

SALVATION TODAY

T. Pierce Brown

Published by

WORLD LITERATURE PUBLICATIONS

Box 3815

New Delhi 110049

First Printing in India, 2,000 Copies
Art Work, K. L. Verma, Delhi
Printed in 1992

Printed by
Print India
New Delhi 110064

INTRODUCTION

I first met T. Pierce Brown in Manchester, TN, U.S.A. That was many years ago when my family and I were making plans to come to Asia to work for the Lord.

Bro. Brown has preached for a number of congregations in the States and has more recently been helping with the ONE NATION UNDER GOD campaign, which is designed to preach the gospel to every person in the country.

In addition to all of this, Bro. Brown has also written extensively. He has brought out several books and materials with emphasis on personal work.

On corresponding with him about supplying some of his writings for our work here in India, he readily responded, and for such we are very thankful for his interest and help.

I commend Bro. Brown's writings to you and it is our prayer that you will receive God's teaching, believe in him, and obey his will, so that you might be what the Lord would have you to be.

J. C. Choate
Church of Christ
New Delhi
Nov., 30, 1991

CONTENTS

The Plan of Salvation	1
The Age of Accountability	4
Sin--Not Pleasing God	7
Regeneration	10
Saved from What ?	11
Sin's Downward Progress	14
Planted by the Father or Rooted Up ?	17
Privileges and Obligations of Modern Christian Women	20
Purposes for which Christ Came and Died	23
The Law of Liberty	48
The Meaning of Baptism	50
The Most Important Thing in the World	53
The Church, The Body of Christ	57
The Demands of Divine Love	62
The Difference in Your Church and Mine	67
The Influence of the Bible	70
How Much faith Do You Need ?	71
How to Learn Love	73
I Love You, But I Don't Like You	75
In Whose Name ?	79
Instrumental Music in The New Testament Church	82
Is God Always Just ?	85
Justification by Faith	87
No Condemnation in Christ	90

THE PLAN OF SALVATION

Most of my life I have heard preachers of the gospel make the following statement (and probably have made it myself): "God could have chosen to save man without the plan of salvation he provided if he had wanted to, but as he chose that plan, we had better stick with it!"

I believe there are some false implications in that statement, although the last phrase is hard to beat! Let me try to explain.

It is assumed that God could save a man on any basis, *but this is not so!* When we speak of God's omnipotence, or his ability to do *anything*, we must realize that this means "He can do anything consistent with himself!" The Bible says, "It is impossible for God to lie." (Hebrews 6:18.) In fact, it is impossible for God to do *anything* wrong or sinful or unjust.

So, if we start with the basic understanding that the Bible teaches that God can do only that which is just, good and proper, then we have basis for discussing the plan of salvation in more detail.

The first thing of which we need to be aware is that "The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23.) That is, in order to act in a just fashion, God cannot overlook sin, disregard it, or imply that it is not bad. If he arbitrarily forgave sins without any payment being made, he would be contradicting himself, which he cannot do. If you and I paid for our own sins, we must suffer spiritual death--eternal separation from God. So, since God is love (1 John 4:8). he had to provide another way for our sins to be paid for.

If you think that he could have done it by any method, try to name any method except the one he used that would solve the problem. Suppose he had said to Gabriel, "I am

going to send you to suffer for mankind." That would not only be unfair to Gabriel to make him suffer unwillingly, it would be impossible for an archangel to be a proper substitute for mankind. One could go on suggesting and guessing for the rest of his life and he could find no plan other than the one God used that perfectly meets the demands of the case including the necessity that God be loving, just, etc.

To put it in the simplest way we know: 1. God is love, so he wanted to forgive mankind. 2. God is just, so he had to demand punishment for sin. 3. Jesus was sinless, so he could choose to pay the penalty for another. 4. He was God in the flesh, so he could properly intercede with God. 5. He was mankind, so he could properly represent and substitute for mankind. 6. He was not forced to do it, but freely choose to lay down his life for us. 7. For it to be done properly, man has to freely accept that plan, for it would be unjust for God to force man to be saved against his own will. 8. It involved faith, for "Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing to God." (Hebrews 11:6) 9. It involved repentance, for it would be wrong for God to force a man into heaven to live with Him, perfected saints and angels if the man loved sin more than he loved God. This is why Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish"(Luke 13:3)--not because he arbitrarily decided on this as a part of the plan, but because His nature and the nature of the case demanded it! 10. It involved confessing faith in Christ, for it would be a contradiction in terms for a person to have the proper faith in Christ, and be ashamed to confess him. 11. It involved baptism for the remission of sins, not because this was a "step of salvation which God arbitrarily chose when he could as easily have chosen something else", but because in the infinite wisdom of God it is the *only* act which could properly demonstrate what the sinner has to demonstrate in order to be saved in conformity with the nature of God.

Many do not understand that for God to be just, he has to demand a *living* faith. "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:17,20), not because God arbitrarily said so, but God said so because that simply is the nature of the case! So he has to demand a faith which demonstrates itself in obedience. But it has to be a faith, not only in the person of Christ, but in the actions of Christ by which he paid for our sins! That is, Christ died for you. If you do not believe that, it would be unjust and improper for God to forgive you of your sins, for it would imply that the death of Christ was unnecessary. You demonstrate faith in that fact when you die to the love and practice of sins (1 John 2:15, 3:8). Christ was buried. If you do not believe that, you cannot believe that he was resurrected from the grave. You demonstrate faith in that fundamental fact when you are buried with him by baptism into his death. If you think God could have chosen another way to have us do that properly, suggest one! Christ was raised from the grave. We are raised from the water of baptism to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4). These were not arbitrary steps, accidentally chosen simply because nothing better suggested itself at the moment! These are all steps chosen by an infinitely wise and loving God because nothing else can properly do what needs to be done to secure our salvation and adequately meet the demands of justice, mercy, propriety, love, and all the other attributes of God!

Just think, friends, if you are willing to humbly submit to God's ordained plan for your redemption, you conform to the nature of God and become a partaker of that Divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). You participate in a plan that was chosen and foreordained before the foundations of the world--not an arbitrary or accidental one--but one designed with all the wisdom, power and love of an infinitely great God!

Do not neglect that plan, nor even imply that it was one among many that God might have chosen. Could one

thoughtfully say, "God could have saved us without having his Son go through the anguish of the cross, but he just arbitrarily chose to allow his Son to suffer that?" Surely not! The whole plan goes together. God's *love* offered his Son. God's *justice* demands that you accept it *on his terms!* There is no other way! Will you accept it?

THE AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Not long ago in a home Bible study a question arose about what is involved in the expression. "the age of accountability." since I usually try to "call Bible things by Bible names and do Bible things in Bible ways," I first admitted that I do not find that exact expression in the Bible, and thus can not quote a scripture that deals directly and specifically with it. However, I DO find in the Bible the idea that a child is born pure and without sin, for "Sin is a transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Since the little child has not transgressed the law, I am sure he is not accountable for sin. Also, since Jesus said in Matthew 18:3, "Except ye become converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," I am sure we are not to become as little sinners. James also says, "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Since the baby did not know to do good, I am sure he is not accountable. But since Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," I am sure there comes a time when he IS accountable. Therefore, he must reach the "age of accountability" at some time.

But like many of our man-made expressions which we use to explain a Bible idea, it may be "fuzzy" and need clarification. In that respect, it is similar to other expressions like, "their sins were rolled forward," which many of us use,

and "accept Jesus as your personal Saviour" which most denominations use. Although I have accepted Jesus as my personal saviour, I do not know whether that means to the person who may hear it the same as "I PERSONALLY accepted Jesus as my Saviour," or how it might differ from "I IMPERSONALLY accepted Jesus as my Saviour," or whether it means, "I accept the fact that Jesus HAS saved me," or "I accept the fact that Jesus WILL save me on certain conditions," or "I accept the idea that Jesus is a PERSON who will save me without any conditions," or exactly what.

The question which came to me in the Bible study was like this: "Suppose my child, 3 years old, is told to leave the candy alone, and does not. She gets her hand slapped, and thus realizes it is wrong to take the candy. She sneaks and does it behind my back, knowing she will be punished if she is caught. Is she not at the age of accountability? If not, is it proper for me to punish her for her disobedience, since she is not accountable? If so, is she a sinner, and in need of salvation, since she did what she knew to be wrong?"

Since I know of no scriptures which deal directly with that question, my answer to him dealt with the problem of linguistics and semantics in communication, and with Bible principle which can be logically applied. First, we need to recognize that the words "wrong" and "right" are used in several different ways--sometimes without us being aware that we have shifted meanings. We know that if we put the left shoe on the right foot, it may be on the wrong foot, for in that case, the left foot is the right foot. So, if a person said, "I put my left shoe on the right foot," on which foot did he put it? Also, if he put his left shoe on the wrong foot (which would be the right foot) did the fact that he did "wrong" mean that he sinned? Of course, most of us could easily answer that question with a quick, "No." A similar question would be, "Does a child who learns that it is "wrong" to take candy sin

when she/he does so? The answer to that question is not "Yes," or "No," but "Not necessarily so." Every parent who has little child who requests baptism, and every preacher who is asked to baptize such a child needs to understand the principles about which I am now writing.

The precious little girls, one nine and one thirteen years old, came to me to be baptized. I baptized the nine year old one, but did not baptize the thirteen year old because of my application of this principle.

The nine year old said she wanted to be baptized for the remission of her sins. I asked her what she had done. She said, "I told a story, and did not mind my mother." To see what she understood, I replied, "Lots of little children tell stories, and forget to do what their parents say. Is that so terrible?" She replied, "Yes, sir, The Bible says, Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds', and Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.' So I have sinned against God and need forgiveness." After further questioning, I had to baptize her. The other girl knew that she had sometimes done the "wrong" thing, and got lost because she turned right when she should have turned left, but had no concept of sin against God, and therefore did not know how to repent. She was perfectly satisfied that if she died then, she would go to be with Jesus, and I had an idea she might. At least I had no authority to baptize her, for I neither found evidence of consciousness of sin, nor of repentance. A dog may be taught that it is "wrong" to chase chickens. But although I treat him as if he has "reached the age of accountability" when he has thus learned, I do not thereby assume him to be a sinner.

So a child may reach the "age of accountability" with reference to a conditioned response in which his parents have taught him that punishment will follow certain actions, and therefore he ought not do those things. But this does not mean

that he is at the "age of accountability": with reference to what God wants.

I am persuaded that if we had time and space, we could prove that until a person has a concept of God, and is able to have a concept of what it means to sin against that God, Jehovah God does not hold him accountable for sin. The very widespread idea that person reaches the "age of accountability" at the age of twelve and thus should be baptized, whether or not he has any concept of sin against God, has no foundation in the Bible.

SIN--NOT PLEASING GOD

There are at least 10 words in the Bible, all related to sin, but all meaning slightly different things. Thus it would be well for us to consider them as we think on the subject of how we may be displeasing to God.

1. **EVIL**--translated from the Greek words, "Kakos" and "poneros," has reference to three kinds of things: a. Generally that which ought not to be. b. Specifically, that which is morally or legally wrong. c. That which is "troublesome, injurious, pernicious, destructive, baneful"

(Thayer, p. 320). In John 3:10, when "God repented him of the evil he said he would do to Nineveh and did it not," the third meaning is evident.

2. **INIQUITY**--translated from the Greek words, "adikia" and "anomia" which means the condition of one who is without law, either because he is ignorant of it, or because he is violating it. Thayer gives several meanings of "adikia," but the primary idea seems to be "unjust toward, or to wrong someone". This coincides very well with the Old Testament usage, literally meaning "crooked." If we are able to make this fine distinction, we may note that whereas the word "sin" refers

to the action itself, the word "iniquity" refers to the character or description of the action, as in Psalm 32:5 where David says, "And thou forgavest the *iniquity* of my sin." Broadly translated, it would be, "Thou forgavest the crookedness of my sin."

3. OFFICE--translated in the New Testament most frequently from "skandalizo" or "skandalon" which had reference to the trigger of a trap against which the animal strikes, springing the trap. It is therefore a snare, or stumbling block, or an occasion which leads to sin.

4. SIN--translated most often from "hamartia" which literally means "missing the mark." When one's AIM is not to center himself upon God, but on himself, or on some desire, he is led to sin. He may actually miss the mark in any of the other 9 ways mentioned in this article.

5. TRANSGRESSION--translated from the Greek word, "parabasis" which literally means "a going over." When one goes beyond God's will by doing what is not authorized, or doing that which is forbidden, he sins--misses the mark by so doing. It is interesting to note that the word translated "transgression" in the Old Testament most often means "rebellion." Although it is hard to be dogmatic about this, it seems to me from observing every time the word is used, that in the New Testament the word "transgression" suggests the outward act of rebellion, sin, or disobedience, whereas "sin" may be done in the heart. When John says, "sin is a *transgression* of the law" (1 John 3:4), another word "anomia"--lawlessness--is used. As I understand it, not every sin is a "parabasis" — transgression or going beyond — but every sin is "anomia" — disregard of law. To say it another way, sin (hamartia) is acting without law, whether a man is ignorant of it or not, whereas "parabasis" (transgression) is going beyond a definite law.

6. TRESPASS--translated from "paraptoma," which

literally means "a fall beside". It seems to differ from "transgress" not in the nature of the thing done, but only in the figure of speech employed to describe it. Whereas, in the Greek, one would suggest going beyond or over, the other would suggest falling beside. If one is aiming at a target, he misses it whether his arrow goes beyond, or falls to one side. In English, the words "trespass" and "transgress" mean the same thing.

7. UNRIGHTEOUSNESS--most often translated from "adikia" which means "injustice." It is said of one who does not do his duty toward another. Although my limited research would not lead me to assert dogmatically, it seems that in almost, if not all references, there is a connection between the term "unrighteousness" and the wrong relationship toward MEN. I do not find the term referring to man's relationship to GOD except in such cases where other men are also involved. "Justice" and "injustice" are primarily used in reference to right dealing with others. It seems to me that Paul is suggesting something similar to this when he says in Romans 5:7, "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die for peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." A man may merely do that which is "right" without having a Christ like spirit about him--without being "good."

8. UNGODLINESS--translated from the Greek word, "asebeia" has reference to a want of reverence toward God.

9. WICKEDNESS--most often translated from "poneros" is practically synonymous with "evil." The distinction between the meanings can be seen fairly well from Jonah 3:10, "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil (poneros) ways; and God repented of the evil (kakos) that he said he would do to them; and he did it not. "Nowhere in the Bible is God said to repent of his *wickedness*, for that word always carries the idea of malicious wrong doing.

10. WRONG--translated from about 10 different

Hebrew and Greek terms, but for all practical purposes always synonymous with "unrighteousness". In English, a man may do the "wrong" thing without committing sin. As far as I can determine, the word is not so used in the Bible, but is always an act of unrighteousness.

This has not been intended as a scholarly review of the words mentioned, but as a sort of pointer to those who are interested in "rightly dividing the word of Truth."

REGENERATION

The word "regeneration" comes from The Greek, palingenesia, sometimes spelled paliggenesia, from palin meaning anew and genesis, meaning beginning, begotten or born, depending on the context.

As far as I know the word is used only two times in the New Testament. Titus 3:5 and Matthew 19:28. In Titus 3:5, we are told that it is the "washing of regeneration" which saves us. This washing is the baptism of the new birth. The operating power is the Holy Spirit through the Word of Truth (John 3:5,6, James 1:18, 1 Peter 1:23) and the element used in water (John 3:5, Ephesians 5:26, 1 Peter 3:21, Acts 11:26). The word "regeneration" stands for the ACT of being begotten again, or for the STATE resulting from that act.

It is *assumed* by many that it stands also for a state which must begin only after Christ returns at the end of this dispensation. This assumption is not based on the meaning of the term, or a necessary conclusion from the context of any passage, but is based partly on another assumption that Matthew 19:28 cannot refer to this age. The assumption is based upon another assumption that the Son of man is not now sitting on the throne of his glory, and that the Apostles are not now judging the 12 tribes of Israel. So the meaning of

the term is twisted to uphold 3 assumptions, instead of the assumptions being judged or evaluated in the light of the meaning of the terms.

The expression refers to the same condition in Matthew 19:28 as it does in Titus 3:5. The Son of Man is NOW sitting on the throne of his glory (Psalm 45:6, Hebrews 1:8, Hebrews 2:8, Eph. 2:22, Col. 1:13, Eph. 4:8, Acts 20:30,31,36). The Apostles are NOW judging the twelve tribes of Israel--not OLD ISRAEL, BUT NEW ISRAEL (Romans 2:28,29, Romans 9:6,7, Galatians 3:29, 4:26, 6:16).

