

*A Layman's Look
At The Book Of
Galatians*

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Introduction

The book of Galatians was written by the Apostle Paul, probably around 57 AD, during his third missionary journey from Ephesus. Galatia is a region that was home to a multiplicity of local congregations, of which this letter was to be circulated. There is also the probability that it had been written while Paul was in Corinth.

Galatia is a country region north of the Island of Cyprus, was the name given it by the Roman government, although it also referred to the ethnicity of the people. It was a main route of traffic for commercial purposes and to the west of its region were the many cities referred to in Revelation to which the Apostle John had written (Revelation 2-4), concerning their falling away from the truth of the Gospel and warnings by God of their pending doom, as well as encouragement to stand fast in the Word of God.

The main problem with the many congregations in Galatia would be that which we find today; intermingling works with grace. Wherever the Gospel is preached, there will be those who will seek to add their works to the finished work of Christ on the cross. "Well, you have to believe, but you also have to...(you add the work you think of)." If it was not as then, circumcision, it is today that you must be baptized (any one of the many so-called "baptisms" that you see today; sprinkling, dousing the head of babies with water, going into water and pouring water over the individual, etc.), or you must have spoken in "tongues," although no one can clearly define which "tongue" it is that they must use.

Paul, as we would say today, "laid it out on the line," concerning their seeking to add works, calling them *foolish*, which in the Greek was the equivalent of our calling them stupid, moron, or just plain idiotic. Any time anyone tries to add their works to the work of Christ, is simply not wishing to exercise the faith that is there for us to have complete, eternal and final salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary.

It is my prayer that in this brief work, you will see that, as stated so many times before, salvation is not in **do**, but in **done**. It is finished. Read with an open mind and heart to the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ, and see that Jesus paid it all.

Jerry W Jones PhD
Psalm 68:11

Chapter One

Another Gospel

Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen (Galatians 1:1-5). As was Paul's custom, and the custom of that era, he opened his letter by a public salutation, personal authentication and powerful introduction of the purpose for writing to these ***churches of Galatia***. It is obvious that he is not speaking of some invisible, mystical group, but flesh and blood people who had been won to the knowledge of grace through Jesus Christ. It is also evident that there were those in Galatia who had challenged Paul's authority as God's emissary to deliver the Gospel of salvation to them, and had sought to undermine his ministry. But the most evident problem was that which was the opening chastisement he would pronounce on those who not only doubted his ministerial position, but the message he had given.

1. Grace Versus Works:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (1:6-9). As seems to be the case wherever the Gospel is preached, there will be those who will seek to pervert it with their own "works," thereby voiding the simplicity of salvation. Paul uses the choice of two different Greek words in explaining the difference between false teaching and the truth of the Gospel of Christ. ***I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.*** There are two distinct Greek words to describe the use of the word ***another***; the first being the Greek word 'ετερον, which means of a different type and the second being αλλος, which means of a true type.

Herein lies the danger of adding to or omitting from the Word of God. There is a curse God places on anyone who will tamper with His Word. Revelation 22:18-19 tells us ***For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*** It is a fearful thing for man to seek to add his own ideas to the Gospel. Moses warned against adding to the law, which is

what was done by the Pharisees and Scribes in the days of Jesus Christ. They would take the law and make it fit their purpose, rather than teach the people the truths God had given.

Here in Galatians, Paul tells the people ***If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*** It should be a fearful thing for man to face the anathema of God, but today we see so many religions that teach you must also be baptized to be saved, or you must speak in tongues to show that you have been filled with the Holy Spirit and are therefore saved, or you must do any one of a dozen “works” to be saved. They will quote Philippians 2:12 and say, “Well, the Bible says ***...work out your salvation...*** without taking into account the next verse, which says, ***For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*** We don’t work ***for*** our salvation, but ***because*** we are saved. When anyone adds to or takes away from the Bible, they face the wrath of Almighty God.

It should put fear in anyone who would read again, ***God shall take away his part out of the book of life...*** when they ***take away from the words of the book of this prophecy.*** What about all the perversions in the world that omit verses from their “bibles” because the verses do not fit their lifestyle? The whole theme of this first chapter is to show the Galatians that they need to tread on soft ground when they handle the Word of God.

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man (Galatians 1:10-11). Paul’s use of ***now*** implies that before his conversion, his sole purpose in persecuting the saints of God was to please others. He no doubt received, besides the authority to go to Damascus for the reason to arrest Christians, but to gain from their capture. It was the custom of those days that any time someone was arrested, all their property was confiscated by the arresting authority, hence, Paul gained from his actions against the Christians. But ***now***, his purpose in life had been changed. He no longer sought to please men, for in that, he would ***not be the servant of Christ.*** His whole meaning for living was now to serve the Lord with all his heart, soul and might.

Sad to say but too many “ministers” today seek to placate their message so as to please their congregations and not “step on any toes.” Their message is watered down so that they give out soothing words to those ***having itching ears*** or “tickle” their fancy and not to bring any conviction. Far too many “church boards” have dismissed pastors because they would not water down their messages.

I recall one an occasion where the minister of the congregation I attended was to be gone for two Wednesdays and asked if I would have the messages those weeks. I had a series of messages titled, A Prophet For A Profit – or A Profit For A Prophet, which dealt with compromise of the Gospel with the ecumenical crowds of that area. When one of the “elders” came into the church building and saw me in the pulpit, he quickly took his hat and coat and left immediately. That week, I was told by the pastor that he had been told I would have nothing further to do in the services. Since the congregation felt I had overstepped my boundary, I felt compelled to submit my resignation. Within two weeks, the pastor did the same thing. They had rejected not only my message but his, and would not be submissive to his leading. But Paul’s preaching was not to please man.

For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:12). The *revelation* (Gr. αποκάλυψις) is defined: disclosure, appearing, coming, enlighten, manifestation, be revealed, revelation. This was the time when Paul (then called Saul) went to Arabia and communed with Jesus Christ and was revealed the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures in Jesus, and then went to preach the Gospel unto the Jews, then to the Gentiles.

2. Personal History

For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers (Galatians 1:13-14). As Paul has had to do on other occasions, he goes into a brief personal background of his history, explaining his *conversation* (behavior or conversation) *in time past in the Jews' religion...* The term *religion* (Gr. ιουδαϊσμοῦ - Judaism) speaks of the zeal that the Jews had against anyone who was other than a Jew, in this occasion those who had converted to Christianity, whether Jew or Gentile. Paul had not only *wasted it* (ravaged, pilfered for his own gain), but had also *profited in the Jews' religion*. It was a common practice in Paul's days for a person who initiates an arrest or apprehension of another to seize the property and claim it for his own. Such must have been the case for Paul, even *above many by equals* in the nation of Israel. Such was a custom that was carried over into the time of the inquisition, when Christians would be put to death for their faith in Christ and in the written Word, which the Popes held was against the law for them to be able to read.

Paul now calls Judaism *the Jews' religion*, demonstrating to those he witnessed to that he was saved, not *by* Judaism, not *in* Judaism, but *from* Judaism. Religion will never save anyone, no matter what so-called "denomination" it may be. Even the Baptist religion will not save. It is only through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ and when we repent of our sins, believe on Him and ask Him for forgiveness, that we become the children of God. So joining a church, being baptized (whatever method you may choose) or any of the many "works" you may seek will not merit you entrance into the throne of Grace. It is work that was finished on the cross of Calvary for you and I, work that was done by Jesus Christ and He alone, that gives salvation.

