not only be literally dead to sin but literally glorified. We could in no wise possess a “vile body” whose members and deeds must daily be put to death (Philippians 3:21; Colossians 3:5-9; Romans 8:12-13).

If the experience of our position literally destroyed the sin nature then we would certainly have no sin, but John warned that those who say such a thing deceive themselves and the truth is not in them (1 John 1:8). It is because we still have the sin nature that we are commanded to confess our sins (Matthew 6:12; 1 John 1:9). It is because we still have the sin nature that we have an advocate who intercedes for us (1 John 2:1-2). Thus, we must conclude that the receiving of the Spirit in the present age was not to eradicate the sin nature. “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us” (2 Corinthians 4:7).

4. The experience of our position did not (and does not) destroy the warfare within us.

The matter of the Christian warfare is quite an important one and must be considered from two view points, one of which does not pertain to the present study. On the one

hand our Christian warfare is against the forces of sin from without, while on the other hand it is one against our own evil nature. The Christian warfare as it pertains to wicked spirits is not the point of discussion here, therefore it will not be dealt with except as such might be associated with the matter of temptations. The following thoughts will be devoted to the warfare as it pertains to the sin nature.

A. First, it is needful to explain what this warfare is and also what it is not.

To begin with, it is not defeat. We might say that warfare does not speak of weakness but strength. It is not the weak but the strong who engage in battle. To war against our evil nature does not mean to be led captive by it. This warfare is not a resistance of the flesh against the flesh. It does not consist in defeating the evil nature by the energies of the flesh. The warfare does not consist in resolutions to be good boys and girls, nor does it consist in some kind of penance or chastisement of the body.

The warfare is solely a matter of faith. You may call it reckoning the body dead to sin (Romans 6), and that is right and it is done by faith. You may call it putting to death our members which are upon earth (Colossians 3:5-9) and the deeds of those members (Romans 8:13), but this also is done by the exercise of faith. You may call it keeping under the body and bringing it into subjection (1 Corinthians 9:27), but this also is an exercise of faith. You may call it walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-26), and this too is by faith. It is all a matter of faith - faith, which itself is the operation of God that brings us to rest upon the mighty working of His Spirit who indwells us (Philippians 2:12-13; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:16-17; etc.).

B. Paul's Own Experience.

Paul fought a good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 4:7), and much of that fight (and race) was against his own body (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

The righteous judge will give a crown of righteousness to those who have lived a righteous life — those who through the Spirit have waited for the hope of righteousness by faith (Galatians 5:5). Mark how these things are associated with our conduct as related to the body. The fight and the race both are necessary in order to win the crown of righteousness and also the incorruptible crown (2 Timothy 4:6-8; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 10:1-13). A race is not a fight, yet the race necessitates the laying aside of every weight of sin and this produces a fight which provided the occasion for Paul to refer to a fight.

“And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.” In order to be “temperate in all things” we must heed the words, “But I keep under my body (give it a beating), and bring it into subjection (make a slave of it), lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (disqualified in the race - 1 Corinthians 9:24-27). If the servant of God who gave these instructions found it necessary to engage in this constant warfare, surely we must take heed to his urgent warnings lest we come to think that we stand and thereby fall, or perhaps cause the weak ones to fall.

C. Paul's instructions.

A slightly different picture is given in Galatians 5:17. Here we find that there are two forces within us constantly entrenched in warfare against each other. The one is the indwelling Spirit and the other is the flesh nature. The flesh strives to

bring our entire being into slavery to vile lusts, whereas the Spirit strives to establish our entire being as a vessel sanctified and prepared for the Master's use. It is not a question as to which is the stronger. By all means the flesh is utterly powerless before the Spirit. But then we may well ask how there can possibly be any opposition from the flesh. The answer is that it is not the purpose of God to destroy the flesh nature yet, but rather to exercise, prove, and prepare our hearts in the stewardship of the grace of God through the Spirit.

The Spirit does not drive and force us, but is the mighty God who has come alongside to aid and lead us. He desires to be our defense and our offense, our protector and provider, our comfort and joy. It is God's pleasure that we learn to exercise this stewardship that we might be His HUIOI. Therefore the Spirit is active in proportion to our submission to Him. Christ is formed in us by the Spirit in proportion to our submission to Him. This means that Christ is seen in us in varied degrees - in some Christ is seen clearly, while in others He is hardly seen at all. It is these latter ones who are ready to be spewed out of the Lord's mouth (Revelation 2:4-5; 3:16-17; Hebrews 6 & 10; John 15).