They are judging in the same sense Jesus meant in John 20:23 when he said, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted", and Matthew 16:19, when he gave Peter the keys to the kingdom, which used in opening the doors to the kingdom in Acts 2 and Acts 10.

Of course he has committed all final judgment to his Son (John 5:22), but the Apostles "judged" through His Word (1 Cor. 5:3). We are to be judged by his Word (John 12:48), but since the Apostles were to speak that word and thus have the honor *in this age* (the age of regeneration--the age of the new birth--the age when we can be new creatures in Christ), they were thus to have the honor of judging.

The regeneration begins at the begetting by the word (James 1:18, 1 Peter 1:23) and will continue along until the final restoration of all things (which is now going on) and will be finished when Jesus delivers up the kingdom to God (1 Cor. 15:24, 25), for that will be the *end*, not the *beginning of the restoration of all things*.

SAVED FROM WHAT?

Yesterday as I was knocking on doors and studying the Bible with those who would, a man suggested that the Jailer

of Acts 16 wanted to know what to do to be saved from the consequences of what had transpired. It was evident from his whole conversation that he was doing what a large number of persons do when they are faced with unanswerable arguments against their preconceived notions--he wanted to evade the issue of "What must I do to be saved?"

If he could have managed to get me to go into same lengthy discussion of the possibility of the question meaning "How can I be saved from a damaged reputation?" or "How can I be saved from the wrath of my superiors?" it would have suited his purposes perfectly.

For a person who is honestly sincere in raising the question of what the jailer meant, I have no objection to discussing, and think I could show with a reasonable degree of certainty that he did not need to be concerned with the consequences of the situation, for he could not be charged with causing the earthquake, nor with letting his prisoners escape, for they were all there. His reputation was in no danger, for he could show that in the face of great difficulty, he had done his duty.

But now, I want to suggest what I consider an important principle in dealing with many such things. If I had spent an hour convincing him that the question REALLY was dealing with "What must I do to be saved from my sins?" we probably would not have taken time to adequately discuss the answer, which is what really counts. So I just applied what I call "spiritual jujitsu" to him. I yielded his point, in theory, and said, "I think I can prove it was not what he was talking about, but let us assume it was. With what question did Paul deal? Regardless of what the jailer meant, was Paul talking about how to be saved from the wrath of a superior officer?" And then we got back at once to the question at hand and the complete answer to it.

The principle we wish to emphasize for those who try to

study with others is: Try to make sure you do not get sidetracked by trivial or irrelevant matters, but stick to the things that make a difference. For example, when an unsaved person raises a question about what happened at the division of the Red Sea, or whether or not the whale could swallow Jonah, or vice versa, I try to follow the principle Paul applied in 1 Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified " Even if I convinced him that Jonah could have swallowed the whale if the Bible said so, *he is still lost* until I get him to Christ.

So I say something like this to him, "I will be happy to discuss that with you, but there is even a greater miracle than that recorded in the Bible that I want to discuss with you first. If you are convinced that IT happened and then want to discuss this one I will do so. "By the time we have finished the story of the resurrection of Christ, he has either accepted or rejected that. If he accepts THAT, he will have no problem with Jonah, for Jesus confirmed that story in Matthew 12:40. If he rejects, it is wasting time to even discuss the story of Jonah, or any other, for one can get more proof of the resurrection of Christ than he can that Napoleon fought the battle of Waterloo, and if one is not willing to accept overwhelming historical evidence, no discussion of that are any other subject is of any value anyway.

My judgment is that we have often allowed others to get us involved in endless disputes about "questions which do gender strife" (1 Tim. 6:41; Tit. 3:9; 2 Tim. 2:23). Any such question, the answer of which (even if we could prove it) would not bring them one step closer to Christ, should be disregarded.

SIN'S DOWNWARD PROGRESS

Young people may not need this lesson any more than adults, but the value of addressing it to young people is that they can understand and apply it while still young. If early in life they can be aware of how sin works, they may be able to escape many heartaches they would otherwise have. Psalm 1:1,2 gives us one of the best short indications of how sin operates. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: but his delight is in the law of Jehovah; and on his law doth he meditate day and night."

It is almost certain that nobody in the world just decided to commit the vilest sins in one step. From Adam's time, it happened a step at a time. The steps are suggested by David in the preceding passage. First, there is a walking in the counsel of the ungodly or wicked. In each of these steps, there are three words that suggest a downward progression. In the first, there is walking. Eve started walking toward the forbidden fruit before she took it. The Prodigal Son walked away from his father before he stood with the sinners.

In the first step there is also counsel. One usually hears a suggestion or temptation to sin before one partakes of it. When you hear a suggestion to do wrong, then is the time to turn away and resist. If we play around with the idea, it will usually eventually be presented in a way that it will appeal to us. There is even a kind of progression downward suggested by the words "ungodly" (wicked), "sinner" and "scoffer." The word "wicked" comes from the Hebrew word "rasha," which means "wrong" or "ungodly." It does not always refer to one who actually engages in the vilest acts of rebellion and rejection of God, but one whose moral condition is lax. He is

not godly. Isaiah 57:20 suggests, "But the wicked are like the troubled sea; for it cannot rest, and its waters cast up mire and dirt." They are unstable or undependable, and have dirty thoughts.

The first idea I am suggesting is: Do not even walk around with those who do not have godly attitudes. Those whose counsel is to do things that are not good, even if they do not actually participate in things that are looked upon as sinful, unlawful or terrible, are to be avoided.

The second list of things in this downward progression is "stand," "why," "sinners." Whereas "walking" may suggest the casual passing by, or just happening to be in the presence of, as well as a persistent or habitual way of life, "standing" suggest an even more permanent situation. If you walk by a liquor store often enough, you may get accustomed to it, but if you stand by it the chances are greater that you will be enticed by its temptation. Whereas "counsel" suggests listening to or heeding the advice of another, the "way" of a person has to do with the way he actually lives. The point here is that a person would seldom walk in an evil way if he had not first listened to the unwise counsel. Again, whereas the first person may simply be ungodly, or not particularly interested in God, the second person is a sinner--one who practices sin.

Note the normal progression. If you associate regularly, even casually, with one who is not interested in God, the next natural sequence will be to walk in the way of one who regularly practices sin.

The third list is those who sit in the seat of the scoffer. You may know persons who not only accidentally or occasionally commit some sort of sin, they are "set in their ways." Sin seldom becomes a habitual way of life for a person who has not first listened to unwise counsel, then stood with sinners as they practice their sin. Also, the scoffer is not just a person who is not particularly godly, or who occasionally

commits a wrong act. He is one who will laugh and scoff at the very idea of trying to do right. He will ridicule one who shows any moral restraint. If you start on the downward path of sin, you will eventually discover many persons who fall into this category. It is even possible that you will find yourself there, where you now would be shocked to think of being.

At this moment, you can imagine yourself occasionally associating with sinners. It does not bother you too much, for they are around you always. You cannot get away from them. You are in the world, but not of the world (John 17:11, 15:19). It bothers you a little more to visualize yourself habitually running around with those who are in the actual practice of getting drunk, robbing banks, or committing other acts of deliberate sin. You can scarcely conceive of yourself so dulling your conscience that you would make fun of, ridicule and scoff at those who want to do right, and at God himself. You can get there if you start in that direction and keep going.

David, Peter, Paul and others inspired writers of the Bible knew and revealed that the pathway of sin is usually in this pattern of the downward progression. It is true whether we are thinking of moral or doctrinal progression. Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:4, "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables."

Notice the steps. First, they will not endure sound doctrine. They do not like preaching that points out either doctrinal error or lack of Christian living. Second, they have the kind of itching ears that want to hear only good things. It is usually called "positive preaching" as opposed to the kind that says, "This is wrong." Third, they turn away their ears from the truth. They quit listening to preaching at all if it ever stirs their conscience. Fourth, they turn unto fables. Apostasy has set in. Then the terrible situation Paul described in 2

Thessalonians 2:11 takes place. "And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Whether you are young, old, or somewhere between, you need to be aware of this pattern of the downward progression of sin. When you are aware of it, then you should beware of it.

PLANTED BY THE FATHER OR ROOTED UP?

Jesus said in no uncertain terms, "Every plant which my heavenly father hath not planted shall be rooted up" (Mt. 15:13). That this applies to denominational *organizations* is certain. But the context suggest that it includes *every* doctrine, practice, organization, tradition and attitude not authorized of God.

Paul says in Col. 3:17, "*Whatsoever* ye do in word or deed, do all in the name (by the authority) of the Lord Jesus." So, we must conclude that anything not authorized by Jesus is condemned. But the point of *this* article is that Jesus is *the one who said so!* I have written a workbook on THE MIND OF CHRIST, designed to help us *develop* the mind of Christ rather than just talk about it. In almost every lesson, we see that he was not only kind, loving, gracious, tender, compassionate and understanding, but he was plain, straightforward, bold and uncompromising in his language and actions about sin and error under ALL circumstances.

It is a false concept that since Jesus was meek and lowly in heart (Mt. 11:29), if we have the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5) we must be so soft and "mushy" that no one can tell for sure what we condemn, if anything. Too many of us have

preached in a bitter, arrogant, sarcastic or hateful way, almost totally negative and derogatory, But our refusal to do *that* kind of preaching does not release us from the responsibility to speak the *truth* in love" (Eph. 4:15).

Many at Pentecost, would have sounded something like this: "Brethren, we think it is possible that some of you may have erred slightly in judgment and allowed a relatively innocent man to be put to death. If so, it seems proper to share with you my feeling that you should try to rectify that in some way." But the Holy Spirit did not and does not want it done that way. Peter was neither ashamed or afraid to point out that they were guilty of crucifying the Lord.

The emphasis should be on the GOOD NEWS of what God has graciously done for us rather than on the BAD NEWS of our hell-bound condition. But the real truth of the matter is that NO PERSON can really appreciate the GOOD NEWS of salvation if he is not made to realize he is lost.

It is but another symptom of a widespread disease that we hear many persons pray so often, "God, forgive of us our *many mistakes and shortcomings* ." They do not seem to know they have *SINNED!* God can over look mistakes and shortcomings, but needs to forgive sins.

When Jesus offended some listeners and they went away (John 6:66), he did not run apologetically after them, saying, "I did not really mean it *that way!*" He sadly let them go and said to his apostles, "Will ye also go away?" Speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15) did not then, and does not now involve "watering it down", compromising it or failing to boldly and clearly proclaim it.

Let us freely admit that there may be some plants in God's garden that are unknown to us. No person who properly understands New Testament Christianity would take the position that a person has to have any knowledge of what is sometimes called " *our fellowship*" or have their name listed

in "Where the Saints Meet" in order to have been planted of God. But that in no sense implies that a person can become a Christian by hearing and obeying denominational doctrines or any perverted "gospel." "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). And if anyone plants *anything else*, the plant produced thereby will be rooted up! So, wherever the gospel *in its purity* is heard believed and obeyed, there is a plant of God! But if that gospel is perverted (even by an angel from heaven—Gal. 1:8) it does not produce a plant from God, and will be rooted up!

So we want to emphasize that if the "plant" about which Jesus was talking was *doctrine*, he was plain, unambiguous, bold and clear that false doctrine is condemned, vain and useless, for he said, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mt. 15.9) And anything *produced* by that false doctrine will fall in the same category and under the same condemnation.

The same kind of language is used by Jesus if the "plant" refers to any *practice*. He scathingly rebuked the Pharisees for many things, among them, "They say and do not" (Mt. 23: -2-3). There was never any "wishy—washy", "soft-soaping", compromising, 2. language used, but striking and forceful denunciation of sin in all of its forms. Even his kindest action toward a sinner, such as the woman caught in the act of adultery (John 8:11) left her with the knowledge she had sinned as he said, "Go and sin no more." Different kinds of sin deserve different kinds of rebuke, but NONE of them are to be "smoothed over" as if they were not there!

"Let your speech be always with grace" is a command of God, but "seasoned with salt" is also included (Col. 4:6). The fact that some get so "salty" we can scarcely stand to listen is no excuse for our failure to be Christlike--plain and bold in condemnation of sin!

PRIVILEGES AND OBLIGATIONS OF MODERN CHRISTIAN WOMEN

There has been a great deal of discussion pertaining to the role of the modern Christian woman in the church and in today's society. The principles for everything we have the right or obligation to do are found in the Bible. Only the Methods used by the Christian women of the past were different from those used by women of today. Living in the era of mechanical and electronic aids far beyond the imagination of our ancestors, we have much more time from our household duties to decide on and do other things of importance.

With the extra time also comes added responsibility. Even without this extra time our mothers and grandmothers found or made the opportunity to do many things they felt were their duties as Christian women.

One of the most important obligations we have, and the first mentioned in God's Word is to our husbands (Genesis 2:18-25). We were made especially and specifically to be a help suitable for man. Many persons have missed the main point of that passage as they think of the help "meet" for man merely as a "helpmate." But that the help was to be "meet" or suitable is an important part of God's plan

Since this relationship is for life, it is very important, not only from the standpoint of doing God's will, but from the standpoint of being vital to our own and our husbands' happiness. We should, therefore, be diligent in our efforts to fulfill our obligations as a help suitable for our husbands. This includes a great deal, as a companion comforter encourager, and one who sees that his physical and emotional needs are furnished in the realm of the home.

Those of us who have Christian husbands will find it a

joyous privilege to be a help meet for them, for they love us as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 5:25,28) and as they love their own bodies. Formerly, for these Christian women, much more effort had to be involved but with our modern conveniences, we can be good wives with less time involved. This leaves more time to do other things that are required of Christian women.

Another obligation and happy privilege of equal importance and perhaps of more lasting value, is performed with our husbands as we rear our children in an understanding of and obedience to God's will. This can be done only by teaching AND example (Ephesians 6:4). Lois and Eunice, the grandmother and mother of Timothy, are surely excellent examples of this principle (2 Timothy 1:5). Sometimes it may seem as if we have failed, but God's promise is still true (Proverbs 22:6). That passage does not say what some seem to think it says: "Take your child to church services and send him to Sunday school and he will turn out fine." Training involves teaching by word and example, discipline providing the proper environment in work and play, and many other facets of life.

With all the activities in which parents and young people are involved, it may take a great deal of thoughtful planning to decide what is really the most important. We always need to keep uppermost in our minds and hearts that souls--eternal values--are most important, and plan with those values as top priority.

Christ, in giving the Great Commission (Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:15-16), told his Apostles to teach all creatures as they were going into all the world, and having made disciples (disciplined followers of Christ), teach them to DO all that the Apostles had been taught for them to do. Thus, as Christian women, we have both the right and responsibility to teach others his will.

In all ages I am sure that women have taught others. In Acts 1:26, we find Priscilla, along with her husband, teaching Apollos. Before that in Acts 18:18, we find Priscilla and Aquila accompanying Paul to Syria. Today if we choose to go outside our hometown to teach God's word, we may go in a variety of ways that are faster and more comfortable, but Priscilla still remains an inspired and inspiring example for us.

Phoebe is another example of a woman who was a servant of the Church (Romans 16:1-2). She had been a great help to many, including Paul. It is hard to imagine her going about helping others and NOT teaching them of Christ.

Lydia must have been not only gracious, generous, and hospitable, but also devoted to the Lord. She is the first known Christian convert in Philippi, and certainly a woman who stands out as a Christian worker. After her baptism, she welcomed Paul and Silas into her house (Acts 16:14-15). Later, after their release from prison, they went directly to her home to meet with her and encourage the brethren (Acts 16:40). We cannot but conclude that she had a great part in the work and growth of the church in Philippi, and was no doubt included in Paul's prayer and thanks giving for the Church there (Philippians 1:3-11).

We, as Christian women of today, have the same responsibilities as Phoebe, Priscilla and Lydia, but we should be thankful that we have far easier and more convenient ways to discharge those responsibilities.

Dorcas is the woman probably most thought of as one who did for others. In Acts 9:36, we are told that she was always doing good and helping the poor. It may be that there are only a few who ALWAYS go about doing good, but we can all do for others some of the time. She made garments for those who needed them, and must have been ready to help with food or anything else that was needed. How much she might have done if she had possessed the food processors,

micro wave ovens and many gadgets we have! Do our THINGS help or hinder our service to God and man?