A large part of the doctrines of the Pharisees depended on mere tradition; and Paul doubtless made this a special matter of study, and was particularly tenacious in regard to it. It was to be learned, from the very nature of it, only by oral teaching, as there is no evidence that it was then recorded. Subsequently these traditions were recorded in the Mishna, and are found in the Jewish writings. But in the time of Paul they were to be learned as they were handed down from one to another; and hence the utmost diligence was requisite to obtain a knowledge of them. Paul does not here say that he was zealous then for the practice of the new religion, nor for the study of the Bible. His object in going to Jerusalem, and studying at the feet of Gamaliel, was doubtless to obtain a knowledge of the traditions of the sect of the Pharisees. Had he been studying the Bible all that time, he would have kept from the fiery zeal which he evinced in persecuting the church, and would, if he had studied it right, have been saved from much trouble of conscience afterwards (Albert Barnes' NT Commentary).

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus (Galatians 1:15-17). If ever there was a clear distinction of predestination in a man, it was in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul the Apostle. Here he indicates that it was God who had called him into service for Jesus Christ. Sometimes we can see God's handiwork in someone whose sole purpose was to bring glory to His Word and His work. Such was the case in the Old Testament with Jeremiah, whom God had called before even his birth. ***Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations*** (Jeremiah 1:4-5). We cannot understand the omniscience of Almighty God, because He knows everything from the beginning to the end, and all that pertains in between. We are predestined to His service, and yet we have a free will. It can be explained best by saying that God has predestined **all** to be saved, but not all will choose that path. It is looking at a doorway with a sign over it that says, "Whosoever will may come," and on the other side, it reads, "Predestined from the foundation of the earth." We cannot see the other side until we step through that door of faith.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:18-19). For those who will holler for the perpetual virginity of Mary, they need but read the Scriptures to see that Jesus had brothers and sisters. "Oh, but that word means cousins." The word cousin or cousins is used but twice in the New Testament and neither time is it anywhere near the Greek word for brother or sister.

Here we see that Paul and Peter had a time of fellowship, which was nothing like that which was to be had later in their ministries, when because of Peter's relationship with the Jews and Gentiles, he was called into question about his attitude by Paul. We shall touch on this briefly later.

Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me (Galatians 1:20-24). We read in the book of Acts that those dwelling in Jerusalem were at first reluctant to accept Paul as a disciple of Christ, until they heard him speak and confound the unbelieving Jews by using the Old Testament Scriptures to prove that Jesus was the promised Messiah. It was not long until the Pharisees sought to kill Paul because of his convicting testimony of the grace of Christ, and those who had believed began to praise God, not just for the discontinued persecution of Paul but his discerning preaching of the cross of Christ.

Chapter Two

Justification By Faith

Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain (Galatians 2:1-2). We see a continuation of Paul's reference to his history, now as a Christian and proponent of the Gospel of Christ. It is evident from reading his epistles that this ***revelation*** was the same as that personally given to the apostles by Jesus Christ when He was on earth, and that the message received and given by Paul was accepted by the Jews, as well as the Gentiles. Evidently, because of the tension of that day between those of the Jewish faith, he had to privately seek out to give the Gospel to the "ethnic" group that was previously forbidden access to anything pertaining to the Jews, including the faith in Christ for their salvation.

We see in this chapter the experiences of Paul in Jerusalem, the experiences he had in Antioch and the great theme as previously mentioned, justification by faith, not of works. It is the theme Paul used in other of his epistles, proving that our works are dead, and that we are also dead in Christ, Because it is He who has completed all that is necessary for our salvation.

It was a brilliant move on the part of the Lord to have Titus, a Gentile, accompany Paul on his journey, to demonstrate to the Jews that salvation was not just for them, but as Christ had said, for all the world (Matthew 28:19-20). The ethnic barrier that was between the Jews and Gentile nations was such that they looked disdainfully on others as "dogs" and unworthy of God's love and protection. It was to these that Paul was to go eventually with the Gospel, when it was rejected by the Jews.

But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you (Galatians 2:3-5). Here was the underlying theme of the Judaizers; you must also be circumcised in order to be saved. This was the reason Paul and others went up to Jerusalem to dispute concerning this, declaring to them how the Gospel had been preached to and received by Gentiles, without the necessity of them being circumcised. Today, it would be those who say it is necessary to also be baptized, or to speak in tongues, or any amount of other "works" to be saved. Baptism was not given in order to, but because someone is saved. "Oh, but Peter said, ***Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*** (Acts 2:38). They fail to realize that ***for the remission of sins*** does not mean "in order to," but "because of" the remission of sins. It is like a gangster, robbing a store and going to prison for robbery. He does not go to prison "in order to" rob, but because he had robbed the store. Works do not save.

But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do (Galatians 2:6-10). Paul evidently (with Barnabas and Titus, it seems) sat down with the disciples who then questioned him on his message of salvation. When they found out that his was the same as that which they preached, although his was to the Gentiles and theirs unto the Jews, they extended *the right hands of fellowship* unto them and called upon them to *remember the poor*, which of course would have been a portion of their mission journey, helping out the saints who were to be under persecution during those days and suffered loss of property and ability to even feed themselves.

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 (Galatians 2:11-13). Whenever you have an ethnic difference, there will be contention, as seemed to be the case here with Peter. He would gladly “hobnob” with the Gentile Christians as long as there were no Jews present, but as soon as some Jews showed up, there goes Peter off and fellowships with them, totally ignoring the Gentile Christians who were present. This became such a sharp difference in his demeanor that it even caused Barnabas to follow his example.

It is a sad state of affairs that in our so-called fundamental congregations today, we have cliques and social status among the Christians. Someone from the outside who comes to visit will sometime feel as if they are lower class citizens. I had stated it once before, but it needs repeating. In one congregation, the men had a prayer breakfast every Sunday morning, and during one such occasion, a prominent doctor (who had the newest of automobiles and flew his own airplane) made the statement, “I think anyone who does not clear at least \$100,000 a year as being poor.” How do you think this made some of the men there who were working jobs that barely paid the minimum wage?

Such was the case with Peter, when he was with Gentile Christians. He would converse openly with them, and then when Jewish Christians would be there, he would leave and talk only with those of his ethnic standing. And it was so apparent to Paul, that he noticed *Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation*. Such a matter had to be corrected. “Oh but the Bible says ‘Judge not lest ye be judged.’” Friend, if you will read the context of that remark. it speaks of one who has problems of his own that he needs to correct before he can ever think of correcting someone else. It would be like a drunkard telling another drunkard that he should not drink. Whenever someone is caught in a position where they need to be corrected, make sure you are able to do so without you being wrong in something you are doing also.

But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? (Galatians 2:14). Here was the time when private criticism had to be ignored, that others would know when something was very wrong. Religious snobbery does not fit well in any occasion, especially when it is someone who is foremost in preaching the Gospel. If this was allowed to continue, there would have been a rift between Jews and Gentiles who were saved. So Paul addressed the situation in the only way it was possible to let others know it was not to be condoned.

The nature of Paul's rebuke shows, first of all, the inconsistency of lawkeeping. If it was right for Simon Peter to live as the gentile believers lived, why should he desire the Gentiles to live as the Jews? That is what he was saying when he left the gentile table for the kosher table. If gentile living under grace apart from the Law was good enough for Peter, was it bad for the Gentiles themselves? If Simon Peter was free to live outside the Law, was it not lawful for the Gentiles to do the same?

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee, Vol. V, p.160

We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Galatians 2:15-16). It is simple, my friend. Works will never save you, whether you be Gentile or Jew. Salvation is simply ***by the faith of Jesus Christ***.