How does all this prove that we are at war with our flesh? Simply because it is in our minds that we submit to the Spirit or to the flesh. If the Spirit took complete control of our minds to the extent that the flesh could have no chance to exercise influence and persuasion then there could not be the various degrees of the formation of Christ. To say that we have no warfare with the flesh is to say that it has no opportunity to influence or persuade us toward evil. The warfare is not a setting out to subdue the flesh by our own mental or physical power, but rather in yielding to the Spirit.

It may be argued that the exercise of faith in submitting to the Spirit is not a fight, nevertheless Paul found it most convenient to use such an expression as fighting a good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12). Observe how the fight is inseparably joined to faith. It is a “fight of faith.” When the clouds of financial hardships flush the skies and there appears to be no possible arm of help, the fight of faith begins to show more clearly. There is the family to take care of, and the Lord’s provisions have taken a big drop. Certainly it is a trial of faith, but what is a trial of faith? It is a flowery bed of ease? Is the exercise of faith at such a time like switching on a light? Will just a flip of a thought in the mind set the entire being at ease? It seems that somewhere along the line the flesh has raised up its head and whispered that things are awfully cloudy. Why should others be driving new cars, living in cushioned houses and wearing the latest fashions while you are riding over some mighty rough roads? There were times when you were fairly well set. It would be rather nice to be back under the clear skies with no pressing burdens and embarrassing circumstances. Yet, the trial of faith entertains a fight any way you look at it.

Let us look into those many passages which speak of the works of the flesh and then measure our experience (heart experience) and see if we are ever harassed by the flesh at any of those points. Let us also look over the fruits of the spirit and check up to see if we are strong and fruitful as the Spirit desires us to be. Surely we would not say that the flesh was not active in influencing our weaknesses and failures. Since the flesh is active in this manner we can be sure that there is a constant warfare - a fight of faith that will enable us to finish our course without being disqualified.

It was in this respect that Paul said, “mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth”

(Colossians 3:5). And again, “but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live” (Romans 8:12-13).

D. Tire evil nature and temptations.

An association of James 1:12-15; Galatians 5:17; 1 Corinthians 9:24-17; 10:1-12; and similar passages provides a lot of light at this point of the discussion. The first passage deals with trials and temptations as they are associated with the evil nature. God tries our faith. The devil tempts us. God does not tempt us, yet He does “suffer you to be tempted.” He will never permit us to be tempted above our ability to endure, yet He does permit us to be tempted (1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Thessalonians 3:5).

It becomes very necessary for us to determine what the connection is between our evil nature and temptations. This is made quite clear for us by Paul in Galatians 5:17 and by James in James 1:14). Concerning this latter passage the Weymouth translation says, “But when a man is tempted, it is his own passions that carry him away and serve as bait.” The Moffatt Translation says, “Everyone is tempted as he is beguiled and allured by his own desire.” The point of emphasis is that temptations are necessarily associated with our evil nature. 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 will further bear this out. It is in the purpose of God that we endure temptations or trials. God never sets a temptation before us but He permits Satan to do so that our faith may be exercised. Sufficient grace and power is always supplied to carry us through any temptation.

When Satan tempts us he does not ignore our evil nature, but approaches us through that medium. The evil nature is his most effective companion in his efforts to ensnare us. The passions of our evil nature are held forth as bait to lure us into the snare. The evil nature lies entrenched against

the Spirit within us (Galatians 5:17), and is ever active in its efforts to lead us into sin.

5. The experience of our position provides victory in the warfare.

Let us mark carefully that it is not the work of the Spirit to so suppress the carnal nature that we may never be tempted by it, for if such were the case there would never be temptations as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; therefore no warfare as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 9:27, nor blessedness as mentioned in James 1:12. It is not God's will that we should be ensnared in temptations, but that we should exercise faith and have victory through His grace which is always supplied abundantly by the indwelling Spirit.

The indwelling Spirit lies entrenched against the flesh within us, but does this suggest any lack of power on the Spirit's part? Never. It rather speaks of the victory that God has provided for us under the new covenant. There were no such provisions under the Law covenant, therefore there was no victory over the flesh for the saved man under that covenant. Under the new covenant there stands within us a valiant and unconquerable Warrior ever ready to strike a knock-down blow to the evil nature. He only awaits our request, which request of course, is completely dependent upon His power.