The Bible has given us very clear commands and examples to help us in our roles as Christian women. Now we must decide what needs to be done, and how we can live up to our obligations. We may not be able to do all these things all the time, but each of us can look for those opportunities that present themselves, and view them not only as obligations, but as privileges which God has given us to be fellow workers with our Lord and sharers in His Divine Nature and plans, with joy and thanksgiving.— Tomijo W. Brown

PURPOSES FOR WHICH CHRIST CAME AND DIED

About three years ago I started to write an article on the things accomplished by the death of Christ. It turned out to be one of the most extended, rewarding and profound studies of the Bible I have ever done in the 60 years I have been reading God's Word. As I have pondered this matter over the years I have become convinced that it is the grandest and most profound theme on which the human mind can dwell. I believe that to understand it adequately would cause one to see clearly the very nature and purpose behind the universe itself. It is my judgment that the deepest and most mysterious and awesome attributes of God are interwoven and clarified by a proper understanding of this subject. In short, it appears that there are more significant results related to the death of Christ than to any other event that ever transpired in all history.

To try to deal in any adequate way with the subject in one or two articles seems almost sacrilegious. Yet, if we do not intend to write a theological compendium, we must limit the

scope of our inquiry, both vertically and horizontally. So, we shall proceed, trying to be both as comprehensive and succinct as possible.

Although we have read practically nothing in the writings of our brethren on this subject, we have a feeling that there may be some difference of opinion as to whether Christ died in OUR STEAD, as well as on OUR BEHALF. If our memory serves us correctly, the only time we actually heard it mentioned was in a short comment by the head of the Bible department of Abilene Christian College in 1946. I am not absolutely sure what position he took on it, but I think the discussion took place in a Greek class while we were discussing the meaning of the prepositions, "anti" and "huper." The statement was made that in the expression about Christ's death for us in Romans 5:6, the word "huper" is used, which means "on behalf of" rather than "anti" which means "instead of." The idea was also suggested by someone that if he died *in our stead* we would not have to die. So the conclusion to which some came was that he did not die IN OUR STEAD, but only ON OUR BEHALF. I think my professor made an argument along these lines: "There are only two kinds of death--physical and spiritual. It would be almost blasphemous to say that Christ died spiritually. So we must conclude that he only died physically --on our behalf, but he did not make a vicarious sacrifice--in our stead. For as sinners, we are condemned to spiritual death, and he could not have suffered that for us." My teacher was a renowned Greek scholar, and possibly had forgotten more about both the Bible and Greek than I have learned, and raised questions that I could not answer, but my study of the Bible in the subsequent years has forced me to differ with what I think he was teaching.

It is true that a person may die in behalf of another, but not necessarily in his stead. The death of a soldier for his

country or fellow citizens could be of that kind. It could also be in both categories. In the "War Between The States" I am told that some persons who were asked to go found someone to go in their place. If that person died he would have died both in behalf of, and in the place of another.

It is true that in most cases when the subject of the death of Christ is discussed in the Bible, the word "huper" is used. It is also true that the most obvious and general meaning of "huper" with the genitive case is "on behalf of." But when we find in Matthew 20:28 that Christ gave his life a ransom (anti pollon) instead of many, and in 1 Timothy 2:6, we find that he gave himself (antilutron) a ransom, the conclusion seems to be inescapable that he gave himself **IN OUR STEAD, and ON OUR BEHALF.**

The average reader may feel that his is splitting theological hairs, and ask, "What difference does it make?" Without trying to write a theological treatise on the ultimate implications of those two positions let us simply say that to serious Bible students, what the Bible does or does not teach makes a difference, whether or not we may understand the practical ultimate consequences. For example, 1 Peter 3:21 says, "Baptism doth also now save us." Suppose we took the position that since that is what it says, it does not make any difference how or why, when or where it saves us. Then we could arrive at such diverse, contradictory and unscriptural conclusions as these: "Baptism saves us, but only in a figure (Whatever that means)!" Or we could conclude, "Baptism saves us, for it is a sacrament, which when perform by an authorized administrator, is the means of conferring divine grace on the one baptized." Both positions are seriously wrong, but it would be difficult for one to deal with either if he were of the school which says, "It says what it means and means what it says, and that is all there is to it." We are sure it **DOES** mean what it says, and **DOES** say what it means, but

that is SELDOM all there is to it.

Although we make no pretensions to scholarship, either Greek or otherwise, it seems to us that when we consider all the uses of both "anti" and "huper" in connection with his death, along with all other statements about it, we are forced to the conclusion that the reason "anti" is not used more often is that it would have expressed ONLY the idea that he died *in our stead* whereas "huper" expresses the idea that FOR OUR SAKES, without excluding the idea that he died in our stead.

In this case, we conclude that although grammatical usage is a very vital fundamental way of conducting Biblical exegesis, it is not the ultimate and only way. We discover that the primary meaning of "huper" with the genitive seems to be "for our sakes." But in looking at the total revelation of God on the matter, we discover additional facts. It seems beyond dispute that justice demands judgment on and punishment for sin. We have heard those who claim to be preachers of the gospel say, "If God had wanted to, he could have provided salvation on some other basis, or could forgive sins on any condition he chooses." To me that Makes about as much sense as saying, "If God wanted to he could lie, or be unjust or do any wrong." Just because a sentence can be diagramed does not mean it makes any sense. God could not be God and *want* to do something contrary to his own nature, and any statement or question with or without an "if" that implies that God could arbitrarily do whatever we might choose to suggest does not make any sense. When I was a small boy, some smart-aleck agnostic could delight in raising a question, "Can God make a rock so big he could not move it?" Of course God cannot do anything inconsistent with himself or contradictory to himself. This is one reason the Bible says "God cannot lie."

So the holy character of God demands punishment for sin, and his love and mercy do not mitigate against that. They simply provide an infinitely loving and wise way to satisfy all

the attributes of God.

But punishment for sin is not mere physical death. When Paul says, "The wages of sin is death." he surely means more than "A person who sins will physically die." Surely none who read this could doubt that the death of which Paul speaks is separation from God! It is my judgment that when Jesus said in dying, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" he was expressing the punishment he was undergoing *in our stead*.

There are two reasons for this conclusion: First, not every sin was accounted of God to be worthy of physical death, Second, if he died a physical death in our place, than we would not have to die a physical death. Although we never remember reading about this, or hearing it discussed that should be self-evident. His death, agony and suffering was far more than merely physical. He was forsaken, in death, that we might not be. Our death now as Christians, will not be "death" in relation to God for properly related to God, we shall never die (John 6:50, 11:26). We shall die only in relation to those from whom we shall be separated. Peter implies that we deserve to die, or be separated from God because of our sins, but Christ died **IN OUR PLACE**, as he says in 1 Peter 2:24, "And he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree." For God to reconcile the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them demands that he impute their trespasses to *Someone*, for he can not overlook or pass by sin. So, when we find "made him to be sin who knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21), we understand that Christ was made sin on our behalf. He is the one to whom our trespasses are imputed. He bore our sin in his body on the tree, and was forsaken **IN OUR STEAD**, so that we might never be.

I confess that my beloved and revered teacher heretofore mentioned raised some hard questions which I could not then answer, and still may not be able to answer

properly. But I think I can come nearer now than I could then. Question: If the claims of justice against the sinner be temporal AND eternal death and if Jesus suffered the penalty IN OUR PLACE, must he not be still suffering eternal death? Answer: Under the law, not every sin was punishable by temporal death. Even in Adam's case, I believe I could prove with a reasonable degree of certainty, that the death about which God spoke was separation from him, and not merely physical cessation of life. In the light of Genesis 3:22, it appears that although sin had separated him from God, he would not have died physically had God allowed him to stay and eat of the tree of life. However whether that conclusion be right or wrong, it is incontrovertible that not every sin was accounted of God to be worthy of physical death. In the second place, under the law, when the penalty for sin was death, they were PUT TO DEATH. They did not simply die. During the law period, each person suffered death, just as we do, whether guilty of sin or not. So even if we were living under a law, the violation of which would bring death, it would mean that we would be put to death for violating that law, not merely that we would die a natural death. So the question, "If the penalty was only temporal death, why do we yet each suffer death if Christ died in our stead?" is not applicable, for it fails to distinguish between being PUT TO DEATH as a criminal or sinner, and simply dying as a result of some other person's sin. But in the third place every sin (even what we may term "the smallest ones") separates one from God--brings death. If unforgiven, it separates from God forever.

When we consider the death of Jesus on the cross, we should not define death in terms of temporal or eternal, but in terms of whether the death was in relationship to man or God, or both. Surely my readers do not need to be reminded that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are dead, as related to man, but alive as related to God (Luke 10:38). So the question

should not be, "Did the Claims of justice demand ETERNAL DEATH for sin?" but "Did the claims of Justice demand a separation from (or being forsaken by) God?" The answer to that is, "Most certainly, yes" (Isaiah 59:2) ! And unless we assume that the utterance of our Lord was merely the delirious utterance of a mistaken and tormented or demented mind, he was, in some sense, forsaken of God on the cross. In my judgment, part of the problem with my astute professor was that he was saying what most of us say, but improperly, that "The consequence of sin in ETERNAL DEATH Strictly speaking, that is not so. The consequences of *unforgiven* sin is eternal death. But the consequence of SIN is separations from God. Christ died for sin and was separated from God in some sense, upon the cross.

Although it may be impossible for us to comprehend how one with the very nature of God, whose every thought and motive was to do his will, could be forsaken, it seems MORE impossible to conceive of one who could be "made to be sin on our behalf" and NOT be forsaken!

My conclusion, therefore, is: Jesus without question died ON OUR BEHALF, but also died IN OUR STEAD, for his death was not merely the suffering of a physical death (Paul and Stephen might have done that) but involved the spiritual anguish of separation from God so that we might never have to be separated from God. It is my contention that a Christian need NEVER die (John 11:26) for he HE died in my place as well as on my behalf. Praise God!

There are at least 14 general purposes for which Christ is said to have come and died that I could not classify easily under some specific heading. Let us examine some of them. When Jesus said in Matthew 5:17, "I came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill" and when Paul said in Romans 10:4 "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," they were talking about the same

thing. But what is involved in the fact that Christ is the end of the law -- or that the law was fulfilled in Him? We have heard preachers say that "Christ is the end of the law" means that the law ended with Christ. It does NOT mean that, even though it is true that the Law of Moses was no longer binding when the Lord made a New Covenant. The fact that Christ was "the end of the law" means that he fulfilled the purposes of the law (Romans 8:3).

The primary purpose of the law was two-fold. It was to point out to man what was right and wrong, so he could do what was right and live, or impose a penalty if he did not do what was right. Thus, the law would make a man righteous if he kept it, and show him to be a sinner and punish him if he did not.

There are at least two senses in which Christ was the end of the law or fulfilled it. First, he paid the penalty which the law imposed on man for the greatest sins that man could commit, and thus discharged any obligation which the sinner might have, provided the sinner accepts the payment Christ made on the terms which Christ offers.

Second, God wanted man to be righteous, so he gave the law so man could know what was right and wrong and do right. Paul says, "For by the law comes the knowledge of sin," and in Romans 7:7, "I had not known sin but by the law. "When a man broke the law, there was no way he could be righteous by keeping the rest of it. Since God wanted man to be righteous, and he could not be so by keeping the law, God had to provide another way for him to do it. So Paul says in Romans 8:3, "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. "And in Romans 3:21-22 he says, "And now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which

is by the faith of Jesus Christ."So, in the second place Christ fulfilled the law in the sense that he did what the law would have done if it had never been broken -- given man a righteous standing before God. This is probably a large part of what Jesus had in mind when he said in John 4:34, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and finish the work he gave me to do."

Part of finishing the work God gave him to do was the confirming of his promises and thus demonstrate the truthfulness of God. Romans 15:8-9 tells us, "Now I say that Jesus Christ was minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers; and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy."

Luke 4:18 suggests another purpose of Christ's coming as he says, "He came to heal the brokenhearted." I do not know all that may be involved in that, but it is my opinion that he is primarily referring to the spiritual healing he gives to one who is contrite and brokenhearted because of his sins (Cf. Mt. 5:4). He is not limited to that, of course, as he blesses those who mourn in many kinds of circumstances. We have no doubt that more persons have found comfort in the words of our Lord in times of difficulty and sorrow than in words of all other men from Adam on down. In fact, in all the words of men that I have read from Aristotle to Zeno, I do not recall anything that would be a great deal of comfort to those who mourn, or bind up the brokenhearted. The nearest thing to it is probably in the philosophy of the Stoics, founded by Zeno. They were not able to give much comfort, but may have enabled one to better endure discomfort. They had no way to give man hope, but they might teach him to face death more calmly without hope.

In 2 Corinthians 8:9 we find that it was through his poverty that we may become rich. Although it does not mention his death, that was included in "his poverty."

"Whatever was included in the riches he had before he became poor, he wants us to have. I could hear a person preach all day on the joys and beauties of heaven, and it is not as meaningful to me as this one simple statement, "heirs of God and *JOINT HEIRS* with Christ. "He died that I might be a joint heir with him!

Hebrews 2:14-15 suggests two wonderful blessings. The writer says, "Forasmuch then as the children share in flesh and blood, he himself also partook of the same that through death he might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the Devil, and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. "The AV says, "destroy the Devil"; the ASV says, "bring to naught"; the NAS has "render powerless. "The Greek word is "Katargeo," which means "make inoperative" or "render powerless." It does not suggest that the Devil ceased to exist, but that he ceases to have power to operate to keep men enslaved. Now we have the precious promise of 1 Corinthians 10:13, "God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear, but will with every temptation provide a way of escape that we may be able to endure it. "The purpose of Satan was to enslave the entire human race and destroy us. His purpose was defeated and brought to nothing through the death of Christ. The second thing the verse says we get is deliverance from slavery as we are freed from the fear of death. It may be a little thing compared to some others, but it is wonderful to be delivered from fear -- especially the fear of death.

In 1 Peter 1:21 we find a very suggestive statement, "*Who by him* do believe in God, who raised him up from the dead and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God." I do not know how many hundreds of times I have read that passage without noticing two very important truths. First, it suggests that we "by him believe in God." It is only

through Jesus that I can have the proper understanding of God, and thus have the proper faith in him. When a person says, "I worship the same God you do" while still refusing to surrender to his commandment to "Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sin" (or any other), he may be making a misstatement of fact. He **MAY** be worshipping a god of his own imagination rather than the one revealed by Christ, for the God revealed by him demands loving submission and obedience.

So Jesus died that our faith and hope might be in God. If he had not died, our faith and hope **MIGHT** have been in our own righteousness. We might have said, as the rich young ruler, "all these have I kept from my youth up," and rested in the law as did Paul. But now that Christ has died, "my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness" and rests neither in a broken law nor in my partial obedience to it.

I feel sure that a great number attached to the Church of our Lord (more or less loosely, in some cases) do not understand that our salvation is not on the basis of law keeping -- either of Moses **OR** of Christ. I recognize that when I make a statement like that some will immediately suspect that I am espousing the ungodly and false doctrine that salvation by grace eliminates the necessity of law. That is **NOT** so! I am in no sense implying that we can disregard the commands of Christ and just accept his grace. What I **AM** saying is that if the Jews were not justified by the principle of law keeping because **NONE OF THEM KEPT THE LAW PERFECTLY**, neither are we justified by the principle of law keeping (though it be the law of Christ), for none of us have kept it perfectly either. When I pray for forgiveness, I do not pray, "Forgive me for *I have kept your law*." I pray, "Forgive me for **NOT HAVING KEPT** your law, for I am dimly aware that my salvation does not depend on my **NOT HAVING BROKEN**

THE LAW, but upon my having accepted the blood of Christ *on his terms*. "Of course his terms include obeying the gospel. But surely any thinking person can see the error in thinking that since the gospel is the law of Christ, and I must obey the gospel to be saved, my salvation is on the basis of LAW KEEPING. Get it; If salvation was on the basis of law keeping, I must have kept the *whole law*. The real truth is that accepting salvation (or anything else) by grace ALWAYS necessitates obeying some rules (law).

We are sadly aware that some may still try to wrest my statement into some antinomian concept and feel that it would give comfort to some denominational idea that a man can be saved by grace while refusing to accept that grace on God's terms. But when or if a person says, "We must obey ALL of God's commands to be saved," many of us would applaud, for we think we understand what he means. But if you should ask him and he is honest, he must reply, "But NONE of us have obeyed ALL of God's commandments. "The only logical conclusions are: 1. None of us will be saved or 2. The BASIS of our salvation must be something other than obeying ALL that God said. So the truth is, the grace of God has provided the means for us to be saved in *spite of the fact that we have NOT obeyed the law*, as we demonstrate faith in the blood of Christ by repenting and being baptized for the remission of sins. This is the difference in salvation by grace through faith and salvation on the basis of law-keeping.