Can you imagine folks gathered around the throne of grace and bragging about all they did to "earn" their salvation? There would be no place for bring glory to the one who paid the price for our eternal redemption. There would be the millionaire who says he gave over and above the ten percent required (it doesn't though, because the tithe was for the Old Testament Jews under the law and never was intended as a measure of one's ability to find acceptance with God). And then there was the little old lady who gave her "mite" in the temple (still under the law), whom Jesus said gave her all. Salvation is not in what you may or may not have done, ***for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified***. To be justified is to be accepted in Almighty God, and our justification is only through what Jesus accomplished on the cross of Calvary. We are ***justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*** (Romans 3:24). We are ***justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*** (Romans 5:1). Then being ***justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him*** (Romans 5:9). ***And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*** (I Cor. 6:11).

Living He loved me; dying He saved me.
Buried He carried my sin far away.
Rising He justified, freely forever.
One day He's coming; O glorious day!

But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God (Galatians 2:17-19). The Jew, who rejects the law in order to be justified by Jesus Christ, takes his place as a sinner in the sight of God. The question then arises, does Jesus make him a sinner? Paul answers emphatically, “Of course not. The Jews are born a sinner just as is the Gentile.” The law never made anyone righteous or just in the sight of God. All the law could do was show a man that he is a sinner (Romans 3:20; 7:7).

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. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain (Galatians 2:20-21). Verse twenty is perhaps one of the greatest New Testament statements that I would imagine most Christians have memorized at one point or another, or at least knew where it was to be located in the Bible. As one preacher stated it, “Whenever I am tempted to sin, all I need to do is go to a chair and throw the 220 switch.” We need but realize that all our sin was laid upon Jesus Christ, and because I, along with my sin, have been crucified with Christ, the life I now live is simply by faith. I am free from the penalty and power of sin, and one day soon, will be forever freed from the presence of sin. Therefore, works or self attempts at righteousness do not and will not justify me in the sight of God. I have already been declared righteous through faith in Jesus Christ.

Verse twenty-one sums up the argument some would give about works for their salvation. It simply states, ***I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*** My friend, if works could get you to Heaven, then what would be the point of Jesus Christ dying on the cross?

Jesus paid it all. All to Him I owe.
Sin had left a crimson stain.
He washed it white as snow.

Chapter Three

The Illustration

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain (Galatians 3:1-4). The implication of the use of the word ***foolish*** is someone who lacks any intelligence; someone unwise in their choices. To ***bewitch*** is to fascinate someone with false accusations. It is akin to a magician who, by slight of hand, fascinates his audience into believing he is actually performing magic, or like a ventriloquist who makes his dummy seem to be talking, simply because it is near to him and people do not see his throat or mouth moving with the words supposedly spoken through the dummy. That is what these false teachers were doing to the Galatians; through their fancy words, they were making the people believe they were not completely saved, but needed to “add” something to their faith in order to be saved.

Paul simply asked them, ***Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*** They should have known, down through the years, that the law could do nothing but show them their sinful state, and no matter how hard they tried, there was no way they could be obedient to all the law, especially when, if just one point of the law was broken, they were guilty of the whole law (James 2:10). Salvation was perfected in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and nothing of the flesh was needed to bring about any more perfection.

He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? (Galatians 3:5). Here was the prime sample Paul left before them. When someone was healed of any infirmity, was it done under the power of the law, or simply by their faith? Jesus tested the faith of those whom He healed many times, by simply challenging them to believe, as with the man whose child was dying, came to Jesus, ***And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief*** (Mark 9:24). It is the same with salvation. No one can be saved if they don't have the faith to believe Jesus Christ can save them. You can challenge them with their sin, show them what was accomplished on the cross, yet if they refuse to believe they can be saved, they cannot. Too many people think they can work their way to Heaven, yet will miserably fall short, when they stand before the Great White Throne Judgment and be cast into eternal fire. “Faith is just believing what God says He will do.”

Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham (Galatians 3:6-9).

Now Paul sets before them the prime example of faith. Here was Abraham, a man who was ninety-nine years old, and God says his wife is going to have a child, with Sarah being eighty-nine years old, and well past her time of being able to conceive. Yet the Scriptures tell us, ***Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*** What did Abraham do to receive righteousness to his account? He did nothing but believe what God said was going to happen, and when one hundred years old, he and his wife were blessed with Isaac, the child of laughter. And it was through this child that came Jacob and the twelve tribes of Israel, of whom came the Promised Seed, Jesus Christ. All this, simply because ***Abraham believed God. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.*** That is you and I, my friend, when we believe on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary and receive Him as our Lord and Savior

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them (Galatians 3:10-12). Having failed by all their efforts to yield perfect obedience, they must, of course, be exposed to the curse which the law denounces on the guilty. The word rendered curse *καταρα*, means, as with us, properly, imprecation or cursing (Albert Barne's NT Commentary). Paul implies that if one is going to try to live under the law, he must be obedient to the full extent of the law, for its only purpose was to expose a person as being already under the curse of sin, hence he cannot be ***justified by the law in the sight of God.*** Even under the Old Testament commandments, it was stated that righteousness came by faith, not by adhering to strict regiments of commands. Habakkuk 2:4 stated, ***Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.*** So even then, God is showing us that faith and faith alone is what justifies a man, or declares him righteous.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith (Galatians 3:13-14). There are two terms used for the word redeem or redemption. Here, the Greek word, *εξαγοραζω*, means more specifically a purchase of any kind, where the word redeemed as otherwise used means to *ransom*, as if it is something paid to purchase someone's freedom. This is what Christ accomplished on Calvary for you and I, paid the price for our sins, by the shedding of His sinless blood to cleanse ours from the filth of sin. And contrary to some liberal preachers of today, this ransom was **not** paid to Satan to redeem us from him, but was the blood sacrifice that Jesus took with Him and presented before the Father at Christ's ascension, before He presented Himself to His disciples after His resurrection. That is why He told Mary Magdalene, ***Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God*** (John 20:17). He ascended to Heaven, presented His shed blood as the one final sacrifice for the sin of the world, and then returned to present Himself to His disciples.

Do you realize that Jesus only referred to Almighty God as His God twice in the Scriptures? Once on the cross, when He cried, ***My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*** And then in John 20:17 as quoted above. For before sin was laid upon

Him, Jesus had no need for a righteous God as His judge. But once He became a curse for us, He became sin for us, and then had the sin of the world judged on Him, so that we would not have to face the judgment rightly due us. All this so that the same blessing of Abraham, by faith, could be ours and *we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ (Galatians 3:15-16). Paul now brings in the analogy of Abraham and the promised seed, Jesus Christ. He does not use the plural term, as if the promise extended to many persons; but he speaks in the singular number, as if but one was intended; and that one must be the Messiah. Such is Paul's interpretation; such is evidently the sentiment which he intends to convey, and the argument which he intends to urge.

There is a popular song that is sung by children as well as adults that says, "Every promise in the book is mine." There are significant promises that God has made that are intended for all in the Bible, that is sure, but in this promise here, it shows that there is but one to whom this promise, or covenant, is extended, and that is the Messiah of the Jewish people, who is known in the New Testament as Christ. And certainly, no one can add to or take away from this promise. It is eternal and it is sure.

And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise (Galatians 3:17-18). When was this promise given to Abraham? Was it under the law? No, for the law was not given until *four hundred and thirty years after*. So when Abraham believed God, it was not while under the stringent rules of the law, but simply by faith. He believed and was declared righteous.