Our possession of the Spirit is in the form of a partnership (Hebrews 6:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8). We are counted as having an active part in our obedience to God. By nature we can exercise no choice toward serving God, yet the Spirit prepares our wills in such a way that we are able to choose either this course or that course in the service of God. We may resist the Spirit's leading and therefore grieve Him, or we may submit to Him and thus enjoy victory through Him. How could we be trained in the sonship (adoption) we possess if we had no liberty of choice (to resist or to submit)? The chief part of our training is the trial of our faith, but there can be no trial of faith apart from the liberty of choice. The spirit gives victory and supplies greater resistance against the flesh as we submit to Him.

Our warfare consists chiefly in this choice - this choosing to walk after the flesh or in the Spirit. Is it always an easy thing to submit to the Spirit? Our first answer to this question may not be the correct one. How can we explain the TRIAL of faith? The word "trial" suggests difficulty. This must also be associated with our growth in the grace and knowledge of the Lord and in faith. We often associate Romans 8:28 with bitter experiences and trials of our faith. Suppose that we should meet with such bitter experiences as many did in the dark ages. The flesh nature is quite active at such times, endeavoring to create doubts or to seek relief from the bitterness of the experience. Faith looks toward the Lord for comfort, but the flesh says that there is an easier way out than having to WAIT ON THE LORD.

We are to reckon our bodies dead to sin and alive to God, and thus we resolve by the power of the Spirit to do. Have we done this? Yes. How often? Many times. Why so many times? Because we find that we are only positionally dead, not literally dead. What good does it do then to reckon our bodies dead to sin? Absolutely nothing if it goes no further than that. What else are we to do then? We are to yield our "members as instruments of righteousness unto God" "as those that are alive from the dead" (Romans 6). Could those under the old covenant yield their members to God as those who are alive from the dead? No. Why? Because God's reckoning under the old covenant did not provide for such. They were under the Law and therefore under the dominion of sin (Romans 6:14-15). They did not possess the Spirit who alone is able to break the power of sin.

Under the new covenant we are not only reckoned to be dead to sin and alive to God, but we have received the Spirit who makes it possible for us to experience our positional reckoning. He has broken our bondage to sin and provided us with freedom. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death,

but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:22-23). “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Galatians 6:7-9).

HEAVENLY PLACES

Christ seated at Father's right hand

Members of Christ's body raised up with Christ to sit in heavenly places.

OLD COVENANT PEOPLE (Israel)	NEW COVENANT PEOPLE (Israel)
Positional (Judicial) Reckoning — Dead	Positional (Judicial) Reckoning ---- Alive
Literal Condition — Dead	Literal Condition -- Dead
Experimental Condition — Dead	Experimental Condition — Alive
Daily Provisions — Daily Cleansing	Daily Provisions — Daily Cleansing

NON-COVENANT PEOPLE (Gentiles - Saved & Lost)

Literal Condition —Dead

Experimental Condition —Dead

Daily Provisions — None (In power of Satan -- pertains to body only, 1 Corinthians 5:.)

UNDER LAW

UNDER GRACE

1. Old Man	1. New Man
2. Not Crucified	2. Crucified with Christ
3. Not dead	3. Dead with Christ
4. Not Buried	4. Buried with Christ
5. Not Raised	5. Raised with Christ
6. Not glorified	6. Glorified with Christ
7. Under Law	7. Dead to Law
8. Under Dominion of Sin	8. Dead to Sin
9. Bore Fruit to Death	9. Bear Fruit to God
10. Members Servants of Uncleanness	10. Members Servants of Righteousness
11. Under Curse	11. Freed from Curse
12. End is Death	12. End is Eternal Life
13. Dead in Sins	13. Dead to Sin
14. Dead to God	14. Alive to God
15. Oldness of Letter	15. Newness of Spirit
16. Married to Law	16. To Be Married to Christ
17. Slave to Lay of Sin and Death	17. Freed from Law of Sin and Death
18. In the Flesh	18. In the Spirit
19. Did Not Have Spirit	19. Have Spirit
20. Walked After Flesh	20. Walk in Spirit
21. Not Redeemed	21. Redeemed
22. Not Adopted	22. Adopted

The above gives some of the contrasts of the conditions and relationships of God's reckoning of the bodies of His elect according to the Law covenant on the one hand and according to the new covenant on the other hand. This follows closely the general outline of thoughts given in Romans 6 and 8. This may also be studied along with the last two chapters of this book.