In 1 Peter 2:21 we find another significant thing that was accomplished by Christ's coming and dying. "He left us an example that we should follow in his steps. "We need to understand that to follow the example of Jesus does not involve doing the exact things he did, such as wearing sandals, riding on a colt into Jerusalem, being baptized in Jordan, reclining at a table to eat, or dying on a cross. It involves acting on the principles which he taught and lived. He was kind,

loving, and obedient to the will of God. He resisted the temptations of the Devil. He loved his enemies.

John 10:10 says that he came that we might have life and have it abundantly. The very fact that he was speaking to those who already had "life" physically shows he was not talking about this, but was talking about a joyous, full, abundant spiritual life. He emphasizes that point in Luke 12:15, when he says, "A man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." When he says in 2 Corinthians 8:9 that we through his poverty might become rich, he has no reference to material wealth. This in no sense denies that God may see fit to bless us materially as 2 Corinthians 9:8-11 indicates, that we may minister to the needs of the saints, help all men who are in need, and glorify God.

In Luke 1:79 we find two reasons for Christ's coming. They are, "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death," and "to guide our feet in the way of peace." Men need light, for "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). There are literally hundreds of things we can not see without Christ, or can see more clearly by the light that he sheds on the subject. He guides our feet in the way of peace, by providing a way for us to have peace with God, then have the peace of God, then to have peace between Jew and Gentile and between all mankind.

In view of the fact that he thus is properly called "Prince of Peace" his statement in Matthew 10:24 might be startling, "Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." It is good that he explained how that happens in the next two verses. For it is still true that when one person accepts Christ on the terms of the Gospel, many who refuse to do it will be at variance with them, and a man's foes shall indeed be those even of his own household.

In Luke 12:49 we find a statement that we may not

understand. He says, "I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled?" As far as I know, there are only two basic ideas as to what he meant by this statement. One is that similar to the sending of a sword. That is fire of contention. That is something like we say "a burning of anger" against the truth. The other idea is that similar to the expression of Jeremiah 20:9 where he speaks of a burning fire shut up in his bones. It has to do with the purifying, cleansing, spreading of the gospel. We have an expression about a man who is zealous for the gospel of Christ, "He is on fire with the message of the Lord." Since there are truths in both approaches, I do not trouble myself unduly in trying to be sure which he means. I confess that the latter one appeals to me the most, for he uses in the other figure of the sword the idea of conflict. And I know that we should have a burning desire to give our lives in service for him, and he could have well have wished that it was kindled even while he spoke.

John 9:39 gives another reason for his coming, "For Judgment I am come into this world." I do not think he means the final judgment at the end of the world, for he goes on to explain something of the kind of judgment he had in mind as he says, "That they which see not may see, and they that see may be made blind." The judgment about which he speaks is the judgment that a man brings upon himself. The man who does not see, knows he does not see, and turns to Christ for light and sight will be judged as righteous and blessed. The man who says, "I see," but thinks his own human reasoning is superior to God's revealed wisdom will be blinded. Romans 1:21 touches the idea. The eternal power of God could be clearly seen, but "when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Paul speaks of the same kind of thing in Ephesians 4:17-18 concerning those "who walk in the vanity of their mind, having

the understanding darkened." When a man closes his eyes to truth, he has judged himself, and will be blind. So one of the reasons Jesus came was to bring judgment into the world so that people could pass judgment on themselves by accepting his truth and seeing, or rejecting it and becoming blind.

Paul suggests in Romans 3:24-26 that one of the reasons for Jesus coming and being a propitiation for our sins was to declare the righteousness of God. The righteousness could have been questioned in two areas, at least, and the death of Christ should have removed any doubt about both of them. First, how could God have given remission of sins under the Mosaic system? Is it right for a man to sin, then simply kill a lamb and get remission? Is a man's soul worth no more than a lamb? It would take a longer treatise than we wish to now write to discuss adequately how the death of Christ could give "redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament" (Hebrews 9:15), but it did. This was why God could "at the time of this ignorance, wink at" sin (Acts 17:30). So God can now show his righteousness also in justifying the ungodly (Romans 4:5), not in their ungodliness, but because of their faith in Jesus (Rom. 3:26).

He came to preach this good news to the meek (Isaiah 61:1,2) and proclaim the gospel to the poor (Luke 4:18). There is little doubt that almost everyone who has any belief in or knowledge of Christ, if asked why Christ came into the world would first give what seems to them the most significant answer, "To save the lost" (Mt. 18:11, 1 Tim. 1:15). But in many there is not a deep awareness of what is involved in saving the lost. There are some who do not seem to realize that he came to "save his people FROM their sins" not IN them. Let us examine some of the things that are involved in his saving us from sin.

First in John 1:29, we find John saying about Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God that *taketh away* the sin of the

world. The word here is "airo" and suggests his bearing our sin away. He lifts the burden from us.

In 1 Peter 2:24 and Matthew 26:28 we find the idea expressed that we are delivered from the guilt of sin, for he "bare (anenegken) our sins in his own body on the tree" and his blood was shed for the remission of our sins.

There are at least three words that are used in the King James Version to describe or deliverance from the guilt of sin. In Romans 5:11, we find, "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." In my judgment, the word should not be translated "atonement" but "reconciliation," for it is from the Greek "Katallage." The word "atonement" does not adequately describe what Christ's blood does for us, for it has to do with "covering the sin where God did not see it (so to speak) but it was not merely covered but taken away by the blood of Christ.

In 2 Cor. 5:19 Paul says "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Though this may not be important, it is reasonably certain to me that Paul is not here concerned in telling us *where God was*, but what God was doing, and where it happened. That is, he is not telling us that God was in Christ (though that is true) but that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ. This is one of the reasons why we have to keep telling the denominational world what their preachers never seem to tell them—how to get into Christ, where salvation is (Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:3-4). It is in Christ that we do not have our trespasses reckoned to us. This word "katallasso" means "to change completely." It is true that when Jesus died, he then INSTANTANEOUSLY changed completely the relationship of the world to God in the sense that he left God free to be righteous and just in forgiving the sinner. That might be called "prospective reconciliation," for it is quite certain that "actual reconciliation" cannot come until

the sinner is forgiven. When Paul says in Romans 5:10, "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," he is not implying that there is somehow an automatic reconciliation the moment Jesus died. There was no difference in the love and care of God for us one minute before Jesus died and one minute afterwards. The passage does not teach that we were reconciled AT his death, but by it. It was by means of his death that we, though enemies, were caused to change completely, both in attitude and state. So God made the Apostles ministers of reconciliation that they might tell us that the reconciliation which was already provided by the Lord in PURPOSE could be attained in FACT.

When we began this study of the things accomplished by the death of Christ, we felt that the term "reconciliation" meant no more than that our attitude and state were changed completely with reference to God. We who were enemies have become friends; we who were lost are saved, we who were sinners are saints. It may be true that for all practical purposes that is all it means. And certainly, if that is all, that is enough glorious truth to satisfy us. But we felt more convinced from a few slight references such as Romans 8:19-23 and Colossians 1:19-20 that the whole meaning of reconciliation (to change completely) may reach even more deeply into time and eternity, earth and heaven, and involve more than sinful man. The curse of Genesis 3:17 may indicate the need of such reconciliation, and the new heavens and the new earth of 2 Peter 3:13 may indicate the realization of it.

But although we utterly reject the idea that God either has or will reconcile all things to himself (Col. 1:20) in the sense that he will save every human being or bring fallen angels back into fellowship with him, we are still impressed by the statement that the reconciliation has to do with things both in earth and in heaven, and think that it probably has a wider

scope than the world dreams of.

In Romans 5:9 we have another statement of what was accomplished by Christ as we find Paul saying, "Being justified by his blood--." The Greek word is "dikaioo" and means to make or declare right. Our justification simply means that we are declared to have a right standing before God. Those who want to find a "cute" way of talking about it and say "Justified means just as if I had never sinned" are ALMOST right. The word does not actually mean that, but it is still true that when a MAN is justified he is treated just as if he had never sinned. The word, however, can also be used about God and does not MEAN that. It simply means "declared to have a righteous standing."

Here it is a judicial term, and is equivalent to a sentence of "not guilty" or acquittal. A man is released from the guilt and penalty of sin. We have no need to get involved in contrived semantics and theological hair-splitting which makes it appear that it involves God reckoning a man righteous who is NOT righteous. Righteousness has to do with a man's judicial standing before God. When God declares a man righteous-- says "Not guilty!" it does not mean "You WERE NOT guilty," but "You ARE not guilty." God is not play acting. It is not that God pretends you did not DO the sin. It simply means that he does not now require you to pay the penalty for it. Our righteousness is not a result of our own goodness, merit or effort. It is a result of our accepting on God's terms his gracious offer of forgiveness. So when God declares him righteous, he IS righteous. But he is righteous (justified) not because he has not BEEN guilty (in which case he might have cause to boast or glory), but he is righteous because when he accepted the blood of Christ on God's terms his guilt was removed. Even in our courts "not guilty" does not mean he did not do it. Nor is it "play like." It simply means that for some reason he is not held responsible for doing it. In

our case, the reason we are not held responsible is because Jesus bore that responsibility for us. "Him who knew no sin was made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

There are six interesting and fascinating words that indicate our deliverance from the bondage and power of sin. Note in this connection Galatians 1:4, "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from the present evil world." The word "deliver" is from the same root word as in John 1:29, "Behold the lamb of God that *taketh away*." It suggests an interesting fact. John is talking about Jesus taking away our sins--delivering us from the burden and guilt of sin. Paul is talking about taking us away from our sins--releasing us from its power and bondage. If you have never thought about the difference in taking sin away from us and taking us away from sin, feel free to do so!

Let us now examine six other words that are used to describe our deliverance from the bondage and power of sin. Hebrews 9:26 says, "But now once in the end of the ages, hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." The words "put away" in English might mean the same as John 1:29, "take away," but the Greek word is different. It is "athetisin"--the word used in Heb. 7:18 where the writer says, "There is verily a *disannuling* (athetesis) of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof." It simply means that Jesus died to disannul the effect of sin on us. As his death removed the Jew from the bondage and power of the Law of Moses (disannulled it) so his death removed all mankind from the bondage and power of sin. The riches of his grace as evidence in the shades of meaning of these different words is thrilling to me, and I hope to you.

As we consider the things done in the removing us from the power and bondage of sin, the word "redemption" looms

large in our findings. There are four words translated "redeemed" and one translated "ransom" that are related to the idea.

First, there is the Greek word "agorazo" found 3 times in the New Testament, as in Rev. 5:9, "for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." The literal meaning is "to purchase at the market place." The figure is that of a slave, sold under sin. Our Lord left the glorious portals of heaven and came to the market place of sin and bought us with his blood. We therefore belong to him.

The next word is "exagorazo," found 4 times in such expressions as Galatians 3:13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law." The word means "To by *out of* the market place." The first word is primarily involved with the payment of the price for a slave. The second word is involved with the idea of removing the slave from the market place. As Jesus put it, in John 17:11-16, we are *IN* the world, but not *OF* the world. He redeemed us *IN* our sins in the sense that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6-8), but saved us *FROM* our sins (Mt. 1:21) and took us *FROM* the market place of sin. These words do not actually signify redemption itself, but merely the price paid for the redemption.

The third word, "lutroo" used 3 times, signifies setting free as a result of the price paid. Titus 2:14, "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity." Whereas the other two words relate to the *payment*, this one relates to the *result* of the payment. In its fullest meaning, it represents the assurance that "if the Son of Man makes you free, then you free indeed" (John 8:36). A Christian has been bought in the market place, taken *out of* the market place and set free, and now has the privilege of being a voluntary bondservant of a new Master!

It is our judgment that these three words are used to

suggest three great significant thoughts related to our redemption. First, there is a sense in which the price was paid (agorazo) but the slave to sin was not necessarily set free. This is what Paul meant when he said in Titus 2:11, "The grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation unto all men." Salvation has been brought, but not all men accepted it. Millions are still lost, though Jesus paid the price. Second, the more intensive form of the verb which is always formed by combining the verb with a preposition (exagorazo), suggests that the price was paid with a view to removing us from the world--its power and influence. Third, not only was the price paid, not only were we released, but now we have the privilege of presenting ourselves as bondservants to a righteous redeemer (Romans 6:22).

Another word in the noun form related to this one, "apolutrosis" is used 9 times and is translated "redemption" as in Hebrews 9:15, "For this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant. "Not only were we redeemed--removed from the power and bondage of sin--by the blood of Christ, but all those under the Old Testament who accepted God's way were also redeemed by the blood of Christ. They had to be if redeemed at all, for "It is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin" (Hebrews 10:4). When one understands that, he can see how the Bible could speak of God forgiving persons in the Old Testament although "without the shedding of blood (of Christ) there could be no remission." In the purpose of God, Christ's blood was shed from the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4-7).

In Timothy 2:6, we find "He gave himself a ransom for all." "I conclude that the primary difference in the meaning of this word "ransom" which comes from "antilutron" and the "lutron" of Titus 2:14 is that the verb "lutroo" signifies the

PAYMENT of a ransom, and "antilutron" signifies that the ransom paid was of a corresponding kind and value. In Matthew 20:28, "He gave his life a ransom (lutron) for many." He paid the price. But in 1 Timothy 2:6, "He gave himself a ransom (antilutron) for all. "He paid *the full and corresponding price*. Let me illustrate. If I were kidnapped and held for \$1000 ransom and my beloved wife should see fit to pay that, it would be "lutron." If they said, "We will not set him free unless you deliver yourself into our hands," and she did that, it would be "antilutron"--and more.

So, in the second place, there is this series of expressions that show in variegated colors and multifaceted splendor the things Christ did as he saves us from the *bondage and power* of sin. Keep in mind that we have but touched the hem of the garment in mentioning them, for an exegesis of all the passages that touch even THAT aspect of the subject would take a small book.

Now let us note briefly the third thing accomplished by the death of Christ. Not only did he save us from the guilt and burden of sin, from the bondage and power of sin, but from the love and practice of sin. In 1 Peter 2:24, he says, "Who himself bare our sins in his body on the tree, that we *having died* to sin, might live unto righteousness." The word "apogenomenoi" (having died) is not the usual word for died, but literally means "be away from." Note the thrilling fullness of these verses. Christ died that we might be free from guilt and punishment of sin, because he bore our sin in his body. Our sin was taken away. But he also died that we might be away from sin--that is free from its love and practice. There is a third thing in this verse which is wonderful. We are supposed to not only be dead to sin, but alive unto righteousness. Sometimes we act as if we have been saved FROM something without being saved FOR OR UNTO anything. Ephesians 2:10 says, "--created in Christ Jesus *unto good works*, which

God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. "And Titus 2:14 specifically says "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people; zealous of good works.

The fact that we are said to be sanctified by the offering of the body of Christ (Hebrews 10:10) is another aspect of being saved from the love and practice of sin. The word "sanctified" is from "hagiazō" and literally means "set apart." It does not, OF ITSELF, mean free from the love and practice of sin, but it demands that as a result of being set apart.

Not only was the death of Jesus designed to save us from the burden and guilt of sin, from the power and bondage of sin, from the love and practice of sin, but there is another word that suggests we are saved from the contamination and impurity of sin. 1 John 1:7 says, "the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin. "The word cleanseth is "katharizo." Not only are we released from bondage, but cleansed from contamination. It is possible for us to imagine a person being released from a filthy dungeon and still be dirty. But in OUR release, we are also clean.

Next, we may notice that we are saved from the punishment for sin. There are many passages that suggest that, but time and space limitations force us to consider only some of them. Let us use the word "propitiate" as used in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10 where we find, "He is the propitiation for our sins." The English word does not really do justice to the idea in "hilasmos." It suggests a gift or act that was offered to secure the good will or leniency of another. We have no such gift or act to offer. God offered the gift and performed the act BECAUSE of his good will and love. It seems to me that the word "hilasmos," translated here "propitiation," rather than suggesting an offering that was to "appease" the wrath of God and make him more kindly disposed to us, rather suggests an offering of mercy which God provided for us. This is why

"hilasterion" is used in Romans 2:25 and in the Septuagint as a technical term for "mercy seat." But it is still true that Christ offered himself as a sacrifice to deliver us from the wrath of God against SIN, and if this is what propitiation means to you, then the term will seem satisfactory to you. The point is that he bore the punishment that should have fallen on us. "By his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). Some liberal and scoffing theologians have tried to make it appear as if the Bible taught that God was angry at MAN and demanded a blood sacrifice to appease himself, somewhat like a man who might get angry at his secretary and come home and slap his wife. The Bible picture is that of a holy God, angry against sin, whose nature is such that divine justice demands payment for sin. But at the same time his infinite love causes him to make the payment himself while his infinite wisdom allows him to do it in the body of Emmanuel who was God in the flesh. 1 John 2:2 which reads, "And he is the propitiation for our sins--" is meaningful when one realizes that God himself is propitious and provided the means by which his righteous wrath against sin could be satisfied. It was not that either Jesus or mankind had to intervene and try to keep God from taking his spite out on all of mankind.