What was *the inheritance...of the law*? It was that Abraham's seed, Jesus Christ, would be the ruler of all the earth. That is why Jesus Christ is called King of kings and Lord of lords in the book of Revelation. One day, He will rule and reign over all, and all will acknowledge Him as Lord.

Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one (Galatians 3:19-20). Again, for what purpose was the law? It was to show man's sinfulness, not be a tool to "earn" our way to Heaven. In the first place, the law was given to the nation of Israel, not to any Gentile, so those outside the Abrahamic covenant could never claim any righteousness by obedience of the law. The law simply was a tool to point the nation to He who would come and fulfill all the righteous demands of the law, and that one was Jesus Christ, the mediator mentioned in I Timothy 2:5: *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* There is no Mary, no Joseph, no "Saint" Christopher or any other so-called saint to which we can go to in prayer. That is the privilege reserved only for He who is a mediator of all. The giving of the law could not annul or abrogate the promise made to Abraham. It was long after that, and it was itself subservient to that. It was given by the instrumentality of angels, and it was entirely

under the control of the Mediator, the Messiah. Since the law was given long after the promise, it shows that there is no merit in obedience to the law, for it had but one purpose and that was *because of transgressions*. You will recall, when Moses came down from the mount with the tables of stone, the law had already been broken before he cast them down and broke the tablets before the people. And by the way, those who will argue that we do not have any of “the originals,” neither did the people of God, for they were broken and Moses went back up on the mount and received a **second copy**, and there was no original. So the argument that we do not have the inspired Word of God today, because we “do not have the originals,” is of none effect. God has promised that we would **always** have His Word, inspired and inerrant. We just need to be sure that what we read is God’s authorized Word, and that we have in the King James Bible, and none other.

Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe (Galatians 3:21-22). One again we have the analogy; law or faith? We cannot argue against the simple statement, *if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law*. But that law (*the scripture*), shows that **all** are sinners, so that righteousness and eternal life can be only *by faith of Jesus Christ*. This almost sounds as if the faith is that which Jesus Christ had, in His willing sacrifice of Himself. Yet verse twenty-seven shows that this faith is that which we have *in Jesus Christ*.

But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster (Galatians 3:23-25). The schoolmaster (Gr. παιδαγωγός) in Old Testament times had strict rule over the child, even though the child may be heir to all his father owned. But the moment the child became of age, the schoolmaster had no more authority. Such was the law. It ruled over the people until the time that the law brought us to faith in Christ Jesus, thereby through Him we were declared justified and no longer under the rules of the law. It had lost its purpose when Christ fulfilled the very letter of the law.

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 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. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:26-29). Here was the purpose of the law; to bring us to Christ in faith. We have been “immersed” into Christ, as He has also entered our hearts. Hence we are no longer ruled by the law, but through faith, therefore through faith, we become the children of God and although we were outside the covenant of the promise given to Abraham, we become heirs, according to this promise given by God. We, as well as the Old Testament nation of Israel, are free from the law and its demand for strict obedience.

Chapter Four

Redeemed & Fulfilled

Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons (Galatians 4:1-5). Paul once again lists the authority of another over a child, even though the child will eventually be ruler over all the estate of his father. Here, the tutor (ἐπιτροπος) is defined as a commissioner, i.e. domestic manager, guardian:--steward, tutor, and the governor (οικονομος) is a house-distributor (i.e. manager), or overseer, i.e. an employee in that capacity; by extension, a fiscal agent (treasurer); figuratively, a preacher (of the Gospel):--chamberlain, governor, steward. The Greek word is a combination of house and law, meaning such a person has full authority over the child, until such a time that the child becomes of legal age, at which time all authority of the **governor** is removed. Such was the law over the Old Testament saints. It was the supreme guide for their lives, showing them, and us, that no man can be justified by the law. It took someone who had authority over the very law, the one who had written and given the law to Moses in the first place, to fulfill the law.

The expression, **But when the fullness of time was come**, conveys that the Lord Jesus Christ, to the very day of His “triumphant” ride into Jerusalem, had culminated the time to the fullness, from the day that the decree was made to rebuild Jerusalem, until the day Christ entered into Jerusalem. That is why Luke 19:41-42 says, **And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes** (emphasis mine). Jesus Christ knew that all things were fulfilled according to God’s perfect timetable, down to the very day He entered into Jerusalem.

J. Dwight Pentecost’s book, Things To Come – A Study In Biblical Eschatology, pages 345-346 quotes Sir Robert Anderson in *The Coming Prince* and states the following, concerning **in the fulness of time**:

“From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto *Messiah the Prince* shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks.” An era therefore of sixty-nine “weeks,” or 483 prophetic years reckoned from the 14th March, B.C. 445, should close with some event to satisfy the words, “unto the Messiah the Prince.”

...And the date of it can be ascertained. In accordance with the Jewish custom, the Lord went up to Jerusalem upon the 8th Nisan, “six days before the Passover.” But as the 14th, on which the Paschal Supper was eaten, fell that year upon a Thursday, the 8th was the preceding Friday. He must have spent the Sabbath, therefore, at Bethany; and on the evening of the 9th, after the Sabbath had ended, the Supper took place in Martha’s house. Upon the following day, the 10th Nisan, He entered Jerusalem as recorded in the Gospels.

The Julian date of that 110th Nisan was Sunday the 6th April, A.D. 32. What then was the length of the period intervening between the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the public advent of "Messiah the Prince," – between the 14th March, B. C. 445, and the 6th April, A.D. 32? THE INTERVAL CONTAINED EXACTLY AND TO THE VERY DAY 173,880 DAYS, OR SEVEN TIMES SIXTY-NINE PROPHETIC YEARS OF 360 DAYS, the first sixty-nine weeks of Gabriel's prophecy.

Anderson arrives at his figures as follows:

The 1st Nisan in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (the edict to rebuild Jerusalem) was 14th March, B. C. 445.

The 10th Nisan in Passion Week (Christ's entry into Jerusalem) was 6th April, A. D. 32.

The intervening period was 476 years and 24 days (the days being reckoned inclusively, as required by the language of the prophecy, and in accordance with the Jewish practice).

| | |
|--|--------------|
| But 476 x 365 = | 173,740 days |
| Add (14 March to 6 th April, <i>both</i> inclusive..... | 24 days |
| Add for leap years..... | 116 days |
| | 173,880 days |
| Add 69 weeks of prophetic years of 360 days (or 60 x 7 x 360) | 173,880 days |

Thus Anderson shows us that the sixty-nine weeks began with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem on the Sunday of the week of the Lord's death. The ...reading of Luke 19:42, spoken as our Lord came into Jerusalem on that day is most significant: "If thou also hadst known, even on *this day*, the things which belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes! ... The accuracy of Daniel's prophecy is observed in that he states "after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off" (Dan. 9:26).

There is no gap between the time of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the very day Christ entered Jerusalem. The Scriptures show that God does do things *decently and in order* (I Corinthians 14:40).

And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ (Galatians 4:6-7). Paul gives us first the positive aspect of our salvation. We are no longer little children, crying "Papa." It is to be noted that usually the first sounds a toddler will pronounce will be the consonant "b" and the vowel "a," "Ababa, ababa, ababa." Significantly, that is the cry for "daddy" to be his helper. Here, our "Papa" is our Heavenly Father, and it is the Spirit of God within us that is crying unto God for our sustenance and spiritual strength. In Jewish and early Christian prayers, it was the title given to the Heavenly Father, but a title that was not permitted to be used of a servant in a household to the master, but only for the child. And since we are sons, we are ***an heir of God through Christ***. What a glorious thought that we should be members of a household that will rule the earth.

Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? (Galatians 4:8-9). Now Paul brings out the negative. Before we knew God, we served another "god," that of the servants of the devil. But now...such glorious

words to be used. Someone once said, “Thank God for the but in the Bible.” Someone thought he was being rude, until he explained that if it were not for the “but,” we would still be lost in sin. But God...but now... God’s interjection of the conjunction changes the whole status of the Gentile world. But if we have been so changed by the Spirit of God, through the blood of Jesus Christ, how can we think that we need to “add” to our salvation by our works? They did not serve us any good before salvation; how think we that they will do anything except once more placing us under the bondage of trying to “work” our way to Heaven?

Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain (Galatians 4:10-11). Paul once more is returning to the on going premise of this epistle, and that is, “Why do you doubt my authority to be your minister of the Gospel?” They have been duped into believing they must observe the same rituals that the Old Testament saints had don for so many hundreds of years. It was not enough that they felt they needed circumcision as part and parcel of salvation, but also felt compelled to follow all the rituals that were required of the nation of Israel; Sabbath keeping, Pentecost, Feast of Trumpets, etc. It would have been enough for many pastors to throw their hands up in defeat.

Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus (Galatians 4:12-14). There has been much speculation concerning Paul’s ***infirmity of the flesh***. Some have felt that due to being stoned at Lystra, it left him impaired in the body so much that he may have suffered epileptic seizures, as well as bulging eyes and a stooped body. The Corinthian Christians called his appearance contemptible, but no matter what was the cause, Paul would not let his ***temptation*** or ***infirmity*** keep him from giving the Gospel to all regions where he went. The use of the phrase ***an angel of God*** is an expression of one being accepted as God’s “messenger.” The word ***angel*** is a direct transliteration from the Greek word ἀγγέλος, which is the word for angel or messenger. Here, these in Galatia had accepted his message, but now were attempting to reject him from any further witnessing or writing to exhort them to be obedient to the Gospel.

Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth (Galatians 4:15-16). Here is a hint as to Paul’s affliction; perhaps his eyesight was so bad it gave him the appearance of “the Humpback of Notre Dame,” all bent over, eye sight being such that he was unable to write as much as he desired and had to use an amanuensis for the purpose of getting out what epistles he could. The attitude of the Galatians before was such that they were willing to give their own eyes to help him see, but now he was more an enemy than a friend, simply because he gave them the full Gospel, and nothing to please their own desires.

They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you. (Galatians 4:17-18). The words, ***zealously affect*** are from the one Greek word, ζήλω which is a term for being not only zealous, but very jealous over them. Here was the problem facing the Galatians. Someone had come into

their congregation and were trying to change their doctrine, saying salvation by faith was not enough; they had to add works to be sure of their salvation. Paul was telling them that it was ***good to be zealously affected always in a good thing...*** in other words, have a zeal for proclaiming the Gospel and the Gospel alone. Don't use your zeal to convince people that they need to add to their salvation. It seems they followed Paul's advice when he was present, then reverted back to tradition and Old Testament rituals whenever he was absent.

My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you (Galatians 4:19-20). Paul uses a very "motherly" approach to them. They were to him as though he had been the one to give them birth, and in a sense, he did, for he was the one who brought them spiritual birth through Jesus Christ, and now, what was he to do? Would it be necessary, as with the Corinthians, to use harshness and discipline when he was to come see them?

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). Here was the problem; law or grace, which was it to be? You cannot have salvation by grace and live according to the law. Just as circumcision was an Old Testament custom for the nation of Israel, so baptism is but a custom for the New Testament saint, something that shows what Christ did.

Here were two distinct nations that came from one man, and because of Abraham and his disobedience, we still see wars and factions today, and will until the end. Those born of Sarah were free, and those born of Hagar were born of a slave woman. Because of Abraham's disobedience and lack of faith at this point, we have the Arab nations and the nation of Israel in a continual battle today over the land of Canaan. The Arabian people want to call it Palestine, but this is land given to Israel long before the Ishmaelites came into existence.

But because of this crisis, people today still believe they must "keep" the law, that is, to be obedient to its stringent demands. What was the purpose of the law? It was to show man's disobedience and sin, not to point them to salvation.

But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children (Galatians 4:23-25). The code in the days of Abraham stated that even though Ishmael was Abraham's son, he was still a slave, being born of a slave woman. He was not entitled to anything concerning the covenant given Abraham and to his legal son, Isaac. Perhaps this is the reason Hagar and Ishmael were sent away with nothing more than water and a morsel of bread, symbolizing that this was all that the son of Hagar was entitled to, according to the laws of Abraham's day. So the two covenants, one of the law (Hagar) and the other of grace (Sarah), allegorized the very fact that no matter how much the Galatians desired to be obedient to the law, it would never provide them anything except death.

But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband

(Galatians 4:26-27). The difference between believers by faith and those who rely on the law is explained as allegorical – Hagar, which is the law, and Sarah, who was given a son by the covenant of Abraham’s faith and God’s promise. It is evident that if a believer’s salvation is by faith, than how absurd it was for the Galatians to rely on the law, which only promised death. Grace is freedom; law is bondage and death.

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now (Galatians 4:28-29). The conflict we see today among the Arabs and Israelites was begun with the birth and day of weaning Isaac. Ishmael, who was now about seventeen years of age and through mocking and ridicule, Sarah caused Abraham to cast them out of their household. That same hatred abounds today among the Arabs and Israel, and will continue until the day Jesus Christ sets up His reign on earth, and both Arabs and Jews will recognize the Lord as God’s Messiah. The first, the Ishmaelites are the children of hatred and persecution; the second, the child of promise, in Isaac, Jacob and the patriarchs, are the children of love. So we see today, the flesh (the law) persecutes he that is born of the Spirit (grace).

Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free (Galatians 4:30-31). Just as the child of bondage was cast out, so we must cast out the spirit of bondage by the law, and claim the free, salvation by grace through faith, and faith alone. We are not to allow anything pertaining to the law to adhere to that which is free. The law cannot and never will save. Its sole purpose was to show that we cannot live by the law, by was given to point us to the one who was obedient to every aspect of the law, and fulfilled it in His death, burial, resurrection and ascension into the presence of Almighty God, there today making intercession for us, for *we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free*. Paul was saying that you cannot live by both the law and by grace. You have to make a choice; it is either one or the other. If you seek to live by the law, then it is the law that will receive the glory. But through Jesus Christ, He and He alone gets all the glory due to His holy name.

Chapter Five

The Spiritual Walk Of Liberty

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing (Galatians 5:1-2). Paul again speaks of the dangers of being under bondage to the law, and in particular, the Old Testament custom of circumcision. The Judaizers were complaining that Gentile Christians had to not only believe, but submit themselves to circumcision in order to be saved. Today, the “law” is baptism and tongues. If you are not baptized, you are not saved. They learn on Acts 2:38 for their proof that baptism is necessary. “Well, Peter did say, ‘Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.’” But they fail to realize that the phrase, **for the remission of sins** means “because of the remission of sins.” It is like saying a person has to go to jail and then commit the robbery. No, you go to jail “because of robbery,” not in order to rob.

Baptism profits you nothing. Speaking in tongues profits you nothing. In fact, the only time that tongues was mentioned in the book of Acts was to authenticate salvation to unbelieving Jews, the same as mentioned in First Corinthians chapter fourteen. It was merely a sign, and that only temporary, until God’s perfect Word was complete. That is why the Bible says, **But when that** (the Word of God) **which is perfect is come, then that** (the temporary gifts) **which is in part shall be done away** (I Corinthians 13:10).