Not only does the Holy Spirit use these 18 different words to try to disclose the unsearchable riches of God's grace, power, wisdom and love in saving us from the guilt, burden, power, bondage, love, practice and punishment of sin, but his death changed *us in all* our relationships. "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold *all things* are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

Notice some scriptures that suggest some of the changes in our relationships to each other. First in John 11:52, "--that he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." This involves the idea Paul expressed in

Ephesians 2:14-16, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us --"Probably the verse that in the shortest space emphasizes it is Galatians 3:28, "For 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." Without going into detail regarding how and how much, we can see that the relationships between Jew and Gentile, between men and women, between servant and master were changed by Christ.

Of course we have emphasized many times that he changed our relationship to the world. The world "ekklesia" suggests to most of us that we are called out of the world. Then various passages such as Titus 2:12, "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world" show that we are in the world but now are not of the world as Jesus said in John 17:15-16, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

Of course our relationship to God was changed as suggested by many of the previous words, but Galatians 4:4-5 puts it even more beautifully. "But when the fullness 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. And *Because ye are sons*, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." I have written another article on "*Born or Adopted*" in which I set forth the fact that these are not simply two words that show how we get into the family of God. Romans 8:19-23 shows that "adoption" is there speaking of "the redemption of the body." Actually, the word "adoption" in the New Testament does not refer to *coming into the family*, but coming into a position of a full grown heir in the family. The "adoption of sons" in the above reference

is, in my judgment, what we will receive at the redemption of our bodies *because we are sons*. "Uiothesia, "translated" adoption," refers to "standing as sons," and not "becoming a son."

There are many other references suggesting various aspects of what he wanted to accomplish in changing our relationship with him, such as Romans 14:9 "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he *might be Lord* both of the dead and living. He wanted to have a glorious Church (Ephesians 5:25), with all the things which that would involve, including fellowship with him and a whole life related to him in a way not possible without the death of Christ. Perhaps it is climaxed by 2 Corinthians 5:15 which says, "He died that we who live should no longer live unto ourselves, but unto him who died and rose again."

This is in no sense an exhaustive treatise on the more than 60 separate things that were accomplished (though they overlap in many instances) by the coming and death of our Lord. But if you can read and digest this with care and concern, it will help you to be willing to cease to live for yourself, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Jesus. In doing that, all of the things for which Christ died will automatically become yours to enjoy for time and for eternity.

THE LAW OF LIBERTY

It is tragic, and almost incomprehensible, ;that many of those whom we have considered as brethren in Christ are now teaching that we as Christians are under no law. Much has been written about that in recent months, but it is my hope that this article may cast some light on the subject from a different viewpoint and be worth your consideration.

The following scriptures are some that make it almost

incomprehensible to think that there are preachers who teach that we are under no law at all. Romans 5:13, "Sin is not imputed where there is no law." If there were no law at all, there could be no sin, and no need for a Saviour! Romans 8:2 says, "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." I Corinthians 9:21 specifically says, "Not being without law to God, but *under law to Christ.*" If there is any clearer way of saying that we do have a law and are under obligation to obey it, I do not know what it would be. Galatians 6:2 speaks of fulfilling "the law of Christ." Hebrews 8:10 says concerning the new Covenant, "I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts." What sense would that make if we were not under law of some kind? James 1:25 says, "He that looketh into the perfect law of liberty" and in 2:11, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."

Even if one understood practically nothing about the meaning of those verses, he could not doubt that we are under *some kind of law* and will be judged by it!

It is probably called the "law of liberty" for several reasons, but among them, no doubt, is that it is obedience to that law that gives us liberty—freedom from sin and its dominion.

The law of Moses was a "ministration of death, written and engraven in stones" (2 Corinthians 3:7), and the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:2) is written on the heart (Hebrews 8:10), but it is still a law.

Possibly some of those who teach that we are under law do so because they do not understand the difference in being justified on the basis or principle of law-keeping, and being amenable to or under law.

As the law of Moses was not merely a group of suggestions, so neither are the commandments of Christ. They are binding, with all authority in heaven and on earth

(Matthew 28:18). But if we are to be justified on the principle of having kept the law, *we must have never broken it*. If you claim that you have never broken it, you just then did (Romans 3:23). But if you admit that you have broken it, you can not consistently claim that you are justified on the basis of having kept it!

But many would reply, "But I repented and was baptized for the remission of my sins, and that is a keeping of the law." That is a keeping of a part of the law. But James says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). Anyone who can read this can understand that if you robbed a bank and murdered the teller, when the authorities took you in, it would not be satisfactory to say, "I kept the law! I did not run a stop sign, nor break a speed limit!" The principle is: If you would be justified on the basis of law-keeping, you have to keep all of it.

So, we are under law-the law of liberty. But we are not thereby justified because we kept a part of it. We are justified freely by his grace, *if/as/when.by his grace we accept the salvation that is in Christ on his terms*. His terms are simple, his yoke is easy and burden is light, but you must take his yoke on you (Matthew 11:29), and when you do you will confess freely that, 1. You operate under his law, 2. You are saved by his grace and 3. You are not justified or saved on the basis of having kept his law, but in spite of the fact that you broke it numerous times!

THE MEANING OF BAPTISM

Every Christian has probably encountered many efforts to deny the necessity of baptism, or its importance. Those efforts range all the way from making sneering remarks about

"water salvation" or a "mere ritual" to a more sophisticated, sometimes apparently scholarly attempts to remove water baptism from the plan of salvation.

Recently, while knocking on doors and setting up Bible studies, I found a pastor of the Presbyterian persuasion who admitted that baptism MIGHT mean immersion, but in that case you could do it in sand or milk, but since it MIGHT mean "dye" as in Revelation 19:3 or "wash" as in Mark 7 : 4, one could not REALLY tell what it meant, but it was not a "water ritual", and the basic meaning probably was "to be identified with", however that might be done. He admitted that he had been immersed, but gave "his people" the choice of whatever they wanted. It would take a small booklet to deal with the errors he espoused in our short conversation, but let us consider only one or two of them in this article.

I believe one can check at least two dozen Greek-English Lexicons and ALL of them define the basic meaning of "baptize" as 'to dip, plunge, immerse, overwhelm, etc.' It is true that the word itself does not define the element used. It may be fire, water, Holy Spirit, suffering, milk, or anything else in which a person might be either literally or figuratively plunged, dipped or overwhelmed.

But let us emphasize a point with which we have not had anyone deal in recent times, as far as we recall. Although the imprecise nature of our language may allow us to say that a word MEANS something when it does not, we should not allow such common usage to confuse us as to the real meaning of a term. For example, one may say in ordinary conversation, "Having a tire blow out at 70 MPH MEANS you lose control of your car." It does NOT really mean that. Even if it ALWAYS resulted in your losing control, it does not MEAN that. It means, "While traveling at 70 miles per hour, a tire lost its pressure through a rupture." So, when an action RESULTS in a certain condition or state, that does not mean that the

resultant condition is the MEANING of the words describing the action. When a garment is dipped in dye, it will be dyed. But "dip" does not mean "dye." When a cup is dipped in water often enough, it will be washed. But "dip" does not mean "wash." When a person truly repent, he will change his action. If he has been committing adultery, he will stop. But "repentance" does not MEAN "stop committing adultery." When a person is scripturally baptized into Christ, he is identified with Christ, but "baptism" does not MEAN "identification."

So, although one may reason correctly, "The word 'baptism' does not mean a water ritual", that does not prove that the command to be baptized does not INVOLVE a burial in water. And although one may reason properly, and prove from the Bible that scriptural baptism INVOLVES being identified with Christ, that does not prove that the MEANING of baptism is "identification." If "baptism" simply means "identification," one would have not possible way of knowing HOW to be identified. It might be by signing a card, raising a hand, closing one's eyes, or whatever else one might imagine. In such a case, signing a card would be baptism. Also, if one word MEANS the same as another word, the second word can be substituted for the first in each occurrence. You may want to try it with each occurrence of baptism and see how impossible it is. Also, you may want to try it with a person who thinks baptism is sprinkling. If sprinkling is defined as "to scatter out in small drops", then one could read Mark 16:16 as, "He that believeth and is scattered out in small drops shall be saved."

So, although it is true that when a person is scripturally baptized into Christ, he is identified with Christ, he is united with Christ, he is buried with Christ in the likeness of his death, he has put on Christ, and he has sins washed away, the word does not MEAN any of those things. It means,

"dipped,plunged,immersed,overwhelmed, etc." and when it is done in reverent obedience to the lord, for the right reasons,it is NEVER "a mere water ritual."

When Naaman dipped in the Jordan river and was cured of his leprosy, he probably would not have appreciated anyone calling it a "mere water ritual." When the blind man washed in the pool of Siloam (John 9:7), he knew it was not a "mere water ritual". If a person would simply be honest and thoughtful enough to try to understand Colossians 2:12, surely he could see that our faith is in the operation of God, but we can show no proper faith in the operation of God until we are willing to be buried with him in baptism as he commanded. If we want to be identified with Christ, we must do it HIS way. No one in Bible times ever said, "See, here is sand or milk, what hinders me to be identified?" But it was, "See, here is water,what hinders me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36). We are convinced that honest, sincere people will try to Do what God says, not try to find some excuse to get out of it.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THE WORLD

Most of my preaching life, especially as I would be involved in personal evangelism, I have asked the question, "What is the most important thing in the world?" in order to elicit the answer, "My salvation," or its equivalent. Or I would ask, "What is the most important question in the world?" in order to get a discussion started around the topic, "What must I do to be saved?"

In my later years, I have become convinced that as important as those things are, they are actually secondary. It is my opinion that a great deal of damage may be done,when and if we substitute the good for the better and the better for

the best.

This is an easy thing to do when we are trying so hard to push what we think is the most important job of the church, or of the individual Christian. As a result, we have an unbalanced religion, perhaps becoming denominational or cultish in our tendencies, depending on how far we take the matter.

The most important thing in the world is to glorify God, and one of the reasons we have done no more damage than we have is because the most significant thing in the world that glorifies him is our salvation, and one of the best ways to glorify him is to work for the salvation of our fellowman. Glorifying God should be the ultimate purpose behind all preaching, programs, building, or activity, no matter what is its nature.

There is a significant difference between the concept of the ultimate end of mankind being to win souls to Christ and the ultimate of mankind being to glorify God. The failure to understand and point out the difference results in a slight warping of Christianity, and a resulting failure to live as abundantly and productively as we should and could.

One of the small ways we have failed to differentiate between the ultimate purpose of life-- to Glorify God, and the second most important thing in the world-- salvation of souls, and the attendant emotional psychological and practical results we shall now suggest.

When we come to Acts 2:36-38, practically every preacher of the gospel I know, including myself, has provided an exegesis similar to this: "Peter had pointed out to the Jews that they had crucified the Lord and were guilty of the most grievous sin. When they realized *their condition*, they were pricked in their hearts and cried out, 'What shall we do?', for they wanted to get rid of the guilt of their sin. They received the answer, 'Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins,' and thus received the answer to their question."

All of that is no doubt true, but I believe there is a greater truth that created the response we see there, in contrast to the kind of response we often see now. Let us give another exegesis of it, that you may more clearly see my point.

Peter had pointed out to the Jews that they had crucified the Lord and were guilty of the most grievous sin. When they realized *that he was the Lord*, and accepted him as such, both intellectually and emotionally, they were pricked in their hearts and cried out, "What shall we do?," for now they *wanted to glorify him as Lord!* They received the answer, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins," and gladly receiving this as a gracious gift of a resurrected and reigning Lord, they were baptized. Then, *they continued steadfastly* in the Apostle's doctrine etc.

Of course these two explanations are not mutually *exclusive*, thank God, but surely a discerning mind can tell the difference between the *lasting response* (they continued steadfastly) of one whose *primary thought* was to accept in HIS appointed way the Lordship of Christ and glorify HIM, and sometimes vacillating response of one whose *primary thought* was to escape the punishment for his sins (get remission of sins)!

Whether we contrast it as a "Theocentric" rather than an "Anthropocentric" religion; whether we realize that much of our religious life may be self-centered rather than Christ-centered; whether we express it as the difference between an attitude of "What do I get out of it?" instead of "What does Christ want me to put into it?," it comes out about the same way.

Surely, not even a tyro in Christianity has failed to realize that the thousands of empty pews at all sorts of services are a result of an attitude which is, "If I do not get what *I want* out of it, I am under no obligation to come" or "The Preacher does not *turn me on*, so I quit." How many hundreds of us have

started off with the crippling psychological barrier like this: "The water is warm, the baptistry is ready, the clothing is prepared, and we are happy for you to come" with the subtle and unrecognized implication that if the water is cold, and you have to walk a mile in the snow, breaking the ice to be baptized, and the lions, the rack or stake might await you at the end of it, you really ought to wait!

Do you not see that if the *ultimate purpose* of your life is to "get saved" as it is often inelegantly put, then when you have done what it takes (or what you *think* it takes) to do that, all of your intellectual and emotional being is geared to stop at approximately that point. Why should a person whose goal is to win a hundred yard dash run on for half a mile?

But if your *ultimate purpose from the beginning* is to glorify God, then there is no stopping place for you. You do not practice a subjective religion in terms of what pleases you, or in terms of what rewards you get, but you immediately and regularly understand, assimilate, and practice such passages as 1 Cor. 10:31, "Whatever you do, do *all to the glory of God!*" You automatically have answered hundreds of questions about such things as "social drinking " (or even non-social drinking), dancing, vulgar shows, etc.

You do not ask the question, "Do I *have to come* on Sunday nights or Wednesday nights to be saved?" for it never occurs to you. The thing by which you measure each response and action in life is, "Does it glorify God?" and not, "What benefit do I *personally* get from it?" You will still have to "study to show yourself approved unto God" (2 Timothy 2:15) for you do not always know automatically how to glorify him. But now your center is different, so your circumference will change. as will your direction and speed.

This re-evaluation of what is the ultimate purpose or the most important thing in the world will not only help us prevent majoring in minors, but will help us not to get lop-sided in our

attitude and work. If I should knock on more doors and set up more Bible studies than you, that does not mean you are a second-class citizen, for you may glorify God in another way.

Lest I should again be accused of trying to lessen our individual responsibility to do personal evangelism, may I repeat that in my judgment one of the greatest and most significant ways we can glorify God is to "save our selves and them that hear us." There is nothing of which I can think that is more Christ-like than seeking to save the lost. Yet his ultimate purpose was not, as we have often put it, to save the lost, but to glorify God. So the ultimate end we should have in mind is the glory of God, or the secondary will become primary and Christianity will be perverted just that much. Any amount is too much!

THE CHURCH, THE BODY OF CHRIST

In the sixty years we have been reading the Bible and hearing preachers proclaim the gospel of Christ, we have heard many comments made on the fact that Christ is the head of the Church. With this statement no man who calls himself a Christian should disagree. However, without exception, all those who have spoken on the subject in our hearing have spoken as if the meaning of the phrase was practically exhausted when one thinks of the head as a sort of director of an organization. Or, if they want to go half a step farther, they cap the climax by saying something like, 'As my head directs my hands and feet, so Christ, the head of the body, directs every member of the body.'

With all my heart (or head--or whatever) I believe that Christ is to direct every member of the church, the body of Christ, but aside from the little technical fact that my head does

not really direct my hands and feet, but the head itself is directed by the brain to move, turn, etc., just as the hands and feet are, it is my conclusion that those allusions to the "head" of an organization directing it and the head of a man directing his body do not do justice to the meaning which the Holy Spirit would like to transmit to us through His word. I am not arrogant enough to assume that I will now do justice to it, but if I can cause earnest, honest students of God's word to probe more deeply into some Bible truths, and to see some other significant facets of God's multifarious revelation, I shall be gratified. Primarily, I hope to open some avenues of thought with the hope that those with better minds, deeper spirituality, and broader knowledge may amplify or correct our conclusions.

In the first place, to conceive of the church as an organization-- a sort of glorified country club--or we could even say, "Divine Institution"--into which a person must come in order to be saved does not do justice to the Bible picture. It is true that the church is called the house or family of God, and one must be a son of God to be saved. God has no children outside his family. But that does not mean that the Apostles presented the church as a Divine Institution into which you had to come in order to BE saved. The Bible concept is that when a person accepted the risen Christ as his Lord and Saviour and demonstrated that faith by his repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, he became a part of the family, inasmuch as *he was being saved* as he obeyed the gospel (Acts 2:47), and the Lord added him to his family. If this distinction seems too fine to be practical, let us suggest this difference. the idea of a divine institution into which one must come in order to be saved suggests a concept of an organized church which one has to join (even if we would rather use another phrase, "come into") in order to be saved. The second idea suggests a concept of a group of

persons who have become ONE with Christ by surrendering their lives to him in accordance to his terms, and are thus recognized as a part of his family, or body. The second one is scriptural; the first is not.