For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace (Galatians 5:3-4). If you are going to live by the rules of the law, then you have to adhere to and be obedient to every aspect of the law. If you are disobedient in just one point of the law, you are guilty of the whole law. And then you are still in the same problem before salvation. The law does not save. It just shows you that you are a sinner. You cannot be justified by something that shows imperfection. And only through Jesus Christ can you be justified in the sight of God. Matthew Henry’s Commentary states, “No outward privileges or profession will avail to acceptance with God, without sincere faith in our Lord Jesus. True faith is a working grace; it works by love to God, and to our brethren.” Ephesians 2:8 does NOT say, “For by works are ye saved through keeping the law.” It does state that salvation is by grace, through faith, plus nothing. It has been perfected in the shed blood of the Savior on the cross of Calvary.

For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love (Galatians 5:5-6). Paul’s use of the word **hope** is an anticipation of something that God has promised. Since Jesus said we would have eternal life, then He must have in mind something other than working our way to Heaven. Even when the rich young ruler came and asked what he had to do to inherit eternal life, after being told

to be obedient to the law (which Jesus knew he couldn't do), in Matthew 19:20, ***The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?*** He knew that something was missing, that he could not observe and be obedient to the law. And just as baptism today does not help us merit Heaven, even so in the days of Paul, uncircumcision or circumcision had no effect on earning righteousness in the sight of God. In fact, the Lord had already told the Old Testament saints that all their righteousnesses were as filthy rags, something worse than the garment women cast aside after their time of uncleanness, or the rotten cloths used to wrap a dead body and that had decayed. But then again, thank God for the conjunctions; ***...but faith which worketh by love*** is the only thing that brings about our salvation.

Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you (Galatians 5:7-8). Paul was saying, "Who is the culprit that wants to bind you once again with the law? Why don't you just be obedient to the truth of the Gospel? None of this came from me or anyone associated with me who taught you the truth of the Scriptures. It is a gentle chiding and rebuke that Paul is giving the Galatians. As J. Vernon McGee stated, "You were doing well until the Judaizers came along. The 'truth' is the gospel, of course, and the Lord Jesus Christ in person." And it is the Lord Jesus Christ who calls us unto grace, through faith, minus any work on our part.

A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be (Galatians 5:9-10). Wherever leaven is mentioned in the Scriptures, it is a type of sin. The old adage states that you cannot put a rotten apple into a basket of good ones and expect the bad one to be "converted" to a good one. The bad apple will sooner or later corrupt all that is good. Here, the "bad apples" are again those Judaizers who were attempting to corrupt the Gospel of Christ by works, in this occasion, the works of circumcision. I have always wished I could go back in time and ask them the simple question, "What about the women?" And as the Scripture clearly states, he who would attempt to add to the Word of God is doing nothing but adding contempt on his own life. God has given specific word concerning attempting to hinder the Gospel by one's own misconceptions about its interpretation. I wonder about the judgment that is going to be upon those today who are bringing in their NIVs, ASVs, NKJVs, PDQs and any other abbreviations you would want to take the place of the Authorized and preserved Word of God that we have had now for over four hundred years. As Paul stated, ***...he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whoever he be***. May God help our people to return to the Word of God and cast aside all the "works" of the flesh.

And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. I would they were even cut off which trouble you (Galatians 5:11-12). Here was the problem confronting Paul. Evidently, there were some who said Paul had been preaching that you must be circumcised. And even if he did, then why was he constantly suffering from the hands of those who would destroy his message? Adding something to the Gospel makes it acceptable. The Gospel by itself is not acceptable, hence those who said Paul has preaching false doctrine showed in his message that this was totally false. The cross of Christ is an offense to sinful man, as is the preaching of the truth of the Gospel. It is an offense against his own "morality." It is an offense against his desire to "do his own thing."

Paul uses a stern warning to those who were bringing in the false doctrine. ***I would they were even cut off which trouble you.*** No doubt the Judaizers were already “cut off” in the sense of being circumcised, but here it speaks of their judgment at the hand of God for perverting the truth. Beware, you who would add to the Gospel. It will bring you nothing but the judgment of God.

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another (Galatians 5:13-15). Again, J. Vernon McGee had a subtle reply to these verses, when he said there is nothing one can do when there are Christian cannibals in the congregation. Their bite is as bad as that of a mad dog, only worse, because once you are “bitten” and devoured by someone in your congregation, nothing can heal the wound. Unless you have an immense amount of love and forgiveness, it will haunt you every time you see that person or hear their name mentioned. You will always go back to that instant when rumors, whether they be true or not, are spread among the people about you. And no amount of convincing will ever restore the confidence others had in you. There have been many pastors destroyed by the malicious gossip of someone in their congregation. I personally have known some church congregations that seemingly have nothing better to do than to spread rumors about someone. Sometimes it is even done in the guise of “prayer.” “Brother, I don’t want to be one to cause trouble, but you need to pray for brother so-and-so. I hear that he has...” and on and on it goes. Then the other person does the same thing to someone else. I am afraid there are many men in the congregation that are greater gossipers than the women whom they blame all the time for troubles in the troops.

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would (Galatians 5:16-17). Paul now comes to one of the great distinctions in the Scriptures concerning the flesh and the Spirit. If we only knew how very close the Holy Spirit is to us in our daily walk, there would be many things we would shy away from doing. Do you really want to take the Spirit of God, who lives in your heart, inside that beer joint? How about those magazines in stores that you allow your eyes to gaze upon? Would Jesus look at them? There is a book written many years ago, titled [In His Steps](#), and the whole basis of the book is the phrase, “What would Jesus do?” It is sad to think that this phrase has been misused in our days, because in truth, if we would think about those words, it just may change some of the things we do on a daily basis. How about those movies you see on television? Would the Lord sit beside you and watch with you? Well, my friend, He does, because He abides in your heart. To walk in the Spirit is to realize that He is with us every moment of every day, if we are His child, and to live for the pleasures of the flesh are ***contrary the one to the other***, and keeps us from doing what we should to. Remember, when in doubt, leave it out. If you are not sure if it would please the Lord, then please Him by not doing it..

But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law (Galatians 5:18). Paul now returns to the subject at hand, adherence to the law. We have been redeemed from the curse of the law. In the first place, as Gentiles, we were never subject to the law because it was written for the nation of Israel, not the heathen world. So why then would these

Judaizers wish to have Gentile Christians be obedient to any point of the law? We are not under the law, but under grace, by faith in Christ Jesus alone.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21). Paul once more shows a stark contrast between the *works of the flesh* and the *fruit of the Spirit*.

Adultery: Noah Webster's 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language defines adultery as the violation of the marriage bed; ...the sexual intercourse of any man with a married woman. It is defined in the Scriptures also as a man who has divorced his wife, she remarries, divorces and goes back to her original husband.

Fornication: Again, Webster defines fornication as the incontinence or lewdness of unmarried couples, both male and female. In today's society, this has become rampant among young people who think it is permissible for them to "experiment" with various forms of sex, whether it be intercourse with male and female, or acts of sodomy where there is various forms of lascivious sexual pleasures, too numerous and vulgar to be mentioned here.

Uncleanness: Filthy of mind and body. It was that which lepers were required to let others know they had a disease so hideous on those days they were not permitted to live in the general populace. In the mind, it is thoughts so reprehensible that they devise mischievous pleasures in thinking of things that are not permissible.