There is no hint that the Ethiopian eunuch had any concept at all of some DIVINE INSTITUTION into which he must come before he could be saved, but he did have a concept of obeying his Lord, at which point he would be saved, automatically becoming a part of the total group of saved persons. Nowhere in the Bible is the idea taught that a person should think of "coming into the church" in order to be saved (as we usually put it), nor that he "got saved" then joined the church, as most denominations conceive of it. What he was taught was, in essence, "Surrender your life to Lord on his specified terms and you will be saved and simultaneously be a part of the body." They neither thought of coming into the body *to be saved*, nor being saved in order to be thought worthy (and perhaps voted on) to get in the body.

Now, we want to consider a little more intensively and extensively some additional thoughts relative to the church as His body, and Christ as the Head that we might see that these terms as the Holy Spirit uses them imply far more than the head of a corporation telling a body of people what to do. Christ as head will have to be studied in another article.

The term "body" is from "soma", so translated in the KJV 145 times. The word "flesh" is from "sarx", so translated 147 times. It is also apparent when one reads every passage in the New Testament where the term "body" is used, it is never used to simply mean a "body of people"--a crowd or an assembly, organized or not!

It is true that Ephesians 1:23 shows that the church (assembly of called out ones) is His body. But Paul is not simply saying, "The church is his crowd of people". He means,

"The called out assembly (which belongs to Him) may also be classified as his BODY (a term which embodies other characteristics than those inherent in a mere assembly of people)." When the Bible speaks of the church as his flock, family, bride, house, etc. we properly find characteristics of a flock, family, etc. and show that the church has those. If we can discover some characteristics which inhere in the term "body" beyond simply being a group of separate entities directed by one "head", our purpose will have been accomplished.

A reading of Colossians 2:17 in the NASB suggests "things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ." The King James says, "but the body is of Christ." It is evident that whatever is meant by "soma", translated "body" or "substance" is opposite to a mere shadow, and involves the idea of reality, substance, or essence. As we examined all the uses of the term "body" in the New Testament, it seemed more evident that the basic idea was not the human form or bodily shape, and certainly not a group or "body" of people, but the essence or substance of something.

Now, it happens that the substance (dust) of which man's outward being is composed is called his body. It usually has a particular form or structure. But, note carefully: The thing that makes it the body of a man is NOT its external form, but its essential qualities! One can determine whether a piece of flesh is from the body of a man, cow, pig, or ape, not by its form or shape, but by its essence, nature or substance.

Without belaboring the point unduly, or even trying to suggest all the reasoning and research that led up to that conclusion, this is our point: When Paul speaks of the church as the body of Christ, it is more in keeping with the depth of his thinking and his use of language to suggest that he means that every member of the church (body) must be a partaker

of the Divine nature--that the very essence of his spiritual being must be such that he has the essential qualities of Christ, rather than the idea that he merely becomes a member of a group (body) of people whose head (leader) is Christ. We ARE members of a group. Our leader is Christ. He is more than that. He is my Example. He is more than that. Paul touches more deeply the real concept in Galatians 2:20 when he said "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." This is more than merely an example, a leader, or director, as good as those concepts are. This is: "He is the very essence of my life!" That is, I am a part of his body, the church. It is not enough to merely think of him as the director of an institution to which we belong.

We are persuaded that Christ was trying to get the same point across in John 6:53-56. There is no reason whatever to assume that he is talking about the Lord's Supper. But to eat his flesh and drink his blood is to assimilate his life in ourselves. It is to be a "partaker of the Divine nature." If you do not see any difference in "being a partaker of the Divine nature" and "getting membership in a group" that claims they will follow Jesus, this article will not mean anything to you.

What constitutes a person as a member of the body of Christ is that he has become a partaker of the Divine Nature--he has become a new creature--the very essence of his being is changed. He has become one with Christ.

Someone may scornfully say at this point, "That is what all faithful gospel preachers have said all along. You are not saying anything new!" Thank God for that if it be true! But I am persuaded that one of the reasons for the rottenness and liberalism which is destroying the faith of many today is the concept of some of God's "grandchildren" that if you "get membership" in God's Divine Institution, you "get saved." (Of course God really has no "grandchildren", but I use the expression it to describe some "second-generation Christians"

who "grew up in the church" and are "Christians" because their parents were). So instead of Christ becoming a living, personal reality, whose nature and life becomes our nature and life, he is rather a sort of impersonal head of an institution sending down directives to follow.

If the "body" of Christ may be defined as that group of persons whose essential nature is that they have become Christlike, not merely a "body" of people who claim Christ as their leader, what is involved in the idea of Christ being the "head" of that body? That subject needs to be discussed in another article.

THE DEMANDS OF DIVINE LOVE

About thirty or more years ago I wrote an article entitled, "I Love You But I Do Not Like You." It was the first one of which I am aware that pointed out the difference between what Jesus asked and what Peter answered in John 21:15-17. Of course I am not the first one who recognized the difference. I simply had not read anything about it in anything from The Millennial Harbinger down to that time. For those who are still not aware of that difference and what difference it makes, we will take a moment to point it out, although that is not the thrust of this article.

Jesus asked, "Lovest (agape) thou me more than these?" Peter responded, "Thou knowest that I love (phileo) thee." Several Greek scholars seem to see no distinction between the words, but it seems evident even to one who has no distinction between the words, but it seems evident even to one who has no knowledge of Greek that the use of two different words shows some difference. If I understand it properly, Jesus was asking for a commitment of sacrificial love. Peter was making a statement of a feeling of affection. They are different. The

kind of love that Jesus demands, even for our enemies, is not an emotion at all. It is a choice of will to sacrifice of what we are and have for the welfare or pleasure of another.

I do not doubt that Jesus would lie for us to have a feeling of affection for him. Most of us probably do not have enough, for we can sing or speak about Jesus dying on the cross for us with no more emotional response than if we were talking about killing hogs. He wants us to show reverence and respect, feel admiration and affection. But the "agape" about which he asked Peter is the kind of love he wants at the very center of our being. If we have the will to sacrifice of what we are and have for his pleasure, then other things will come in the proper place and at the proper time.

So, the first thing we note is that he wants a certain kind of love. The second thing is very similar, but in this passage is emphasized in a different way. He says, "*Lovest thou me more than these?*" When Alexander Campbell debated Bishop Purcell, Purcell took the position that Jesus was asking "Do you love me more than the other disciples do" I think William Barclay takes that position. I do not remember what Campbell's reply was, but there are at least three reasons why that is not the correct exegesis of the passage. First how could Peter know he loved the Lord more than the others did? Can I know whether I love the Lord more than you do? Second, one does not need to know if he loves the Lord more than someone else does. I may need to love the Lord more than I do, but I do not need to try to love him more than you do. Third, even if he loved Christ more than the other disciples did, it would not be fitting to brag about it and compare his love with the love of others. There is no example of Jesus ever asking a person to do a thing like that.

Jesus had already pointed out that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesses (Luke 12:15). He had already said, "He that loveth son or

daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:37). So he was asking Peter to compare himself with the standard already set up, not to compare himself with someone else. As Paul later said, "But they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves are not wise" (2 Corinthians 10:12).

The answer to this question, "Lovest thou me more than these?" is probably the key to most of our spiritual successes and failures. Our lives are ruled and directed by the kind of supreme love we have for persons or things. We would not need to teach much on the subject of giving if we can teach people to love God supremely. We would not need to nag people on the subject of church attendance if we can get persons to love Christ properly. We do not have to dwell on the fact that husbands should not beat their wives if we can teach them so that they love the Lord with all their heart, soul, strength and mind. Then they will love their wives as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 5:25).

In this story we see that he first demands sacrificial love. Second, he demands supreme love. It must be "more than these," whatever "these" are. If we have not learned how to do that, we should start learning. This kind of love can be commanded, taught and learned. It is not a spasm of the colon or heart or something into or out of which one falls.

Third, there is to be a confession of our love. Probably all who love or want to be loved recognize some value in being told of that love. Occasionally I meet a wife who reports something like this: "When I ask my husband if he loves me, he is likely to reply, 'I told you 30 years ago that I love you, and if I change my mind, I will let you know.'" We should gladly tell of our love for the Lord; both to the Lord and to any concerned person. Jesus was not asking Peter to find out for he already knew. He wanted to help Peter to find out. You and I need to know about the extent of our love. What sort of

love and how much we have for the Lord is very important. If we discover that we do not love enough, and want to make it grow, there are at least four things that will help in the process.

These apply in all cases of love, whether it is the love a person has for his wife, his parents, his enemies or God. First, one needs to think good things about the other person. These may be good things about what he is, or what he does or has done. Second, say good things about the person. Express appreciation to and about another person for the good he has done. Tell a person you love them, and tell them why. This helps to make love grow. Third, do good for them. Do something that pleases them, or will be helpful to them. Fourth, receive good from them if they offer it. Each of these is important enough for a whole article to be written about it.

There are those who ridicule what they call the "five steps of conversion" and make laughing, sarcastic enquiries about whether a man with four fingers can be saved. For those who do not understand the reference, it relates to people like Raccoon John Smith and others of the Restoration Movement who tried to help persons see and remember the simplicity of the plan of salvation by what they called the "five finger exercise" of using the hand to remember, "hear, believe, repent, confess and be baptized." However, these shallow critics do not seem to be aware that every step that God ordained is not merely a mechanical step, but has excellent logical, psychological, physiological and spiritual reasons for being included. The plan of salvation is not an arbitrary plan which would have worked just as well if it had been composed of other things, such as "Stand on one foot in the corner for one minute." Whether we use five fingers or one finger five times, each step is important, and those who make fun of "five steppers" are simply ridiculing God's plan of redemption.

The thing I am trying to emphasize is that God wants us

to confess our faith and love, because there are many values in that confession if done properly. Doing it properly involves more than a mere repetition of a formula, whether it is called "regurgitation" or another reprehensible term. It was good for Peter to be asked to make that confession three times.

The Lord wants more than our love. He wants more than the first place in our love. He wants more than a confession of that love. He wants a demonstration of it. It would take more time and space than is now available to make a proper study of the different expressions used in this passage, but I will mention them for the value of those who want to do extended study of them. Jesus first said, "Lovest thou me (agapas me)?" Peter replied "I love thee (Philo se)." Jesus said, "Boske ta arnia mou (feed my little lambs)." The second time, he said, "Poimaine ta probatia mou (shepherd my little sheep)." The third time, he said, "Boske ta probatia mou (feed my little sheep)." Without properly going into detail, we need to know that he wants one who loves him to demonstrate it by providing nourishment and watching for the general welfare of his lambs and sheep.

The demands of Divine love include our giving specific evidence of the kind of love he demands. It is not enough to feel or speak of love for Jesus himself. It includes his statement in Matthew 25:40, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." There are false teachers that say, "Real love cannot be commanded or demanded, but must be spontaneously expressed. A father who would say to his child, 'I only want a striped tie in a green box' and would reject spontaneous loving gift of a green bath robe is an arbitrary and wretched father." Contrary to this false doctrine is the plain statements of Jesus in Matthew 23:36-37 and other places. What they are trying to teach is that if you claim to love God, you can worship or without instrumental music, or any other way you choose, for you must have

freedom to express love spontaneously. But Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words" (John 14:23). So our demonstration of love must be the demonstration he ordained, not some substitute. Note well: this does not mean we can not show our love in other ways. It only means that even if an earthly father says, "I want a striped tie in a green box" it is not a proper expression of love for the child to say, "I am not to be concerned about what my father wants, for I will express my love by giving him a red tie in a blue box instead." How much more important the principle is with our love for God.

These are some of the demands of divine love. When God loves us enough with the kind of love that involved the giving of His only begotten Son, that love was offered freely. However, a proper response to that kind of love impels us to love him back with a sacrificial love, with a supreme love, with a confessed love, and with a demonstrated love. It is to be demonstrated according to the expressed will of him who deserves our love and life. That does not mean the love will not or should not be expressed spontaneously in other ways. It does mean that our spontaneous expression must not be substituted for God's expressed will. John said, "He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:4).

THE DIFFERENCE IN YOUR CHURCH AND MINE

Many of us who do personal evangelism have made a basic mistake in our response when a person asks us what is the difference in the church of Christ and any denomination. We begin to point out such things as, "Your church practices sprinkling. We immerse. Your church does not take the Lord's

Supper each first day of the week. Ours does." And so on through the line of things we think are important.

Suppose their church quit sprinkling and started immersing. Suppose they "communed" each Sunday. Does that solve anything? Suppose you knock all the rotten apples from an apple tree? Does that make it a peach tree?

Let us try to make the point even clearer and more emphatic. Suppose a dozen of us decide to get together and organize a church. We call the meeting to order and raise some pertinent questions. First, what are we going to call the organization? After extended discussion about what names are better--those that signify an act, an attitude, the structure of the organization, or something else, the decision is made by a vote of 7 to 5 that we call it "The Church of Christ".

Next we must decide the terms of membership. We debate about that at some length, and the minimum requirements we can all agree on are that one must confess some sort of belief in Christ, confess his sorrow for sin, and be immersed. That passed by a vote of 8 to 4!

Next, we must come to some conclusion about activities the corporate body will perform. We discuss it at some length, and eventually conclude to do at least 5 things: Sing (preferably without musical instruments, for most of us feel we can not afford good ones), pray (for most of us think the rest of us need it), take the Lord's supper each week (for a lot of people think that if "taking communion" is worth anything, once a week is not too often), and give (because we must have money if we are going to operate), and appoint someone who will deliver a homily.

Without belaboring the point any longer, can you not see that *no matter what we decided in the meeting, or practiced after we left the meeting*, we do not have a church of Christ as described in Mt. 16:18, even if we appoint elders and deacons, and refuse to call the preacher (or whoever

deliver the homily) a "pastor"! Do you not see why? The whole thing was start on **THE WRONG FOUNDATION!** It does not matter what the superstructure looks like, if the building is not on the right foundation.

No denomination of our acquaintance was founded on the right foundation--**THE AUTHORITY OF OUR LORD!** It may well be that there are also things called "churches of Christ" and those individuals who are called "Christians" that did not start and do not operate on that basis. Calling a thing a "Mephitis" or "woods pussy" does not keep it from being a skunk!

If a person comes to you and says, "I want to be baptized into Christ for the remission of my sins, **BUT** when I do that, I will decide if and when I will attend the services, give or do anything else, on **MY OWN TERMS.**" you have no authority to baptize him! But if you Do baptize him and he attends a local congregation of God's people he is **NOT** a disciple of Jesus (a Christian-Acts 11:26), for Jesus said in Mt. 16:24, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me". He did **NOT** do that! Have you ever thought carefully what the Great Commission says, "All authority is given to **ME--go ye THEREFORE --** "If a person does not do what he does, whether teaching, baptizing, or anything else **IN SUBMISSION TO THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST,** it does not matter whether his mother wants it, his pastor wants it, his church wants it or he wants it is no value!

The difference in your church and mine (if we each have one) is probably not worth discussing. But the difference in the Lord's church *and everything else* is as great as the difference between time and eternity. He will add you to it when you accept Him as Lord, and do what he says, when he says, how he says, for the purpose he says.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE

Regrettably, I do not now seem to find time to read as widely in classical literature as I might. But yesterday I again picked up some of Shakespear's writings for a few moments and was impressed again with what I had noted many years ago when I read more from great authors. Practically everyone I remember would frequently make allusion to some Biblical story or character. A person reading their writings without a familiarity with the Bible would have found it "flat, stale, and unprofitable," as Hamlet put it, or at least enigmatical.

The assumption of those great writers that their readers would be familiar with the Bible reveals a great deal about their own familiarity with it, as well as the great esteem in which they held it. A long article could be filled with specific quotations from multitudes of great men of literature, art, sculpture, science and various other disciplines which show their respect or reverence for the Bible. But it is at least as impressive to me to find literally thousands of allusions to some remote Biblical circumstance with the awareness that their readers did not need a foot note with an explanation of the time and place of its occurrence.

One might expect to find this in the writings of Alexander Campbell, Moses E. Lard or others of the great Restoration, or even those of the Reformation movement, but to find it so widely in men of general literary fame is instructive. If there is any one thing that more readily shows the influence of the Bible and the respect in which it was held, I do not know of it.

Seldom have I found it advisable to accuse a man of lying, but if I should ever need to do so, I should like to be able to do it as superbly as did Moses Lard. He said, in

reviewing Mr. Jeter's book, "*Campbellism Examined*," "It is to be regretted that an author whose pedigree points to an American origin should still by his speech so often betray a Cretian extraction." Brother Lard expected his readers, largely men of religious interest, to understand his allusion to Titus 2:12 without any explanation.

But it is almost equally fascinating to hear Shakespeare saying, "The sons of Edward sleep in Abraham's bosom" (showing his familiarity with such passages as Luke 16:22) or Pope saying, "Who sees with equal eye, a God of all, / A hero perish or a sparrow fall" (indicating his familiarity with such passages as Mt. 10:29-31). One might expect Bunyan or Milton, or others who were writing of Biblical themes to fill their writings with such references, but when so many others, whatever their theme, are found doing it, it gives us particular pleasure.

Although it is probably possible to read most of the kinds of literature produced in recent generations without knowing anything about the Bible (and much of it could not be read with interest by anyone who *cared* much about the Bible), if we want our children to understand some of the greatest literature of the ages, we will have to help them learn the Bible.

HOW MUCH FAITH DO YOU NEED

In Luke 17:5, the apostles said, "Lord, increase our faith." They felt a lot like most of us. "If I had more faith, I could do greater things." At that point, it is my judgment that most commentaries do not do justice to the lesson Jesus is trying to teach. The ones I remember say something like this, "The grain of mustard seed is small. If you just had a small amount of faith you could do great things."

No doubt this is true, *provided some other conditions*

were met, but it appears to me that his statement is concerned with the other conditions, rather than with the "size" of their faith. Why?

He already admits they had a *little* faith (Mt. 8:26, Mt. 14:31; Mt. 17:20). So, if just having a little faith would allow them to do the "impossible" tasks, then they could already be doing them. It is not the SIZE of the faith that he is emphasizing, but the NATURE or QUALITY of the faith!

That is, I do not think he is saying, "If your faith was a BIG as even a grain of mustard seed you could do great things", but "Though you know your faith is small, for you asked for it to be increased, if it were AS (not as BIG AS, but had the qualities of) a grain of mustard seed, you could do tasks which seem impossible." Now, how IS a grain of mustard seed? Well, it is small, but that is not the important point, for they ALREADY had THAT kind of faith! The important things are: it has in it a germ of life; it has power to grow; it has power to, and does, appropriate God's gifts in according to his laws, etc.

The point is, they did not need an INCREASE in faith as much as they needed as ACTIVE, OPERATIONAL faith. If a grain of mustard seed is *dead*, it does not matter whether it is small or large, it will produce nothing. But if a grain of mustard seed is *alive, active, and appropriating the gifts of rain, sunshine and earth* then it will produce greatly. So it is with YOUR faith!

The real truth is, you do not need to pray for an INCREASE in faith. It does not come that way! If you will have a faith AS the mustard seed and DO WHAT YOU CAN, WHERE YOU ARE, WITH WHAT YOU HAVE, it does not matter whether it is big or little, it will grow, and with its increase, it will produce "exceedingly abundantly above all that you are able to ask or think" (Eph. 3:20).

HOW TO LEARN TO LOVE

In the many sermons and articles we have heard and seen concerning the necessity of loving God and our brethren, I never remember one on HOW TO LEARN TO LOVE. Jesus said in Mt. 5:44, "Love your enemies." It seems hard enough for many of us to love our friends! How in the world can we learn to love our enemies?

Maybe we can not "in the world," but "in Christ" we can! An astounding thing is said in verse 48 of that same chapter. After the command to love your enemies, he says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Most of us feel as brother J. W. McGarvey said, "It is, of course, impossible for us to attain to this perfection." Although we hate to have to disagree with a scholar as astute as brother McGarvey, it will probably will not make him "turn over in his grave" for us to dispute his word! We CAN attain the "perfection" about which Jesus is talking about here! When one learns to love his enemies, he is mature (perfect), and about as full grown as it is possible for a man to get.

Jesus said, "Greater love hath NO MAN than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). But man, with the help of God, can have greater love than this! He can be willing to lay down his life for his enemies! And when he has done that, he is "therefore" perfect, even as the father is perfect! This does not mean he is either as good as God, as loving as God, or sinless. But as Noah was "perfect in his generation" (Gen. 6:9) and Job was "perfect and upright" (Job 1:1,8), so can we be. In fact, we are COMMANDED to do so; and it will behoove a preacher of the gospel to deny that we can do what God commanded us do!

However, our theme today has to do with HOW TO DO

IT. It can not be done by clenching the teeth, tensing the muscles and grunting! But it can be done. There are at least four rules by which one can learn to love. This includes loving God, spouse, children, parents, friends, enemies or anyone else you want to love. Underlying these four "rules" must be the desire to do so. Sometimes I tell delinquent members, "Your main problem is, you do not love God enough. If you WANT to love God, I can help you a lot. if you do not want to love him more, I can help you only a little. but if you do not want TO WANT TO love him more, there is very little anyone can do for you."

First, if you want to love ANY person, think good things about that person. When one meditates on what God has done for us, especially through Christ and the cross, he is creating love in his heart for God (2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Jn. 4:19). But the PRINCIPLE applies for friend, enemy or wife.

Second, SAY good things to and about the person. If you want to love God more, speak more of his goodness, mercy and love as you talk with others, and thank Him directly for those things. If you want to love your spouse more, do the same thing. The marvelous thing about it is, it helps the person (even an enemy) love YOU more too!

Third, do good for the person. With reference to God, it simply means, do WHAT He wants you to do, WHEN He wants you to do it, in the WAY He wants you to do it, etc. Jesus said, "If ye love me, (you will) keep my commandments" (Jn. 14:15). It is also true that if you keep His commandments, you will love him more! Any time you fail to do what you know.

He wants you to do, you will love him less. You may not have realized it, but when you do good for others, you learn to love them more. You have something invested in them, and Jesus said, "Where your treasure is (whatever you have to invest), there will your heart be also" (Mt. 6:21).

Fourth, when you receive with graciousness and thanksgiving the good which another would do for you, you will love him more. When God offers you salvation freely by His grace, accept it on the terms and conditions offered, and you will love him more! Can this principle apply to an enemy? Yes, but perhaps not as often. Those who are called "enemies" have been known to offer good to others for one reason or another. If one whom you think to be your enemy offers you good, try accepting it in gracious thanksgiving and see what happens!

You may be able to think of other rules for developing and growing in love, but if you can not, try these for six months. If they do not work, send back the unused portion with the magazine cover and you can get double your cost refunded!

I LOVE YOU, BUT I DON'T LIKE YOU

Because so many persons seem to feel that the command of Jesus to love our enemies is impossible to obey, we determined to make a more serious study of the matter in order to try to impress upon our hearers and readers the fact the God never gave a command which was impossible to fulfill. It is our opinion that even such an astute scholar as McGarvey slightly missed the point when he says in his comments on Mt. 5:48, "The command, 'Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect, 'makes the moral perfection of God our mode. It is, of course *impossible for man to attain to this perfection* (emp. mine. TPB); yet anything short of it is short of what we ought to be. " If that comment means anything, it surely means that God gave a command which we OUGHT to obey, but which we CANNOT. We deny the implications of such a statement, and believe than an erroneous exegesis

of the passage is the only thing that could have led to such a conclusion. It is our firm conviction that God never gave us a command which we OUGHT to obey, but CANNOT.

When a disciple of Christ loves his enemies and is able to bless them that curse him, he has attained unto the "perfection", the "completeness", the "maturity" enjoined by this verse. In fact, when we have obeyed God's command in any sphere, we have attained perfection in that sphere. If not, why not? What would perfection be? This in no sense implies that a man reaches the place where he can not sin, nor does it suggest that the nature or degree of love you may have for your enemies is equal to God's love. God never commanded us to love as MUCH as He loves, but He does command the same *kind* of love in this context--the love of enemies. When we do it, we have obeyed the command to be perfect *even as* He is perfect. A perfect sphere one inch in diameter is as perfect as another sphere one foot in diameter. So, when we have done what God demands of us--and we can--we are like God in this respect--perfect. He did not ask that we be gods and love, but we love as humans can love.

In order for us to understand more completely the Bible teaching on the necessity and nature of love, let us be aware that there are a variety of Greek words which may be translated by the English word "love". There is the word "agapao", translated "love" 135 times in the N.T., and having reference to a love founded in admiration, veneration, and esteem. The word "phileo" is translated "love" 22 times, and denotes an inclination of affection prompted by sense and emotion. As far as we know the word "eros", indicating sexual love and "stergo" indicating love characterized by satisfaction or complacency--as a love of a family member for another--are not used in the New Testament.

We suggest these words for the purpose of impressing you with the fact that the Greeks had a more exact word for

the various kinds of love which we recognize as existing, but for which we have only one word. For example, I know existentially that there are different kinds of love. I love God in one way, my mother in another, my children in another, my friends in another, my enemies in another, and my wife in many others. But I use the word "love" in reference to them all.

One of the points we want to emphasize is that God never asked us, in loving our enemies, to have the same sort of feeling toward them that we have toward our friends. We are not supposed to have the same feeling of love toward the other good, godly women of the church as we have toward our own wives. The preacher who does not know that is already in serious trouble! "Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" Many seem to have a sense of hopeless rebellion against God's commandments when they do not, and feel they cannot, feel the same affection for an enemy that they have toward a friend or brother in Christ. God never asked us to do that!

If we can arrive at an understanding of the basic meaning of "love" and realize that it does not necessarily involve what we commonly mean by the term "like", it should be of value to us. This definition I have derived from my study of the term "love" (agape) in every passage it is found in the Bible, and all the Greek literature in which I have been able to find it: "Love is that attitude of an individual which causes him to be willing to sacrifice of what he is or has for the welfare or satisfaction of another. It is NOT an emotion at all. "This can be commanded and developed. Try as you may, my personality, disposition or habits may be such that you can not like to be in my presence, but that need not prevent you from being willing to sacrifice of what you are and have for my welfare--and it WILL NOT, if you love me.

We find it difficult, if not impossible, by the very nature

of the situation, to LIKE a person we do not know. If we use the word "like" (phileo) to indicate a kind of pleasant attraction which is created in us by another, then I feel sure that I do not, and can not, *like* the savage in Africa whom I have never seen. But I can *love him*, and must love him if I am to be pleasing to God.

When God so loved the world that He gave His Son to die for it. He used the word "agapao." This is the word he used when he commanded us to love our enemies. The fact that Jesus could say concerning the men who nailed him to the cross, "Father, forgive them," does not mean he felt any personal attraction to them, nor does it remotely imply that he had a feeling of personal pleasure out of being close to the Roman soldier who pierced his side with the spear. But he loved them--he gave of what he was and had for them.

In John 21:15-17, when Jesus asked Peter, "Lovest thou me more than these?" he used the word "agapao", but when Peter answered, "Thou knowest that I love thee", he used the word, "phileo". Jesus wanted to know if Peter had a sacrificial love for him. Peter replied, in effect, that he had an affectionate, brotherly love. That was not then, nor is it now, good enough! We should have an affectionate feeling for Christ, as Paul puts it in 1 Cor. 16:22, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." He uses the word, "phileo". But having a tender feeling of affection for him is not enough. There must be such a love that will constrain us to deny self, take up the cross and follow him.

The primary point of this article is the fact that God never commanded us to like our enemies, but he does command us to love. And whether our personalities are such that we would appreciate being in the presence of another for an extended period is not so important. The important thing is that we have so much of the nature of the Son of God in our beings that we are willing to sacrifice what we are and have for his welfare.

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10).

We need to realize, however, that it is not sufficient toward our brethren to merely have a sacrificial love (agape). Romans 12:10 says, "Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love." This means that we should cultivate a feeling of affection toward our brethren. This word is "philostorgoi", and has reference to a feeling of affection one has for a relative or family member. The "agape"-love-willingness to sacrifice of what we are and have--is far more basic, and deeper than a simple feeling of affection, but toward our brethren we should have both.

These are some conclusions that we may draw from what the scriptures teach: 1. God does NOT command us to have the love (phileo) toward our enemies that we should have toward our brother. 2. God DOES command the love (agapao) toward our brother and wife that he does toward our enemy. 3. It is possible for me to love (agapao) my enemies and NOT at that time have a feeling of *attraction* to them, but I must have a feeling of **CONCERN FOR** his welfare, etc. 4. When a person learns properly to show love (agape) for his enemies, he may learn to develop a love (philos) for them, and may even make brothers out of them!

IN WHOSE NAME?

Most of my readers are aware that preachers in the Lord's church usually teach that when a thing is done as a matter of religious practice, it should be done in the name of Jesus, for Colossians 3:17 says, "And whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father through him." We teach correctly that this means that it must be done *by his authority*. We then

sometimes go on to explain the difference between generic and specific authority, which also needs to be understood.

But this articles is dealing with another aspect of the expression, "in the name of" which is not as easily understood, or well explained. The three most commonly used expressions translated "in the name" are "en onomati" as in Col. 3:17; "epi to onomati" as in Acts 2:38, and "eis to onoma" as in Matthew 28:19. These three expressions mean slightly different things, sometimes overlapping, and neither mutually exclusive nor contradictory.

A careful study of every place the expression is used leads me to this conclusion: In the approximately two dozen times the expression "en to onomati" is used, its basic meaning is "by the authority". In the dozen or so cases where "epi to onomati" is used, its basic meaning is "upon the awareness or recognition of the importance of the name (including all the name stands for)". The ultimate meaning is therefore about the same as "en to onomati". For example, in Acts 2:36, Peter points out that the Jesus whom they crucified is Christ and lord. Then in verse 38, he teaches that in the awareness of that fact (epi to onomati), they are to be baptized for the remission of their sins. So "epi to onomati" suggests INDIRECTLY the authority of the name, whereas "en to onomati" refers DIRECTLY to that authority.

However, "eis to onoma" as used in Matthew 28:19 has a slightly different meaning. The basic idea of "eis" is related to a transition, and may involve a change of relationship. When a person is baptized INTO (eis) Christ, he puts on Christ (Gal. 3:26-27) When a person is baptized into the name (eis to onoma) of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit he enters into a changed relationship with them. It is by the authority of Jesus, but that authority is found in verse 18 in the explicit statement, connected with "therefore" of verse 19, and not in the expression "eis to onoma". It is worthy of note that if the

authority for your baptism is your parent, parent or priest, no matter what verbal expression may have been used at that time, your baptism is not REALLY *in the name* ("eis to onoma") of Jesus, and your relationship with God, Christ and the Holy Spirit has NOT been changed! This is one reason why baptism into some denomination is not valid, *no matter what the person was saying* when he administered it. One cannot, by the authority of Christ baptize anyone into a denomination!

It is our judgment that expressions such as Matthew 10:41,42 do NOT mean "Whosoever receives a prophet BY THE AUTHORITY OF a prophet shall receive the reward of a prophet". The expression is not "en to", but "eis onoma". This means that whosoever receives a prophet INTO a position of honor which is inherent in the name of a prophet shall receive the reward of a prophet. This is equivalent to saying, "If you receive a prophet as if he were *INDEED* a prophet, you will be rewarded properly." The same is true about a righteous man. He is NOT instructing us to receive a righteous man BY THE AUTHORITY of a righteous man, but to receive him AS SUCH, because you recognize he IS SUCH. The "eis" here again indicates transition. Here was a person who was not being treated as a prophet or righteous. But because you recognize him to be such, you receive him INTO that position and treat him as such.

When Paul gives thanks in 1 Corinthians 1:14-15 that he had baptized few, he was not talking primarily about the idea that some would say he had baptized *by his own authority*. Even less was he suggesting that he was glad he had baptized few because it was a "mere ritual", unimportant in its import! But what he says is, "lest any should say they were baptized *in my own name* (eis to emou onoma), or into a relationship with him in which they would feel an allegiance to him rather than to Christ.

When my wife calls herself "Brown" instead of "White", it is indicative of the fact that she came INTO a marriage relationship with a Brown and is no longer a White. So if a person has a relationship with Paul because he was baptized INTO Paul's name, he would properly call himself after Paul's name. The same would be true with Peter, John or Luther. But if a person is baptized INTO (eis) the name of Christ, his relationship with Christ is changed, and he will wear the name of Christ and honor and exalt it.