Lasciviousness: This was the irregular desires of animal lusts, which today would be labeled bestiality. In the Old Testament and New, this was acts by a human that were perpetrated upon animals in the sexual nature.

Idolatry: This is the love of anything that we put ahead of God. "Oh, I can go on the lake on Sunday and meditate there with God just as well as in a church." But it is in violation with the admonition to not forsake the gathering together of individuals for purposes of worship. Hebrews 10:25 says, *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

Witchcraft: This is the Greek word φαρμακεια, which we have transliterated as pharmacy. It is working with hallucinating herbs for the purpose of excitation of the mind to that which causes them to lose control of themselves. Such is what is labeled LSD, which is so powerful it makes a person think they can fly and jump from the windows and died.

Hatred: Hatred in this sense is an aversion to someone because of jealousy, envy or a desire to recompense evil on someone because of something they did to you. The Scripture clearly tells us that vengeance belongs only to God and that He will recompense evil for evil (Romans 12:19).

Variance: It is arguing with someone simply to cause frustration. It is the fellow who will argue against anything you say, simply to be argumentative. It would be a word akin to epos, which is the English equivalent of erotic. Here, it is the opposite of lust for pleasure, but pleasure in being argumentative.

Emulations: This is unfavorable jealousy toward someone else. It would be like a husband who shows continual jealousy whenever his wife speaks to another man, with the idea that he thinks she is flirting or desiring the other person.

Wrath: This would be heaviness of breath out of fierce indignation toward someone. The expression, “His top is about to explode,” would fit the idea of someone who is about to lose all control because of inward anger.

Strife: This would be inward and outward contention. Here is someone who knows how to do nothing except cause problems for others. He will maim and kill out of sheer pleasure of causing harm to others.

Seditions: We have standing before Pontius Pilate those who bring all kinds of false claims against Jesus Christ, causing divisions against others who would stand in support. We have Pontius’ wife, warning him against bringing harm to Jesus, yet he is willing to placate the crowd because of the hatred of the Jewish leaders.

Heresies: This is the Greek word itself, speaking of someone who brings in false doctrine. It is the Judaizers who will, for the sake of wanting to hold onto the law, cause error to be entered into the Gospel that had been given to them, stating that the Gentile Christians had to be circumcised. Today it would be those who say you must be baptized or speak in tongues or you are not saved. It would be worshipping Mary or any one of the countless thousand “saints” to get your prayers answered.

Envyings: Again we have someone in the attitude of jealousy. It can be one’s envy of another’s possessions, or position, or population. “I could sing that sing just as good as her.”

Murders: This is self explanatory. Taking of someone’s life without it being because of protection of one’s own self or property or family.

Drunkeness: The Greek word here is μεθη, from which we could possibly have the word “meth” or “methamphetamine.” It is lack of control of the body due to drinking or ingesting something that harms the brain from working properly.

Revellings: It speaks of one who is comatose,, or like someone who had been riding on a carousel too long and cannot control themselves when they get off, but will stagger until their brain function returns to normal.

And such like: As if to be sure he did not leave out anything that was wrong, Paul says *and such like*. If there is anything that is contrary to the Word of God, you need to realize it is the work of the flesh and wrong.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23). We now have a real contrast between those who live to satisfy the flesh and those who live for God. Instead of adultery and fornication, we have the example of love. This is the term in the Greek as αγαπη, which is a sacrificial giving of one’s self without any thought of such love being reciprocated. This is the love of God towards sinners we read of in Romans 5:8, ***But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*** This is the love of John 3:16, ***For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*** Think of the millions who have come and gone on this planet, who had the opportunity to know the love of Christ, yet rejected it because they wanted to get to Heaven by their own merits.

Peace is the quietness of the inner spirit, no matter what may be thrown your way. It reminds me of the story of the millionaire who called in some gifted painters and asked them to paint a picture of what peace meant to them. When they were finished, he looked over the many different descriptive paintings of a baby sleeping in its mother's arms, an elderly man with his hands folded and lying tranquil in a coffin, among others. But the one that caught his attention was of a bird's nest, overhanging a cliff, with a raging water fall, with the mother bird singing away, oblivious to the dangers of the limb should break. That my friend is peace. The Bible calls our peace, *the peace that passeth all understanding*. No matter what befalls us, we have the peace of heart, knowing we are held secure in the arms of our Savior.

Longsuffering: This is forbearance of the ridicule, persecution and antagonism of others around us. It is the calmness of spirit, when someone is doing something that is wrong, you try to correct them, but they just do not understand what is demanded of them.

Gentleness: Moral usefulness towards others; patience in explaining to another the love of God when they cannot fathom such a love. This reminds me of the son of J. Paul Ghatti, whom I had the opportunity to meet in Italy when in the military. We had befriended him, and he could not understand why we were not trying to get money out of him, since all his so-called "friends" tried to take him for all he was worth. When we had tried to explain the love of God for his soul, he could not believe there was such a love. No one had ever loved him, not even his parents. We tried every gentle approach to let him know that there was someone who loved him even above His own Son.

Goodness: This is beneficence and congeniality towards others; giving what you can to be of help to someone in need. Romans 2:4 tells us, *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

God is so good; God is so good;
God is so good; He is good to me.
He died for me; He died for me;
He died for me; He's so good to me.

Faith: Faith is a confidence that no matter what we do, God is there to be a guide and protector. It is the little boy on the second floor of a burning house, seeing his Dad below with open arms, and flings himself out the window to be caught and led to safety. We are hanging over the precipice of Hell, as stated one preacher, hanging by the thread of a spider's web with the flames flickering around us, until by faith, we reach out our hand and take the hand of Jesus Christ and He lifts us safely into His arms.

Meekness: I would guess the best definition of meekness would be its antithesis, pride. It is living such a life that it brings no shame to the name of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. It is humility, and not the kind that has the plaque that says, "I'm proud that I'm so humble."

Temperance: This would be the ultimate of self-control, when sin is rampant around us, tempting us in every imaginable way, and we refuse to succumb to its whims. It is like the young boy who was being taunted by others, because he would not take a cigarette. "What's the matter? Are you afraid of someone knowing about it?" "No," he

replied, "I'm afraid of displeasing my Dad." When temptation comes your way, turn around and go the other way. That is the idea of repentance also, turning around and heading in the direction that would be pleasing to God.

...against such there is no law. As if to pierce the goads further into their heart, Paul once again brings up the imperfections of the law. There is no law that will teach us the qualities only the *fruit of the Spirit* can give us. No wonder Paul warns us not to grieve the Holy Spirit, who has placed the seal of our protection upon us until the day of redemption.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another (Galatians 5:24-26). They that will claim that because of the lust of the flesh, this proves that we lose our salvation. But it is not the flesh that Paul is speaking of, but that inner spirit that is born again by the Spirit of God. That part cannot sin, because it is regenerated by the blood of Christ. First John 3:9 tells us, *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* Since our outward man sins every day, it is obvious that here, the Apostle John is speaking of that which is born of God; that portion of our soul that is born again and cannot sin. And since we have been born again and *have crucified the flesh*, we are then to walk and *live in the Spirit*.

The vain glory here is an interesting word. According to Dr. John McCormick, it is defined as a "soap bubble." It is something fleeting and pretty for an instant and then it is gone forever. So is any *vain glory* that we may have been praised of. Next month or next year, no one will remember the good deed you have done and your name will have been forgotten. So do not bring in your petty projects that you think are necessary for your salvation. They are useless.

Chapter Six

He That Is Spiritual

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ (Galatians 6:1-2). Galatians could be broken down into three segments; the personal, with the history and experiences of Paul; the doctrinal, with Paul's arguments against the works of the flesh and depending upon the law; and thirdly, the practical, no nonsense aspect of this epistle. It opens with the exhortation to be there as a helper to those in need, without allowing their sin to be any part of your own life. Too often, when one speaks of their temptations, another will be tempted to indulge in their mind on that sin, thereby allowing it to become part of their own life. Here in these verses, Paul is telling us we are not to be overtaken by the sins of others, but to bear their burdens in love.

The ***law of Christ*** is in direct contrast to the Old Testament law. The first gives us hope and eternal life; the second brings only the burden of sin and death. No outward privileges, position or possession will avail us anything toward acceptance in Christ. But the ***law of Christ***, through faith in His finished work on Calvary, brings us salvation and sanctification of the Spirit, as well as justification in Christ Jesus.

For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden (Galatians 6:3-5). Here in these two verses, we have what is a supposed contradiction in the Bible. On one place, it says to bear ye one another's burdens (verse two), and then it turns around and says we are to bear our own burden. Those who will try to cast doubt upon the Word of God love to use these two verses to show a contradiction, when there is none because of the use of two distinct but different Greek words. One the one hand, we are to help carry the weight of another's cares and troubles, while the second, in verse five, is to be responsible for the tasks placed before us. We are to help others, while at the same time being responsible for our own duties assigned to us.

Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things (Galatians 6:6). When is it proper to teach a teacher? We cannot depend upon a teacher to know everything about the Scripture, and there will be times when we might have gleaned a truth from the Bible that others have not seen. I love to read the verses in Hebrews 6:18-20 to show just this principle. There we have mentioned the ***forerunner***, which in our language today will mean nothing. But in the days of the writer of Hebrews, these converts knew very well its meaning. You see, there is a smaller vessel that is placed in the bow of a large cargo ship. This small vessel is called the forerunner. Its sole purpose was to be lowered into the sea with the ship's anchor, and then when the tide was out, it would go into the harbor of the town where the cargo was to be unloaded. There it would stay until the tide would come in, and then the men on

that forerunner would literally pull the large ship into the harbor. Jesus is our *forerunner*, having gone into Heaven with the anchor of our soul, waiting for the day when He will “pull” us into the harbor of Heaven. I have used this to teach its meaning to other teachers, who in turn used it to explain the verses to others. That is when one person who is *taught in the word* can *communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things*. That is why it is the responsibility of a child of God to read the Scriptures and glean as much truth from it as possible, so he can teach it to others, even a teacher of the Word. The word *communicate* means to distribute or be a partaker. Here we see a study group, with all responsible to participate in the lesson being taught.

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 (Galatians 6:7-8). Here is the principle of sowing and reaping. You reap what you sow, more than you sow and later than you sow. You may “sow your wild oats” all week long, but then don’t go to church service on Sunday and pray for crop failure. Being careful of using a verse, even out of its context, ***...be sure your sin will find you out*** (Numbers 32:33). A man may stand on a street corner, shake his fist into the sky and dare God to strike him dead to prove that God exists, but be sure, as the wise man in the audience states it, “God doesn’t always harvest his crops in the autumn.” He, and you, will answer to Almighty God for living a life of sin, because sooner or later, you will bow before Him, acknowledge Him as Lord, and give an answer for your life of sin, if you do not repent, confess and ask Jesus Christ to forgive you and to come into your heart as Lord and Savior.

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not (Galatians 6:9). As one pastor says it, “Charge!” Keep on keeping on. Just because you may become weary in giving out the Gospel, don’t quit. It reminds me of the story of the man who came into the pastor’s office with an armful of Sunday school material, threw them down and said, “I quit. Give someone else my class.” The pastor, a wise man in his handling of such situations, who also happened to be conversing with another person at the time, just replied, “Okay, brother, I will see if I can find someone else to take your class this Sunday.” The man just stood there, shifting from one foot to the other, and then proclaimed, “Well, aren’t you going to ask me why?” “No, I had not thought about that, but since you want to tell me, why do you to quit your class?” The man looked at the pastor and said, “For ten years I’ve been teaching that class and not once has anyone bothered to tell me how much they appreciated what I’m doing.” The pastor, again being very wise, stood, came around his desk and put his hand on the shoulder of the man and said, “Brother, that happens to be one of my weaknesses. I do not recognize others as much as I should.” And then he knocked the props out from under the man. “But tell me, is that the only reason you have been teaching that class, for public recognition?” The man stood there, his lips and jaw starting to quiver and tears came to his eyes. “You are right pastor. I’ve only been doing it for my own pride and glory. I’m sorry. Could I have my material back?” The pastor smiled and said, “I didn’t ask you to bring them in here in the first place.” Now tell me, what kind of a teacher to you think that class will have that coming weekend? We shall reap. So don’t faint, and don’t quit. Keep on keeping on.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith (Galatians 6:10). Here is the principle, *do good*

unto men. Don't just walk elbow to elbow with the saved, but show your love and your compassion to the lost as well. But be sure you have proper fellowship with **the household of faith.** The right foundation is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. His message is the only one of significant importance. But sure to share it with all, not just to those of the household of faith.

Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand (Galatians 6:11). We have here a hint as to one of the infirmities Paul faced in his day-to-day walk with the Lord and those he reached with the Gospel. Evidently, he had a stigma of not being able to see very well, so the statement ***how large a letter*** did not refer to the length of the epistle, but to the writing itself. Evidently this was a time when the amanuensis was not available for Paul, so he had to rely on his own hand writing to get the letter off to these folks in Galatia.

As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For 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). Here were two reasons the Judaizers wanted the Gentile Christians to be circumcised. They were fearful of being persecuted if they accepted the Gentile Christians on the same level as Jewish converts, and they wanted to glory in the mutilation of the flesh (Philippians 3:1-1). Paul called them "dogs," which is an animal that will devour anything, even its own vomit. In Philippians, the word ***concision*** refers to the mutilators of the mutilators of the flesh.

To push the point even further, these Judaizers were not even "keeping" the law themselves, but desired to place others under its strict rudiments so that they could glory in having someone they could claim as following them, not the Gospel. It is as if one says they are keeping the Sermon on the Mount, but then go around every day in direct violation to its tenets.

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. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature (Galatians 6:14-15). Paul continues to knock the props out from under those who desired to have everyone live by the law. Who gets the glory? Is it your desire to have someone under the rudiments of the law, or Jesus Christ and His suffering, bleeding, dying and resurrecting from the dead? Baptism does not do you any good, except in obedience to showing the world what Jesus Christ did for you. And if you are not baptized, you are still going to Heaven as a new creature, even though you may not receive the rewards that God intends for every Christian to receive. In what are you glorying?

And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen (Galatians 6:16-18). Paul concludes his epistle with another stern warning. "Please don't bother me any more with these trivial matters you have brought up. You have seen that I've already suffered more than you all because of the testimony I have had for the Lord Jesus Christ."

So concludes his letter to the Christians at Galatia. So concludes the matter of circumcision, or baptism or being filled with the Spirit and speaking in tongues, or any other thing you may want to bring up as part and parcel to your salvation. The only thing

that matters is whether you have received the Lord Jesus Christ into your heart. He is ***the way, the truth and the life***. No one can come to the Heavenly Father without first going to the Lord Jesus Christ, confessing you are a rotten sinner, deserving of Hell's fire, and realizing that Jesus took your Hell for you. Then ask Him to forgive you of your sin, and receive Him into your heart, simply through faith, and you and I will have joy in the presence of the Savior one day.