To summarize, a person who is a penitent believer needs to be baptized UPON (epi) the name of Christ, recognizing the dignity and authority of that name (Acts 2:38), IN (en) the name of Christ, or specifically by HIS authority (Mt. 28:18, Col. 3:17), and INTO (eis) the name of Christ (coming into a changed relationship with him as Lord and Saviour). Of course this is not three different baptisms, but simply the one he does as he obeys the gospel.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

As far as I can tell, most of those who are now writing and talking of the propriety of worshiping with mechanical instruments admit that there is no evidence in or out of the Bible that the early church used such. More and more seem to be taking Don DeWalt's position that there is also no evidence that the congregation was authorized to sing.

At the risk of adding nothing really significant to the large body of literature on the subject, I want to make a point that I have not heard anyone else make.

Some "authorities" say that when the word "psallo" was used in Bible times, it was understood in the Jewish community that the practice was "singing to an

accompaniment of an instrument." That statement, properly understood, I do not at this moment deny. But that does not mean that the word, "psallo" HAD THAT MEANING, either in the Old Testament or New.

Let us use this illustration to clarify that point. If one were speaking to an average Methodist, Baptist or Presbyterian and said, "Church music is not as beautiful as it once was," he would probably be understood at this time and context in those denominational communities as referring to the singing of songs with instrumental accompaniment. But that does not at all prove, or even indicate, that the word "music" or the words "church music" MEANS "singing songs with instrumental accompaniment." It, in fact, does NOT! We have often been asked, "Do you have music in the church?," and our answer is, "Yes!"

When the Jews "psalloed" they often "psalloed," accompanied with a harp or other musical instruments, and by those who are not as precise as they might be with the language, it is said "They 'psalloed' WITH the harp." To some, that would mean the "psalloing" was what the harp was doing rather than that which accompanied it. In any case, under the Jewish dispensation (or at least part of it) if one used the expression, "psallo," he might be understood as REFERRING to "psalloing" accompanied by a harp.

But that the word "psallo" MEANS "sing accompanied by a mechanical instrument of music," I deny, for the following reasons (among others): First, as far as I have been able to find, NO translation of ANY kind in ANY language in ANY version so translates it. Second, EVERY Greek-English lexicon of which I am aware agrees with Thayer that the basic meaning was in the Old Testament "to pluck or twang." Third, The INSTRUMENT, or thing plucked did NOT inhere in the word. As Thayer says on page 675 concerning "psallo": "a. To pluck off, pull out. b. To cause to vibrate by touching." The

fact is that the context and the usage at the time indicated what was being plucked, twanged, or vibrated. It might be a hair of the head, a whisker, a wire on a fence, or a string of a harp, or, figuratively the strings of the heart.

Vine, in his EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS, says on page 58, "psallo" means "primarily to twitch, twang, then to play a stringed instrument with the fingers; and hence in the Sept. to sing with a harp, sing psalms; denotes, in the N.T. to sing a hymn, sing praise. "Note the point that I previously made, IT CAME TO REFER TO playing a stringed instrument with the fingers, but this was not ITS MEANING. Just as "church music" came to REFER TO "instrumental music" in denominational circles, but that is NOT the MEANING of the term.

Fourth, the truth that Thayer and Vine expressed can be indicated by the fact that in the New Testament when the inspired writer wanted us to understand that "harpers were harping with their harps," as in Rev. 14:2, he used the word "kitharizo," not "psallo." Fifth, as far as I have been able to find, NO HISTORIAN of ANY religious persuasion has documented evidence that ANY mechanical instrument of music was used in the early church until about the 6th century. The following is a short, but representative list of what ALL historians of which I have checked have said: Kurt Pahlee in *Music of the World*, page 27, "Many centuries were to pass before instruments accompanied the sung melodies." Hugo Leichtentritt, in *Music, History and Ideas*, page 34, "Only singing, however, and no playing of instruments was permitted in the early church." Earl Nauman, *The History of Music*, Vol. 1, p. 177, "There can be no doubt that originally the music of divine service was everywhere entirely of a vocal nature." In fact, the term "acapella," of ancient Latin derivation, has to do with "music used in chapel" which was and is singing without instrumental accompaniment.

When you multiply these historical references by the dozen, then notice what the great leaders of denominational groups such as Spurgeon, Clark, Wesley and others said in their refusal to use the mechanical instruments, you can scarcely keep from being impressed with the fact that it NOT merely a hermeneutical problem--an argument from silence--but a HISTORICAL FACT that mechanical instruments were NOT used in the early church, and that although "psallo" to some Jews might REFER to singing with instrumental accompaniment, it did not have that MEANING, either in Old Testament times, or in the New.

IS GOD ALWAYS JUST?

Most of my life I have heard preachers and teachers say something like, "I am glad what, at the judgment day, God will not deal with us justly, or in justice, but in mercy." One teacher even said, "God is unjust," perhaps to wake up the class. My opinion is that he might have as properly tried to wake them up by some other erroneous (one might say, blasphemous) statement as "God lied," or "God did wrong."

I think I understand and appreciate the purpose of such statements, and may have made them myself. We probably mean something like this: "Since we, by our own goodness can never get to heaven, it must be that by grace we have been and will be saved. Therefore our eternal judgment will not be in terms of justice, but in terms of grace and mercy. "Others would take the opposite position and says, "Judgment will be strictly in terms of justice, for the day of mercy will be over." In my judgment, both statements have some truth, but both are in danger of perverting or overlooking some wonderful and fundamental facts relating to God and our salvation.

First, we should never imply that one aspect of God's nature contradicts another. We have no right to suggest that God's mercy has or ever will cancel out his justice, or *vice versa*.

The wondrous glory of God's beautiful plan of redemption is that it enabled God to be just and justify the ungodly (Romans 3:26). This does not mean that God justified him IN HIS UNGODLINESS, but in spite of his ungodliness. The reason God can, in mercy and love, forgive our sins is NOT that his love is greater than his justice, and somehow overrules it. It is because he, in infinite wisdom and infinite love provided a way for justice to be *satisfied* while his love was being shown in the sacrifice of his beloved unique Son.

At the judgment day it may be correct to say, "The day of mercy is over" in the same sense that in the days of Noah the time came for the penalty to be paid and the "long suffering of God" which waited (1 Peter 3:20) stopped waiting. But if we imply that God therefore ceased to be long suffering, or that he was not then still merciful and loving, or that on the judgment day, he will *cease* to be merciful and loving, we make a grievous error. The more fundamental truth is that God will not then be *showing or demonstrating* love and mercy in the same way he has been showing it, but the idea that his justice has *cancelled out* his love and mercy is a different thing and is not correct.

The childish conclusion that a father ceases to be loving when he punishes his child is unworthy of a gospel preacher. And the erroneous assumption that God's judgment will not be just at the end of time simply because we will not be condemned for our sins is destructive to the whole system of Christianity. God can *justly* say, "Enter into the joy of thy lord" to all who have properly accepted his loving gracious merciful offer. The One who knew no sin, but was made to be sin on

our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor. 5:21) made it possible for God to be *just* as well as *merciful*, not only now, but on the judgment day.

God's love and mercy NEVER allow him to condone sin. He could "wink at" sin (Acts 17:30) only in view of the fact that it would be paid for by Christ, and it was not unjust for him to so overlook or wink at it.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

I just finished reading an excellent article in a gospel paper on "Salvation by Faith" by an outstanding Bible scholar. As most good articles should, it not only teaches truth, it creates a hunger for additional information, or inspires additional research in related matters.

To most of us, "salvation faith" and "justification by faith" are synonymous. In many contexts they may be, but I want to examine the idea of justification by faith in a way I have seldom, if ever, seen done.

In Romans 3:19ff, we find Paul stating that no flesh can be justified by works of the law, but by a different system. When he speaks of the righteousness of God being manifested through the "faith of Jesus Christ," in verse 22, he is not referring to our personal faith in Christ, but the system of faith which we call "the gospel plan of salvation," spoken of in Jude 3 and Galatians 3:23. Of course, justification through that SYSTEM is only promised to them that believe, as the rest of verse 22 says.

When Paul, in chapter 4, introduces the example of Abraham being justified by faith, many persons apparently assume that Abraham was in a lost condition--out of fellowship with God up to that point--and that his belief in the promise of God secured his forgiveness or salvation! Surely

this can not be so if Genesis 12:1-7 and 13:4 have any relevance! When we find James 2:25 telling us that Rahab the harlot was justified by works, are we to assume that she was a sinner until she hid the spies and then God *forgave her* and saved her from her sin because of her works? Surely not! She illustrates that faith without works is dead, but any supposition that her good works removed her sin is unwarranted.

The truth is that although the Bible plainly teaches that salvation from sin comes to an alien sinner ONLY through the merits of the blood of Christ when one properly demonstrates his faith in that blood by being buried by baptism into his death, and that now he stands justified, the term "justified" does not ALWAYS mean "saved from sin." A cursory examination of such passages as Matthew 11:19, Luke 7:29, 10:29, 16:15, and 1 Timothy 3:16 will surely convince anyone who cares to find out, that the basic idea of justification is "to declare right" in whatever context it is found. If a man is an alien sinner, and we are discussing how he can stand in the right relationship with God, of course he has to have his sins forgiven to stand justified. But this gives us no right to substitute some little "cute" expression of our own such as "justified" means "just as if I'd never sinned." It is true that when I am justified from my sins, I am treated "just as if I'd never sinned," but it is not because that is the meaning of the word. God Himself may be justified! Surely no one could assume it has anything to do with "as if he'd never sinned!"

In Genesis 15:6, when Abraham believed God and was justified (reckoned right), it has nothing to do with his being lost--out of fellowship with God--before this and then being saved by faith only or even at the point of faith! When Abraham offered his son on the altar (Genesis 22) and was justified by works (James 2:21), it does not mean that Abraham was lost--as an alien sinner is lost--until he offered his son, and then was saved by his works--that his sins were

forgiven when he offered his son! It DOES illustrate that we must have an OBEDIENT FAITH to please God.

When God makes a statement of ANY truth, a man is justified in accepting that as true, although it may be difficult to believe. It is the RIGHT thing to do, and God reckons us to be doing right when we believe it--justified us. When God told Abraham that he would be the father of many nations, and Abraham believed him, although he considered his body as almost dead, and the deadness of Sarah's womb (Romans 4:28-29), he was justified in that belief. But that has NOTHING to do with his being saved from sin at that point!

If God never said for us to DO anything, but simply made a statement for us to believe, we would be justified in believing what he said. But when he said to DO something, whether it was to offer a son on an altar or take the lord's Supper on the first day of the week, no man can stand justified in his sight without doing it!

When an alien sinner hears that God requires him to put his trust in Jesus, he is justified (reckoned to have done the right thing) when he does that. But he is not yet in Christ, redeemed by his blood, justified FROM SIN! When he hears that he is required to repent, and he does that, it is reckoned unto him for righteousness, for he has done right. But he is not saved from sin at that point, even though every man who properly repents is justified in doing that! When he is told to "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16), there is no way he can be justified in God's sight without doing that. He must "obey from the heart that form of doctrine delivered unto him, being THEN made free from sin" (Romans 6:17-18). At each step he was justified in doing what he did, for it was the right thing for him to do, but only at THIS step was he "justified FROM ALL THINKING from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses" and given remission of sins (Acts 13:38-39).

Let us remember that when the context shows that it refers to an alien sinner standing in the right relationship with God, justification must involve the forgiveness of sin, for sin separates us from God. But when it is not in that context, it may be as if God were saying in the vernacular of the South, "I reckon you did just the right thing!"

NO CONDEMNATION IN CHRIST

One of the many "exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Peter 1:4) which God has given us is in Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. "Although in the ASV the expression, "who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" is here omitted, it is in verse 4, and is inherent in the meaning of "in Christ Jesus." We may have allowed the false doctrine of "the impossibility of apostasy" to cause us to react in denial of it in such a way that we lose sight of some grand truths which are affirmed here and in other places. I believe in "the security of the believer" and have no intention of allowing some perverted teaching to denude me of that wonderful truth.

It is our considered judgment that we have sometimes done the same thing with other mountain peaks of God's revelation. The great truth of salvation by grace through faith is not simply a doctrine that we should talk about negatively, in denial of false doctrine. A winning team does not simply take the opponent's rebound when they miss the goal and go dribbling down the court with the ball, making all our points primarily on their missed ones. In all probability, part of the rash of articles in the last few years by those who think they have discovered as a new truth the idea of "salvation by grace" has been caused by the fact that in many cases, we have not properly affirmed the truth of God, but primarily wrote about

it in denying the false doctrine of "grace only." It is doubly sad that many of those who have seemingly discovered the grand truth of "salvation by grace" are writing about it about the same way that denominations have been since John Calvin's time. And I hear an increasing number of "gospel preachers" (or those whom I have considered such) that are teaching "salvation by faith" about the same way Martin Luther's followers taught it. Let us go back to Romans 8:1.

It is probably true that some of us have taught that a person is "in Christ" and "out of Christ" much in the same way a needle of a sewing machine goes in and out of a piece of cloth, each time we sin. And I am sure as I have talked with Christians about their fears and doubts, many have more of those than they do feelings of security. The feeling seems to be, in many cases, "If I go to bed and have not asked God to forgive me for every specific sin which I have committed (not to mention mistakes and shortcomings), and I should die before I wake, I am probably going to wake up in hell." As one dear lady put it many years ago, "I do not have any fears of going to hell for sins of commission, but I am afraid I have left something undone and will be lost because of the sin of omission." Of course, if our going to heaven is dependent upon our not having left something undone, none of us ever will have any security or hope!

But what is involved in the fact that there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus? Among other things, the law of the spirit of life (the gospel of Christ) not only made the Jew free from the law of Moses, but has made all of us free from the "law of sin in our members" as Paul puts it in Romans 7:23. We are no longer under bondage to sin, and "God will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape" (I Corinthians 10:13).

Some who teach "the impossibility of apostasy" teach

that a child of God can't sin. Many admit that he can sin, but teach that even a sin of adultery or murder, if he died while committing it could not cause him to be lost! As with other perversions, they make "there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ" mean, "there will NEVER be condemnation to those who EVER were in Christ, whether or not they walk after the flesh." As with the grand truth of John 10:27-28, which says, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," they try to make it mean, "Anyone who has ever been a sheep and EVER heard my voice and followed me could not quit following me if he wanted to, would not want to if he could, and if he did it would not matter."

But perhaps instead of writing a whole book about it now, a simple illustration might help show the difference in the way the Bible teaches it, the way some of us have made it sound, and the way the false teachers have taught it.

Suppose a man is walking across a chasm above a raging fire in a high wind, on a tight rope. The false teacher says to him, "Don't worry. You could not fall off if you wanted to, for once you have committed yourself to the rope you are eternally secure." Some of us have taught in such a way that it sounded like this: "Worry constantly! If you do not keep your balance constantly, and walk the tight rope with such care that you make no false step, you are in immediate and mortal danger at all times of falling into eternal fire!" The Bible view is: "Attach this safety belt around your waist. Walk carefully, lest you make a misstep and hurt yourself. As long as you keep the safety belt PROPERLY ATTACHED, even if you make a misstep and hurt yourself badly, you will not fall into the fire below." As I John 1:7 puts it, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all

sin." It is a constant cleansing--a constant security, and does not depend upon us not making a misstep or keeping the balancing rod in the proper position at all times, but depends upon our keeping the safety belt properly attached--that is, ALWAYS having a penitent attitude for ANY sin, known or unknown, and ALWAYS depending upon the blood of Christ for our cleansing, not on our perfect balancing act.

So, "no condemnation to those in Christ" not only was true with regard to the Jew who was released from the condemnation of the Law of Moses, but is true with those of us who have accepted salvation by grace through faith, ON THE TERMS DIVINELY OFFERED, and continue to walk in trusting reliance on that blood. Sin must be condemned anywhere at any time, but if we remain "in Him," or "walking in the light" He bears the condemnation just as He did when He took our alien sins when we were baptized into His death. He did not say that "walking in the light would PREVENT us from having sin," but would "CLEANSE US from all sin." But you and I have the choice of keeping "the safety belt" latched. We can keep a penitent, loving obedient attitude, relying on the saving grace of Christ and be secure. Or we can have one of two other attitudes: One is an arrogant, presumptuous attitude that we have saved ourselves because "we have never transgressed thy law at any time" (Luke 15:29). We do an excellent balancing act in a high wind, and never take a misstep. The other attitude is equally false: once we have made a commitment to Christ, we have lost our freedom of choice. The goat may become a sheep, but the sheep may NEVER become a goat! The Bible teaches no such foolishness! The sheep hear his voice and follow Him. Once a person quits hearing his voice and following him, he is a goat! But let us not allow our arguments against ANY false doctrine blind us to the great positive truths, precious promises and grand themes of the Bible.